



Vive l'art France!

Festival of Perth

France, mère des arts.

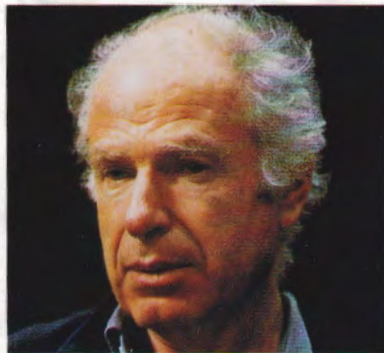
J. du Bellay, 1515 – 1560

Le Centre International de Créations Théâtrales France

PETER BROOK'S production of *La Tragedie de Carmen*

Adapted from Bizet's opera by Marius Constant, Jean-Claude Carriere and Peter Brook.

Produced by Micheline Rozan. Conducted by Marius Constant and Philippe Nahon with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.



Peter Brook



Left to right: Peter Brook, Marius Constant and Jean-Claude Carriere

'For his La Tragedie de Carmen, Peter Brook has transformed the stage into a bullring carpeted with gravel and earth. It is an arena buffeted on every side by fate, and its round shape is echoed in every step of this production's relentless thrust. When we first meet the gypsy temptress Carmen, she tosses tarot cards into a small circle of rope placed in the dirt. When we see her ninety minutes later, she and her outcast soldier lover, Don Jose, make one final walk around the ring before meeting with the destiny those cards have dealt. Many other circles come in between – drawn in sand and outlined in rope – but the largest of them all is not seen, only felt. It is the noose that Mr Brook, through the astonishing power of his art, steadily tightens around the audience's throats.'

New York Times

Peter Brook declares: 'Opera is a form of theatre, and set alongside other forms of theatre, it is encumbered with incredibly unfavourable conditions. So, years ago I abandoned opera. But now it has become possible to change the conditions entirely – the nature of rehearsals and performances, the relationship with the spectators and the relationship with the theatre space.'

Re-defining those relationships was fundamental to Brook's thinking when he and co-adaptors Marius Constant and Jean-Claude Carriere turned to a distillation of Bizet's *Carmen*, in an attempt to create something more visceral and dramatically palatable than the original opera.

First came readings (both in French and English) of Prosper Merimee's novella *Carmen*, upon which Bizet based his opera. Carriere stated in a New York Times interview, 'the aim was to remove 19th century ornament and trimming from Bizet's opera so that *Carmen* herself would emerge as the figure originally drawn by Merimee – a coarsely charismatic seductress, thief and prostitute.'

Brook and his colleagues developed the general form of libretto and score (four singers, three actors, 15 on-stage

musicians). But the creative process was profoundly influenced and sometimes suggested by the performers themselves.

Ultimately, Brook's vision of a synthesis of sense and sound was realized in *La Tragedie de Carmen* – a vision which encompasses an elemental tale of fate and passion, conveyed intimately and directed by actor-singers to a participating audience. 'The whole process,' says Brook, 'has to do with human relationships – relationships with each other, with the material, with the audience. We deliberately avoid the conventions, the pre-conceived ideas, the cut-and-dried formulas that stand in the way of a raw and immediate communication between the events on stage and the emotions of the audience.'

Reaction of audiences to the production's first performances in Paris was immediate, direct and vocal – their feelings echoed by critics from Paris to London and New York.

'The acting is so good that the spectator almost forgets it is being done by singers.'

International Herald Tribune

'The rough theatrical impact of a pound of gunpowder per minute.'

New York Times



Cynthia Clarey as Carmen with Alain Maratrat as Lillas Pastia



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Loretta Bybee as Carmen with Greer Grimsley as Escamillo



Loretta Bybee as Carmen

Brook has drawn together an outstanding cast of international performers for his production:

Carmen	Loretta Bybee, USA Cynthia Clarey, USA
Don Jose	James Hoback, USA Claude-Robin Pelletier, Canada
Micaela	Anne-Christine Biel, Sweden Veronique Dietschy, France
Escamillo	Jake Gardner, USA Greer Grimsley, USA
Zuniga	Jean-Paul Denizon, France
Lillas Pastia	Alain Maratrat, France
Garcia	Bakary Sangare, France

Sponsored by Rothmans Foundation

Octagon Theatre

7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18,
19 February 8.30pm

Event Code: CARMEN
\$66 (F \$61)

A number of bench seats and cushion spaces on the edge of the acting area will be available for each performance at a concession price of \$35.

There will be a special preview performance on Monday 6 February 8.30pm for which there will be a limited number of seats available for pensioners, students and unemployed persons only at a concession price of \$35 (bench and cushion spaces \$25).

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