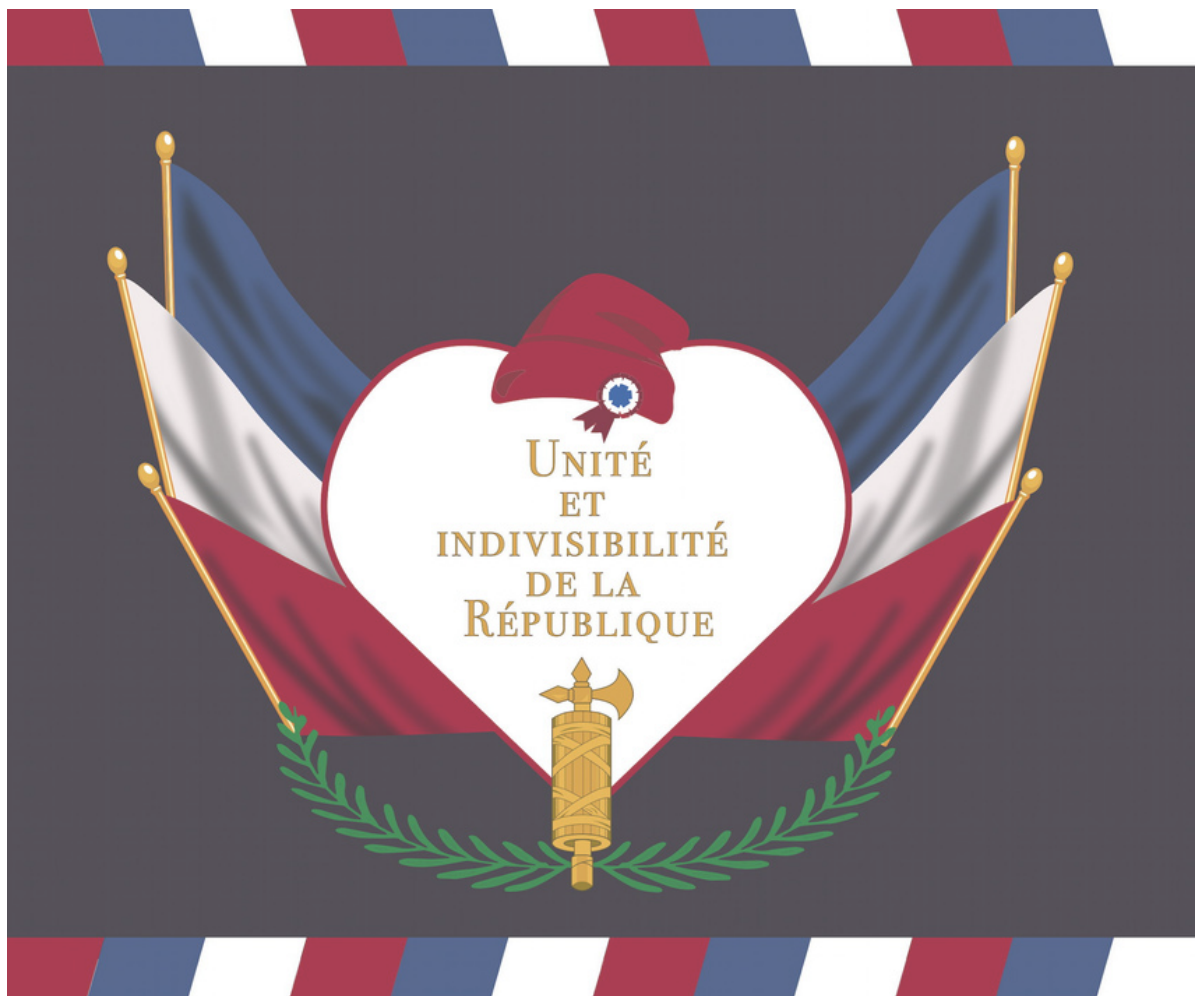




HEINRICH HEINES LE GRAND

When drumbeats tell history



A German-French play by
THEATER DER KLÄNGE



THE PROJECT

A striking childhood memory of Heinrich Heine becomes a theatrical event: his encounter with the French drummer "Le Grand" in Düsseldorf during the Napoleonic occupation. The young Heine did not understand French, but the soldier's drumbeats spoke their own language – they talked about revolution, freedom and a world in transition.

"I didn't understand the words," Heine later wrote, "but since he drummed continuously while speaking, I knew what he wanted to say."

Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, composer and musician at the Théâtre du Soleil for 40 years, is a master of theatrical sound art who creates the musical atmosphere of this historic encounter live on stage. His virtuoso mastery of instruments blurs the boundaries between eras..



WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT LE GRAND

Top-class cast

Jean-Jacques Lemêtre brings with him four decades of experience in world theatre. His collaboration with Ariane Mnouchkine at the Théâtre du Soleil made him a legend in the French theatre scene.

Current relevance

At a time when Europe is seeking cohesion, "Le Grand" demonstrates the timeless artistic power as a bridge between cultures. The story of understanding without a common language could not be more relevant today.

Scenic diversity

Authentic costumes from the Napoleonic era, a variable stage design and Lemêtre's extensive range of instruments create a theatrical evening that is visually, musically and emotionally moving.



ARTISTIC TEAM & CAST

Director: J.U. Lensing

Music: Jean-Jacques Lemêtre (live)

Ensemble: 2 actors, 1 musician, 1 technician, 1 director+ accompanying marching drum

Duration: 135 minutes including interval (compact version: 75-90 minutes possible)



PRESS

"The historical intuition and inventiveness of the Theater der Klänge [...] seeks to draw on experiences from past eras and translate them into a contemporary, original stage language."

Ballet international/Dance



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The encounter took place during the French occupation in Düsseldorf (1806–1813). For Heine, the drummer, who spoke of the revolution without words, became a symbol of the universal language of art. This episode from the Napoleonic era, when French troops brought the ideas of freedom and equality to Germany, is gaining new relevance today for the European self-image.



WHY LE GRAND?

The production combines historical depth with contemporary relevance. Jean-Jacques Lemêtre's international reputation guarantees artistic excellence and public interest. As a German-French co-production, "Le Grand" is a prime example of successful cultural exchange – a theatre evening that takes a stand for a feeling of understanding

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

- German-French cultural projects
- Literature festivals (focus on Heine)
- European themes and intercultural dialogue
- History of the Napoleonic era
- Music and spoken theatre festivals



GUEST PERFORMANCE FORMATS

Full version: 145 min. incl. intermission

Compact version: 75-90 min.

School performances: from Year 9 onwards,
with post-performance discussion



TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Stage: At least 6m x 4m for musicians, flexible remaining space, wooden floor, white projection screen

Lighting: By arrangement

Sound: Space for instruments (will be brought along)

Set-up: 6 hours | *Dismantling:* 3 hours



MEDIATION

- Introductions and follow-up discussions
- Workshops on non-verbal communication
- Educational material for schools
- Programme booklet with historical background information



Contact
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