Stacey Christodoulou talks about directing and co-producing the upcoming Talisman/Other Theatre Production PROVINCE by Mathieu Gosselin/Translation by Nadine Desrochers

For many years The Other Theatre has played a huge role in Montreal, focusing on bringing to life new text, collective creations, and public space installments that are both dynamic and innovative. I sat with Artistic Director Stacey Christodoulou to discuss her directorial process in the upcoming play PROVINCE.

Can you start by telling me a bit about your process?

SC: I like to do as little table work as possible. I think it is important to read it once and then get everyone on their feet. Not that I don't do text analysis, or that I have a low opinion of text, I just feel like the best analyzing comes from action. Theatre is not just a piece of literature, it is meant to be alive.

How has your process/style worked with the building of PROVINCE?

SC: I think this play really shines in this process of exploration and movement. It is a play with a lot of subtext; it even looks scarce on the page. There is so much unspoken between characters, and so many moments that on first read may seem loud or brash but, in rehearsal, end up being very soulful. I believe this play needs to be rooted in a very concrete physical base.

What are some ways you are challenging the cast?

SC: I come from a lot of experience working with dancers and performers of physical theater. I have been trained extensively in Viewpoints and Corporeal Mime activities, and I bring that to my rehearsals. I try to challenge performers to gain more awareness of themselves on stage, and paying attention to

what others are doing. You need to be fully aware of everyone around you, and become conscious of how you perceive time and space on stage; exploring all the elements and physics of a piece of theatre.

What has been the most excite part of this project for you?

SC: I have loved the way this play is so open to operating on a metaphorical level. The play is based in reality but it is has a poetic nature, it is not simple or literal. The performers have been working hard to illuminate the text, and the interconnections between this large cast of many characters is very challenging and exciting. We are creating a community on stage; a dream world that is both beautiful and decrepit, it is mystical yet comes from a place of reality.

Don't miss PROVINCE - Opening October 7th at Centaur Theatre