


**THÉÂTRE
NANTERRE-AMANDIERS**
2003-2004
 MÉDÉE / M. ROUQUETTE - JL. MARTINELLI
 LE PONT / L. VAN WETTER - S. KOUVATÉ
 GUERRE / L. NORÉN
 LA BELLE MEUNIÈRE / F. SCHUBERT - C. MARHALER
 LA VIE EST UN SŌNGE / P. CALDERÓN - G. DELAVEAU
 HAMLET / W. SHAKESPEARE - P. CAURIER ET M. LEISER
 LES SACRIFIÉS / L. GAUDÉ - JL. MARTINELLI
 BORGES / TEXTES INÉDITS / R. GARCIA
 ET TROIS AUTEURS ARGENTINS - M. LANGHOFF

ABONNEZ-VOUS!
01 46 14 70 00
 WWW.NANTERRE-AMANDIERS.COM


Raise the bar

Cultural design sometimes patronises audiences in the relentless pursuit of new customers. Not so with these uncompromising posters for the Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers in Paris. By Adrian Shaughnessy

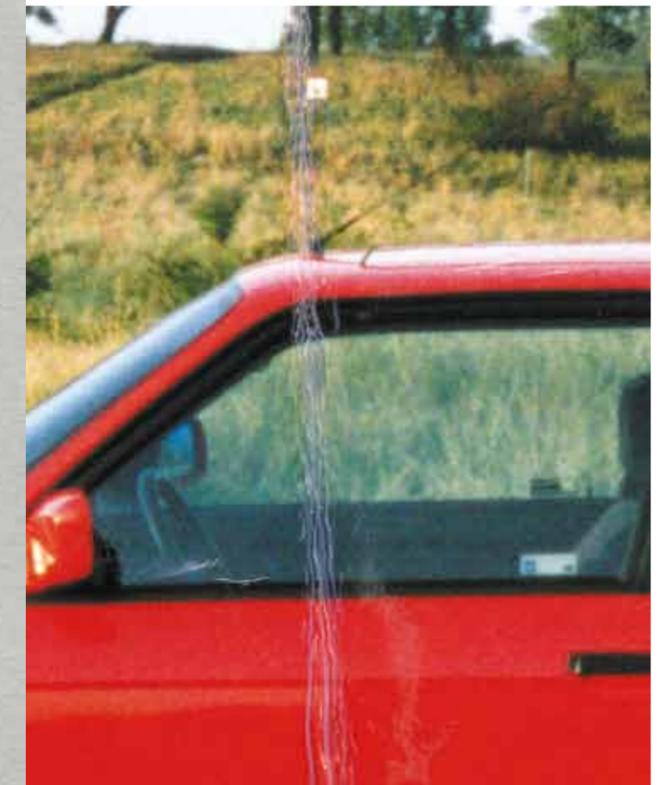
1-6. Posters for Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers, Paris, France.

1. Abonnez-vous! (from 2003-04 season). Design: Pascal Béjean, Frédéric Bortolotti, Nicolas Ledoux (Labomatic) with Olivier Lebrun. Photography: Grore Images. Typefaces: Typ1451 (Linet), designed by Nico Schweizer, 1995-98. Remontoire (Pay/Op), designed by Stefan Hattenbach, 1999.

Visual communication for the cultural sector is, in the opinion of many designers, the last best hope for expressive and radical graphic design before it is finally submerged in a sea of anodyne branding and corporate sterility. And yet, as was pointed out in these pages by Nick Bell ('The Steamroller of Branding', Eye 53), the cultural sector is not always the 'promised land'. Bell wrote: 'Since the 1980s, art galleries and museums have chosen to employ the same methods of persuasion that business uses, because they see themselves more as businesses. In the grip of a new spirit of openness, they believe their customers need to be lured to look at art with a mode of address they understand from spending time in the supermarket - an approach that can easily become patronising.'

Not so the Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers. Under its director, Jean-Louis Martinelli (described by Pascal Béjean - one of the designers of the theatre's promotional material - as someone 'imbued with the spirit of 1968'), this small venue, half an hour from the centre of Paris, offers a bold repertoire of broadly leftist theatre that deals with geopolitics, Africa and France's colonial past.

In 2002, a competition was organised to find a design team to give the theatre a 'new spotlight'. The contest was won by the Parisian design group Labomatic (Pascal Béjean, Frédéric Bortolotti and Nicolas Ledoux). Labomatic were prominent members of the new wave of 1990s French designers. Their work, well known and greatly admired in France, showed the influence of the radical developments that had taken place in America during the 1980s and 90s. The spirit of Cranbrook - and of Rudy Vanderlans' Emigre - was evident in the group's early work for



E RE-AMANDIERS


 12/11/04
 ≍
 19/12/04

PHOTOGRAPHIE GILLES TASCHET
 JAMES PATRICK DUTERTRE
 RE MARIE NICOLAS
 PHILIPPE CACHIA
 ILLAGE, COIFFURES FRANÇOISE CHAUMAYRAC
 TANTE À LA MISE EN SCÈNE EMANUELA PACE

ZAKARIYA GOURAM, HAMMOU GRAIA,
IR MARGOUM

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Labomatic. Photographie trouvée Grore Images, DR. Imprimé par Stipa.



French cultural institutions and art galleries, and in the posters and printed material they did for Nanterre-Amandiers.

Labomatic disbanded in 2009, and Béjean and Ledoux broke away to work as a duo under their own names. They were subsequently joined by Olivier Körner, and together they have carried on the task of designing the print campaigns for Nanterre-Amandiers.

Posters are central to the theatre's efforts to attract audiences. Produced for display on the Paris Métro, these posters make no attempt to depict individual plays. Instead, they offer the viewer a graphic mix of ambiguous pictorial imagery, eccentric typography and madcap illustration. In the words of Béjean, the posters seek to 'encapsulate a mood'. This is both a matter of artistic choice and the result of promotional material being required months in advance of actors being cast for roles. Nor do the posters offer a consistent homogenous graphic approach: there is no logo; no house typeface; none of the patronising repetitiveness and template-driven uniformity beloved of branding evangelists. Only the bold use of yellow and black is retained from one season to the next.

In *En jaune et noir*,* a handsome book published to celebrate eight seasons of work, the theatre's catalogues, leaflets, flyers and posters are presented chronologically in a blunt, matter-of-fact style. In addition to the visual materials, French-language texts are interspersed throughout, as are meticulously detailed credits, including listings for every typeface used.

Is there a lesson for commissioners of cultural design to be gleaned from the graphic output of the Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers? Definitely. In my experience, commissioners of cultural design are mostly concerned with the task of attracting people who do not normally attend theatres, galleries or museums. This is commendable: why should cultural institutions appeal only to initiates? But the consequence of this open-arms policy is, mostly, promotional material that fails to rise above the level of Disneyfied infantilism.

The designers of Nanterre-Amandiers's posters are open to the criticism that they fail to provide succinct graphic summaries of the plays they are charged to attract audiences to see. Yet it can also be argued that they offer something better: firstly, there is a fierce visual bite to these posters that will ensure that they 'stand out' among the hair care products and mobile phone offers they sit next to on the walls of the Paris Métro. Secondly, with their use of unconventional design tropes, they offer a non-patronising and ultimately more truthful and genuinely dramatic insight into the unconventional repertoire of Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers.©

* *En jaune et noir*. 8 saisons. Théâtre Nanterre-Amandiers. Published by Pyramyd, Paris, 2010. Editorial direction: Céline Remechido and Michel Chanaud. Texts by Etienne Hervy, Vanina Pinter, et al. Book design: Pascal Béjean and Nicolas Ledoux.

2. *Une Virée* (from 2004-05 season). Design: Pascal Béjean, Frédéric Bortolotti, Nicolas Ledoux, (Labomatic). Photography: Grore Images. Typefaces: Typ1451 (Lineto), designed by Nico Schweizer, 1995-98. Ocean View, designed by Rick W. Mueller, 1993.

3 (page 72). *Judith ou le corps séparé* (from 2006-07 season). Design: Pascal Béjean, Frédéric Bortolotti, Nicolas Ledoux (Labomatic). Design: Muzo. Typefaces: Typ1451 (as above). Franklin (American Type Foundry), designed by Morris Fuller Benton, 1903-12. DTL Paradox (Dutch Type Library), designed by Gerard Unger, 1998-2001.

4 (page 73). *La Seconde Surprise de l'amour* (from 2007-08 season). Design: Pascal Béjean, Frédéric Bortolotti, Nicolas Ledoux (Labomatic). Photography: Pascal Béjean, Florence Lebert. Typeface: Vendôme (Olive), designed by François Ganeau, 1952.

5 (page 74). *Je t'appelle de Paris* (from 2009-10 season). Design: Pascal Béjean & Nicolas Ledoux. Painting: portrait of Louis-François Bertin by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres. Typefaces: The Proteus Project / Saracen (Hoeftler Type Foundry), designed by Jonathan Hoefler, 1991-93.

6 (page 75). *Klaxon, trompettes... et pétarades* (from the 2010-11 season). Design: Pascal Béjean & Nicolas Ledoux. Photography: Pascal Béjean. Typeface: Marcelle, designed by Pascal Béjean, 2009.



THÉÂTRE
NANTERRE-AMANDIERS

UNE
VIRÉE

12/11/04
∨
19/12/04

SCÉNOGRAPHIE GILLES TASCHET
COSTUMES PATRICK DUTERTRE
LUMIÈRE MARIE NICOLAS
SON PHILIPPE CACHIA
MAQUILLAGE, COIFFURES FRANÇOISE CHAUMAYRAC
ASSISTANTE À LA MISE EN SCÈNE EMANUELA PACE

TEXTE
AZIZ CHOUAKI
MISE EN SCÈNE
JEAN-LOUIS MARTINELLI

AVEC ZAKARIYA GOURAM, HAMMOU GRAIA,
MOUNIR MARGOUM

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Labomatic. Photographie trouvée Grore Images, DR. Imprimé par Stipa.

THÉÂTRE
NANTERRE-AMANDIERS
01 46 14 70 00



CRÉATION

DU 9 JANVIER
AU 11 FÉVRIER
2007

TEXTE
HOWARD BARKER
TEXTE FRANÇAIS
JEAN-MICHEL DÉPRATS
MISE EN SCÈNE
JEAN-PAUL WENZEL
COLLABORATION ARTISTIQUE
ET DRAMATURGIE
ARLETTE NAMIAND

DÉCOR
JEAN HAAS
LUMIÈRE
PASCALE SAULETEL
COSTUMES
CISSOU WINLING
SON
PHILIPPE TIVILLIER

AVEC
LOU WENZEL
MOHAMED ROUABHI
CAMILLE GRANDVILLE

JUDITH LE JOU CORPS

SÉPARÉ



* île de France



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DESIGN LABOMATIC, PARIS. IMPRIMÉ PAR STIPA.

THÉÂTRE
NANTERRE-AMANDIERS

DU 17 NOVEMBRE AU 21 DÉCEMBRE 2007

LA SECONDE SURPRISE DE L'AMOUR

TEXTE **MARIVAUX**

MISE EN SCÈNE **LUC BONDY**

DRAMATURGE **DIETER STURM**

COLLABORATEUR ARTISTIQUE **GEOFFREY LAYTON**

DÉCOR ET LUMIÈRES **KARL-ERNST HERRMANN**

COSTUMES **MOIDELE BICKEL**

ASSISTANTE À LA MISE EN SCÈNE **SOPHIE LECARPENTIER**

AVEC **PASCAL BONGARD, AUDREY BONNET,
ROGER JENDLY, CLOTILDE HESME,
ROCH LEBOVICI, MICHA LESCOT**

01 46 14 70 00

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PHOTOGRAPHIE ET DESIGN LABOMATIC, PARIS



**THÉÂTRE
NANTERRE
AMANDIERS**

**JE T'APPELLE
DE PARIS**

**DU 9 JANVIER
AU 14 FEVRIER
2010**

**TEXTE
ET MISE EN SCÈNE
MOUSSA SANOU**

**AVEC
MOUSSA SANOU
MAMADOU KOUSSÉ**



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Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Portrait de Louis-François Bertin, fondateur du Journal des Débats. © RMN / Gérard Blot
Design Pascal Béjean et Nicolas Ledoux
Impression Moutot

THÉÂTRE NANTERRE-AMANDIERS

**DU 18 NOVEMBRE
AU 18 DÉCEMBRE
2010**

**TEXTE
DARIO FO
MISE EN SCÈNE
MARC PRIN**

**KLAXON,
TROMPETTES...
ET
PÉTARADES**

**GÉRALD CÈSBRON
ANNE DUPUIS
CÉLINE DUPUIS
MILENA ESTURGIE
GILLES OSTROWSKY**

TRADUCTION MARIE-FRANCE SIDET
SCÉNOGRAPHIE ET COSTUMES MARC PRIN
DRAMATURGIE JULIEN DIEUDONNE
LUMIÈRE PIERRE MONTESSUIT
MASQUES, PERRUQUES ET MAQUILLAGES MARIE MESSIEN
ACCESSOIRISTE PATRICK LAGANNE
SON ET MUSIQUE VALÉRIE BAJCŠA, MARC DELHAYE
PHOTOGRAPHE ALEXANDRE SARGOS
ASSISTANTE À LA MISE EN SCÈNE ANA-LUCIA LUNA

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Département de la Seine-Saint-Denis
Paris Ile-de-France