

# teatre lliure



## European House

*(Hamlet's prologue without words)*

conceived and directed by Àlex Rigola

Cia. Teatre Lliure

Teatre Lliure / Season 2005-2006 / on tour 2008-2009

## **European House (*Hamlet's* prologue without words)**

conceived and directed by **Àlex Rigola**

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cast

**Chantal Aimée** Gertrude / **Joan Carreras** Claudius / **Rubèn de Eguia** Horatio / **Oriol Guinart** Hamlet / **Nathalie Labiano** Guildenstern / **Lluís Marco** ghost / **Norbert Martínez** Rosencrantz / **Sandra Monclús** servant / **Fèlix Pons** Laertes / **Alba Pujol** servant / **Joan Raja** Polonius / **Mar Ulldemolins** Ophelia

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set design **Sebastià Brosa** and **Bibiana Puigdefàbregas** / lighting **Maria Domènech (a.a.i.)** / wardrobe **M. Rafa Serra** / sound design **Ramon Ciércoles**

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assistant director **Anna E. Armero** / assistant wardrobe **Berta Riera** / trainee set design at the Institut del Teatre (Diputació de Barcelona) **Nicolás Bueno** / set up made by **Teatre – Auditori Sant Cugat**

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co-produced by **Teatre Lliure** and **Temporada Alta**  
with the collaboration of **Teatre – Auditori Sant Cugat**

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contact

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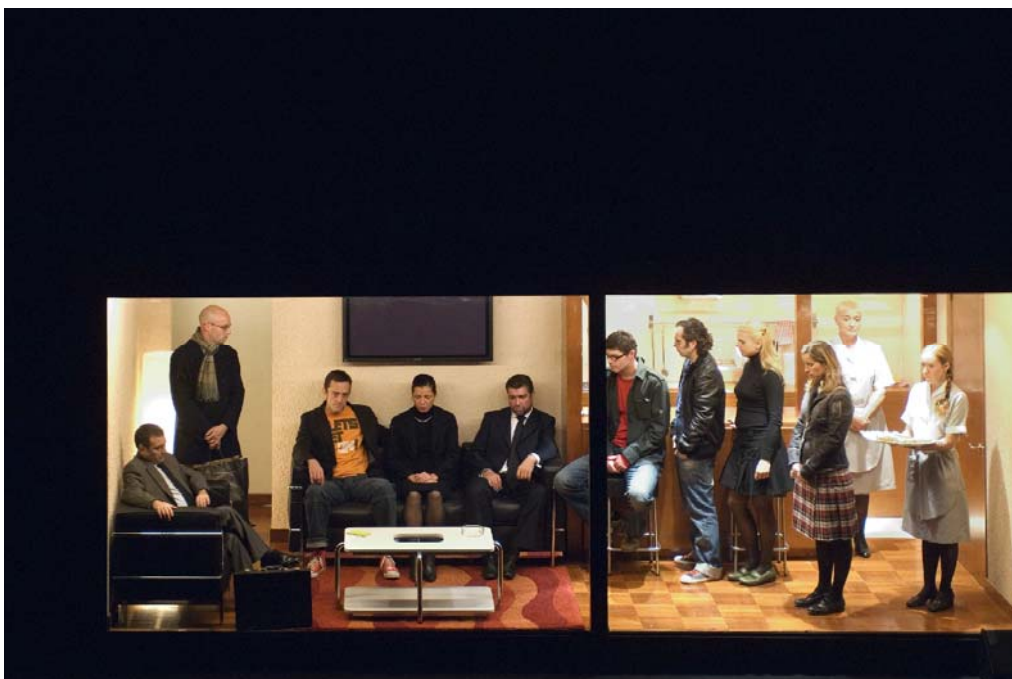
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length of the piece: **1h. 15' without break**





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El País, 12/12/2005

## TEATRO / 'European house'

## ¿Hogar, dulce hogar?

*European house*

De Shakespeare. Creación y dirección: Àlex Rigola. Intérpretes: Chantal Aimée, Pere Arquillué, Lurdes Barba, Ivan Benet, Joan Carreras, Natalie Labiano, Francesc Lucchetti, Norbert Martínez, Alicia Pérez, Joan Raja, Eugeni Roig, Anna Ycobalzeta. Teatre de Salt. Girona, 10 de diciembre.

## BEGOÑA BARRENA

Hamlet, el gran mito de la dramaturgia occidental, ha dado siempre mucho que hablar. Su naturaleza escéptica y su ambiguo carácter siguen siendo motivo de especulaciones. Àlex Rigola no entra en la obra de Shakespeare, al menos por ahora. De momento se imagina lo que podría ser la antesala de una de las grandes tragedias del bardo. Con el subtítulo *Pròleg d'un Hamlet sense paraules*, Rigola nos ofrece una original visión contemporánea de los motivos que podrían llevar a un Hamlet de hoy en día a su fin. Y es que la muerte está presente en la pieza shakespeariana desde el primer acto en el espectro del rey y es la que desencadena la tragedia y las reflexiones pertinentes en torno a la vida. La cuestión entre el ser o no ser tiene que ver, también para Rigola, con el ser o no conscientes de la vida y de sus posibilidades: los que actúan frente a los que dejan que la vida pase de largo. Sabemos que Hamlet actuará, pero sus acciones no nos incumben aquí. *European house* nos da el material con el que después se tejerá la tragedia a través de los ventanales de una moderna casa de tres plantas de una familia burguesa.

La escenografía Bibiana Puigdefàbregas ha diseñado para este montaje cinco estancias que componen el magnífico hogar de la familia. Como espectadores, nos dejamos llevar por la

supuesta cotidianidad que tras los cristales de metacrilato se cuece en cada espacio. Y digo "supuesta" porque, a pesar de las indicaciones de Rigola —que introduce el montaje advirtiéndonos del tiempo real en el que se desarrolla la trama y otorgándonos el privilegiado rol de mirones—, los personajes son muy conscientes del papel que representan y de los gags que nos ofrecen. Y aunque nosotros seamos también conscientes de no estar robando la intimidad de nadie —ni siquiera cuando Hamlet se ducha—, no dejamos de lamentar que las luces se apaguen y la función se acabe justo cuando la cosa empieza a ponerse interesante.

El montaje empieza con la vuelta a casa de la viuda y el hijo de un tipo importante, un hombre de negocios que acaba de morir, tras su entierro. Los amigos y allegados irán apareciendo para acompañarles en tan triste momento. No cuesta identificar a Gertrudis, (Alicia Pérez), ni a Hamlet (Joan Carreras), ni a Ofelia (Anna Ycobalzeta), ni a Claudio (Pere Arquillué) ni al resto de los personajes de la obra, complementados con dos sirvientas (Lurdes Barba y Chantal Aimée) que sirven de contrapunto en una especie de *Arriba y abajo* teatral. Hay más correspondencias que se dibujan sutilmente a lo largo del camino entre la vida y la muerte que se esboza entre las paredes de esta *European house*, como es la yuxtaposición de los tímidos besos entre los adolescentes Hamlet y Ofelia en la habitación de éste y el encuentro sexual urgente y catártico entre Gertrudis y Claudio en la de ella. En estos paralelismos radica la aportación de Rigola a la obra más famosa de Shakespeare.

THEATRE / "European House"  
Home, Sweet Home?

By Shakespeare.  
Creation and direction: Àlex Rigola. Cast: Chantal Aimée, Pere Arquillué, Lurdes Barba, Ivan Benet, Joan Carreras, Natalie Labiano, Francesc Lucchetti, Norbert Martínez, Alicia Pérez, Joan Raja, Eugeni Roig, Anna Ycobalzeta. Teatre de Salt. Girona, 10 December.

## Begoña Barrena

Hamlet, the great legend of western theatre, has always been a great talking point. His sceptical nature and ambiguous character continue to be the subject of speculation. Àlex Rigola does not enter the Shakespearean work, at least not for now. For the moment he imagines what could be the prelude to one of the bard's great tragedies. With the subtitle *Prologue of a Hamlet without words*, Rigola offers us an original contemporary vision of the reasons that might lead a modern-day Hamlet to his end. And the fact is that death is present in

Shakespeare's play from the very first act in the king's ghost, and it is what triggers the tragedy and the pertinent reflections about life. The question of whether to be or not to be is related, for Rigola too, with being or not being aware of life and of its possibilities: those who act, as opposed to those who let life pass by. We know that Hamlet will act, but his actions are not our concern here. *European House* gives us the material with which the tragedy will later be woven through the windows of the modern, three-storey house of a well-to-do family.

For this production, scenographer Bibiana Puigdefàbregas has designed five rooms that make up the magnificent family home. As the audience, we let ourselves be carried away by the supposed everydayness simmering in each space behind the plexiglass windows. And I say "supposed" because, despite the indications from Rigola – who introduces the production warning us that the plot unfolds in real time and awarding us the privileged role of voyeurs – the characters are very conscious of the role that they represent and of the gags that they offer us. And although we are also aware that we are not stealing anyone's privacy – not even when Hamlet takes a shower – that does not stop us from lamenting, when the lights go down and the play ends just as things were starting to get interesting.

The production begins with the return home of the widow and son of an important man, a businessman who has just died, after his funeral. Friends and acquaintances gradually appear to accompany them at this sad time. It doesn't take much to identify Gertrude (Alícia Pérez), nor Hamlet (Joan Carreras) nor Ophelia (Anna Ycobalzeta, nor Claudius (Pere Arquillué) nor the rest of the characters in the play, complemented by two servants (Lurdes Barba and Chantal Aimée) who serve as a counterpoint in a kind of theatrical *Upstairs Downstairs*. There are more correspondences subtly sketched along the path between life and death that is played out between the walls of this *European house*, such as the juxtaposition of the timid kisses between teenagers Hamlet and Ophelia in the bedroom of the former and the urgent and cathartic sexual encounter between Claudius and Gertrude in that of the latter. It is in these parallelisms where Rigola's contribution to Shakespeare's most famous work lies.

El Mundo, 12/12/2005

**THEATRE / European House**  
**In the Best Families**  
*Temporada Alta*

Creation and direction:  
 Alex Rigola./ Cast:  
 Chantal Aimée, Pere  
 Arquillué, Lurdes Barba,  
 Ivan Benet, Joan  
 Carreras, Nathalie  
 Labiano, Francesc  
 Lucchetti, Norbert  
 Martínez, Alícia Pérez,  
 Joan Raja, Eugeni Roig,  
 Anna Ycobalzeta./  
 Venue: Teatre de Salt./  
 10 December.  
 Rating: ★★★★★

Iolanda G. Madariaga

GIRONA. – With *European House*, Àlex Rigola has given yet another demonstration of his intelligence as a stage creator. In the show that he subtitles as the *prologue to a Hamlet without words*, Rigola has taken good notice of the opinions given regarding his previous show, *Ricard III*. It is admirable that, without distancing himself from his path of rereading classics from highly unusual perspectives and with the interaction of different languages, he offers a *mise-en-scène* that, making explicit reference to the theatrical classic par

**TEATRO / European House**

*En las mejores familias*

*Temporada Alta*

Creación y dirección: Alex Rigola./  
 Intérpretes: Chantal Aimée, Pere Arquillué, Lurdes Barba, Ivan Benet, Joan Carreras, Nathalie Labiano, Francesc Lucchetti, Norbert Martínez, Alícia Pérez, Joan Raja, Eugeni Roig, Anna Ycobalzeta./ Escenario: Teatre de Salt./ 10 de diciembre.  
 Calificación: ★★★★★

IOLANDA G. MADARIAGA

GIRONA.– Con *European House* Alex Rigola ha dado muestra una vez más de su inteligencia como creador escénico. En el espectáculo que subtítulo como prólogo de un *Hamlet sin palabras*, Rigola ha tomado muy buena cuenta de las opiniones vertidas a propósito de su anterior espectáculo: *Ricard III*. Es admirable que, sin apartarse de su trayectoria de relectura de clásicos desde perspectivas insólitas y con la interacción de diferentes lenguajes, ofrezca una puesta en escena que, haciendo referencia explícita al clásico teatral por excelencia, no debe rendir cuentas a tradición literaria alguna.

Rigola quiso presentar el espectáculo al público del estreno como un experimento, pero sólo la discreción y la prudencia justifican el calificativo: las bases de *European House* están lo suficientemente probadas como para determinar su eficacia, aunque hay que reconocer el mérito y la valentía de Rigola al combinar el argumento clásico con el hiperrealismo de la propuesta, el voyerismo al que aboca al espectador y el final abierto con la estimulante perspectiva de «nuevas entregas» del drama «en próximas temporadas» (sic).

En esta *European House* es relativamente fácil descubrir el rastro de otros creadores teatra-

les y de auténticos referentes actuales en la dirección escénica, pero desde su inicio se puede apreciar que se trata de un espectáculo con una firme personalidad propia. Rigola sitúa al espectador frente a una sección transversal del hogar de una familia burguesa más o menos estándar, en una posición clara de voyeur. Pronto descubrimos que el cabeza de familia acaba de fallecer y su viuda, su hijo y el servicio se preparan para recibir el pésame de amigos y familiares. Sin palabras apenas, apreciamos una galería de gestos, actitudes, pequeños rituales... que nos son cercanos y que nos invitan a una reflexión sobre nuestra propia actitud ante la vida y la muerte.

La factura es impecable: desde la recreación escenográfica de la vivienda –una moderna casa de muñecas con figuritas de carne y hueso– hasta la interpretación de personajes encarnados por prácticamente el mismo excelente elenco de *Ricard III*. Los actores, encerrados en una urna de metacrilato, desgranar sus pasiones solapando acciones en arras de la verosimilitud pero sin abrumar al espectador que tiene que elegir qué escena seguir o en qué detalle pararse.

Nos reencontramos con letreos luminosos, proyecciones videográficas y algunos solos de danza que ha usado el director en otras ocasiones. El tempo de la representación se ralentiza buscando el «tiempo real» aunque el ritmo del espectáculo lo marca la mirada del espectador. Con trazo limpio y firme se empieza a dibujar un *Hamlet* contemporáneo y nos invade la morbosa curiosidad por estos repentinos vecinos ajenos a la atracción que despiertan.

excellence, has no need to explain itself to any literary tradition.

Rigola wanted to present the show to the audience at the first night as an experiment, but only discretion and prudence justify that rating: the bases of *European House* are sufficiently proven to determine its efficacy, although acknowledgement is due for Rigola's merit and bravery in combining the plot of the classic with the hyper-realism of the proposal, the voyeurism towards which he herds the audience, and the open ending with the stimulating perspective of "new episodes" of the drama "in coming seasons" (sic).

In this *European House* it is relatively easy to discover the trail of other theatrical creators and of true contemporary references in stage direction, but from the start it can be seen that this is a show with a decided own personality. Rigola situates the spectator before a cross-section of the home of a more or less standard well-to-do family, in a clear position of voyeur. Soon we discover that the head of the family has just passed away and his widow, son and serving staff prepare to receive the condolences of friends and relatives. With hardly any words spoken, we appreciate a gallery of gestures, stances, small rituals, etc. that hit home with us and that invite us to reflect on our own attitude towards life and death.

The production is impeccable: from the stage recreation of the family home – a modern doll's house with figures of flesh and blood – to the playing of the characters, incarnated by practically the same cast as Ricard III. The actors, locked inside a plexiglass urn, reveal their passions as they overlap actions to achieve verisimilitude, but without overwhelming the audience who have to choose which scene to follow or on which detail to focus.

We meet once more with lighted signs, video projections and some dance solos that this director has used on previous occasions. The tempo of the performance slows down, in search of "real time", although its rhythm is marked by the spectator's gaze. With a clean and firm hand, a contemporary Hamlet begins to be drawn, and we are invaded by a morbid curiosity for these sudden neighbours, unaware of the attraction that they arouse.

El Punt, 12/12/2005

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### Rigola Ceremonial

Place and date: Teatre de Salt. 10 December.

Joaquim Armengol Roura

On Saturday night we went back to the Teatre de Salt again. That desire was motivated by the Teatre Lliure, in the hands of Àlex Rigola, with the new proposal *European House* (*prologue of a Hamlet without words*). Rigola, in fact, turned out to be the actor with the most text in the entire work, improvising a prologue to the prologue, to warn us that what we were about to see was a theatrical experiment. That's a good thing that Rigola does, in warning us that it is an attempt: that way he covers his back, and in doing so, insinuates to us that what is about to happen onstage may or may not be a show *comme il faut*.

*European House* is a picture of creation without words, where the audience can see, in real time, the cross-section of a three storey house belonging to a contemporary, well-to-do family. As the action takes place, we realise that an important businessman has just died. His widow and son return to the house after the funeral, where immediately characters start arriving in succession to pay their respects. Thus we gradually discover the types (the ghost, Claudius, Ophelia, Laertes, Polonius, etc.) and their real motives, if we are familiar enough with Shakespeare's drama. Therefore we understand this pretentious experiment as a kind of prolonged *Hamlet* fantasy.

Rigola places the audience in the situation of voyeurs who from their own home contemplate a show put on by others. As often happens with his works, what interests him most is the aesthetic affair, more than the idea. On this occasion, the form is, undoubtedly, fortunate and makes an impact. The three storeys are divided into eight compartments, hermetically sealed off using plexiglass; this results in the sound being strangely denaturalised. The rooms light up every time that a character appears, and this produces a collage effect with contrasts that at times is very lively and entertaining. Light is an important element because it gives movement and directs the eye of the curious who, when the chambers are occupied, has to decide who or what interests them more. But the director presupposes things of an unhealthy gratuitous nature, such as that we all have the habit of contemplating sexual acts or naked people, or that the bourgeois family is stupid, or that looking is what leads us find a meaning to our lives. This philosophical speculation appears at a given moment in the form of subtitles, and as an act of deep reflection, it seems, to suggest that the experiment also has its metaphysical part, something which we could never intuit from characters that communicate basically without words, with gestures and expressions that are phatic on occasions. Here one asks oneself: What is the matter with them? Why don't they speak? The lack of words is forced, disconcerting, even grotesque. There are moments with fantastic jokes and we all burst out laughing, for example when the buffoon gives a skull to the prince and says "seeing as your name is Hamlet", or with a brilliant coitus interruptus

just at the moment of greatest lust. Very good, very good, that is what we were hoping for. But it is also true that we ask ourselves where the prince's magnificent personality is; without it, how can we imagine the future drama?

## Cerimonial Rigola

► **Lloc i dia:** Teatre de Salt. 10 de desembre

JOAQUIM ARMENGOL ROURA

**D**issabte a la nit ens vam tornar a acostar al Teatre de Salt. L'anhel venia motivat pel Teatre Lliure, a mans d'Àlex Rigola, amb la nova proposta *European House* (pròleg d'un *Hamlet* sense paraules). Rigola, de fet, es va convertir en l'actor amb més text de l'obra, improvisant un pròleg al pròleg per avisar-nos que el que veuríem seguidament era un experiment teatral. Fa bé, Rigola, d'avisar-nos que es tracta d'una temptativa: d'aquesta manera es cobreix les espatlles i, per tant, ens insinua que el que succeirà a l'escenari pot ser o no ser un espectacle *comme il faut*.

*European House* és un quadre de creació sense paraules on es pot veure, a temps real, la secció d'una casa de tres plantes d'una família contemporània burgesa. A mida que l'acció transcorre ens adonem que un important home de negocis acaba de morir. La vídua i el seu fill tornen a casa després de l'enterrament, on seguidament van apareixent personatges per donar el condol. Anem així descobrint els tipus (l'espectre, Claudi, Ofèlia, Laertes, Poloni...) i els motius reals d'aquests, si coneixem bé el drama de Shakespeare. Per tant entenem el pretenció experiment com una mena de fantasia prologada del *Hamlet*.

Rigola col·loca l'espectador en la situació del *voyeur* que des de casa seva contempla l'espectacle dels altres. Com sovint en els seus treballs, el que més l'interessa és l'afer estètic, per damunt de la idea. En aquesta ocasió la forma és, sens dubte, afortunada

i impactant. Els tres pisos estan dividits en vuit habitacles tancats hermèticament amb metacrilat; això produeix que el so sigui estranyament desnaturalitzat. Les estances s'il·luminen cada vegada que un personatge hi apareix, cosa que produeix un efecte de *collage* i de contrastos en ocasions molt viu i divertit. La llum n'és un element molt important perquè dóna el moviment i dirigeix l'ull del curios que, quan les cambres estan ocupades, ha de decidir què o qui l'interessa més. Però el senyor director pressuposa coses d'una gratuïtat malaltissa, com ara que tots tenim l'habitudo de contemplar actes sexuals o persones nues, que la família burgesa és estúpida o que el fet de mirar és el que fa trobar un sentit a la nostra vida. Aquesta barateria filosòfica apareix en un moment donat en forma de subtítols i com a acte de profunda reflexió, sembla ser, per suggerir que l'experiment també té la seva part metafísica, cosa que mai podríem intuir d'uns personatges que es comuniquen bàsicament sense paraules, amb gestos i mirades a vegades fàtics. Aquí un es pregunta: Què els passa a aquests? Per què no parlen? La manca de paraula és forçada, desconcertant, grotesca. Hi ha moments d'algunes bromades fantàstiques i esclatem a riure, per exemple quan el bufó regala una calavera al príncep i diu «com que es diu Hamlet», o amb un hilarant coitus interruptus en el seu moment més lúbric. Molt bé, molt bé, és el que esperàvem. Però també és cert que ens preguntem on és la magnífica personalitat del príncep: sense aquesta, com podríem imaginar-nos el futur drama?

## Àlex Rigola

Barcelona 1969

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 International 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. Enderrock Price to the Best Musical Show.  
*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 Abadia. 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.

## 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'ELS TEATRES D'EUROPA

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.

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

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.