

Wajdi Mouawad

Born in 1968, author, actor, and director Wajdi Mouawad spends his early childhood in Lebanon, his adolescence in France, and his young adult years in Quebec before settling in France, where he now lives.

He studied in Montreal at École nationale de théâtre du Canada, and is awarded a diploma in performance in 1991. Upon graduation he begins codirecting his first company, Théâtre Ô Parleur, with actor Isabelle Leblanc.

In 2005, he establishes two companies, Abé Carré Cé Carré, in Quebec, with Emmanuel Schwartz, and Au Carré de l'Hypoténuse in France.

During this time, in 2000, he assumes the role of artistic director for the Théâtre de Quat'Sous in Montreal, a position he will hold for four seasons. He and his French company, Au Carré de l'Hypoténuse were associate artists at l'Espace Malraux, scène nationale de Chambéry et de la Savoie, from 2008 to 2010. In 2009 he is artist in residence of the 63rd edition of the Festival d'Avignon, where he stages the quartet *Le Sang des Promesses*. He serves as artistic director for the Théâtre français du Centre national des Arts d'Ottawa from 2007 to 2012. Since September 2011, he has been associated artist at the Grand T- Nantes. In April 2016, he is nominated to assume the role of director for the National Theater in Paris, La Colline.

His career as stage director began with the Théâtre Ô Parleur, as he contributed his own works to be performed: *Partie de cache-cache entre deux Tchécoslovaques au début du siècle* (1991), *Journée de noces chez les Cromagnons* (1994) et *Willy Protogoras enfermé dans les toilettes* (1998), puis *Ce n'est pas la manière qu'on se l'imagine que Claude et Jacqueline se sont rencontrés* coécrit avec Estelle Clareton (2000). His career took a turn in 1997 when he wrote *Littoral* (1997) which he also adapted and directed for cinema in 2005. Following closely were *Rêves* (2000) and *Incendies* (2003), which he staged, in Russian, for the Théâtre Et Cetera in Moscow. *Forêts* appeared in 2006. In 2008, he wrote, staged and played *Seuls*. In 2009, he was entirely dedicated to putting together the quadrilogy *Le Sang des Promesses*, which included a new version of *Littoral*, as well the shows *Incendies*, *Forêts*, and a new work, *Ciels*. His latest play, *Tous des oiseaux*, has been created and presented in Paris in 2017 (National Theater La Colline) for which he received, in 2018, the Grand Prix and price for the Meilleure création d'éléments scéniques of the Association Professionnelle de la Critique de Théâtre, de Musique et de Danse and the Prix transfuge for the best drama play in France. Again, in 2019, he receives the Grand Prix de la Littérature ARTCENA, in France, for *Tous des oiseaux*.

Wajdi Mouawad also wrote plays for youth, *Alphonse* (1996), *Pacamambo* (2000) and *Assoiffés* (2007), as well as novels: *Visage retrouvé*, (2002), and *Anima* (2012) (which was awarded the grand prix Thyde

Monnier from the Société des Gens de Lettre, the award Phénix de la Littérature au Liban and the literary prize of the Deuxième Roman de Laval, amongst others).

A trained actor, he played characters in seven of his own works, as well as acting under the direction of other artists, for example with Brigitte Haentjens in Albert Camus' *Caligula* (1993) and Dominic Champagne in *Cabaret Neiges noires* (1992). More recently, he played the role of Stephan Federov alongside Emmanuelle Béart in Camus' play *Les Justes* directed by Stanislas Nordley (2010).

He never shied away from the opportunity to explore other worlds as a director, such as *Voyage ou bout de la nuit* by Céline (1992), Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1992), Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1998), *Oedipe Roi* by Sophocles (1998), *Six personnages en quête d'auteur* by Pirandello (2001), and *Les trois soeurs* by Tchekhov (2002).

He has been devoting himself to staging Sophocles' seven tragedies, in three major productions: *Des femmes*, which brings together *Les Trachiniennes*, *Antigone*, and *Électre* (2011); *Des Héros*, which includes *Ajax un cabaret* and *Oedipe Roi* (2014); and *Des mourants* which assembles *Philoctète une conférence* and *Oedipe à Colone une expérience* (2015). This trilogy was presented in its entirety under the title *Le Dernier jour de sa vie* in «Mons 2015, capitale européenne de la culture».

Concurrently he is writing and directing a new work in which he explores familiar themes, as he did in *Seuls*. The new cycle *Domestique*, begins with *Soeurs* (2014), and will soon be followed by *Frères*, *Père* and *Mère*.

Wajdi Mouawad has received many awards for his writing, producing and staging, notably the Governor General's Literary Award Canada in the catégorie Théâtre for *Littoral* (2000), the prix de la Francophonie from the Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques (SACD) for the accumulation of his artistic output. He is Chevalier de l'Ordre National des Arts et des Lettres de France (total output, 2002), Officier de l'Ordre du Canada (total output, 2009), and Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Québec (total output, 2010).

Translated in more than 20 languages, the works of Wajdi Mouawad have traveled the 5 continents, being produced and presented in theatres around the world: Japan, Brazil, Korea, Scandinavia, Germany, Spain, Morocco, Britain, the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Australia, to name a few. Wajdi Mouawad continues to make his mark on the world of theatre with his unique style and compelling voice, expressing the idea that «art witnesses human existence through the prism of beauty».