

Thursday 10 & Friday 11 January 2019  
Lilian Baylis Studio, 8pm  
Free post-show talk: Thu



# London International Mime Festival

# Olivier de Sagazan

# *Transfiguration*

LONDON PREMIERE

**World Premiere** 1998, Galerie Marie Vitoux, Paris, France

**Duration** 45 mins (no interval)

**Conceived, directed, designed and performed by** Olivier de Sagazan

This production is supported by Institut Français du Royaume-Uni  
as part of its En Scène! programme

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Supported using public funding by  
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# A note on Transfiguration

I am alone, a painter and sculptor. For 30 years, working with my hands and body, I have tried to understand who I am. I'm flabbergasted in seeing to what degree people think it's normal to be alive. Disfigurement in art is a way to distance oneself from everyday life and perhaps to better understand real life.

In my studio some 20 years ago I became frustrated and exhausted with my lack of success in attempting a particular sculpture. I couldn't bring it to life. I thought that maybe I just needed to get into the clay myself, to see things from inside, to see what I miss when working with my hands from 'outside.' That's how Transfiguration was born. I couldn't have imagined the result, but I understood that I was working blind, that the image I was producing was created from touch, not from seeing. I discovered the importance of improvisation and chance in invoking our presence in the world.

I was born in Africa, and have often been asked what aspects of my performance relate to my country of birth and its culture. I believe it is a question of engagement and authenticity: in black Africa, art objects such as masks or fetishes – as well as

certain dances – are acts of survival in order to connect with the spirits, to ask their favour. I don't believe in spirits or other worlds, but conversely for me a performance is a vital gesture in that it represents a means to question my identity in the world. I want to reveal all the enigma of a face, and thus of the Being which animates it. For me, disfigurement in art isn't a hostile act towards life: conversely, the effacement is a measure of loss and the transformation a measure of strength.

**Olivier de Sagazan**

## **About Olivier de Sagazan**

Born 1959 in Brazzaville, Congo, Olivier de Sagazan is a French artist, painter, sculptor and performer. His work typically involves building layers of clay and paint onto his own face and body, transforming his own identity and revealing a half human, half animal seeking to understand his true nature. In Transfiguration he breaks down barriers between the physical and spiritual senses.

Olivier de Sagazan has notably featured in the film Samsara by cinematographer Ron Fricke, in videos with best-selling French singer Mylène Farmer and British singer/songwriter/dancer FKA Twigs, and recently in London in a collaboration with Nick Knight and Gareth Pugh on the fashion film presenting Pugh's Spring/Summer 2018 collection. His forthcoming movie appearances include Mario Sorrenti's supernatural thriller, Discarnate, and Bartosz Konopka's historical action film, The Mute and with Qui Yang for a virtual reality movie.

He has exhibited and performed in galleries, theatres and at festival's across Europe, North and South America, China and the Middle East.

[olivierdesagazan.com](http://olivierdesagazan.com)

## **About London International**

### **Mime Festival**

London International Mime Festival (LIMF) promotes contemporary visual theatre. Its productions have won nominations for Olivier Awards and in 2017 the festival was honoured with the Empty Space - Peter Brook Special Achievement Award for its work over four decades. Founded in 1977, LIMF is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

**Festival Directors** Helen Lannaghan & Joseph Seelig

**Production Manager** Bill Deverson

**Artists Managers** Stephanie Brotchie & Shanti Freed

**Press Representatives**

Anna Arthur PR

**Graphics & Website** Iain Lanyon

**Marketing Consultants**

Mobius Industries

London International Mime Festival 2019 gratefully acknowledges co-operation/financial support from: Arts Council England; Institut français as part of its En Scène programme; Finnish Institute in London/TelePART; Royal Norwegian Embassy, London and Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI)

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## Coming up in the Lilian Baylis Studio

### **Albert Quesada & Zoltán Vakulya**

#### **OneTwoThreeOneTwo**

Thu 4 & Fri 5 April 2019

A pair of male dancers break flamenco down into its component parts, inspecting each to find out the source of its singular magic.

### **Nora Invites Deborah Hay**

#### **Where Home Is**

Wed 24 & Thu 25 April 2019

Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikorski and Flora Wellesley Wesley invite the experimental Deborah Hay to make a new piece for them.

### **Wild Card: Keira Martin**

Thu 9 May 2019

An evening of live music, dance and spoken word drawing on Irish, African and Jamaican influences which asks: who owns culture?

## For Sadler's Wells

### **Artistic Director and Chief Executive**

Alistair Spalding

### **Artistic Programmer and Artist**

#### **Development**

Eva Martinez

### **Projects Producer, Programming**

Robyn Cabaret

### **Programming Coordinators**

Christopher Haddow, Winona Guy

### **Senior House Manager**

Marguerite Bullard

### **Director of Technical and Production**

Emma Wilson

### **Technical Manager**

Zeynep Kepekli

### **Theatre Technicians**

Fraser Thompson-Noble, Pete Maxey, Nick Rundall

### **Senior Marketing Officer**

Martha Quigley

### **Press Officer**

Alicia Powell