



SLOW  
MAGIC

ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL  
FOR PRESENTERS





## des mots d'la dynamite

### Brief history

Founded in 1988 by the artist Nathalie Derome, Des mots d'la dynamite is a company that seeks to provoke unusual encounters. For 30 years now, it has done this between the disciplines it ceaselessly questions, the audiences it reaches, and the artistic collaborations and professional spheres it brings together. By privileging the intimate encounter, often through intentionally artisanal means, it advocates for the decompartmentalization of disciplines.

Since its foundation, Des mots d'la dynamite has surprised audiences with the range and inventiveness of its proposals, juxtaposing performance, orality, theatre, music, poetry, dance, object theatre, visual and media arts. A pioneer in the interdisciplinary arts sector, Des mots d'la dynamite has contributed to the blossoming and the recognition of the discipline in Montreal, in Quebec, in Canada and abroad.

The company has produced over 50 performances and 17 interdisciplinary shows, disseminated in different contexts: theatrical venues, festivals, museums, artist centres and in situ art events.

Young audiences appeared very early in the company's artistic process. At the request of dissemination partners, three adaptations of shows originally intended for adults were produced. First, *Le Retour du refoulé* (1990) was presented for a teenage audience at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. *A collage of texts* (1995) was then adapted into episodic performances for the Festival de création de Paspébiac, under the honorary chairmanship of Nathalie Derome. With *Du Temps d'antennes* (2001), the company reached children aged 7 to 12 years at the Maison Théâtre and participated in the Les Francophonies en Limousin festival in France.

### Toddlers / Very Little Ones

In 2007, Des mots d'la dynamite began a new cycle of art making and shifted towards an uncharted territory in Quebec and Canada: the very young audience of 18 months to 5 years of age. Since then, four works have seen the light of day for this particular age group: *Scenes from a Tree* (2009), *Where I Live* (2013) and *Slow Magic* (2016) as well as a wandering event, taking inspiration from *La p'tite Tombola*, called *The Alley of Little Secrets* (2017). The company's new work, *That's My Sister!* (2019), is aimed at the oldest of the young set, namely 4 to 7-year-olds. The productions have travelled throughout Canada, the United States and Europe. In 2013, the three actresses from *Scenes from a Tree* jointly won the Female Acting Award from the Katowice-Dzieciom International Puppetry Festival in Poland.

### Cultural Mediation

At each stage of making the work, the creative team visits the children, not as pedagogue artists, but rather as humans going to meet other humans. The shows are written with their collaboration, based on a theme or a philosophical questioning - the origin of the world; what does growing up mean?; what is fraternity, sisterhood? - and, often, with one material favoured: clay, wool, cardboard... Through these encounters, the children become our guides, indisputable dramaturgs and the co-authors of our shows.





FOR US, THE POETRY OF DAILY LIFE  
EMBRACES THE MAJOR EXISTENTIAL  
AMBIGUITIES AND, JUST LIKE CHILDREN,  
WE ENJOY THE SENSATIONS OF TOUCHING  
AND FEELING THE WORLD AROUND US.

TO DO SO, WE HAVE TO PLACE OUR TRUST  
IN BOTH THE SUBCONSCIOUS AND THE  
PRIMITIVE LOGIC.

#### Introducing pre-schoolers to the show

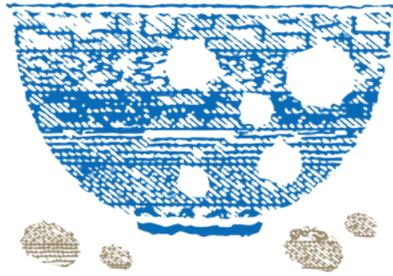
To be able to meet the needs of a very young audience, we studied the theories of English pediatrician and psychoanalyst Donald Woods Winnicott. According to Winnicott, an infant passes through an important stage in which he develops a separate sense of self in relation to his mother; he finds a place between the exterior and the interior world. This in-between environment, or "area of play", corresponds to a safe or imaginative place that every person has and where the cultural experience originates. Developing and nurturing this "potential space" promotes the notion of play and creativity in children and gradually eases their transition from dependence to self-reliance.

Because this is such a delicate phase, we pay special attention to how we meet and greet the children. Our performance takes place in the here and now, and a direct contact approach helps introduce the toddlers to poetry.

Our performers are not fazed when, during the show, a child stands up, needs to say something to an adult, or even starts to cry. On the contrary, young children challenge the performers to listen actively and respond openly. We are delighted to perform for these candid spectators who have yet to learn about theatre etiquette or how to behave at cultural events.

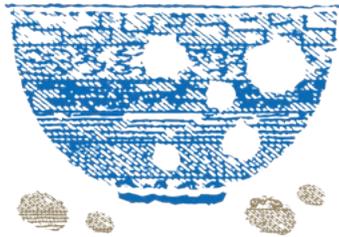
For some children, this is their first contact with the performing arts; for others, it is a whole new experience. As for the performers, parents and educators, they are exhilarated when they make eye contact with an inquisitive youngster who is surrounded by strangers in an unfamiliar place.

To help adults who have never accompanied very young children to a show, we produced "Bringing pre-schoolers to the theatre for the first time!", which is available online. We encourage you to send it to them a few weeks before they see the show.



SLOW  
MAGIC





INTERDISCIPLINARY  
SHOW FOR YOUNGSTERS  
FROM 18 MONTHS  
TO 5 YEARS OLD



## DESCRIPTION OF THE SHOW

Through clay-based transformations, *Slow Magic* tackles the origin and evolution of the world.

On stage, a sound artist allows the secrets of playful mechanical objects to resonate while two characters are born. Slowly exploring sounds, space and movement, they tame and discover matter. Sound becomes pulsation, the ground unfolds, shapes appear and disappear. Slowly, they explore and build their universe. They are jovial people who are not afraid of getting wet or dirty to share their attachment to the Earth, to its mysteries and its endless transformations. In *Slow Magic*, all the senses are called upon to celebrate the cycles of life.

### **Creative team**

**Production:** Des mots d'la dynamite

**Performers:** Nathalie Derome, Steeve Dumais and Anne-Françoise Jacques

**Developed and written by:** Nathalie Derome and Steeve Dumais

**Sound design:** Anne-Françoise Jacques

**Artistic collaborators:** Lucie Bazzo, Raymond Marius Boucher, Colette Drouin, Elinor Fueter, Gigi Perron

**Technical director:** Anne Parent



AGE GROUP — From 18 months

Audience capacity **130**

For the tour: three actors and one technical director

Length  
**35 MINUTES**

#### Past performances

Performances (In progress)

56 shows

**Québec** Festival Petits bonheurs, Maison Théâtre, Théâtre Les Gros Becs, Tournée du CAM, Théâtre La Rubrique, etc.

**Canada** Centre national des arts, Ottawa



#### Video clip

<http://bit.ly/1cxoS61>

#### Accompanying material for presenters

<https://desmotsdladynamite.com/en/show/circulation/id/50>

#### Document for parents and educators

<https://desmotsdladynamite.com/en/show/circulation/id/50>

#### For French presentations in Quebec

Yves Bellefleur  
Agent de diffusion — Promoter  
Summum Communications  
yves@summumcom.qc.ca  
summumcom.qc.ca  
T: 819.820.0236  
F: 819.820.0562

#### For presentations outside Quebec

Contact us  
Des mots d'la dynamite  
T: 514.528.7070  
[info@desmotsdladynamite.com](mailto:info@desmotsdladynamite.com)



## BIOGRAPHIES

[Nathalie Derome](#),  
performer and interdisciplinary artist.

In 2018, Nathalie Derome celebrated her 30 years as artistic director of Des mots d'la dynamite company and 35 years of interdisciplinary practice. Her research questions the practices of "making believe" in different modes and using several media such as spoken word, performance, music and video. In parallel to her work as an artist, she occasionally teaches in Quebec universities. In 2014, she received an award for excellence, from the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)'s École supérieure de Théâtre, for her Master's thesis on the appropriation of languages.

[Steeve Dumais](#),  
artistic designer and performer.

Steeve Dumais' hybrid and unconventional practice is embodied in performances, installations, street theatre or surrealist cabarets. Cofounder of the Mobile Home Company, Steeve Dumais has created and performed in all the shows of the company. For the company, Des mots d'la dynamite, he collaborated in the conception of three shows.

[Anne-Françoise Jacques](#),  
composer and performer.

Anne-Françoise Jacques has had an active practice in sound art since 2004. She is interested in systems that turn and in the construction of devices that generate performances, installations, animated film soundtracks, or sometimes nothing! The use of obsolete technology, ridiculous objects and raucous sounds particularly interests her. She performs regularly, alone or as part of various collectives. Her work has been presented at several festivals and cultural sites. This is a first collaboration with the Des mots d'la dynamite company.



## THEY SAID | THEY WROTE

"A third production conceived for kids directed by Nathalie Derome, *Slow Magic* inscribes itself in the continuity of the two previous works, *Scenes from a Tree* and *Where I Live*. Its form testifies to the same artisanal care and possesses a similar will to engage its audience in the mysteries of human existence. The set design is imbued with delicacy, minutia and humour, in addition to standing out by its refusal to be too simplistic."

"THE SET DESIGN IS IMBUED  
WITH DELICACY, MINUTIA  
AND HUMOUR [...]"

Olivier Dumas, mon(theatre).qc.ca  
- May 28, 2016

"Playing with matter, transforming clay right before the children's eyes, Nathalie Derome and her two accomplices, Steeve Dumais and Anne-Françoise Jacques, propose an organic staging in which they allow the earth to speak. Set up on stage, they make themselves modellers of the raw material representing the beginning of the world."

"[...] THEY MAKE THEMSELVES  
MODELLERS OF THE RAW  
MATERIAL REPRESENTING THE  
BEGINNING OF THE WORLD."

Marie Fradette, *Le Devoir*  
- May 26, 2016

A superbly creative experience! As always, Nathalie Derome takes us inside her universe composed of freedom and rigour; we discover how enriching it is to leave behind convention in order to explore and discover the entire potential of our environment.

The little ones were conquered and the big ones were converted!  
A lesson in visual art! Pleasing and superb!

"THE LITTLE ONES  
WERE CONQUERED  
AND THE BIG ONES  
WERE CONVERTED!"

Manon Touchette,  
Family and school programming,  
Théâtre Outremont



## des mots d'la dynamite

Des mots d'la dynamite,  
7755, boul. Saint-Laurent, suite 300  
Montréal (Québec) H2R 1X1

info@desmotsdladynamite.com  
desmotsdladynamite.com  
 Desmotsdladynamite  
T. 514.528.7070

### Team

Nathalie Derome  
General and Artistic Director

Geneviève Simard  
General and Administrative Coordination  
info@desmotsdladynamite.com

### Presentations in Quebec

Yves Bellefleur  
Promoter  
Summum Communications  
yves@summumcom.qc.ca  
summumcom.qc.ca  
T. 819.820.0236

### Presentations outside Quebec

Contact us  
Des mots d'la dynamite  
T. 514.528.7070  
info@desmotsdladynamite.com

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msfts productions

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