

Christophe Coppens

Director, Designer, Visual Artist

...And it works. Because Coppens had the intelligence to leave enough references to nature and animals - with moments of great beauty, and even dreamlike moments... This world sounds true of today (there is even Trump and Wilders on TV) without miserably labouring the point... And because of his direction of actors, and especially his management of young extras, is an almost perfect success: the movement is a hymn to life, and contains nature's effervescence.

Nicolas Blanmont, La Libre

Christophe Coppens is a director, designer and visual artist. He designs sets (in collaboration with ISM Architects) and costumes for all his productions, making an acclaimed debut as an opera director in 2017, directing *FOXIE!* – an adaptation of *The Cunning Little Vixen* – at La Monnaie / De Munt. He returned to Brussels at the end of 2017-18 with a double bill of Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* and *The Miraculous Mandarin*. Theatre projects include the direction of a new work by Javier Barcala, based on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, for NTT Groningen, in September 2018.

Prior to his return to directing in 2017, Christophe gathered a suitcase full of experiences from his prolific work in other fields - experiences that now colour his approach to his work as a director.

Coppens initially studied drama and theatre direction, then - quite by chance - developed a global career in fashion, design and art. In those prolific years (1991-2011) he made many collections of fashion accessories, hats and couture, had collaborations in the fashion, music and design worlds, and stores all over the world. His collections were shown at Fashion Week in Paris and in Japan. His work included millinery for the collections of designers such as Issey Miyake, Guy Laroche, Juun J, Songzio, Manish Arora, as well as creations for Rihanna, Grace Jones, les Scissor Sisters, Beth Ditto, Róisín Murphy.

In 2012 Christophe took the decision to close his fashion business and devote himself to his work as an artist. He has exhibited in Brussels, Tokyo, Rotterdam, New York, LA and Hong Kong, and recent shows include a retrospect on his 20 year career at Pierre Bergé & Associates in Brussels (2011), *Early Paintings*, HPGRP Gallery New York and Tokyo (2014-2015) *Works on Paper*, Stephane Simoens Gallery Knokke (2015) and *50 Masks Made in America*, Please Do Not Enter in Los Angeles (2016). Coppens has studios in both Belgium and in Madrid, and is currently preparing a new exhibition of his artworks.

In 2015 Christophe was appointed Programme Director of a new Masters – *Fashion Matters* - at the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam.

But the seductive voice of theatre kept calling, leading him full circle to his opera director debut in 2017.

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