

# LOO by PONTEN PIE (Barcelona, Spain)

*FIRA TITELLES LLEIDA AWARD 2016. Best Show For Early Ages*

*FETEN AWARD 2017 Best Show For Early Ages*

## PRESS REVIEWS

**Poetics and a striking look at an unfinished desire.**

[Jordi Bordes](#) 19/11/2015. *Recomana.cat*

Ponten Pie returns, once again inviting the audience to enter onto their stage. They previously did so in 'Àrtica' and also, in their own way, in 'Copacabana'. Now, the little spectators are on the deck, feeling the sea breeze of the protagonist's journey. She breathes, conveying an illusion for this journey that may well suppose a new dimension of freedom. The wind, the sailing... the adventure will be a game, becoming dark and losing even a certain course.

In truth the staging is quite abstract and the game a constant play by the actress upon a sea of cork chippings. Distress and suffering are expressed throughout in a subtle way, perceived only by adults, and being unnoticed by the children, who are yet attentive to the novelty effects of wind and light. It offers continuous stimuli to the youngest. The work displays a very thought-provoking element of risk by placing the children really close to the sand pit, which is very suggestive, though it is not well integrated with the spectators' game, especially the moment at which they must stop playing. Certainly, the elements discovered by the protagonist in the backdrop of this particular sea retain the attention of the majority of the audience. Surely, in a family session (with diligent parents) the journey would become more benevolent.

Ponten Pie maintains its poetry, and the manipulation of the oar, the drifting ship's captain, reminds us of the onion-singer from the *Copacabana* variety show. The wind and the rough timber of the ship's deck refer to *Àrtica's* touch. This time, though, it is not necessary to furnish the audience with coats. Nor are words needed to evoke a story that has the depth that each spectator may interpret. Once again, a wise choice.

## **A very favourable wind**

[Teresa Ferré](#) 06/07/2016. *Recomana.cat*

How to portray a windy scene? With imagination, precision down to the smallest detail and a protagonist who, from the first instance, captivates viewers without uttering a word. Emilie de Lemos does a remarkable job of body movement and expressiveness of gesture without ever resorting to overacting.

With eyes like plates, she performs within a boat-shaped setting that evokes children's park sand pits, here created utilising thousands of cork chippings. From a large wooden mast, Lemos spectacularly unfurls the sails with deft and agility to signal the beginning of the journey. The scenic space is designed to promote interaction between the boldest spectators, who on Sunday did not hesitate when it came to becoming guides or playing in the sea of cork chippings.

Thanks to the sound and lighting we become immersed in an adventure that provokes the little ones astonished cries when they notice danger and then much noisy laughter, for example when the wind

blows comically from the interior of the Earth. A half an hour that is also time for adults to disconnect absolutely from reality, and enjoy a show that can awaken very diverse interpretations: from the purely aesthetic, because some moments of beauty are always welcomed, to profound thoughts and deep inner reflections.

## Poetic sensory adventure

[Núria Cañamares](#) 17/09/2016. *Recomana.cat*

Ponten Pie is one of the companies of 'theatre for adults' that has opened its arms to the little ones without lowering the bar of exigency and quality, nor moving away from its artistic direction: a multidisciplinary language in search of new formats to bring unusual and vivid experiences to the public. Born in 2009, it has given birth to 'Copacabana', a fun 360° gastronomic show that mixes cuisine and cabaret, and 'Àrtica', a poetic tale about the threads of life, staged in a cabin at 6 degrees. The two montages renamed 'Petit Copacabana' and 'Àrtica en un Conte', have been adapted for the family audience and received warmly.

In 'Loo', their latest production, première (and co-produced) last November at the Festival 'El Més Petit de Tots' (The smallest of them all), they further reduced the audience age by limiting it to children between 2 and 5 years old. The show has already been endorsed with an award for the best children's show at the latest 'Fira de Teatre de Titelles de Lleida' (Puppets Theatre Fair in Lleida) and made the selection in the official programs of La Mostra d'Igualada, the MiniGrec Festival and Fira Tàrrrega.

Visual and without text, the work is based on a thin story layer starring the warm and dry Asian wind known as 'Loo' which blows on summer evenings in northern India and Pakistan. With soaring high temperatures and a low humidity level it dehydrates the vegetation and can have a devastating impact on the environment. Here we see the wind embodied in a girl who, in the mornings, makes the waves dance, soaks herself with the sea and plays with objects which the water presents to her. When the afternoon arrives, however, with the same gentleness, she pushes the desert dunes, catching boats in the sand. At dusk she rescues everything that has been disturbed or buried and, at night, falls exhausted after her days activities, which are bound to repetition the next day...

Children may not understand the story for themselves, but they will surely be stimulated sensually and through the imagination, above all, by a deliciously brown-and-blue tinted aesthetic with flowing fabrics and grains of sand dripping melodically. You just need to feel the silence and see the desire of the little faces wanting to touch the sand -tiny pieces of cork- with their hands to check whether or not they are entirely hypnotised. The fact of being seated within the scenery, which evokes the presence of a boat, enhances proximity and immersion in this poetic adventure which wholly captivates them throughout the entire 30 minutes of the show.

## **Loo, the wind that moves magic**

[\*Irma Borges\*](#) 24/04/2017. *Titeresante*.

Loo, a visual spectacle produced by the company Ponten Pie and the Festival 'El Més Petit de Tots' in 2015, continues its tour, sowing interest in good theater among the little ones. Last February they won the FETEM award for the best work directed at early childhood and it is not surprising, because this creative and intelligent team has managed to put together a wonderful aesthetic proposal that immerses children in an unprecedented adventure.

Designed for children between two and five years old, Loo is a sublime spectacle that poetically shows us the power of transformation that all materials have.

We enter a ship, a scenery that evokes a trip: Where are we going? This is the first question that appears, and we begin the adventure discovering treasures hidden under the sand. The audience comfortably settled, music and lighting are key elements to draw attention towards the main action, where any movement can be cause for amazement.

Loo is inspired by the name of a hot, dry wind that blows on summer evenings in India. An actress appears on the scene, maybe she is Loo, from her and with our eyes wide open we discover emotions in the simplest actions, those that children have right under their skin. The performance of Natàlia Méndez is authentic, close, communicative and connects with the curious gaze of the child viewer.

Adults, on our part, are remembering sensations, smells and even flavours because ... who has not tasted the sand?

Loo's mission is to push the dunes of the desert and devastate the humid zones, seas and oceans that they encounter, leaving the ships paralysed in the sand. Loo is the noble and invisible wind that awakens the sea, the sand, the boats.

The story, which is nourished by spontaneous actions, can evoke a journey, a change, the passage of time or simply the game, but definitely those who take the narrative role are the materials: animated and masterfully transformed objects that move us to different environments and tell us little anecdotes without saying a word.

That fine fabric that turns into sea, into beach, into waves ... those cork chips that are sand, a volcano ... food. The sober and inspiring costumes in their textures are also significant, capable of mimicking other materials and returning sensations such as the breath of the wind, the rise of the tide, the sand on the skin.

The company Ponten Pie, directed by Sergi Ots, has achieved an empathic and assertive result that not only manages to captivate the children's interest, but also invites them to continue watching, touching, smelling, feeling, experimenting.

Loo has been a brief, sensory and exciting gift that left us with a smile on our faces and the desire to get into a boat and play, play with all the elements to transform them into the purest poetry. This proposal is an intimate, playful and dreamlike journey that allows the whole family to enjoy the best visual theater for children.