

**NIGHT-SHIFTERS**  
Workshops x  
Participative projects x



# LES COMMANDOS PERCU

**For more than 20 years the team has traveled the world with its innovative percussion work and specialized knowledge about fireworks. The fusion between music and fireworks stands as its main mechanism. A language that is new and ancestral at the same time goes through several cultures and genres.**

As well as performing large scale shows, Les Commandos Percu have improved their skills in sharing their expertise through many different participative projects. Collaborating with British professional artists to create a brand new show for the London 212 Festival or engaging local communities to participate to a performance based on the mining industry history in Stiring-Forbach France, Les Commandos Percu are eager to share and pass on their knowledge.



Special creation for the London 2012 Festival a collaboration with 12 British artists : On the Night Shift.

## WORKSHOPS AND SPECIAL CREATIONS

**Special creations consist in creating a large scale performance alongside with non-professional artists or/and local communities. Participants are trained by Les Commandos Percu to develop a project from its composition to its concrete fulfilment.**

The reason why our show Le Concert de Feu was acclaimed by several hundreds of thousands people is that stage direction is never fixed. On the contrary, special creations, original scenography and specific circumstances are as many parameters that become creative challenges.

The most beautiful challenge is to meet the participants involved in this adventure. Les Commandos Percu are passionate trainers. They are able to share their expertise and their art of creating dreams. This sharing adds strength and emotion to our shows. Fire totally fulfilled its rallying-catalyst role. Les Commando Percu's training and introduction workshops are closely related to the local network of cultural and community associations. The meeting of artists and amateurs is a special time dedicated to transmission and artistic exploration. This process goes beyond usual social and generation gaps.



## OBJECTIVES

The main goal of this project is to train and support participants through the different stages of creating musical and pyrotechnic show. Various workshops can be organised all along the development of the project: **musical training, stage-direction writing, production, rehearsals, set and instruments fabrication, pyrotechnics.**

An initial meeting is set up to introduce Les Commandos Percu's work and present the whole project. It is important for us to offer the possibility to adults as well as kids to meet around a collaborative project.

# TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

## Participants

Anyone, male or female, over 14 years old can take part in the workshops and the show (parental permission is required for people under 18).

Meetings are precisely scheduled. People involved in the project have to make themselves available for workshops, rehearsals and the show. During a week before the show anyone interested by the project can take part in the workshops. Everything is done to get a high level of involvement.

Most volunteers will handle small hand-held pyro. Many of the people that have never handled fireworks before find themselves able to do it. The most important thing is to have a sense of organization and teamwork.



*Music and pyro workshops.*

## What are participants doing for the show?

### **Before the show :**

- Getting special effects ready.
- Pyro handling training.
- Musical workshops.
- Rehearsals, global coordination.

### **During the show :**

- Handling small special effects during specific scenes of the show.
- Logistic, teams coordination.
- Playing music (percussion).

Les Commandos Percu musicians usually lead 3 workshops sessions beforehand to the show. The idea of the first meeting is to create a group dynamic, to write down the project and to program the workshops. On the evening before the show all participants meet for a technical rehearsal. It is time for the show's final adjustments. Day of the show is dedicated to set up. Each volunteer participates according to his abilities. They get into several groups according to their role in the performance.

## PERFORMANCE

**This project finds its conclusion in a public performance. The impact of this creation has to be strong enough to leave a deep impression on one's memories. The idea is that each participant takes over a part of the creation and gives it a new energy. It is necessary for the final show to be advertised and lived as an important cultural event in the area.**

### **1 - Big parade.**

Participants come along with Les Commandos Percu artists to perform a mind- blowing parade through the streets with their percussion and special effects.

### **2 - Stage finale.**

After the parade all the people involved in the project come on stage with the artists. Staging is precise and rhythmic up to the pyrotechnical finale and an ultimate bow towards the audience.

>> [video online](#) : extract from Clash of Drums performed in Milton Keynes with Deabru Beltzak & Festive Road performers.



## STICKS METHOD

An introduction to a specific way of writing rhythm.

The sticks method is a teaching method used to formalize rhythm, write it down, read it and finally play it. This is a method turned towards non-professionals who do not know music theory.

However, sticks method was born from a very complex rhythm that professional musicians have had problems playing despite the score. When those little geometric signs appeared, the music finally came out.

**Little sticks method is a simple and powerful tool for writing and memorising rhythm but also for analysing and creating new rhythm figures.**

[>> 60" to discover the Sticks Method - video online](#)

## WORKSHOPS CONTENT

It is not strictly speaking a Masterclass with demos etc... but an opportunity for musicians from different backgrounds to meet and learn from each other's perception of rhythm, learning, exploring, memorising and writing it down.



*On The Night Shift dancers and musicians were trained with the sticks method.*

It is a simple and logical way to write down, memorize and analyse rhythm. This method has shown itself to be very useful when teaching rhythm to beginners. It is also a formidable tool for professional musicians, no matter their instruments. Only a few hours of workshop are enough for them to appropriate this technic and develop a personal way of using it: it is clearly the Linux for rhythm! We explore many examples during the workshop. Any participant can bring a rhythm he finds particularly difficult or beyond his understanding. He will realize that there is for sure an easy way of writing it down and creating many complex rhythmical arrangements that will be easy to memorize and pass down.

## RECENTS PROJECTS

**2017 : 20th anniversary of Les Années Joué festival, Joué les Tours FR** with 20 volunteers (dancers and performers).



**2016 : Creation of a large parade opening to Les Commandos Percu's show Clash of Drums : Liverpool et Hull UK.**

*« The experience was incredible : working with groups that have such a different approach to performance, fusing music and pyrotechnics in such a theatrical way was incredibly inspiring. »  
Juliana Landim co-director of Katumba – River of Light 2016 - Liverpool UK*

*« The project surpassed everyone's expectations. All participants describe it as a life changing experience ! »  
Chloe Birr-Pixon producer at Hull Samba – Freedom Festival 2016 - Hull UK*

**2015 : Rugby World Cup in Milton Keynes UK - a collaboration with Festive Road**

## REFERENCES

Fête de la St Paul à Sarreguemines, 2014 / Les Enfants du Charbon à Petite Rosselle, depuis 2013 / Festival Les Noctibules à Annecy, juillet 2013 / Perth International Arts Festival (AUS), février 2013 / Festival Les Accroche-Coeurs d'Angers (49), septembre 2010 / Lakes Alive, Manchester International Arts, Maryport (UK), août 2010 / De l'ombre à la lumière Angoulême, décembre 2008 création avec le soutien de la région Poitou-Charentes / « Foyer » à Flin (54), création pour les 60 ans des Foyers Ruraux de Meurthe et Moselle, août 2009 / Les Odyssées Ambésiennes, création Ville d'Ambès (33)....

# LES COMMANDOS PERCU

International Street Arts Company

## **Energy in motion.**

For more than 20 years the team has traveled the world with its innovative percussion work and specialized knowledge about fireworks. The fusion between music and fireworks stands as its main mechanism. A language that is new and ancestral at the same time goes through several cultures and genres.

A third element is then added in: mobility, or the art of surprise, that leads musicians/pyrotechnicians to greater challenges – justifying the company's name.

As well as performing large scale shows, Les Commandos Percu have improved their skills in sharing their expertise through many different and challenging projects.

RHYTHM - FIRE - MOTION



## **By creating our own instruments, we're building a proper identity.**

After their first performances more than 20 years ago with no actual musical instruments, Les Commandos Percu wanted to keep their mobility and to create a musical repertory that would not borrow other cultures rhythms. Creating their own folklore, rituals, a language, as if we came from another clime.

Their show On the Night Shift presented an original musical composition played on drums specially drawn and created for this show: the SATTELLIDRUM. It's been about 10 years now that Les Commandos Percu have been working with Claude Walter from **Rythmes et Sons** (Strasbourg) through a permanent partnership, a sound laboratory, in order to develop unique and original musical instruments.

## **A brand new partnership : PRO ORCA France supports Les Commandos Percu.**

Even if broken sticks are of no use to us, we often want to keep them, only because they tell a story. A story of brutal strength and emotions we shared with the audience. ProOrca Drumsticks is a great manufacturer of drum kit sticks made in France (with North American and sometimes French woods). We are very proud to count them as our new partners in music. We can break lots of sticks now!



« Coming from the beginning of time and from the future, Les Commandos Percu remind us that we live on a ball of fire and that there is no greater sorcery than this fusion of the circle of fire, which removes the shadows and brings men closer. Giddiness, fireworks of emotions, immediate feelings of touching the essence of humanity, the spectacles of Les Commandos Percu are a kind of initiation into our human condition in its terrible and elementary beauty.» GIL PRESSNITZER



**++ more images and vidéos available on our website :**

**[WWW.COMMANDOSPERCU.COM](http://WWW.COMMANDOSPERCU.COM)**



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[les\\_commandos\\_percu](https://www.instagram.com/les_commandos_percu)

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