
Musée Duras

Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe

Julien Gosselin

tour 2025 – 2026



© Christophe Raynaud de Lage

Musée Duras

text **Marguerite Duras**

direction and set design **Julien Gosselin**

a ten-hour show

comprising five two-hour performances

to be enjoyed either continuously or individually

with the students of Paris's
Conservatoire national supérieur
d'art dramatique of 2025

Mélodie Adda
Rita Benmannana
Juliette Cahon
Alice Da Luz Gomes
Yanis Doinel
Jules Finn
Violette Grimaud
Atefa Hesari
Jeanne Louis-Calixte
Yoann Thibaut Mathias
Clara Pacini
Louis Pencreac'h
Lucile Rose
Founémoussou Sissoko
and the participation of
Denis Eyriey

dramaturgy
Eddy d'Aranjo

video
Pierre Martin Oriol

musical creation
Guillaume Bachelé
Maxence Vandavelde

lighting designer
Nicolas Joubert

set design collaboration
Lisetta Buccellato

costume designer
Valérie Montagu

stage director assistant
Alice de la Bouillerie

video operators
Raphaël Oriol
Baudouin Rencurel

sound operator
Julien Feryn

with the team of Odéon-Théâtre
de l'Europe

premiered on October 18, 2024
at Conservatoire national supérieur
d'art dramatique de Paris

production Odéon-Théâtre de
l'Europe, Conservatoire national
supérieur d'art dramatique de Paris,
Si vous pouviez lécher mon cœur

with the artistic collaboration
of the Jeune théâtre national

Note of intent

I began reading Marguerite Duras's work seriously when I started drama school at the age of 19. Like many young people of my generation, I began by reading *The Sailor from Gibraltar*, which was a real eye-opener for me, a revelation. I went on to read other texts and distanced myself from her and her books for several years in what was a real estrangement. I no longer understood: the words seemed to repeat themselves indefinitely, the sea, love, death...

A few years ago, it suddenly all came back to me. I was at the end of a certain period in my life and I read *Atlantic Man* ten times in a row. The story features the author herself, asking (ordering) her loved one to agree for her to film him, really film him, observe him, in fact. She tells him not to look at the camera, to walk along the sea, and then finally to move out of the shot, out of the shot and out of her life. *Atlantic Man* is the voice of a woman who has lost love and now has nothing else to do but make films, and when the film is done, there's nothing left. Roses in the garden and writing.

So Duras came back into my life at that point, along with all the other texts, the texts from the Roches Noires period in Trouville, the "Atlantic" texts, and 1960s theatre too, everything came back into my life.

Then when I got an invitation from the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique to run a workshop, I thought I'd turn it all into a museum showcasing Marguerite Duras's words, her themes and obsessions, the end of love, death, sex, childhood in Indochina, the beaches of Normandy, hotel bars, lies and folly. It could also document my own history with her, as I try to do with every show, delving into a work, the story of a reader face-to-face with the work of a writer.

We worked together for two months and I met young actors who saw the world in a totally different way that sometimes contradicted the way Marguerite Duras saw it. Those two months were wonderful. It was as if they'd finally come to understand and even forgive one another, and seeing them today, saying these words, the gap between what they are and represent and the language they use is a more beautiful thing than I could ever have imagined.

The museum is open for ten hours a day. Audiences visit for two hours or more at a time and never know what they're going to see. They see performances that last between twenty minutes and an hour; sometimes it will resemble performance art, sometimes film, sometimes theatre. Sometimes the audience will sit facing the stage, sometimes surrounding it, sometimes they might lie out on the floor. There are fifteen actors from the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique, where we opened our museum for the first time.

The works currently featured at the museum include *The Man Sitting in the Corridor*, *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *La Musica Deuxième*, *Savannah Bay*, *The Lover*, *Suzanna Andler*, *The Malady of Death*, *The Painting Exhibition*, *The English Lover*, *The War: A Memoir*, *Atlantic Man*.

There is the potential for other texts to be added in the future.

It is said that artists always do the same thing, always follow the same steps, and I think that's true. That's the beauty of spending ten hours inside Duras's words, realising that she has written a lot, changed a lot, that the 40-year-old Duras was not the same as the 70-year-old Duras, and yet there is something that remains, something like a body, a pain, the memory of childhood and violence.

Extracts

Atlantic man

"You will not look straight at the camera. Except when you are told to do so. You will forget. You will forget. You will forget that is you. I believe it can be done. You will also forget the camera. But above all, you will forget that this is you. You. Yes, I believe it can be done."

Hiroshima Mon Amour

HE: Four times at the museum....

HE: What museum in Hiroshima?

SHE: Four times at the museum in Hiroshima. I saw the people walking around. The people walk around, lost in thought, among the photographs, the reconstructions, for want of something else, among the photographs, the photographs, the reconstructions, for want of something else, the explanations, for want of something else.

Four times at the museum in Hiroshima.

I looked at the people. I myself looked thoughtfully at the iron. The burned iron. The broken iron, the iron made vulnerable as flesh. I saw the bouquet of bottle caps: who would have suspected that? Human skin floating, surviving, still in the bloom of its agony. Stones. Burned stones. Shattered stones. Anonymous heads of hair that the women of Hiroshima, when they awoke in the morning, discovered had fallen out.

I was hot at Peace Square. Ten thousand degrees at Peace Square. I know it. The temperature of the sun at Peace Square. How can you not know it? ... The grass, it's quite simple...

HE : You saw nothing in Hiroshima. Nothing.

The Malady of Death

You wouldn't have known her, you'd have seen her everywhere at once, in a hotel, in a street, in a train, in a bar, in a book, in a film, in yourself, your inmost self, when your sex grew erect in the night, seeking somewhere to put itself, somewhere to shed its load of tears.

You may have paid her.

May have said: I want you to come every night for a few days. She'd have given you a long look and said in that case it'd be expensive.

And then she says: What is it you want?

You say you want to try, try it, try to know, to get used to that body, those breasts, that scent. To beauty, to the risk of having children implicit in that body, to that hairless unmuscular body, that face, that naked skin, to the identity between that skin and the life it contains.

You say you want to try, for several days perhaps.

Perhaps for several weeks.

Perhaps even for your whole life.

Try what? she asks.

Loving, you answer.

The format

The museum is open ten hours a day and can be set up on a stage or in an empty space, an exhibition area. There is a white floor with terraced seating on either side of the performance area, in a bifrontal arrangement. To one side there is a large wall onto which live images can be projected; to the other, a glass box that serves as a shooting area for certain formats. Above each tier there are large panoramic white screens.

Audience members are invited to leave after each performance, when a ten-minute timer appears on the screens. Tickets are available for two hours, four hours or more, right up to ten hours, for those who can go the distance. Performances last between twenty minutes and an hour.

Audiences are invited to watch the show from two or four sides, sometimes seated or lying out on the stage, sometimes standing concert-style, depending on the performances.

There are fifteen actors and a live musician, as well as cameramen for recorded images.

Julien Gosselin

Julien Gosselin studied at the EPSAD college of performing arts in Lille, run by Stuart Seide. Along with six other actors from his year group, he formed *Si vous pouviez lécher mon cœur* (literally, "If you could lick my heart"), or SVPLMC, in 2009, and directed Fausto Paravidino's *Gènes 01* at the Théâtre du Nord in 2010. The following year, he directed the original production of the French version of *Tristesse Animal Noir* by Anja Hilling at the Théâtre de Vanves, before taking it on tour in 2012. In July 2013, he directed Michel Houellebecq's *Les Particules élémentaires* at the Avignon Festival, *Si vous pouviez lécher mon cœur's* third production, and in March 2014 he directed *Je ne vous ai jamais aimés*, a short-form production based on a text by Pascal Bouaziz from the group Mendelson, at the Théâtre National in Brussels. In the autumn of 2015 he was back with *Le Père* by Stéphanie Chaillou at the Théâtre National in Toulouse, and that same season, at the Avignon Festival, directed *2666*, adapted from Roberto Bolaño's ground-breaking saga, before it went on tour around France and the rest of the world. At the 2017 Festival de Marseille he directed *1993*, based on a text by Aurélien Bellanger, with students from the Théâtre National in Strasbourg's year group 43. For the 2018 edition of the Avignon Festival, he adapted and directed three novels by American author Don DeLillo, namely *Players*, *Mao II* and *The Names*. The following year, at the invitation of the Internationaal Theater Amsterdam, he continued his work with Don DeLillo by adapting *Falling Man* (*Vallende Man*) with the actors of the ITA ensemble, in March 2019.

As part of the *Printemps des Comédiens* festival in Montpellier, he directed another Don DeLillo creation in the form of *Hammer and Sickle*.

In February 2021, Julien Gosselin and the Théâtre National de Strasbourg's 45 group created an adaptation of Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Dekalog*.

The director returned to the Théâtre National de Strasbourg with *Le Passé*, an adaptation of texts by Russian author Léonid Andreev, that autumn.

In the spring of 2022, he directed *Sturm und Drang*, the first instalment in the History of German Literature series, at the Berlin Volksbühne.

In 2023, he directed Thomas Bernhard and Arthur Schnitzler's *Extinction*, starring actors from both *Si vous pouviez lécher mon cœur* and the Volksbühne, at the *Printemps des Comédiens* festival in Montpellier, before taking it to the Avignon Festival, Berlin, Antwerp and Paris (Théâtre de la Ville).

Since 15 July 2024, he has been director of the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe.



© Christophe Raynaud de Lage



© Christophe Raynaud de Lage

Tour 2025

Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe

March 21, 22, 23

performances with English surtitles

Printemps des Comédiens – Montpellier

June 7, 8, 9 (to be confirmed)

Wiener Festwochen | Freie Republik Vienne

June 21, 22 (to be confirmed)

Contact

Eugénie Tesson

Program and Production Director

+ 33 6 22 18 11 14

eugenie.tesson@theatre-odeon.fr