



**Eric BRETON**

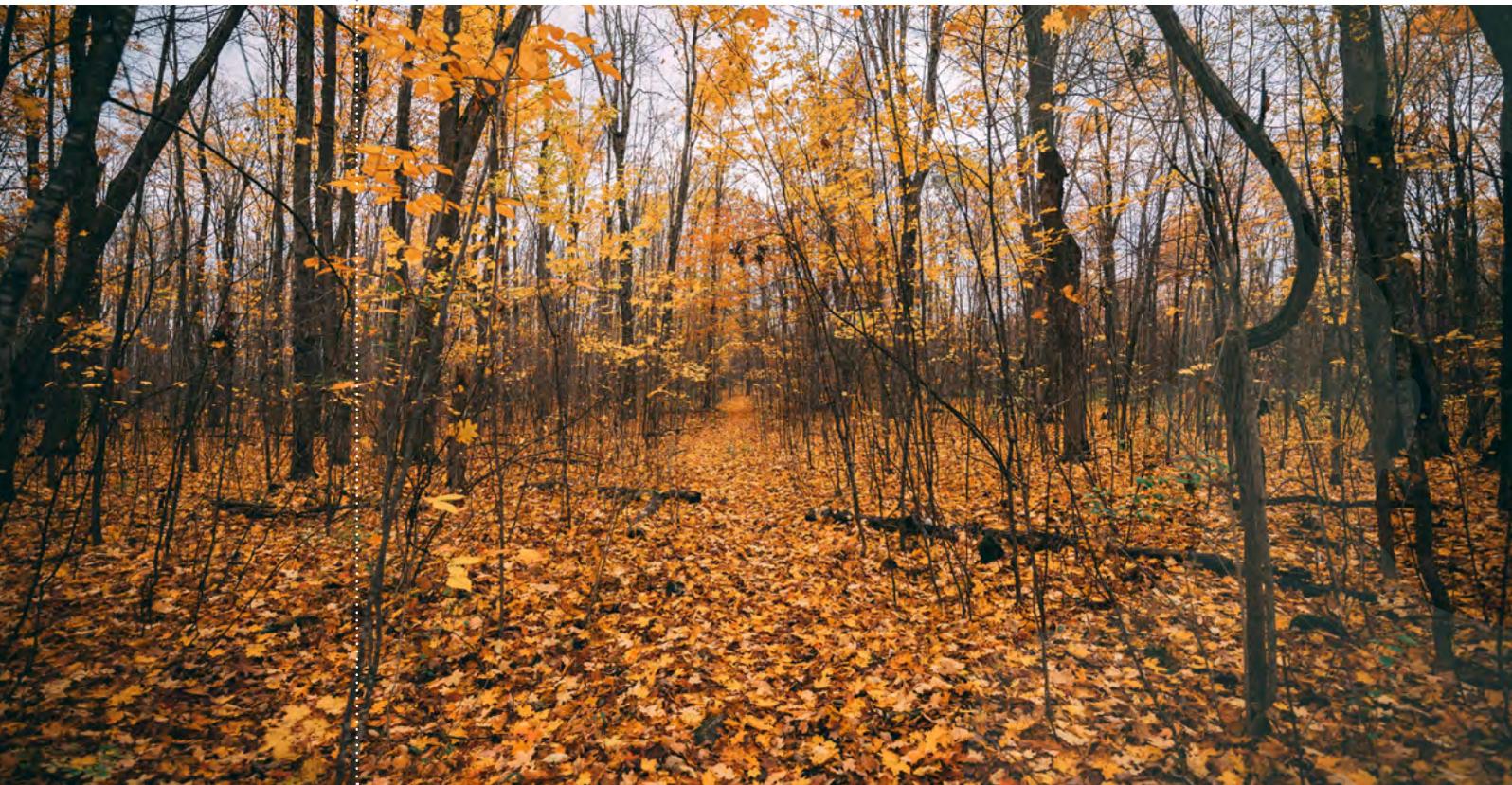
Mob. +33(0) 6 62 42 02 58  
eric@ericbreton.com



# PRESS KIT

## THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH

### OPERA



Composer **Eric Breton**

Libretto **Eric Breton after the novel by Augustin Billetdoux  
(Gallimard / Les Cygnes Publishing)**

Staging **Charles Chemin**

Production **Grand Avignon Opera**

In partnership with **Sarajevo Winter Festival**

Creation date and location: **Avignon, France - November 2020**



Simon, twenty-five, suffers from androgenetic alopecia (baldness). The fall of his hair is an existential fall as well. Recluse, he finds solace in literature and online forums, where other young alopecia sufferers vent their own distress.

But his existence will be shaken by a most symbolic discovery: he was conceived out of a donation. Neither his mother nor himself know the identity of his biological father. He is the "Son of Mankind". Gathering a small entourage, he intuitively feels that something is "expressing" itself through him, and that the ill he is afflicted with is but one of the many facets of a growing climate change. Growing conscious of a parallel between deforestation and baldness, he foresees he must accomplish an extraordinary feat for him make sense out of his chaos.

Meanwhile, he will meet M.M, who will become his favorite disciple, and will encourage him upon the narrow path ahead of him: becoming the Bald People's Messiah, whose mission will be to reforest the human soul as well as the planet.

There remains to find how to address mankind to call its people to rebellion. A providential United Nations summit with global stakes will give him just this opportunity. At first, only a few followers join Simon, but gradually a massive crowd comes from everywhere.

At United Nations, Simon and his followers become conscious of the system's immobility: unanimity is needed amongst voters in order to pass legislation, and everybody strives to find Byzantine complications. Requests are made to move a comma, change one word, etc.

Still, Simon manages to speak to the President of United Nations, who then begins to understand what is at stake: the parallel between a planet plagued by deforestation and the heads of men plagued by alopecia comes to light. But one of the disciples holds a more radical vision of the action needing to be undertaken, and plots with Security. As Simon comes closer to the President to shake his hand, he is shot by his security detail.

Is a casualty needed in order to save the planet? The epic of a rebel at the confines of his utopian ideas: whoever succeeds is a genius, whoever fails is a madman.

**SIMON** (25 years old) tenor

**M.M** (25 years old) Mezzo **SARAH LAULAN**

**THE MOTHER** (40/50 years old) Soprano **LYDIA MAYO**

**CAPILEA DOMINA** (25/40 years old) Soprano

**THE PRESIDENT** (40/50 years old) Baritone

**JUDAS** (25/40 years old) Dramatic baritone

**CHORUS** (some of whom will occasionally sing small solo parts)

**BALLET**

**ORCHESTRA**



## Eric Breton

### Composer

Eric Breton was born in Avignon, France, where he studied piano, harmony as well as counterpoint. A student of Mrs. Hélène Varszegi, he will later study composition and orchestration with Ivan Jullien and orchestra conducting with Ernst Schelle.

A prolific and eclectic composer, Eric Breton uses many different types of formations and has seen his work played internationally, be it in attendance of Pope John Paul II, US President Bill Clinton, or on the occasion of prestigious collaborations (Lord Yehudi Menuhin, Maurice Jarre, Emir Nuhanovic...).

He is the only French citizen, in 1996, to be presented with the Sloboda Award for the Defense of Human Rights and Humanism in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Named Ambassador of Arts and Culture of the city of Avignon in 1994, Eric Breton is also an honorary member of the Sarajevo Philharmonic.

Beyond his instrumental works, he has a passion for voice, which has brought him to compose over a hundred melodies on texts ranging from Petrarch to Christian Bobin, Victor Hugo, Pablo Neruda, Frédéric Mistral and many others... As such, he was asked to contribute to the "Vaccaï 2000" collection, published under the aegis of Paris Higher National Conservatory for Music and destined for opera students.

His is also the author of three musical comedies, a Cantata for chorus after Nathan the Wise by G.E. Lessing, two masses in Latin, stage music, ballet and soundtrack music for film and television, not forgetting five comic operas.

## Charles Chemin

### Staging

Charles is Franco-American and was born in Paris in 1983. He was trained by Meg Harper (Merce Cunningham Co.), Robert Wilson and Philippe Chemin.

He conceives shows between theater, dance and visual arts, with subjects where fiction and reality collide. He presents two fake solo pieces in 2019 with the female performer being the subject of the piece, *I hope* at Ménagerie de Verre in Paris and *SALOME* at Odeon Theater in Bucharest. In 2017/18, he created *20 silences* at Vicenza Festival, based on his research at NASA and *Athens by night* at Craiova National Theater, based on two Shakespeare plays, *Timon of Athens* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. His works since 2008 include productions at Performa Biennial in New York, Havana Biennial, Babel Festival in Romania, Bregenz International Festival, and Moscow Contemporary Art Biennial.

He also works as a co-director for Robert Wilson and collaborated with him in over twenty countries. In 2018/19, Charles co-directs *Mary Said* with Isabelle Huppert and *Jungle Book* with CocoRosie by Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, tours *Rhinoceros* by Ionesco and *Krapp's Last Tape* by Beckett where he directs Wilson on stage, and remounts the mythical *I La Galigo* in Indonesia. He participates in the artistic orientation of the Watermill Center, a laboratory for performance created by Wilson in New York. He has had a long career as an actor with Meg Harper, Robert Wilson, Philippe Chemin and many others in places like Comédie-Française, Lincoln Center in New York, Festival d'Avignon, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Mmoma Moscou, Barbican Center in London and other major French and European theaters.

## Sarah Laulan

### Mezzo-soprano

Following theater studies at Conservatory of Tours, France, then at National Theater of Toulouse, Sarah Laulan studied opera singing at Royal Conservatory of Brussels (class of Mr Pousseur), then at Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel (class of José Van Dam). Third prize winner of the Queen Elisabeth International Competition in 2014, she also was awarded the Paul Streit Prize at the Geneva Voice Competition of 2016. She was heard in the roles of Maddalena (Rigoletto/ Liege Opera), Cleone (Penelope / Rhein National Opera), Mrs. Quickly (Falstaff/Massy), Lucy (The Threepenny Opera), Theodorine (L'Île de Tulipatan), Carmen (Algiers), and lately in the lead role in The Shadow of Venceslao, on a European tour. She has recorded a CD, "The Blasphemies".

## Lydia Mayo

### Soprano

Après des études de piano, hautbois et et l'obtention de la médaille d'or en chant, Lydia Mayo est admise à l'école d'art lyrique de l'Opéra de Paris durant 3 années, bénéficiant de masters classes avec les plus grands, (Alfrédo Kraus,Christa Ludwig, Hans Hotter).

Elle se produit sur les scènes françaises et internationales dans les ouvrages tels que : « *la Célestine* » de Maurice Ohana à l'Opéra Garnier, « *La Fiancée* » des *Noces* de Stravinsky, et tourne le film de ce même ouvrage pour la télévision flamande.

On a pu l'entendre à l'Opéra-Comique dans « *Vincenette* » de Mireille, « *Miss Ellen* » de Lakmé avec Natalie Dessay, « *Miss Gobineau* » du Médium avec Rita Gorr, « *Frasquita* » dans Carmen, « *Carolina* » Matrimonio Segreto (Cimarosa) avec la troupe de l'Opéra Comique. Mais aussi dans d'autres théâtres : *la Bohème*, *Thaïs*, *Manon*; *Roméo et Juliette*, *La Favorite*, *Così fan tutte*... Notons aussi son répertoire d'Opérette, Opéra-Comique dont les principaux rôles sont : « *Serpolette* » (*Les Cloches de Corneville*); « *Franzi* » (*Rêve de Valse*); « *Simone* » (*Mousquetaires au Couvent*); « *Nadia et Missia* » (*La Veuve Joyeuse*); « *stella* » (Fille du tambour major) ; « *madame Phidias* » (Phiphi)

#### PARTICIPANTS / PARTNERSHIPS

Other roles are not definitively cast yet.

Grand Avignon Opera Chorus: Direction Aurore Marchand

Grand Avignon Opera Ballet: Direction Eric Belaud

Avignon Provence Regional Symphonic Orchestra will be conducted by the composer



# THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH

## OPERA

after the eponymous novel and theater play  
by Augustin GUILBERT-BILLETDOUX (Gallimard  
and Les Cygnes publishing).  
Adaptation by Eric BRETON.

## CASTING / PARTICIPATION

SIMON (25 years old) tenor

M.M (and other roles as Female 2) (25 years old) Mezzo

THE MOTHER (and other roles as Female 1) (40/50 years old) Soprano

CAPILEA DOMINA (and other roles as Female 3) (25/40 years old) Soprano

THE PRESIDENT (and other roles as Male 1) (40/50 years old) Baritone

JUDAS (and other roles as Male 2) (25/40 years old) Dramatic baritone

CHORUS (some of whom will occasionally sing small solo parts)

BALLET ORCHESTRA

STAGING Charles CHEMIN



THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.  
Libretto Eric Breton  
After Augustin Guilbert-Billetedoux.

LIBRETTO

1/17

# THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH

## OPERA

### PROLOGUE

*Very simple symphonic introduction (solo English horn?)*

M.M:

It happened during the night.

My son is there, lying.

He is sleeping as I touch his forehead,

The same way all mothers have been

Since the dawn of time.

It happened during the night,

It's official.

Two degrees

Two degrees more

Two degrees more in average

Two degrees hotter

Two degrees too hot

Yet, back in the days when I was twenty-five years old

The powerful talked of saving the planet

We felt reassured

We were safe

But were we really?

### I - AT CAPILEA DOMINA'S

*The assistants and the patients: ballet dancers. Patients are wearing half-wigs.*

*Chorus stands in the background, as if in a waiting room.*

*High-tech medical practice interior, but dull lighting. Doctor CAPILEA DOMINA is seeing her patients who are standing in a single file. She is very strict-looking (chignon, glasses... ). Her female assistants are wearing very short white coats, with bare legs, stiletto heels. Clinical, slightly S&M atmosphere. Motorist repetitive music.*

SIMON is among the file of patients.

FEMALE ASSISTANTS:

Next !

CAPILEA DOMINA:

Acute androgenetic alopecia !



THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.  
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LIBRETTO

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FEMALE ASSISTANTS:  
Next!

CAPILEA DOMINA:  
Acute androgenetic alopecia!

FEMALE ASSISTANTS:  
Next!

CAPILEA DOMINA:  
Acute androgenetic alopecia!

*Each time, the music is becoming more oppressive.  
The Chorus is singing in counterpoint, on long values, the letters A, D, L, B, etc...  
These letters are projected on the backdrop. Each time a letter is sung, it is displayed on a  
neon tube in a greenish color. Letters are shown randomly.*

FEMALE ASSISTANTS:  
Next!

CAPILEA DOMINA:  
Acute androgenetic alopecia!

FEMALE ASSISTANTS:  
Next!

CAPILEA DOMINA:  
Acute androgenetic alopecia!

*At the end of the scene, the order sequence of the letters spells B.A.L.D.*

## II- DEPRESSION

SIMON:

And now, where do we go?  
Much too soon,  
Long before midway point down the road of my life,  
I am losing my way in a dark forest  
Its horrors are more bitter that the wait for death.  
What crime have I committed to lose the straight path?  
Alone, a shadow amidst shadows  
I have the appearance of the living.  
And all think me alive.  
My head is a knocker  
Hopelessly knocking  
On destiny's door.

Ever since the dawn of humanity, an absence of hair has been a sign of mediocrity.  
To dishonor a man? You shave his head...  
To weaken a man? You shave his head...  
To humiliate a man? You shave his head...  
Hair, it is roots, it is grass, it is soil,  
It is the sky, it is the comets, it is the wind that makes them fly  
Like a displayed flag, it is...



### III- INTERNET FORUM 1

*Four characters are sitting back to back on a small revolving stage. Each one has a laptop on their lap, and is typing on its keyboard.*

Male 1:  
Hey, are you there?

Male 2:  
The urge to hide, ever felt it?

Male 1:  
There is no fighting against the natural selection of the eye!

Female 1:  
I am a girl, it happens to us too!

Male 2:  
Women like a nice head of hair!

Female 2:  
No boyfriend either!

Male 1:  
How many millions of us are there?

Male 2:  
We could set a meeting in a symbolic place!

Female 1:  
Young alopecia sufferers of all nations, unite!

Female 2:  
Ill-fated people of a thousand tongues, let's unite!

Male 1:  
How many millions of us are there?

Female 2:  
How many millions of us are there?

Male 2:  
How many millions of us are there?

Female 1:  
How many millions of us are there?

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LIBRETTO

4/17

## IV- THE SON OF MANKIND

SIMON:  
Mother!

How was he, the one I have no remembrance of?  
No virtue has adorned his memory  
Was my ill his before it was mine?

THE MOTHER:  
Unspeakable secret!  
Reckless confession!  
What to say of a cold transaction  
Performed in the dead of winter  
In the frozen silence  
Of a gloomy dispensary?

SIMON:  
A donation?

THE MOTHER:  
A donation! Yes, a donation  
Which has made you into who you are  
Given by an anonymous man

SIMON:  
No father, no name, no genes, no hair  
Everything is abandoning me!  
I am stepping out of a dark forest  
To emerge, blinded,  
In a devastated clearing!

THE MOTHER:  
Bach, Byron, Newton, Nietzsche, Moses, Luther, Jesus  
All orphans  
Or abandoned by their father!

SIMON:  
I am the Son of Mankind!

## INTERLUDE

*Chorus comes on stage. Each one is carrying a frame of approximately 60 by 60 cm at face level. Television news style music.  
In groups of 3 or 4, they switch on a lamp inside the frame, which lights up their face.  
Fast-moving sequences, as on a channel surfing TV screen.*

Males 1:  
Our special correspondent

Males 2:  
United Nations summit



*THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.*  
*Libretto Eric Breton*  
*After Augustin Guilbert-Billetdoux.*

**LIBRETTO**

5/17

Females 1:  
Climate change

Males 1:  
Media coverage

Females 2:  
Critical situation

Males 3:  
Political figures

Females 3:  
2 degrees

Males 1:  
2 degrees

Females 1:  
Irreversible process

Males 2:  
Predictable catastrophes

Females 2:  
Whole populations

Females 3:  
Negotiations

*AD LIBITUM, closer and closer together, then on top of each other :*

Negotiations  
Predictable catastrophes  
Irreversible process  
Whole populations  
United Nations summit, etc...

## **V- INTERNET FORUM 2**

Female 1:  
Hey, are you there?

Male 1:  
Alopecia is an allegory of imperfection

Male 2:  
As long as my hair remains thanks to the treatment, I shall live!

Female 2:  
But the clock is ticking

Male 1:  
I live in fear of that day



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*After Augustin Guilbert-Billetdoux.*

# LIBRETTO

6/17

Female 1:  
Unless...

Female 2:  
Unless?

Male 1:  
I can attribute this hair loss to something else

Male 2:  
To the accomplishment of something incredible?

Female 1:  
Something prodigious?

Female 2:  
Unhoped-for?

Female 1:  
Look around!

Male 1:  
I don't see anything!

Female 2:  
You can see nothing then... The only sphere that is metamorphosing,  
It's your head?

Female 1:  
Losing your hair at 25 years old, it is Winter time in Spring...

Female 2:  
She is taking revenge.

Male 1:  
Who? Who is taking revenge?

Female 2:  
Pachamama. Her hair, it is the trees.

Male 2:  
Two fields. Two football fields. Every two seconds,  
A small forest disappears, the size of a football field.

Female 1:  
I am like you, I don't know what to do...

Male 1:  
How many millions are we?

Male 2:  
We could set a meeting in a symbolic place!



*THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.*  
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After Augustin Guilbert-Billetdoux.

**LIBRETTO**

7/17

Female 1:  
Young alopecia sufferers of all nations, unite!

Female 2:  
Ill-fated people of a thousand tongues, let's unite!

Male 1:  
How many millions are we?

Female 2:  
How many millions are we?

Male 2:  
How many millions are we?

Female 1:  
How many millions are we?

## **VI- THE DREAM**

*Simon is lying in the center of the stage. The Chorus is divided into 4 groups (men and women mingled) and surround Simon, miming the scene..*

Group 1:  
He is a leper!

Group 2:  
A monster!

Group 3:  
An animal!

Group 4:  
Worse! He is bald!

Group 1:  
Don't come near!

The others, echoing:  
Don't come near! Don't come near!

Group 2:  
How ugly!

Group 3:  
How ugly!

Group 4:  
Let's stone him!

Group 1:  
Let's stone him!



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LIBRETTO

8/17

Group 2:  
Let's crucify him!

Group 3:  
Let's crucify him!

Group 4:  
He is fleeing! He is going towards the forest! He does not know!

Group 1:  
He does not know!

Group 2:  
He does not know!

Group 3:  
He does not know it no longer exists!

Group 4:  
Barren as a civil servant's soul!

Group 1:  
Sad as a minister's heart!

Group 2:  
Arid as a member of parliament's tongue!

Group 3:  
Dry as a senator's skin!

TUTTI: Bald!

*Simon is awoken by his phone's ring tone. He has received a text message which reads 'The United Nations summit on climate change and deforestation will be held next month'. All members of the audience whose phone number was collected get the same text message on their phones. Those who have not turned their phones off will get it in real time, others will get it after the show! The text message shows up on the surtitle screen as well.*

## VII- THE MEETING

+ choreography

*Long musical sequence during which Simon and M. M. meet, cross each other's path again, skim past each other. She has a long, luxurious head of hair (redhead?). The "first disciples" (bald ballet dancers) avoid her and are watching her with a suspicious eye. But ever so slowly, Simon and M. M. come closer together.*

M.M:  
I have seen the sky whose clouds are dirtied by the commercial world.  
I have prayed in the freezing wind filled with lightning,  
Implored the ferryman of this fetid swamp



*THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.*  
*Libretto Eric Breton*  
*After Augustin Guilbert-Billetedoux.*

**LIBRETTO**

9/17

And cried of impatience while waiting for new days.

Dying, thinking:

«I will have been drinking the impossible!»  
Instead of weeping for another possible life.

Of the disorders of the world,

Being

The spectator,

I leave this

To the sheep

To vile shareholders,

To kings of pollutions,

To master Communication consultants!

SIMON and M.M:

I have seen the sky

SIMON:

Its clouds dirtied by the commercial world.

SIMON and M.M:

I have prayed

SIMON:

In the freezing wind filled with lightning.

SIMON and M.M:

Implored

SIMON:

The ferryman of this fetid swamp

SIMON and M.M:

And cried

SIMON:

Of impatience waiting for new days.

SIMON and M.M:

Dying, thinking

SIMON:

"I will have been drinking the impossible!"

SIMON and M.M:

Instead of weeping

SIMON:

For another possible life.  
Of the disorders of the world,

Being

The spectator,

I leave this

To the sheep



THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.  
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LIBRETTO

10/17

To vile shareholders,  
To kings of pollutions,

SIMON and M.M:  
To master Communication consultants!

*They leave together...*

*The other disciples are anyhow watching M. M. with distrust, but with envy as well.*

## VIII- INTERNET FORUM 3

Man 1:  
Hey, are you there?

Woman 1:  
All peoples will be represented

Man 2:  
All but mine!

Woman 2:  
All but ours!

Man 1:  
Flagless people!

Man 2:  
Without an anthem!

Woman 1:  
Without a cause!

Woman 2:  
The bald people of a bald planet!

Man 1:  
We that science disregards, let us be the grain of sand that jams the cogs

Man 2:  
In the machinery of decline!

Woman 1:  
The machinery of history!

Woman 2:  
The history of the bald people!

Man 1:  
Deserts reaching the fronts and the continents!

Woman 1:  
We need a flag!



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LIBRETTO

11/17

Woman 2:  
An anthem!

Man 2:  
A cause!

Man 1:  
Let us find the one who will be the envoy!

Woman 1:  
The bearer of good tidings!

Man 2:  
The messenger!

## IX- THE PLEDGE (Simon becomes conscious of his role)

*A meal. Around the table, Simon, the Mother, M. M. and other disciples, among whom Judas.*

Apostle 1:  
How many millions of us are there?

Apostle 2:  
Ill-fated people of a thousand tongues, let's unite!

M.M:  
How many millions of us are there?

Apostle 1:  
The salvation of the world is in our hands!

SIMON:  
The one who follows me does not tread in darkness  
All are looking at him...

The Mother:  
My son?

SIMON:  
Son of Mankind!

The Mother:  
My son?

SIMON (to his mother):  
What do you want from me? What do you believe in? What do you expect?

The Mother:  
To change the ways of the world, to break the ancient submission, to leave the house  
of pain, to erase  
the incandescent footprint of the ancient world...



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LIBRETTO

12/17

SIMON, to M.M:

What do you want from me? What do you believe in? What do you expect?

M.M:

To dream beyond the dream, to feel at last the burning essence of life, to sow green pastures whose furrows were wounded by profit and ignorance...

SIMON (rising slowly):

The one who follows me does not tread in darkness

TUTTI:

The ones who follow you tread in the light!

## X- THE LONG ROAD

SIMON, DISCIPLES, THE CHORUS, THE BALLETT

*Simon and some disciples take to the road. They are very few, but are soon joined by a growing crowd (cf/ Pilgrim's March-Tannhauser).*

THE CHORUS:

How many millions of us are there?  
Ill-fated people of a thousand tongues  
Mute people, gagged people, forgotten people  
How many millions of us are there?  
Humiliated people, exploited people,  
Freed people!

## XI- ARRIVAL AT UNO

BALLETT

*Orchestra. Nations Anthem.  
North Korean style parade.*

## XII- BRIEFING

**(Dissension appears among the group,  
particularly between Simon and Judas)**

Woman 1:

We who are entering in here, let us be all hope!

JUDAS:

Hope for who?  
Hope for what?

M.M:

For heroes and cowards,  
For kings, and peasants  
For loving couples  
For parents, children,  
All have lived here,  
On this speck of dust  
Green and blue.



*THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.*  
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*After Augustin Guilbert-Billetdoux.*

# LIBRETTO

13/17

Woman 1:  
This is our home!

The Mother and M.M:  
This is our home!

Man 2:  
How many kings,  
How many Generals  
Have shed rivers of blood  
To be masters but an instant  
Of a fraction of this bubble of matter  
Tiny stage in the grand cosmic opera!

JUDAS:  
We need to act!

SIMON:  
Why have we not acted?

JUDAS:  
We need to act!  
An attack!  
A few casualties!

SIMON:  
We are millions of walkers,  
Peaceful bald heads,  
Living witnesses of the looming peril!

JUDAS:  
We need to act!  
Drive the merchants out of the temple!  
A few casualties!  
Just a few!  
It is the price to pay...

SIMON:  
We will show!  
They will see!  
We will speak!  
They will understand!  
We will say!  
They will know!

JUDAS:  
It will not be enough!



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LIBRETTO

14/17

## XIII- DEBATES AT UNO

THE CHORUS + THE BALLET

The General Secretary (chorus singer):

Resolution 13.649:

«Coastal zones, excluding port facilities, as well as coastal forests must be protected»

Delegate 1 (chorus singer):

Objection!

Let us move the second comma, from «facilities» to «forests»!

The General Secretary (chorus singer):

«Coastal zones, excluding port facilities as well as coastal forests, must be protected»

The General Secretary (chorus singer):

Let's vote!

(They are voting...)

178 votes in favor,

3 votes against,

5 abstentions.

Objection accepted!

Resolution adopted!

The General Secretary (chorus singer):

Resolution 13.650:

Proposal: "Environmental standards, excluding carbon emission levels, and the contribution of polluting states will be reevaluated»

Delegate 1 (chorus singer):

Objection!

Let us move the second comma, from «levels» to «states»!

The General Secretary (chorus singer):

"Environmental standards, excluding carbon emission levels and the contribution of polluting states, will be reevaluated»

The General Secretary (chorus singer):

Let's vote!

(They are voting...)

175 votes in favor,

2 votes against,

9 abstentions.

Objection accepted!

Resolution adopted!

*Debates continue, covered by the music. Circus music, discordant and chaotic.*

*The delegates are getting agitated, miming heated discussions.*

*The President, visibly disillusioned, withdraws slowly.*

*Musical atmosphere change.*

*SIMON follows him*

**TWO PARALLEL SCENES (STAGE LEFT AND RIGHT?) XIV and XV**

## XIV- SIMON AND THE PRESIDENT

*The President sports a beautiful head of greying hair.*

THE PRESIDENT (as if to himself):  
Three intermediate meetings, one summit a year!  
Civil servants, scientists,  
Jurists, journalists,  
Everyone likes expense-paid travels,  
Buffets, opening ceremonies!  
After all, it all generates employment!  
*He notices Simon...*

SIMON:  
How can you criticize yourself?  
And yet...

THE PRESIDENT:  
I sometimes think about it

SIMON:  
Think?

THE PRESIDENT:  
«The hotter is gets, the better»  
How many obscure non-profits  
Exist in the world  
Thanks to climate change?

SIMON:  
How can you criticize them?  
Yet...

THE PRESIDENT:  
We are all, unconsciously,  
Waiting for the spectacle of the first hurricanes,  
The fascinating spectacle of towns flooded...  
And yet...

SIMON:  
And yet?

THE PRESIDENT:  
It all seems far away  
We are only seeing the beginnings  
Not enough to feel on our napes  
The burning wind of the desert...

SIMON:  
Look at me!  
Soon there will be no more trees on Earth  
Than there is hair on my head!  
Turn around for a moment...  
Turn around for a moment towards the others...



THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.  
Libretto Eric Breton  
After Augustin Guilbert-Billetdoux.

LIBRETTO

16/17

What do you see? (the President turns his head and sees the crowd of bald people)  
What do you see?  
A portrait of the Earth at the turn of this century,  
Devoid of vegetation,  
Flooded by the waters!

THE PRESIDENT:  
The fall, it is a mourning,  
It is the end of the show!

SIMON:  
In the name of the bald people,  
I am the one who says "enough!"

*Slowly, the President removes his wig and strokes his completely hairless head.*

## XV- TREASON

*The scene is mimed on the other side of the stage.  
JUDAS speaks in conspiratorial tones, to member of the security detail (BALLET),  
pointing towards Simon and the President.  
This scene will be lit intermittently, JUDAS and the security detail are getting closer and  
closer to SIMON and the President each time.*

## XVI- DEATH OF SIMON

*SIMON is walking in direction of the President. They look at each other... He wants to  
shake Hands, and takes a step forward.  
Seeing his security detail coming, the President flinches.*

THE PRESIDENT:  
Do not touch me!  
*SIMON, incredulous, comes a little closer...*

THE PRESIDENT:  
Do not touch me!

*SIMON slowly lets his gaze sweep over all of the other actors of the scene, who have  
joined him: the Mother, M. M, the apostles, the Delegates.  
He wants to let them know his speech was heard, that the President is on their side. But all  
look at him with horror...*

SIMON (to the disciples):  
Come,  
Do not be afraid!  
All is accomplished!  
He comes closer still...

THE PRESIDENT:  
Do not touch me!

*The security detail shoot. SIMON crumbles...*



THE BALD PEOPLE'S MESSIAH.  
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LIBRETTO

17/17

## XVII- DEPLORATION

*The Mother and M. M. are alone near SIMON's body. Nostalgic and poignant music (cf/ Barber's Adagio). Then the Mother starts singing a funeral lament, joined by M. M. who is singing another melody in counterpoint to the first one.*

*Backstage, the Chorus start singing the Long March theme, pianissimo:*

How many millions of us are there?  
Ill-fated people of a thousand tongues  
Mute people, gagged people, forgotten people  
How many millions of us are there?  
Humiliated people, exploited people,  
Freed people!

*The three melodies overlap and disappear progressively...  
Orchestra only, which segues into the next sequence..*

## XVIII- FINAL

*After a long musical sequence, back to prologue.*

*All are on stage around SIMON's body.*

Quintet (Man 1, The President, JUDAS, The Mother, M.M, Woman 3):

It happened during the night.

He is there, lying.

He is sleeping and we touch his forehead,

The same way all mothers have been

Since the dawn of time.

It happened during the night,

It's official.

Two degrees

Two degrees more

Two degrees more in average

Two degrees hotter

Two degrees too hot

Still, he was twenty-five years old

*The Chorus come on stage and joins the quintet, followed by the Ballet:*

The powerful talk of saving the planet

We feel reassured

We are safe

The powerful talk of saving the planet

But are we really?

## FINAL DECRESCENDO TO PPP

# MUSICAL EXTRACTS & INTERVIEW



You can access the following by clicking on the PDF file link: :

Prologue

[Listen](#)

VI The dream

[Listen](#)

VII The meeting

[Listen](#)

You can also watch the interview by following the link below:

[Watch the interview](#)

## The Bald People's Messiah Artistic Project

### The Bald People's Messiah OPERA

after the eponymous novel and theater play by Augustin GUILBERT-BILLETDOUX  
(Gallimard and Les Cygnes publishing).  
Adaptation by **Eric BRETON**.

SIMON (25 years old) tenor  
M.M (and other roles as Female 2) (25 years old) Mezzo **SARAH LAULAN**  
THE MOTHER (and other roles as Female 1) (40/50 years old) Soprano **LYDIA MAYO**

Other roles are not definitively cast yet.

CAPILEA DOMINA (and other roles as Female 3) (25/40 years old) Soprano  
THE PRESIDENT (and other roles as Male 1) (40/50 years old) Baritone

JUDAS (and other roles as Male 2) (25/40 years old) Dramatic baritone

CHORUS (some of whom will occasionally sing small solo parts)

GRAND AVIGNON OPERA CHORUS: Direction **Aurore MARCHAND**

#### BALLET

GRAND AVIGNON OPERA BALLET: Direction **Eric BELAUD**

#### ORCHESTRA

ORAP - Avignon Provence Regional Orchestra: Conducted by **Eric BRETON**  
STAGING: **Charles CHEMIN**

## The Bald People's Messiah Artistic Project

### MISCELLANEOUS

GALLIMARD Publishing's authorization regarding the adaption et writing of the libretto based on the novel "The Bald People's Messiah" by Augustin Billetdoux.

#### Éditions Gallimard

Monsieur Eric Breton  
Ferme des Lions  
Chemin de la grande bastide  
30400 Villeneuve les Avignon

Paris, le 8 décembre 2016

Augustin Billetdoux : *Le Messie du peuple chauve*

Cher Monsieur,

Nous faisons suite à notre échange de correspondance relatif à votre souhait de présenter sur scène une adaptation sous forme d'opéra du roman cité en objet ainsi que de la version théâtrale de ce même roman qui a été créée dans le cadre de l'édition 2016 du Festival d'Avignon Off, en France, au cours des saisons 2019/2020 et 2020/2021, à titre non exclusif.

Nous avons le plaisir de vous faire savoir que l'auteur que nous avons consulté sur la base des éléments que vous nous avez communiqués à l'appui de votre demande, a émis un avis favorable à l'égard de votre projet, sur le plan du principe.

Il vous appartiendra de nous adresser le livret de votre opéra ainsi que tous les éléments relatifs à sa production, dès que possible, de sorte que nous puissions les soumettre à l'auteur, pour avis définitif.

Il est bien entendu qu'aucune représentation du *Messie du peuple chauve* d'Augustin Billetdoux ou d'une adaptation de cette œuvre ne pourra avoir lieu en l'absence d'une autorisation en bonne et due forme établie par nos soins, en accord avec l'auteur, à des conditions restant à déterminer.

Vous devrez obtenir l'accord direct de l'auteur et/ou des Editions du Cygne pour ce qui est de l'utilisation de l'adaptation théâtrale du roman dans le cadre de votre opéra.

Bien cordialement,

Marion Lalanne  
Cessions de droits  
Spectacles vivants et audiovisuels

Tél : 01 49 54 16 19  
Fax : 01 49 54 16 14  
[marion.lalanne@gallimard.fr](mailto:marion.lalanne@gallimard.fr)

## The Bald People's Messiah Artistic Project

LES CYGNES Publishing's authorization regarding the adaption et writing of the libretto based on the novel "The Bald People's Messiah" by Augustin Billetdoux.

Association LES CYGNES  
4 villa des Cygnes  
201 rue Haas  
75020 Paris  
0611642745  
0143062081  
<http://www.editionlescygnes.fr>

Paris, le 1/12/2016

Je soussignée, Monique de Montigny, présidente de l'Association LES CYGNES, editrice de l'adaptation théâtrale de la pièce d' Augustin Billetdoux : "Le Messie du peuple chauve", autorise Monsieur Eric Breton à utiliser des passages de cette version pour son projet d'opéra.

Il est bien entendu qu'il établit une déclaration auprès de la SACD mentionnant la répartition des droits à établir pour chaque éditeur.

Fait à Paris, le 1/12/2016

  
Monique de Montigny,  
Présidente.

## GRAND AVIGNON OPERA statement

At the time, the creation date was set for Spring 2020, but it was pushed back to November 2020 to coincide with the reopening of the Opera, presently being renovated

OPÉRA  
GRAND AVIGNON

### ATTESTATION

Je soussigné, Pierre-Guy de Diez, Directeur de l'Opéra de Grand Avignon, atteste que Monsieur Eric Breton a obtenu l'autorisation de l'Association LES CYGNES pour l'adaptation théâtrale de la pièce de théâtre d'Augustin Billetdoux, "Le Messie du peuple chauve", et pour son projet d'opéra.

Fait pour servir et valoir ce que de droit  
Avignon, le 01/07/2017

  
Pierre-Guy de Diez,  
Directeur