

“ Subtle re-make of elusive Satie...

“ Intriguing play of rituals revives in free adaptation...

“ Radios and gramophones help pianist in ancient ‘mammal notes’...



“Within the small freedom that Satie offers, Reinier van Houdt shows he possesses a profound sense of color and nuance, enhanced more than adequately by his performance as an actor. Together with actress Barbara Duijfjes he plays a mysterious game of rituals that leaves a lot of question-marks, but that connects perfectly with the elusive world of sound that Satie and composer van Rossum have created...”

(De Volkskrant)



“ A white play without words”

“Satie would have been thrilled by this performance.....dream-like music, confusing imagery, hypnotic acts, they all create a sense of wonder that is hard to put into words.....this is surprise after surprise.....this white performance finally has become totally Satie....”

(Dagblad Trouw)



LE FILS DES ÉTOILES

or

# Notes of a Mammal

An imaginative performance about Erik Satie

Barbara Duijfjes  
Actress

Reinier van Houdt  
Idea / Pianist

Petra van der Schoot  
Direction / visuals / scenografie

Piet-Jan van Rossum  
Music / Sound

Albert Tulling  
Light design

Stichting Igitur  
Production

## Le Fils des Étoiles Or



### NOTES OF A MAMMAL

*Notes of a mammal* is the first staged performance of Erik Satie's complete stage music LE FILS DES ÉTOILES. This music was only recently published by Scratch Orchestra-member Christopher Hobbs. Satie wrote it in 1892 as a commission for Joséphin Péladan's homonymous play.

Péladan - a key figure of the Rosicrucian's - wanted a grand Wagnerian happening, where massive dramatic sounds would submissively illustrate his text. Satie however wrote a very cool, sublime, almost motionless music for solo piano that ignored the drama. Satie: "...my ideal would be that the music doesn't move a muscle when a protagonist enters...I want to create a musical scenery where characters can move freely..." Satie and Péladan could not come to an agreement and predictably, the performance never took place.

But what did Satie have in mind when he wrote his music, what were the roots of his remarkable imagination?

Now, 115 years later, a visual artist, a composer, an actress and a pianist, fascinated by this question, joined forces to create the first staging of Le Fils des Étoiles. The performance *Notes of a Mammal* is a work on both visual and musical imagination.

Composer Piet-Jan van Rossum created a new composition, departing from Satie's long forgotten stage-music Le Fils des Étoiles. He studied the score as it was found in the archives and decided Satie must have left it a draught, obviously not ready for publication. By re-composing the piece and honouring Satie's spirit as if he were around today, van Rossum releases the music to the present time. In his instrumentation he uses not only piano, but also old gramophones, world-receivers, laptops and tape-recorders, all distributed in a refined, detailed and spatial sound-design.

Visual artist Petra van der Schoot developed a theatrical concept or image-scenario inspired by the way Satie experienced the world and survived it as an artist: "Satie was the "image-thinker", of the music world. The special thing about him is that he felt morality and mentality of the artist-man should be reflected in the work of art. In spite of all the colourful eccentricities and dada-pranks, Satie's life was devoted to an impossible and almost tragic-comical striving for 'whiteness'..."

In a fully white décor with video projections, sculptures, radio's, gramophones and laptops, actress Barbara Duijfjes and pianist Reinier van Houdt inhabit a formal, black piano-island and conjugate Satie's material like a game of chess, played by the imagination. They enter the ghostlike realm beyond the story, where every image yields soft static - images like in a dream, with nor inside or outside.

Robbed of any story whatsoever, we join Satie in poverty behind the piano, and we follow our joyful master of exiting boredom through absurd worlds, wonderful manifestations of his own piano playing.

In the artistic direction of *Notes of a Mammal*, van der Schoot aims for a new form of music theatre, where music and image are irreducible elements, no longer submitting to each other or to a story. Instead they come together in one integral score for sound, image, action and light.

*Notes of a Mammal* wants to be a contemporary tribute to the extraordinary artist Erik Satie, who - in his times often misunderstood- turned out to be a pioneer for new music and modern mentality. His ideas and techniques have silently become common property, his music more and more abused for soaps, pop music and commercials, whereas Satie himself and his motives have sadly been forgotten.

With *Notes of a Mammal*, the artists want to bring new life to Satie's music by reintroducing the attitude and necessity from which his work was born.



Direction/visuals/scenography: Petra v/d Schoot - Music/Sound: Piet-Jan van Rossum & Erik Satie - Actress: Barbara Duijfjes - Idea/Pianist: Reinier van