

# Press reviews

## Libération

Edouard Launet

*Deafening Silence (Silence Encombrant)*, the new production by Kumulus, manages to achieve the unbelievable - namely to keep you spellbound for an hour and a half with what is on paper ostensibly an un compelling performance involving nine zombies, who do nothing more than empty a waste skip without uttering a word. The soundtrack is simply the scrape of junk being dragged along the ground; **a scrap symphony, a choreography of despair.**

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## WebThéâtre

Gilles Costaz

### The Return to Political Themes

A large waste skip is left standing in the middle of a public square, when suddenly it bursts open, and starts spewing out objects and people. Amidst all the rolls of metal, broken signs, tangled electric cord, worn tyres and oddments of all sorts, men and women can be seen slowly emerging from the cloud of dust, all dirty, grey, scaly, dazed and confused. What exactly are the rejects of modern civilization, left for scrap? Are they things, or people? Kumulus, the French theatre company, creates this confrontation, bringing the audience face to face with the victims of consumer society. **This is a particularly powerful show. What is certain is that Kumulus manages to captivate the audience with a rare intensity.**

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## Kourandart

Angélique Lagarde

Very slowly, a procession of wandering souls empty out the useless objects that are so essential to each of their sad, daily existences: existences all built on fantasies of the dream life. This ballet continues inching its way further and further forwards to the sound of objects hitting the ground, knocking together and echoing through the air. Having brushed past each other again and again, back and forth, these poor miserable wretches finally end up actually noticing each other, and understanding each other. And in the midst of all this desolation, together they manage to create for themselves a sense of possibility. **This production has a strange, poetic intensity.**

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## Les trois coups

Léna Martinelli

From the deafening moment this show crashes in on the scene, up until the grand finale, it leaves a profound impression throughout. Radical and unsettling, Kumulus hits the right note making its point in a perfectly suited expressionist vein. **And this poetic explosion booms out loudly. Intentionally!**

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## Telerama

Mathieu Braunstein

The Kumulus theatre company, now a veteran of the street theatre circuit (25 years), has this time opted to put on a performance devoid of words. Mute but by no means silent: this is the bottomless sewer of society which drives both men and industrial products to waste, out as rubbish, accompanied by the deafening scrape of the debris that they drag along with them. **Here in the boundless strangeness of these " sub-humans ", who appear totally indifferent to one another, we can see traces of Beckett, Butoh, and a whole body of well-known catastrophe theatre...**

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## Politiken (Denmark)

Like a grand still life, all the rubbish and displaced junk of death and misery are laid out before our very eyes.

What we witnessed is mortality itself in action. **That is why *Deafening Silence* moved us in such an intense manner.** But not until later. When it was all over.

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## El Mundo (Spain)

The XIII International Street Theatre festival came to a close yesterday with the final award ceremony, with the French theatre company Kumulus emerging as grand winner for its latest production *Deafening Silence (Silence encombrant)*– a portrayal of human vagrants and waste that walked away with the award for Best Production.

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## La Stradda

Thomas Hahn

**Striking close similarities to the expressionism of Egon Schiele, Barthélemy Bompard and his company have created a reply to one of the best shows ever seen, the famous *May B*, the homage paid to Beckett by Maguy Marin.** And indeed the actors from Kumulus can certainly hold their heads high when comparing themselves to *May B*. In the silence of their permanent failure, they become universal. These people have nothing (left anymore), but

they remain clinging on. Isn't what they are living here only the fate of most people? The consumer fights just like Sisyphus to inject beauty and sense into a life which will only end up as dust.

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## Le bruit du Off

**Pierre Salles**

Where some artists have little cause for hope in mankind in this 2013 Edition of the Avignon Theatre Festival, Barthélemy Bompard offers us the possibility of a collective way out. Man, once rid of his own bits of waste and his rags, can find himself again, in a group, finally capable of hoping for a different future.

**This is an extremely interesting project and dramatic work, which is also imbued with a distinct aesthetic appeal.**

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## L'Express

extract from a review by Igor Hansen-Love

It is the outcasts' ball, the choreography of revolt.

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## Danser

**Thomas Hahn**

Kept in store for the audience this year at the festival's commemorative anniversary was a major work of the tragic genre. **Human rejects become universal symbols, even realer than life itself, as they embrace the unwavering dance of time.**

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## Mouvement

**Julie Bordenave and Pascaline Vallée**

Kumulus' old verve returns with *Deafening Silence (Silence Encombrant)*, a mute, healthy uppercut.

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## La revue du spectacle.fr

Kumulus distils street theatre into an eminently political tool, making a probing statement about inner city life on housing estates, and about the world in general with all its distractions. It also takes a profoundly disturbing stance where the very act of performance itself holds up

a mirror to our own attitudes, our own vagaries, and to the downward spiral across our so-called "civilized" society.

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## Reg'Arts

**Bruno Fourniès**

This is a ballet staged in slow motion out of a fierce determination to clear a space in the hyper commotion of the modern world, meaning that you come out the other end feeling a bit dazed and slightly scared. **Yet the actors maintain a precision that lulls the whole audience into a state of fascination, and leaves you genuinely impressed by the feat of design and stagecraft in this production by the Kumulus Theatre Company.**