

INDEPENDENT  
LITTLE  
LIES

4.48

PSYCHOSIS

Written by Sarah Kane

Directed by Sandy Artuso

# DATES AND VENUES

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27.10.2023 - Kulturfabrik Esch-sur-Alzette

28.10.2023 - Kulturfabrik Esch-sur-Alzette

21.02.2024 - opderschmelz Dudelange

# INTRODUCTION

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Sarah Kane (1971-1999) is considered one of the most powerful voices of British contemporary drama, even though she only wrote five plays and one screenplay. Since the much-discussed success of her first play *Blasted* in 1995, her work has been linked to the “In-Yer-Face” theatrical style - much to the dismay of the author herself. In fact, Kane’s work is far more than mere “sound and fury.” Throughout her work, the unapologetic research of absolutes like Love, Guilt, Truth are centrepiece.

4.48 *Psychosis* is Sarah Kane’s last play, written while Kane was struggling with severe and recurring depression. It premiered posthumously in 2000 at the Royal Court’s Jerwood Theatre Upstairs in London, one year after the suicide of the author.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white short-sleeved dress, stands in a room. She is holding a dark, crumpled object in her hands. In the background, there is a bed with a white sheet and a dark blanket, and a table with a glass pitcher and a glass. The room has a tiled ceiling and white walls. The text "DIRECTORIAL CONCEPT" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

## DIRECTORIAL CONCEPT

4.48 *Psychosis* is an unsettling play, both in form and content. For some, like the theatre critic Michael Billington in his first review, it is a “75-minute suicide note”, but for others, like the actress Jo Innes who starred in the very first production, “the heart of it is a love story – what does it mean to love, can we love, all those questions.”

The play, which is very far from being a conventional play with dialogue and stage directions, is characterized by Sarah Kane’s virtuosic and precise use of the language, where the lyrical potency starkly contrasts with the main theme: the decline of the mental health of the dramatic “I,” the narrator of the play. But as always in Sarah Kane’s plays, there is hope, and especially through the visual directing of this project, our production of this play wants to explore the brightness hidden in this text. The interplay of performance, text and visual will be centre stage for this production. For this, Catherine Elsen, a multidisciplinary actress and performer, will be using her varsity of acting and musical skills to master the impressive text, which is very rhythmic and prone to a more poetic rendering.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white short-sleeved dress, stands in a room. She is holding a dark, possibly black, object in her hands. In the background, there is a table covered with a white cloth and a dark patterned throw, and a chair. The room has a white wall and a tiled ceiling. The overall lighting is soft and somewhat dim.

## DIRECTORIAL CONCEPT

In concordance, the scenography and visual concept of the production will help translate the words and performance to the public. “Remember the light and believe the light” – this recurring sentence of the play is one of the paradigms directing the visual concept of the play, which is curated by the renowned artist Anne Lindner.

A few words concerning myself: Although this will be my first “solo flight” as a director, I have accumulated a myriad of experience in theatre in the past years as an assistant director and theatre project manager. Moreover, I have a literary background, a PhD in literature, and more pertinently for this project: expertise in contemporary British drama. In fact, I wrote my master’s thesis on Sarah Kane’s second play, *Phaedra’s Love*.

**Sandy Artuso**

# ILL RESIDENCY 2022 AS A FIRST WORK PHASE

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In their yearly residencies, Independent Little Lies gives the opportunity to one of their members to explore a project, an idea, a concept for a later production. For 2022, ILL had offered Sandy Artuso this **residency** to explore ways to stage *4.48 Psychosis* with a particular focus on the visual and performing expressions of the play's main themes. Together with Anne Lindner and Catherine Elsen, they started working on the possibilities of the visual and scenic concept in **September 2022**.

During the residency, the trio developed their visual and performative language for the production. Anne Lindner could experiment on the visual design, which has proven to capture the complexity of the main themes of the play: vulnerability amidst chaos. Catherine Elsen and Sandy Artuso experimented on methods to work with the intricate text. They found ways to forge pathways through a fragmented, but powerful text.



## ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

As the title of the play already suggests, the main topic of the play is mental health. Considering the importance and the weight of this topic, it is the intention of this production to offer an accompanying programme to the play. By working with associations from the civil society devoted to sensitize on the topics of mental health, depression, and suicide, and by cooperating with schools, we want to offer an informative and supportive frame for the public. For this accompanying programme, we have already reached out to different schools, theatre pedagogues, the Equality offices of Esch-sur-Alzette and Dudelange and plan on contacting the local institutions devoted to mental health care.



# ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

## Theatre pedagogy

- Cooperation and regular exchange with an English teacher and their class through the school year 2023/2024 by offering them insight into the rehearsal and creative process (*classe marraine*)
- Preparation of pedagogical material relating to the play and its main topics for classes coming to the “scolaire” show in Dudelange, and also for the general public.

## Roundtables

- Participation of one of the team members at the “Living Library” held by the Service Égalité des Chances Esch-sur-Alzette in October 2023
- Table discussion at the Ratelach / Kulturfabrik (October 2023)  
Discussion to be held one-two weeks before the premiere on the topic of art(ists) and mental health issues. (*Exact date, topic and participants to be determined*)
- Table discussion in Dudelange (February 2024)  
Discussion for a larger public on mental health, suicide prevention, and care in collaboration with the Service à l'Égalité Dudelange. (*Exact date, topic and participants to be determined*)





# ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

## After-the-play talks

- Discussions with the team and the public after the play, in presence of local associations working on mental health. The idea is to offer possibilities to exchange on the subject that is otherwise stigmatized by ongoing health taboos.

## Other

- Psychological consultant to be visiting the creative team on a regular basis with the purpose to help us check-in on our well-being through out the process, but also to help us understand the psychological issues described in the play from a professional point of view.
- Academic paper by Sandy Artuso to be presented at the European Narrative Network (ENN) conference in September 2023 in Monopoli, Italy. Title of the paper: *“And this is the rhythm of madness.” - Fragmentation of time, space and the mind in Sarah Kane’s last play 4.48 Psychosis*

# BIOGRAPHIES

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## Sandy Artuso

Sandy Artuso has a diversified portfolio in and around the promotion and creation of art. She is a member of the theatre collective Independent Little Lies, where she has coordinated the Biergerbühn project in the framework of Esch2022 - European Capital of Culture. She was the assistant director for Marc Baum's directorial work on "Dreck" in 2000, "Far Away" in 2003 and "Grexit" in 2016. She has co-managed ILL's *Impossible Readings* editions 7 to 10. An *activist* for the promotion of queer art forms and queer artists, she has created and curated the biennial queer-feminist festival *Queer Little Lies* since its first edition in 2018. She has also worked as a cultural journalist, co-created and edited the queer-feminist magazine "Die Preziöse" and holds an actual PhD in literature. She is a founding member of the *Laboratoire d'Etudes Queer, sur le Genre et les Féminismes* - LEQGF asbl.

# BIOGRAPHIES

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## Catherine Elsen

Catherine Elsen is a multidisciplinary performer, working at the crossroad between theatre, movement and music. She holds an “MA Dance Theatre: The body in performance“ (dist.) from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London. Her solo practice is influenced by the Roy Hart Theatre approach, exploring the psychic and theatrical expressivity of the voice. Recently, electronic music production and new technologies have led her to extend her theatre language into virtual reality and interactive sound installation. She is the artistic co-director and voice and movement artist of “The Assembly”: a multi-dimensional sound project produced within the programme of Esch22. Awards include “Best Actress” for the main role in F. Zeimet’s webseries “W.” at the NZ Webfest and the award for “Young Hope” at the “Theaterpräis” 2020 in LU. She has performed for Tino Sehgal (Tate Modern), Anna Frick (TVL and Theater Trier), Anne Simon, Renelde Pierlot and Tania Soubry. Furthermore, she has worked as an assistant to “Jungle Book”, a co-creation by C.Chemin, Robert Wilson and Coco Rosie.

# BIOGRAPHIES

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## Anne Lindner

Anne Lindner is an intuitive painter. Mostly she is interested in painting, but she also loves in-situ installations and photography. Her latest 'thing' though, is being a stage designer, which all started as a residency with Independent Little Lies last Year (2022). Her studio is situated in the beautiful town of Bourglinster at the Annexes of the Ministry of Culture which is next to Luxembourg City. It is right next to the Bourglinster Castle. A Queen deserves a Castle ;) or at least she is allowed to look at this one. Most of the time you will find her there, dipped in paint, listening to music and enjoying every minute of it.

[www.annelindner.art](http://www.annelindner.art)

# BIOGRAPHIES

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## Claire Wagener

Claire Wagener studied comparative literature and translation at Paris-Sorbonne University where she received her master's degree in 2016. Since 2015 she has been working as a dramaturge and assistant director for various productions, among which *Mendy, Das Wusical* (directed by Tom Dockal, Jacques Schiltz), *Der Besuch der alten Dame* (directed by Claire Thill), *Leurs enfants après eux* (directed by Carole Lorang, Bach-Lan Lê-Ba Thi, Eric Petitjean). She directed *Warten auf Godot* (Kaleidoskop Theater, 2023) and cocreated *Weinender Mond* (Kammerata, 2023), *Doheem - Fragments d'intimités* (ILL, 2022), *Zizou a Zazou* (ILL, 2021), *Amadeus* (ILL, 2020), *A la Recherche des Temps Modernes* (Théâtre du Centaure, 2020). Her work as a translator includes the French translation of the monologue *Erop* by Romain Butti (LUAR Éditions, 2023).



**4.48 PSYCHOSIS**  
**BY SARAH KANE**

Director: Sandy Artuso

Performing Actress: Catherine Elsen

Scenography / Artistic Design: Anne Linder

Light Design: Steve Demuth

Theatre Pedagogue: Laetitia Lang

Psychological Consultant: *tbc*

Assistant Director: Claire Wagener

Production Manager: Jill Christophe

A production by Independent Litte Lies - ILL

*Photos by © Anne Lindner*

A group of approximately ten people are posed in a cluttered industrial or workshop space. The room features large, multi-paned windows in the background, some of which are dark. The floor is covered with various items, including boxes, pipes, and equipment. One box in the background has the text "Attention, un carton!" and "Achtung, Karton!". The overall atmosphere is gritty and artistic.

# INDEPENDENT LITTLE LIES

**Independent Little Lies (ILL)** is an interdisciplinary theatre collective that brings together theatre makers, artists, pedagogues and art aficionados. Our productions and cultural events address contemporary, social issues in four different languages. Founded in 1995, ILL has been part of the Luxembourgish cultural scene for over 27 years. We are constantly committed to building collaborations with local and international artists and producers, to exploring new modes of production and artistic creation, and to giving emerging artists from various backgrounds the opportunity to pursue their practice. Since 2017, ILL also organizes the *Biergerbühn*, a platform dedicated to foster encounters between professionals and amateurs interested in experiencing various aspects of being on stage.

ILL is subsidized by the Ministry of Culture of Luxembourg and the City of Esch-sur-Alzette.

[www.ill.lu](http://www.ill.lu)



**ILL PRODUCTIONS  
OVER THE YEARS**

November 2022: *Queer Little Lies festival - the 3rd edition*

Biennial festival dedicated to queer culture and artists, curated by Sandy Artuso

July 2022: *Doheem - Fragments d'Intimités*

Co-written and directed by Elsa Rauchs and Claire Wagener

In the framework of the European Capital of Culture Esch 2022

Decembre 2021: *Der Besuch der alten Dame*

Written by Friedrich Dürrenmatt, directed by Claire Thill

In the framework of the European Capital of Culture Esch 2022

November 2020: *Amadeus*

Written by Peter Shaffer, co-directed by Jacques Schiltz and Claire Wagener

April 2019: *Love, Death and Polar Bears*

Written and directed by Catherine Elsen





ALL PRODUCTIONS  
OVER THE YEARS

February 2018: *Blackout*

Written and directed by Claire Thill

January 2016: *GREXIT*

Co-written and directed by Marc Baum and Ronald Dofing

November 2015: *Visions*

Written by Nora Wagener, directed by Claire Thill

October 2012: *Late: A Cowboy song*

Written by Sarah Ruhl, directed by Linda Bonvini

April 2007: *Mercury Fur*

Written by Philip Ridley, directed by Johannes Maile