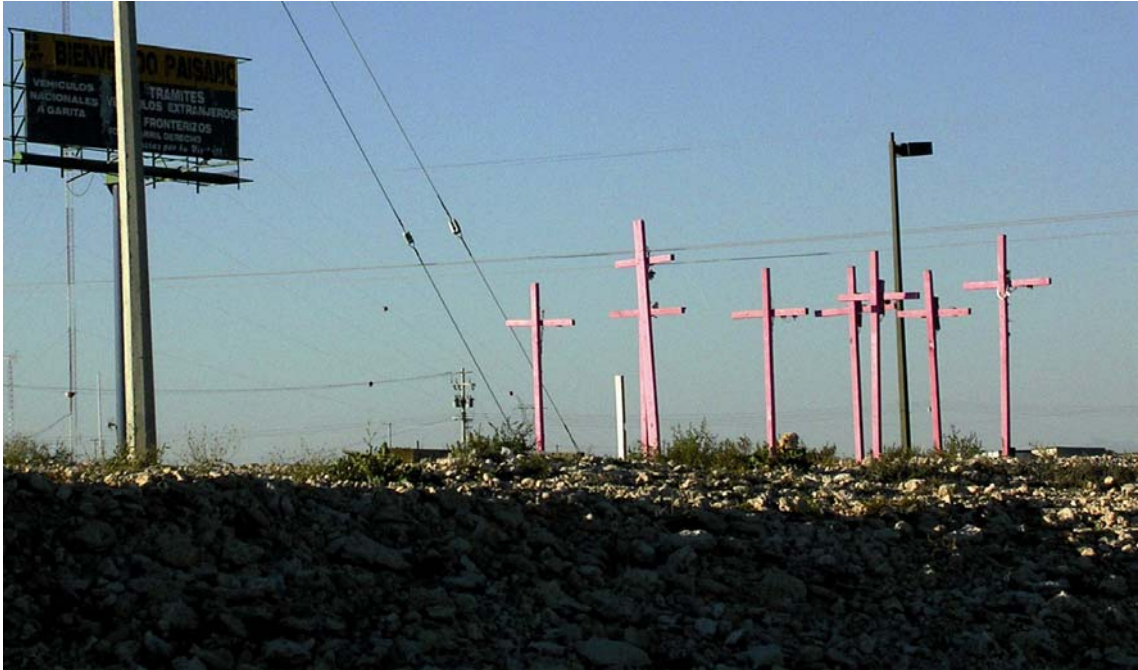


teatre lliure



© Àlex Rigola

2666

by **Roberto Bolaño**

adapted by **Pablo Ley** and **Àlex Rigola**

directed by **Àlex Rigola**

Teatre Lliure: Montjuïc – 2007-2008 season

2666

by **Roberto Bolaño** adapted by **Pablo Ley** and **Àlex Rigola**
directed by **Àlex Rigola**

cast in order of appearance

The Critics' Part

Espinoza **Julio Manrique** / Morini **Andreu Benito** / Pelletier **Joan Carreras** / Liz Norton
Chantal Aimée / Sra. Bubis **Alícia Pérez** / Amalfitano **Andreu Benito**

pause 10 min.

Amalfitano's Part

Amalfitano **Andreu Benito** / Rosa Amalfitano **Cristina Brondo** / Lola **Alícia Pérez** / Decano
Guerra **Manuel Carlos Lillo** / Young Guerra **Ferran Carvajal** / Boris Yeltsin **Fèlix Pons**

pause 10 min.

Fate's Part

Fate **Julio Manrique** / Barry Seaman **Pere Arquillué** (video) / Charly Cruz **Víctor Pi** / Rosita
Méndez **Alba Pujol** / Chucho Flores **Fèlix Pons** / Young Guerra **Ferran Carvajal** /
Guadalupe Roncal **Chantal Aimée** / Rosa Amalfitano **Cristina Brondo** / Omar Abdul **Joan**
Carreras / Amalfitano's Section Head **Andreu Benito** / Albert Kessler **Manuel Carlos Lillo**

pause 20 min.

Crime's Part

Rosita Méndez **Alba Pujol** / Epifanio Galindo **Andreu Benito** / Lalo Cura **Ferran Carvajal** /
Pedro Negrete **Manuel Carlos Lillo** / Juan de Dios Martínez **Julio Manrique** / Lino Rivera
Fèlix Pons / Klaus Haas **Joan Carreras**

pause 10 min.

Archiboldi's Part

Sra. Bubis **Alícia Pérez** / Hans Reiter **Joan Carreras** / Lotte Reiter **Cristina Brondo** / Hugo
Halder **Fèlix Pons** / German soldier **Julio Manrique** / SS **Ferran Carvajal** / Leo Summer
Manuel Carlos Lillo / Ingeborg **Chantal Aimée** / Endevina **Alba Pujol** / Jacob Bubis
Andreu Benito / Alexander Fürst Pükler **Víctor Pi**

stage design **Max Glaenzel** and **Estel Cristià** / costumes **Berta Riera** and **Georgina Viñolo**
/ make up **Mariona Trias** / lighting **Maria Domènech (AAI)** / movement **Ferran Carvajal** /
video **David Vericat** / music/sound **Sila** / sound design **Ramon Ciércoles**

director's assistant **Pau Carrió** / documentation and locations in Ciudad Juárez **Ignacio**
Alvarado / trainee director from the Institut del Teatre, (Diputació de Barcelona) **Eleonora**
Herder / trainee costume designers from the Institut Superior de Disseny **Lluc Fiol** and
Lorena Granada

stage set construction **Castells Planas de Cardedeu** / mask **La Columna Curvada**

and the teams of the **Teatre Lliure**

co-production **Teatre Lliure, Festival de Barcelona Grec 2007** and **Teatro Cuyás del Cabildo de Gran Canaria**

on tour with the suport of  **institut ramon llull**
Llengua i cultura catalanes

acknowledgements **Carolina López, Trànsit Projects, La Cantina Mexicana, Bar Bonobo**

performance in 5 parts with 4 intervals

approximate length: 5 hours

performance in spanish

the novel **2666** was awarded the **Salambó Prize 2004** and the **National Book Critics Circle Award 2009**

the show **2666** was awarded the **Barcelona Crítics Prize to the Best Drama Performance, Best dramaturgy and Best Set 2008**, the **Terenci Moix Prize of Scenic Arts 2008**, the prize **Qwerty 2008 to the Best Adaptation from a novel to another format** and the **Max 2009 Awards to the Best Theater Show and Best Scenography**.

contact **Narcís Puig** / npuig@teatrelliure.com



Dear Alexandra and Lautaro Bolaño,

We have never met but I am the fool who is directing the theatrical adaptation of the novel that your father dedicated to the two of you. First, I'd like to thank your mother, Carolina, for giving me permission to adapt the magnificent book that is 2666. Salvador Sunyer and I went to see her in Blanes two years ago and I still remember how her eyes shone as she spoke about your father's work. Secondly, I must apologise for daring to attempt the impossible task of trying to adapt the novel for performance on the stage. Every time Pablo Ley or I cut a new fragment we got a knot in our stomachs. However, we have tried to transfer to our production the spirit of the novel, not a bad thing to try and do because if afterwards someone wants to read the book, they will see that the enormous quantity of information and stories we had to leave out meant that this attempt was a utopian dream, and that the spirit rests in the whole, and not in any of its parts or fragments.

Evidently it seems impossible to try and sum up in just one phrase the whole scope of the novel's 1124 pages. I also think it would be unfair to try and pare it down to a mere string of words and ideas like evil, dignity, parallelisms and coincidences, the imperviousness of human beings when faced by misfortunes they themselves have brought about, the world of literature (authors, publishers, scholars, critics), death, love, what we know and what we don't know about people, suffering, the portrait of the society we are creating... We would always be leaving something out. Perhaps the best thing would be to use the words your father used in *Amuleto*:

“Avenida Guerrero, at this time of day, looks more than anything else like a cemetery, but not a cemetery of 1974, nor a cemetery of 1968, nor a cemetery of 1975, but rather a cemetery of 2666, a cemetery forgotten beneath a dead or stillborn eyelid, the impartial wateriness of an eye that, wanting to forget something, has ended up forgetting everything”.

You must be asking yourselves why I am writing to you, but since Roberto is not here I have no alternative but to write to those he named as his only homeland.

Please accept the warmest of best wishes from one who, if he has not succeeded in his attempt to bring your father's work to the theatre, has at least tried passionately hard to do so.

Àlex Rigola



“2666”: what the critics say:

“t seemed impossible, but the Lliure has pulled it off. 2666 is the outstanding production at this year’s Grec, the most important and powerful piece Alex Rigola has directed, coming closer than ever to Lupa’s Extinction or Lepage’s Seven Branches of the River Ota: high praise indeed. A triumph (with just one slip) of staging, adaptation (the dramatist Pablo Ley, who has produced here his best work), stage design (we might almost talk of ‘locations’) by Cristià and Glaenzel, of the whole team. And, of course, of the remarkable cast. The stage version of Roberto Bolaño’s arboreal novel is a work of well-earned love, the repayment of a debt.”

Marcos Ordóñez (**El País**)

“Andreu Benito is splendid, present in all five parts, as is Julio Manrique whose almost constant presence is magnificent, like Chantal Aimée, like the remarkable Joan Carreras, especially in his brilliant finale, like the movements of Ferran Carvajal, especially in his powerful dance in the second part, like the whole cast. Everything is measured and balanced to perfection in this magnificent production”

María-José Ragué Arias (**El Mundo**)

(...) “Àlex Rigola and Pablo Ley have adapted the novel using a theatrical language that is effective, direct and surprisingly easy to sit through for the audience who know, from the outset, that they are faced with a production that lasts five hours.” (...) “Crucial to the success was the decision to maintain the structure of the five volumes or stories as parts of a more or less chaotic whole. Parts that work on their own, while also forming part of the rather ethereal narrative thread that runs through the work, the search for the image of an unknown character; Benno von Archimboldi.”

Santi Fondevila (**La Vanguardia**)

“The adaptation by Ley and Rigola has doubtless had to leave out much material, many parallel stories, but the final text has substance and power, invites the audience to plunge into the original, is faithful to the Chilean author and follows his book very closely. (...) There are elements in the production that reflect the very best of Rigola as a director. (...) Take note, for it is an impressive work that is well-worth seeing.”

Gonzalo Pérez de Olaguer (**El Periódico de Catalunya**)

“Àlex Rigola and Pablo Ley lay before us, over five hours on the stage at the Teatre Lliure in Barcelona, the literary work “2666”, which the Chilean author Bolaño wrote in five volumes. The risky gamble has paid off and both emerge triumphant” (...) “It is far from easy to keep the audience involved for five hours in such a tangled web of stories, with so many open endings without them feeling the draught. Rigola, Ley and the cast of actors gracefully emerge unscathed from what might well have turned out to be a fatal dramatic temptation. It’s even possible to imagine Bolaño, a Sisyphus of a writer, happy.”

Sergi Doria (**ABC**)

“Receptacles designed to preserve Bolaño’s delicate prose. Words carefully transferred from one fragment to another to create a greater whole that rises and floats above the different landscapes created by Max Glaenzel and Estel Cristià. A dramatic use of space that matches the essence distilled out by Pablo Ley and Àlex Rigola. This essential quality of Bolaño’s writing is preserved intact, with the direction adapting to it and the actors moving on the limits of naturalism, as if they were characters dreamed up in a literary transit, and then transported to the stage to become the physical vehicles for the representation of a collective (bad) dream.”

Juan Carlos Olivares (**Avui**)

Five hours with Bolaño

Pure theatre

IT SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE, but the Lliure has pulled it off. *2666* is the outstanding production at this year's Grec, the most important and powerful piece Alex Rigola has directed, coming closer than ever to Lupa's *Extinction* or Lepage's *Seven Branches of the River Ota*: high praise indeed. A triumph (with just one slip) of staging, adaptation (the dramatist Pablo Ley, who has produced here his best work), stage design (we might almost talk of 'locations') by Cristià and Glaenzel, of the whole team. And, of course, of the remarkable cast. The stage version of Roberto Bolaño's arboreal novel is a work of well-earned love, the repayment of a debt. An *envoi*, as the troubadours called it, to the dead though not departed novelist, to his family ("his only homeland", apart, that is, from literature) and to the adult public who have applauded it throughout its four-day run. It will return in the autumn and will then go on tour around Spain, and I imagine, much of Europe as well. There is here an infinite respect for the word and the imagination of Bolaño. The five parts of *2666* have been turned into five hours of theatre. You might fear for your physical comfort but let me assure you that your attention will be unwavering, without even the slightest hint of tedium. The journey begins, as in the novel, with *The Critics' Part*, with Pelletier (Joan Carreras), Morini (Andreu Benito), Espinoza (Julio Manrique) and Norton (Chantal Aimée). All of them unmarried, lonely, and obsessed with the trail of Archimboldi, the great enigma of German literature, whose works "devour those who set out to explore them". The format is that of a conference, but do not be deceived: this is pure theatre, and very tightly directed. Within five minutes, you realise you are in good hands. Within ten, you have the sensation that you have known these characters all your life. The trio that takes shape before you, their universe of hotels and congresses, the savage outburst of the beating of the Pakistani taxi-driver. This part alone, this feast of superb theatrical interpretation and narration, would be in itself an excellent production. In the same way that I could here devote a whole review to the exceptional performance by Andreu Benito, who goes on to transform himself into the brutal Police Commissioner Epifanio Galindo or the highly cultivated Jewish publisher Jacob Bubis. And then into the Professor Oscar Amalfitano, who slips into the story towards the end of this first act, as lost and out of place as the Consul in Cuernavaca or Travis in the desert in *Paris, Texas*.

On 2666, an adaptation of Roberto Bolaño's novel, by Àlex Rigola at the Lliure

Having left Barcelona behind, Amalfitano lives, or rather, ekes out his final days in Santa Teresa, Bolaño's accursed city, a replica of Ciudad Juárez, where women die like flies and the sky lowers threateningly, like a carnivorous plant. Compared with the unflinching sobriety of the first act, *Amalfitano's Part* is a hallucination painted in the hyperrealist colours of Lynch. The Professor is visited by very diverse phantoms – some apparently alive, like the iguana-like Dean Guerra (Manuel Carlos Lillo) and his shadowy son Marco Antonio (Ferrán Carvajal), while others are plainly dead, like his wife Lola who left him to hurl herself into the arms of a mad poet, sought asylum in Mondragón, drifted aimlessly, found disinterested love with the taxi-driver Lizárraga, a Celinian character, and stumbled on, heedlessly, towards her own death: a beautiful and terrible story, acted out by Alicia Pérez in the style of a *flower child*

battered but unbowed. Boris Yeltsin also pays a visit to convey to him the secret of existence, and the incorporeal spectre of Amalfitano senior, announcing impending danger: young Rosa (Cristina Brondo) should not be wandering through the streets at certain hours of the night, or haunting such undesirable bars. Everything in Santa Teresa is falling apart, disintegrating, and the characters in the play are soon infected by the same malaise. In the third act, *Fate's Part*, a black reporter (Julio Manrique) turns up to cover a boxing match and plunges into the night, where he is to meet Rosa's unnerving companions. Despite the stupendous central idea (an elevator that leads straight down to hell), many of the characters are little more than clichéd stereotypes (including the picturesque idea of smearing boot polish on the faces of Manrique and Arquillué, the latter a fleeting and improbable *Black Panther*) and this part seems like a parody of the worst of Rigola, with exasperating banalities, lousy choreographies and the projection of a film that makes you think the company is on a bean-feast in some Mexican *cantina* in Gràcia. Exempt from the criticism of this single and retrievable lapse are the performances by Chantal Aimée and Lillo, who play a journalist who is investigating the murders and a Warren Oates-like world-weary ex-FBI agent. To compensate, the fourth act, *Crime's Part*, is one of the most ferocious things I have ever seen in the theatre. We are in hell itself, the Sonora desert, where a group of policemen have just found the corpse of Rosita Méndez (Alba Pujol), who comes back from the dead to howl out her pain (neither have I ever seen an actress tear herself apart or strip herself so bare) while the names of the real victims of Ciudad Juárez are paraded before us, the screams breaking through Beethoven's Seventh, with the stage filling with crosses: a superb metaphor, which synthesises the long, long list of tortures the novel describes, complemented by a remarkable monologue by Klaus Haas (Joan Carreras), a false culprit with the profile and breadth of a young Archimboldi. Carreras plays the mythical and elusive writer in the final part, unstoppable in all senses of the word, pure epic. Mounted on a conveyor belt, he is borne through the 20th century in a constant flight from himself, surrounded by the darkness of an empty stage and encountering those people who have played a crucial part in his life: his sister Lotte (Cristina Brondo), the Baroness Von Zumpe (Alicia Pérez), the publisher Bubis and the Nazi Leo Summer (here too the projections are unnecessary: the words, spoken by Manuel Carlos Lillo, make the images of the Holocaust redundant, and vice versa). And so, finally, we come to the many ends of the story. The identity of Klaus Haas is revealed, but not the ultimate mystery of Archimboldi. I can't wait to see 2666 again in the autumn, and I hope that all those who missed it this time will see it then, and will applaud this highly ambitious production!

Marcos Ordóñez (**El País**) 14/07/2007

interview with àlex rigola

in the cafè de l'òpera in barcelona, 27 february 2006

how did this project come about?

I really wanted to tell a new, contemporary story, and my fascination for Bolaño's work, and in particular for this novel, pushed me to do it, because it allows you to do a lot of stage-work. A play has a life of its own, it's not really the novel any more, the materials are very different. The type of poetry you can produce in a novel is completely different from the poetry of the stage. In an adaptation you start with one material, one set of contents and an underlying story, but the way of telling it is very different. I believe the project makes sense because the story is only relatively well-known. If it was a novel that absolutely everybody had read, then I would have to think again, but very few people have actually read it, amongst other things because its sheer size is off-putting.

it's not the brothers karamazov, for example

People know the story of *The Brothers Karamazov*, but they haven't read it, it's become a legend. People know what it's about, more or less... This is a new novel and if you recommend it to somebody, they'll say "Yes, I bought it, but I haven't read it yet". So it's a story I can retell. One of the most magical sensations to come out of the novel is how when you are flying in a plane and you see lights down below and you think to yourself there are people down there just like you or me, and each of those lights is a life being lived. Sometimes you need to step back to see these things. This novel does so to show us the worst of ourselves, not as individuals but as a society. That's why it's very attractive, to remind the audience of that.

is working with a new story different from the way you make contemporary readings of a classical text?

Yes. It also happens when I'm directing a contemporary work, but then my task is basically that of being a stage director. Normally contemporary theatre allows me to relax because the energy required in tackling a classic, the creativity required to make it seem fresh again, is not the same as with a modern text, where the only thing that is necessary is to be a good stage director. Afterwards, you might do it well or not, but in any case, it is not demanding you to be creative. Here, the world to be represented is so big that there is lots of room for creativity, because the novel is set in very different locations. It requires you to be very inventive because of these different settings and also because of its length, which means you have to invent various ways of keeping the public's attention - though the story is powerful enough as it is.

the structure of the tale is tree-like, even the way of narrating the same characters, but in the end, everything is connected. how do you transfer this to the stage?

My intention is to maintain this idea, though I believe there is a current flowing in the background that carries you with it anyway. In fact, of the threads running through the novel, there is one that is very powerful where the main character is not a person but a city that represents, as Bolaño says, the worst of ourselves. This is Sta. Teresa, Ciudad Juárez as

reinvented by Bolaño, a society that is disintegrating and the place in which the characters also end up; in some way or another they also display some form of disintegration.

in any event, there is a simplification of the stories

Evidently. Narrative fiction, the novel - this is the biggest complication – allows you to open or close the book as you, the reader, wish. In the theatre you are obliged to watch it all. Therefore, it is necessary to search out the dramatic tension in the characters themselves but, above all in those facts that serve as points of connection within the novel. For example, all the themes, or sub-themes, that run through the whole piece: the supernatural way we have of communicating with each other; the factor of pure chance, or coincidence; the search for information or knowledge; the famous 'maquiladoras', hi-tech companies operating on the border, on the Mexican side because labour costs are much lower (while for the workers it's much cheaper to cross the border to buy their jeans in the United States); and the killings, which are simply the product of the way in which people are educated in that city and the value that is placed on life, not on one's own life, obviously, but the value that is placed on the lives of others, which is evidently very low.

will the five-part structure of the novel be maintained in your play?

Yes. There is a different way of working in each part. In the first, the idea is to show a conference where the four main characters are the speakers: they begin talking in a way that is neutral, but gradually they get more involved. The second has something of David Lynch, for some of the abnormal, strange or supernatural things that happen. For example, the character begins to hear the voice of his dead father pointing out which way he should go, and above all warning him to be careful, that evil is on the loose. In the third part, the idea is to produce something like a crime novel, like a *cinéma noir* film. The fourth is an oratorio. There are twelve voices basically reciting the names of the dead. And in the fifth, the idea is once again a narrative in which the theatre of objects has a certain importance. It is explaining the story of Archimboldi like a grand *carousel* of life.

you are working with pablo ley. what is it like working with another dramaturg? you normally do this work yourself...

I need to do it myself, in order to understand my own story. I read the novel and I imagine it one way and, of course, it is very unlikely that another person imagines it in the same way. In this case I believe that it is such a great work, not just in terms of its size but also its scope, that it's a good idea to have another person who you are continually arguing with. In this way, you can tease out the formulas that will enable you to make it work. We worked together and also in parallel, looking for what interested each of us in each of the parts. Afterwards we pooled this information and unified it. And in the final phase, we had to decide how we wanted to focus each part. Actually, with the first two there was no problem, but until we had these first two clear, we couldn't advance with the others, one by one. We need a certain order to understand where we are taking the audience.

so the text is written by four hands...

Yes, yes. It depends on the part. I worked more, perhaps, on some of them, and Pablo more on others. We discussed how they should go, how we wanted to stage them, and then it was

a question of reducing them, and being specific in terms of the dramaturgy. We needed to know why we wanted to do a particular thing and what was necessary to ensure that the public stay in contact, to keep them on the edge of their seats.

does working with another person broaden your vision?

Yes, of course, for sure. Because no matter how difficult it is for the other person to adapt to you, there is the advantage that he will also offer you a whole different world, one that perhaps you hadn't seen before. He will have noticed things I had missed. Working together is much more complicated and takes much longer – and it's much more tiring, but it is much more enriching and productive, because working on your own you can get bogged down in a particular part of a scene and end up losing the overall sense.

you travelled to mexico...

It was useful for me to see that what the novel explains is true and palpable but also that the novel paints a much darker vision of the city than the reality. Some of the material from the journey will be included in the production to remind the audience that part of the novel is based on real events. I believe this is important. It is not the same to tell you the story of the murder of a woman as if I tell it to you with a real photograph of the dead woman as a backdrop. Therefore, the same thing can happen if I project an image of real places where the things that are being recounted are actually happening. I'm even thinking of making a kind of appendix to the play: an exhibition of photographs of Ciudad Juárez for the theatres that put it on. If you have read the novel or go to see the play and then you look at the photos, you won't be able to avoid the idea that perhaps that girl in the photo, or that father of a family, is going through what you've seen in the play, the same thing as in the novel.

is your santa teresa like the hell Bolaño portrayed or like the real ciudad Juárez?

It's a mixture. It is a city where death and murder form part of everyday life and which everybody lives as something normal. It's like the trafficking of people across the border. The only people who cross the border on foot, walking through the desert, are those who don't have any money: Anyone who has some money or a job can cross into the USA by plane as if they were going to spend a few days there on holiday, and then simply stay on. That means, for example, that the person who acts as a guide for the people crossing the border, if they haven't got enough money to pay, will demand to have sex right there in the middle of the desert with the wife or the daughter. And the desert is covered with used knickers, tied to small cactus branches, knickers that belonged to people who have paid sexually to be able to cross the border.

We live in a world, a society, where we refuse to recognise the existence of certain realities. Bolaño defines the city in another novel, *Avenida Guerrero*, as being like a cemetery “*that isn't like that of '74 nor of '68 nor of '75, but rather a cemetery of 2666, a cemetery forgotten beneath a dead or stillborn eyelid, the impartial wateriness of an eye that, wanting to forget something, has ended up forgetting everything.*” At one point in *2666* he says that we all, especially the middle classes, tend to be more interested in Jack the Ripper than in the thousands of victims who died in the slave ships crossing from Africa to America. We immediately cotton on to particular, personal stories but, on the other hand, we often ignore

really important things that point to the true nature of a society and that we are all responsible for as a society.

this work is very different from everything you have done up to now and it has certain peculiarities. does this represent a new way of working?

I suppose my obsessions are the same. Yes, I can say that one of the most important things in this story is, obviously, 'the word'. That, and the fact that the narrative requires me to look for new methods, different narrative forms within a single production - the conference format, or the use of images at a particular point, or the use of objects, or another part that is based more on dialogue. Each part will have different theatrical formats.

with the same team as always?

Yes, yes, because the way I work is very directly bound up with the team, I form part of every one of them, let's say. I couldn't live without a stage designer; I couldn't say that a production of mine, especially this one, had no stage designer. However, I'm also incapable of handing over a text and saying "think up some sets for me". I have a very close relationship with all the people in the team, their role is infinitely important to me but, at the same time, they are very tied to my vision of the production. It's my way of working.

with this enormous production, do others like those by lupa or lepage serve as points of reference?

Well there might be references, of course. I'm thinking about *The Seven Branches of the River Ota*, not just because it is divided into different parts, but also because it is a story that is set in different periods of time and in different locations.

and in different languages...

Yes, as well. The thing is that it makes me very nervous to talk about something like *The Seven Branches of the River Ota*, for example, which is a mythical production for me. But to remove all reference to it would be to try and deceive the public. That doesn't mean that here I'm going to do my *Seven Branches of the River Ota*. However, evidently it will be in there somewhere, it's a point of reference. I believe every artist or creator wants, at least once in their life, to take on a piece of madness like this, to embark on a great journey.

does that lead you to work in a different way with the actors?

Working on a scene with lots of dialogue is very different from working on how to do a conference, or working on a scene that is based on images or objects. However, every production is marked by the actors you have. You might have thought of many things, but the day you begin rehearsals all that can change enormously. You might even, depending on the actor you are working with, have to come up with a completely different psychological profile for a character. In the end it is a theatrical production and the important thing is that it remains equally interesting, that it is talking about what you want it to be talking about, etc. When it comes to working with the actors, things can turn out very differently. In this case, the basic lines, I believe, don't depend so much on the psychology of the characters as on the narrative forms, which will not change so much. What the actors can do is extend their characters much more when we begin rehearsing.

you did your first adaptation of a novel, the trial by kafka, some years ago. what do you think of it now?

It was ten, or eleven, or twelve years ago, now. If I adapted *The Trial* again... the adaptation I believe would be basically the same - it's a question of being faithful to the original material you have, and ensuring that you maintain the same spirit. The variations in the adaptation of the text would be minimal, but the staging would be very different. With *2666* we are talking about another quality and another dimension. People say to me "But, what have you got yourself into?" I'm really looking forward to seeing how it can be represented theatrically. To seeing if I'm capable of pulling it off.

2666

an approximation to the staging

an unusual work

2666 is, without doubt, an unusual novel.

Unusual, firstly, for its genesis, because it has ended up being the posthumous work of one of the most renowned Spanish language novelists of recent years. Born in Chile, Mexican by adoption and by literary training, and settled in Catalonia, the nature of Roberto Bolaño's life means that his works reflect a universal outlook that is capable of sweeping across enormous swathes of territory, and of making his characters leap from one country to another without any apparent effort.

Unusual, secondly, because it is the work of an author who died too soon, at the age of fifty, of a death foretold. Roberto Bolaño was, in this sense, an author who lived with the dangerous proximity of possible death, and it is true that in **2666** there is an undertone, a fluttering awareness that this novel *might turn out to be* his literary testament. The literary testament of a great author whose greatness is measured, above all, by the ambitiousness of the intellectual objectives he set himself.

Unusual, thirdly, because **2666** is a novel that contains many novels in just one. With surefootedness, and an enormous inventive capacity, Bolaño was, when death came for him, constructing five novels at the same time, all vaguely bound together by an interwoven plot, some of whose characters slip out of one novel only to reappear in another, though portrayed from different perspectives (characters who might even coincide with each other in some passages of the novel without their knowing). On his death, the five novels, which Bolaño wanted to be published separately, were left partially unfinished. The decision to publish them together in a single volume was fortunate in that it reflects the writer's ambitious attempt to portray a very considerable chunk of time and geographical space - from the USSR to Latin America, from the 2nd World War to the present (the future is present only as the title, **2666** was to be the year of the arrival of a group of extra-terrestrials presented in the five previous books).

Unusual, fourthly and finally, for its sheer size: more than 1100 pages in which an infinite number of episodes take place that together offer, in a fresh and colourful mosaic, an image of our times from a post-modern perspective, that is, made up of fragments of different cultures, moments, places and events. Realities that jostle each other in the same book, not out of some undemonstrable causal necessity, but rather as a result of their simple, casual coincidence in time and space. The connection between the enigmatic German novelist Benno von Archimboldi and the murders in Santa Teresa (a copy of those that are still happening in Ciudad Juárez), which from the second book onwards come to dominate the whole novel, remains a total mystery until an absolutely unimaginable coincidence renders it utterly plausible.

the story of 2666

But what is it about, this **2666**?

In a work of these proportions, it's easy to get lost researching a question that gets more and more complex as you progress. It's even tempting to let yourself get carried away by the luxuriant arborescence of a plot that is completely impossible to reduce to a simple outline. In short, it is necessary not to lose sight of the fact that **2666** is, in reality, five novels, each with clearly differentiated plots, with five groups of completely different characters despite the fact that some of them coincide with each other in one or other of the novels; and with five different themes that are perfectly defined in each of the parts.

The first book, 'The Critics' Part', narrates the convergences and divergences between four scholars of Benno von Archimboldi, a figure as famous as he is mysterious. The erudite study of a literary work ends up turning into a persecution, almost a police chase that leads the four literary critics, following up a clue that is probably false, to Santa Teresa, on the border of Mexico and the USA - a place where a horrific chain of serial killings is taking place. In the process, the four critics display just how empty their lives are, an emptiness they are forced to try and fill by taking an interest in the lives of others (even here literary lives).

The second book (clearly the most incomplete), 'Amalfitano's Part', narrates the travails of a lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Santa Teresa. It seems to be the story, at times almost surrealistic, of a character trapped in the living room of his home and, above all, trapped inside his own head, somewhere between reality and madness, between memories and phantasmagoria. Time after time his daughter, Rosa, passes through the living room, from her bedroom to the bathroom, from the bathroom to the street, where the threat of the killings floats ominously.

The third book, 'Fate's Part', narrates the traumatic journey of a black political journalist (who, when the book begins, has just been told of the almost simultaneous deaths of his mother and of a journalist from the sports section of his magazine) to the Mexican city of Santa Teresa, where he was to cover a boxing match. Once in Santa Teresa, Fate will meet Rosa and will find himself involved in a strange event linked, perhaps, with the murders of women.

The fourth book, 'Crime's Part', unfolds on the one hand, like an appalling litany, the police account of all the deaths of women that have taken place from 1993 onwards, flatly described with cold forensic objectivity. To the succession of formal pronouncements of death are added other stories, often simple anecdotes, featuring characters who can hardly be defined as protagonists: police, drug-traffickers, spine-trembling sadistic criminals, prisoners, a presumed *serial killer*, an FBI super-cop, the director of a psychiatric clinic, a journalist, etc. No sooner are the stories sketched out than they are interrupted and give way to new stories that leave the main character of the previous one abandoned.

The fifth and final book, 'Archimboldi's Part', is the non-existent biography of an author who vanishes into thin air, a Prussian, born in 1920, who fights on the Russian front during the 2nd World War and afterwards travels through Europe on an unending flight. Almost nothing is known of him, though in the first book, that of the critics, Bolaño gives us just enough information to turn him into an authentic mystery. What remains, of course, is to reveal the enigma that in some way connects Archimboldi with the murders of women in Santa Teresa.

At the very moment that 'Archimboldi's Part' closes the circle, we become immediately and absolutely aware of the two poles that mark and tense the thematic axis around which Bolaño's novel revolves. On the one hand there is the figure of Benno von Archimboldi, here seen as an enigma of creation. On the other, the Santa Teresa killings, hundreds of dead women (according to the official police accounts of a reality that Bolaño follows closely) converted, here, into a terrifying metaphor for the other enigma, that of destruction. Probably these are the two extremes of a single mental impulse, of a single necessity that is specifically human, the delirium of trying to match the divine capacity for both creation and destruction.

The characters that pass through the novel also have some things in common. Philologists, philosophers, scientists, journalists, poets, madmen, publishers, police, drug-traffickers, sadists, novelists... if we think that the drug-traffickers are defined precisely by the substances they deal in, and that they are substances that alter the perception of reality, then immediately it all comes together; if we think that sadists obtain pleasure from the realising of their perverse fantasies, then it becomes apparent that, in some way, all the characters in the novel are bringing their own points of view to the definition of the reality that surrounds us, a reality that we try to define by pinning it down in words or reinventing it in our fantasies, or by demonstrating alternative realities. It is evident that they all contribute to the creation of reality: a reality that ends up being as elusive as the murderer, or murderers (the kind of Kantian question philosophers inevitably fail to answer), who cause so many, many deaths.

Bolaño, apart from offering us a profoundly critical glimpse of the reality he is about to leave behind because of his ill health, also reflects on the task of the writer, a task that, in the end, involves creating myths. Myths or, what amounts to the same thing, marvellous narratives that set out to interpret the origin of the world.

an approximation to the staging

Inevitably, the adaptation of a novel of these characteristics for the stage forces us to let the novel speak for itself. It can not be submitted to preconceived ideas, nor can it be précised by searching out the most theatrical fragments, the most profound dialogues, the most attractive visual images. The novel must be allowed to speak for itself in all its complexity, in its fragmentary nature, in its multiplicity, in all its boundless and unachievable ambition.

And so it's necessary to distil out the essence through successive readings from which the characters, objects, words, music, images, location, aesthetics and *tempo* will emerge. There is not, in this case, a single plot line to hold on to. There are the two poles of tension (Archimboldi - the murders), there is the common thread (fantasy facing reality); all the rest must revolve around these concepts.

Characters, stories, anecdotes... Bolaño's novel is, in large part, an enormous literary feast where with his high quality prose he constructs a world in which are interwoven, indistinctly, reality and fiction, fantasy and lies, knowledge and the occult (understood as that unknown realm where other realities, terrible or merely indifferent, exist). Without doubt, this is the world that must be brought to life on the stage.

Finding a formula that makes it possible to bring this universe into the theatre is the work of the dramatist, work that we are currently preparing. The aim is to maintain the five parts clearly differentiated, to retain as many of the characters as we can, to conserve the word,

the literature of Bolaño, as far as possible given the inevitably drastic reduction, and to ensure that in our staging we stay as close as possible to the spirit of Bolaño's stories, to the tensions of the novel, to the impulses of his characters, to the theme that runs through the 1100 pages.

The objective is also to adapt it to the way of understanding theatre, to the very personal way of looking from the stage, of its director, Àlex Rigola. He has been influenced by the various *avant-garde* currents in 20th century theatre and his vision is one that remains committed to the progressive European theatre of the last few decades. All this inevitably means that the staging is unequivocally contemporary, that in this production the theatricality moves away from the conventions of plot becoming instead the epicentre of the audience's perception.

In reality, if Bolaño, in **2666**, is interested in the content of what can properly be considered literary, perhaps what is essential in the transferring of the novel to the stage is for us to question ourselves about what can properly be considered theatrical. Where does reality begin and where does fiction end, how do fantasies come about and when do they begin to acquire the quality of mystification or lies, when can we speak of knowledge and when is concealment criminal or irrelevant? To what extent are our phantoms more powerful than the reality that surrounds us?

Theatre, like the novel, has its own rules. Everything points to the idea that, in his posthumous novel, Bolaño wanted to play with the idea of how fantasy works, exploring to what extent fantasy itself forms part of reality. This is, then, the game that every attempt at theatrical adaptation will have to play if the aim is to make the production of **2666** a toy fit for Bolaño.

Pablo Ley

Barcelona, 13 September 2006

first pages of 2666

" The Avenida Guerrero, at this hour, looks, more than anything, like a cemetery, but not a cemetery from 1974, nor a cemetery from 1968, nor a cemetery from 1975, but rather a cemetery from 2666, a forgotten cemetery under a dead or aborted eyelid, the dispassionate waterings of an eye which in wanting to forget something, ended up forgetting everything".

Amuleto (1999),

2666

1. The Critics' Part.

Morini: The first time that Jean-Claude Pelletier read **Benno von Archimboldi** was during the Christmas of 1980 in Paris, where, at the age of nineteen, he was undertaking his university studies in German literature. The book in question was *D'Arsonval*. The young Pelletier was unaware at the time that this novel was part of a trilogy (made up of *The Garden*, dealing with an English subject, *The Leather Mask*, a Polish one, as *D'Arsonval* dealt, obviously, with a French one), but this unawareness did nothing to lessen the dazzling effect that the novel had on him. From that day on he became an Archimboldi enthusiast and began his pilgrimage in search of more works by said author. It was no easy task. Not even his own professors had heard of him.

In 1981, with three friends from the faculty, he travelled to Bavaria and there, in a small bookshop, found a thin volume of *Mitzi's Treasure*. In 1983, at twenty years old, he began the task of translating *D'Arsonval*. No one asked him to do it. Pelletier started to translate basically because he liked it, because he was happy doing it.

He finished the work in 1984 and a Paris publishing house, after some hesitant and contradictory readings, published Archimboldi, whose novel, destined in advance not to sell beyond the figure of one thousand copies, sold out, following a couple of positive, not to say excessive, reviews, the three thousand copies of the first print run, opening the doors to a second, third and fourth edition.

By then Pelletier had already read fifteen books by the German author, had translated another two, and was considered the best authority on Benno von Archimboldi that there was in France.

Pelletier: Piero Morini was born in 1956 in a village near Naples and although he first read Benno von Archimboldi in 1976, it wouldn't be until 1988 that he translated his first novel by the German author, ***Bifurcaria bifurcate***, which had an undistinguished passage through the Italian bookshops.

In fact Morini wasn't the first Italian translator. Indeed, the first of Archimboldi's novels to fall into Morini's hands was a translation of ***The Leather Mask*** done in the year 1969 and a selection of short stories, in which there was no shortage of war stories, called ***The Lowest Depths of Berlin***. As such one could say that Archimboldi wasn't a complete unknown in Italy.

Morini: Neither could one say that he was a successful writer.

Pelletier: Morini remained undaunted by the little expectation Archimboldi's work generated in the Italian public and after translating ***Bifurcaria bifurcata*** delivered research on Archimboldi's work to both a magazine in Milan and another in Palermo, one on ***fate in Railway Perfection*** and another on ***the many disguises of conscience and guilt in Letea***, a seemingly erotic novel.

In 1991 a second translation by Piero Morini, this time of ***Saint Thomas***, came out in Italy. At that time Morini was working giving classes of German literature at the University of Turin and by then the doctors had detected multiple sclerosis in him whilst also he had suffered a strange and dramatic accident that had confined him to a wheelchair forever.

Morini: Manuel Espinoza came to Archimboldi by a different path. Espinoza was born in Madrid and studied German philology. In 1990 he gained a doctorate in German literature with a work on Benno von Archimboldi that a Barcelona publisher would publish a year later. In those days Espinoza was a regular at conferences and debates on German literature. He had a good job and a considerable income and was respected by his students and colleagues alike.

He never translated Archimboldi nor any other German author.

Espinoza: Liz Norton, on the other hand, didn't draw up long term plans, nor did she bring all her energy into play to achieve them. When she suffered, her pain was easily detected and when she was happy, her happiness was contagious. For her, reading was directly related to pleasure and not to knowledge or to enigmas or to construction and verbal labyrinths as Morini, Pelletier and I believe. Her discovery of Archimboldi was the least traumatic of all of us. During the three months of 1988 that she lived in Berlin, at twenty years old, a German friend lent her a novel by an author she didn't know.

The novel was *The Blind Girl* and she liked it, but not to the extent of rushing out to the nearest bookshop to buy up the rest of the works of Benno von Archimboldi. Months later, now once again in England, Liz Norton received a present in the post from her German friend. It was, as one can easily guess, another Archimboldi novel. She read it, liked it, looked in her college library for more of the German's books with Italian titles and found *Bitzius*. Reading this work indeed had her running out to find a park. On the park's lawns the oblique drops of rain slipped downwards, but they could as well have slid upwards. The grass and the earth seemed to speak, no, not speak, but argue, and their unintelligible words were like crystallised spider webs or dainty crystallised vomit, a barely audible crackling, as if Norton that afternoon, instead of simply tea, had drunk a brew of peyote.

Norton: The first time that Pelletier, Morini, Espinoza and I saw each other was in a contemporary German literature conference held in Bremen in 1994.

Morini: In fact that was the first time the four of us met, although since 1989, in the Leipzig symposiums, we had already started getting to know each other individually through various meetings.

Norton: In the Bologna conference of 1993, the two opposing Archimboldi groups had become clearly defined: that of Pelletier, Morini and Espinoza against that of Schwarz, Borchmeyer and Pohl. However it was the Bremen conference that marked the beginning of the friendship.

Unexpectedly for the studious Archimboldi Germans, Pelletier, Morini and Espinoza moved to the attack, like Napoleon at Jena. The young German teachers attending the occasion, at first perplexed, took sides, although with certain reservations, with Pelletier and his friends. The public too opted for Pelletier's fiery and passionate interpretations, enthusiastically given over to the Dionysian, festive vision of exegesis in the last carnival.

Pelletier: Two days later Schwarz and his cronies counterattacked. They contrasted the figure of Archimboldi with that of Heinrich Böll. They spoke of **responsibility**.

They contrasted the figure of Archimboldi with that of Uwe Johnson. They spoke of **suffering**. They contrasted the figure of Archimboldi with that of Gunter Grass. They spoke of **public commitment**. Borchmeyer even contrasted the figure of Archimboldi with that of Friedrich Durrenmatt and spoke of **humour**.

Morini: Then Liz Norton made a fortunate appearance and ruined the counterattack. Norton defended our theory, speaking about Grimmelhausen, Gryphius and many others including Paracelso.

Norton: It was that same night that we had dinner together in a taverna near the river. We spoke about Benno von Archimboldi and his life of which so little was known. We swapped vague pieces of already known information and we speculated over the whereabouts and life of the great writer, and, finally, we spoke about ourselves.

Espinoza: The four of us were single.

Pelletier: The four of us lived by ourselves.

Morini: The four of us were dedicated to our careers.

Espinoza: From that day on, not a week went by that the four of us didn't regularly call each other, without thought for the phone bill and at the most unearthly hours.

Roberto Bolaño

(Santiago de Chile, 1953 - Barcelona, 2003)

Chilean writer and poet. In 1968 his family moved to Mexico and there, Bolaño started to study. He went to school at the age of fifteen but he abandoned it one year later and decided never to return to any educational institution.

A great reader, he would not, however, describe himself as 'self-taught'. Though he never met either of them, Bolaño considered the poets Efraín Huerta or Enrique Lihn to be two of his greatest teachers.

In Mexico he wrote articles for various newspapers and magazines. In 1973 he decided to return to Chile with the aim of lending his support to the process of socialist reforms initiated under Salvador Allende. Following a long journey by bus through South America, he arrived in Chile a few days after the *coup* led by Augusto Pinochet, and he then decided to join the resistance against the new dictatorial regime. Some days later he was detained near Concepción and released eight days later thanks to the help of an ex-schoolmate at Cauquenes, who was one of the policemen who were guarding him. He then left the country.

He returned to Mexico where, with a group of Mexican poets, he founded an *avant-garde* movement called 'Infrarealisme'. From 1975 onwards, he began to publish his first writings, including the anthology of poetry *Poetas infrarrealistas mexicanos*.

In 1977 he decided to move to Spain, where he married a Spanish woman, Carolina López, with whom he had a son, Lautaro. From then on he lived in the town of Blanes doing various temporary jobs, from salesman to night-watchman.

Author of five volumes of poetry, he published his first novel in 1984, *Consejos de un discípulo de Morrison a un fanático de Joyce*, written in collaboration with Antoni García Porta, which won the Àmbito Literario Prize.

Roberto Bolaño is also author of *La pista de hielo* (1993), *La senda de los elefantes* (1994), *La literatura nazi en América - Nazi Literature in the Americas* (1996), *Estrella distante - Distant Star* (1996) and the short stories in *Llamadas telefónicas*, which, in 1997, was awarded the Santiago de Chile Municipal Prize, the most important literary award in the country. He had previously, in 1995, been awarded the same prize in the poetry section for his work *Los perros románticos*.

In Spain, Roberto Bolaño was one of the most widely respected Latin American authors and in 1997 he was awarded the Ciudad de San Sebastián International Literary Prize for short stories in Spanish, for *Sensini*. One year later, on 2 November 1998, he was awarded the 16th Herralde Prize for his novel *Los detectives salvajes - The Savage Detectives* (1998), which was also awarded the Rómulo Gallegos Prize in 1999.

In January 1999 he was a member of the jury of the 5th Latin American Film Festival in Lleida. In June, he presented, in Barcelona, the novels *Monsieur Pain* and *Amuleto - Amulet*, a "minor work, narrated in the first person by its main character". The following year, another novel appeared, *Nocturno de Chile - By Night in Chile*, and in 2001 he worked on the short story *Putas asesinas* (2003). In 2002 he published *Amberes* and *Una novelita lumpen*.

Bolaño died of liver failure on Tuesday 14 July in the Vall d'Hebron Hospital in Barcelona after being in a coma for ten days. He left unfinished his novel *2666*, in which he took his capacity for creating fables to the limit, woven once more around the figure of a disappeared writer, in this case, Benno von Archimboldi.

In 2004 he was awarded, posthumously, the Salambó Prize for the best novel written in Spanish, for *2666*. The jury highlighted the quality and the diversity of the five finalists, all of them being “*noble, respectable and highly notable books*”. They also described the winning novel as “*the summing up of a weighty body of work, in which is distilled the best of Roberto Bolaño’s narrative fiction*”, and as a novel that “*contains much literature, that takes great risks and that stretches its author’s literary language to the extreme*”.

Bolaño himself figures in some of his works, like *Los detectives salvajes*, *Amuleto*, *Estrella distante* or in the draft of *2666*, with his *alter ego* Arturo Belano. He is also portrayed in the novels *Soldados de Salamina* by Javier Cercas and *Mantra* by Rodrigo Fresán.

for further information:

<http://sololiterature.com/bol/bolanoprincipal.htm>

<http://www.clubcultura.com/clubliterature/clubescritores/robertobolano/home.htm>

<http://www.letras.s5.com/archivobolano.htm>

<http://lepisma.liblit.com/2007/05/31/entrevistas-a-roberto-bolano>



works by roberto bolaño

- 1975** *Poetas infrarrealistas mexicanos.*
- 1984** *Consejos de un discípulo de Morrison a un fanático de Joyce*, with Antoni García Porta.
- 1993** *Fragmentos de la Universidad desconocida*
La pista de hielo
- 1994** *La senda de los elefantes*
- 1995** *Los perros románticos*
- 1996** *Estrella distante* (Distant Star)
La literatura nazi en América (Nazi Literature in the Americas)
- 1997** *Llamadas telefónicas.* Santiago de Chile Municipal Prize.
Sensini. International Literary Prize, Ciudad de San Sebastián.
- 1998** *Los detectives salvajes.* (The Savage Detectives) Herralde Prize for Novels. Rómulo Gallegos Prize 1999.
- 1999** *Monsieur Pain*
Amuleto (Amulet)
- 2000** *Tres*
Nocturno de Chile (By Night in Chile)
- 2002** *Una novelita lumpen*
Amberes
- 2003** *Putas asesinas*
El gaucho insufrible
- 2004** *Entre paréntesis*
2666. Salambó Prize (published posthumously) and National Book Critics Circle 2009.
- 2007** *Last Evenings on Earth* (stories from *Llamadas telefónicas* and *Putas asesinas*)

Àlex Rigola

Barcelona 1969

Theatre director. Director of the Teatre Lliure from 2003.



Directions and adaptations

- 2008** *Días mejores*, by Richard Dresser. Teatro de La Abadía.
Rock'n'Roll, by Tom Stoppard. Teatre Lliure.
El buñuelo de Hamlet, by Luis Buñuel and Pepín Bello. Lectura. Expo Zaragoza 2008.
- 2007** *2666*, by Roberto Bolaño. Teatre Lliure - Festival de Barcelona Grec 2007. Barcelona Critics Prize to the Best Drama Performance, Best dramaturgy and Best Set 2008, the Terenci Moix Prize of Scenic Arts 2008, the prize Qwerty 2008 to the Best Adaptation from a novel to another format and the Max 2009 Awards to the Best Theatre Show and Best Scenography.
L'holandès errant, by R. Wagner. Gran Teatre del Liceu.
- 2006** *La nit just abans dels boscos*, by B-M. Koltès. Temporada Alta.
Arbusht, by Paco Zarzoso. Teatre Lliure – Festival de Barcelona Grec 2006.
Largo viaje hacia la noche, by Eugene O'Neill. Teatro de La Abadía. Madrid. Notodo Best Drama Performance Award.
- 2005** *European House (Hamlet's prologue without words)*. Temporada Alta. Girona.
Ricard 3r, by William Shakespeare. Festival de Teatro Clásico de Almagro - Teatre Lliure.
- 2004** *Santa Joana dels escorxadors*, by Bertolt Brecht. Teatre Lliure - Festival Grec 2004, Barcelona. 
- 2003** *Glengarry Glen Ross* by David Mamet. Teatre Lliure. Barcelona.
Cançons d'amor i droga by P. Sales, A. Pla, J. Farrés and À. Rigola. Teatre Lliure. Barcelona.
El Cancionero de Palacio by J. del Encina and L. de Milán. International Music Festival Castell de Peralada.
- 2002** *Juli Cèsar* by William Shakespeare. Teatre Lliure. Barcelona.
Ubú by A. Jarry. Teatro de la Abadía. Madrid.
- 2001** *Suzuki I & II* by Alexei Xipenko. Teatre Lliure.
Woyzeck by Georg Büchner. Teatre Romea - Grec 2001 Festival, Barcelona.
The Golderg Variations by George Tabori. Teatre Nacional de Catalunya. Barcelona.

- 2000** *Titus Andrònic* by W. Shakespeare. Festival Grec 2000, Barcelona - Teatre Lliure. José Luis Alonso award for young directors organised by the directors' association ADE (Asociación Directores de Escena) 2000 and Butaca 2001 award for the best theatre production and the best director. Critics Best Direction Award.
- Un cop baix* by Richard Dresser. Sitges Teatre Internacional 2000 - Sala Beckett, Barcelona. Critics Best Direction Award.
- 1999** *La màquina d'aigua* by David Mamet. Sitges Teatre Internacional - Sala Beckett, Barcelona. Critics Best Direction Award.
- 1998** *Les Troianes* by Eurípides. Sitges Teatre Internacional.
- 1997** *Kafka: El procés* by Franz Kafka. Sitges Internacional Teatre - Teatre Adrià Gual, Barcelona.
- 1996** *Camí de Wolokolamsk (I)* by Heiner Müller, as part of the homage to Heiner Müller put on in the Teatre Artenbrut.

Pablo Ley Fancelli

(Barcelona, 1961)

Having graduated in History of Art at the University of Barcelona, he worked as theatre critic for both ABC (1990-1992) and El País (1995-2004). He taught classes in Cultural Journalism in the Faculty of Information Sciences at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (1999-2001). He has been Head of the Department of Dramaturgy at the Eòlia School since the academic year 2003-2004. Author, amongst others, of pieces such as *Se está haciendo muy tarde* (Sant Martí Theatre Prize, Mercat de les Flors, 1988); *Paisaje sin casas* (Marqués de Bradomín Prize 1990); or *Pequeños detalles del horror* (finalist for the Caja España Prize 1991). His theatrical adaptations include *F@ust versió 3.0* (La Fura dels Baus, Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, 1998); *La ópera de cuatro cuartos* (dir. Calixto Bieito, Teatre Grec, 2002); *Comedias Bárbaras* (dir. Bigas Luna, La Nau de Sagunt, 2003); *Homage to Catalonia* (dir. Josep Galindo, Teatre Romea, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds, Northern Stage, Newcastle and MC93 Bobigny, 2004), *La Celestina* (dir. Calixto Bieito, Edinburgh International Festival and The Birmingham Rep, 2004), *Celebració* (dir. Josep Galindo, Teatre Romea, 2005). At present he is preparing the dramaturgies for *Don Quixote* (dir. Josep Galindo, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds, 2007) and *2666* (dir. Àlex Rigola, Teatre Lliure, 2007).

on the publishing of the novel

note from the author's heirs

Faced with the possibility of his imminent death, Roberto left instructions for his novel **2666** to be published as five separate books corresponding to the five parts of the novel, specifying the order and the periodicity of the publications (one per year) and even the price to negotiate with the publisher. With this decision, which he personally communicated to Jorge Herralde a few days before his death, he believed that he financially secured the future of his children.

After his death, and following a reading and study of the work and the working material Roberto left, by Ignacio Echevarría (the friend he designated as the person whose advice should be sought regarding his literary affairs), another consideration, less practical, appeared: that of respecting the literary value of the work, which meant that, together with Jorge Herralde, we changed Roberto's decision and decided to publish **2666** first as a single volume containing all five parts, just as he would have done had not his illness taken the worst of all possible courses.

exhibition

2666 - ciudad Juárez àlex rigola



With the show 2666, the Teatre Lliure offers to the theaters that take in the show on tour, a photographic exhibition by Àlex Rigola: while working on the adaptation of the Roberto Bolaño's novel, Àlex Rigola travels on December 2006 to Ciudad Juarez to catch landscapes, environments and characters of the city that inspired the 2666's Santa Teresa.



THE TEATRE LLIURE

1976...



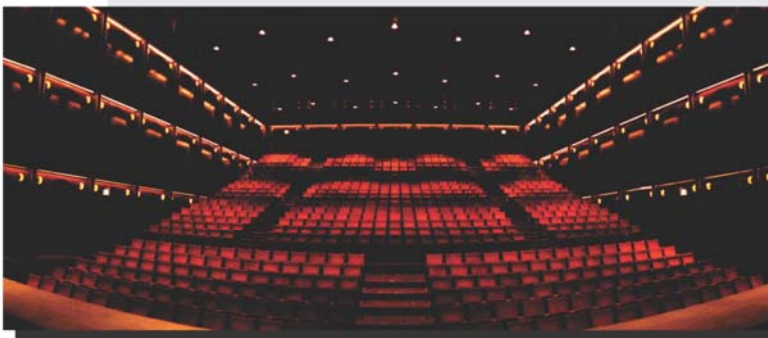
The Teatre Lliure was set up in 1976 by a group of theatre professionals working in the independent theatre. Since then it has become renowned for its emphasis on text-based theatre which involves the re-working of classic texts, as well as the promotion of contemporary dramatists and seasons in which theatre alternates with dance and music. Over the years it has been directed by Fabià Puigserver, Lluís Pasqual, Lluís Homar, Guillem-Jordi Graells and Josep Montanyès, and its commitment to the world of Catalan culture and its contribution to heightening public awareness of the theatre were rewarded right from the start by full houses and critical acclaim.

1989...

UNIO D'EUROPA DELS TEATRES

The Teatre Lliure was one of the founders in 1989 of the Union of European Theatres, a fact which demonstrates the company's commitment to working beyond the confines of its own theatres and to taking its shows on tour to festivals far and wide. The Teatre Lliure has visited many European and a number of Latin American countries and, as part of its new phase, aims to work much more on national and international co-productions such as those already undertaken in the Hebbel Theater of Berlin, the Salzburg Festival, the Festival Grec of Barcelona, and elsewhere. Furthermore, since the inauguration of the new location in the old "Palau de l'Agricultura" at Montjuïc, many internationally recognised performers have taken the stage in its new theatres: Kristian Lupa, Carlo Cecchi, Philip Glass, Declan Donellan, Fura dels Baus, Philippe Decouflé, Cesc Gelabert, Carles Santos, Compagnie Hervé-Montalvo, Antonio Latella, Thomas Ostermeier, Jan Lauwers Lluís Pasqual, Bob Wilson, Wooster Group and Peter Sellars.

2004...



Since March 2003 Àlex Rigola has been the director of the Teatre Lliure and during this period the theatre's repertoire of drama, complemented by a good dose of contemporary dance, live music and many different types of innovations, has become fully established. The Teatre Lliure sees the stage as somewhere for taking risks with the emotions, as it has shown in the relevancy

of the subject matter of both its new productions and its re-workings of established texts that contain ideas that are still valid today. Thanks to the recognition Rigola has acquired already and his team's past successes along with a program that combines the risk and innovation target with the highest artistic standard, the Teatre Lliure is currently one of the leading references of the Spanish theatre scene.