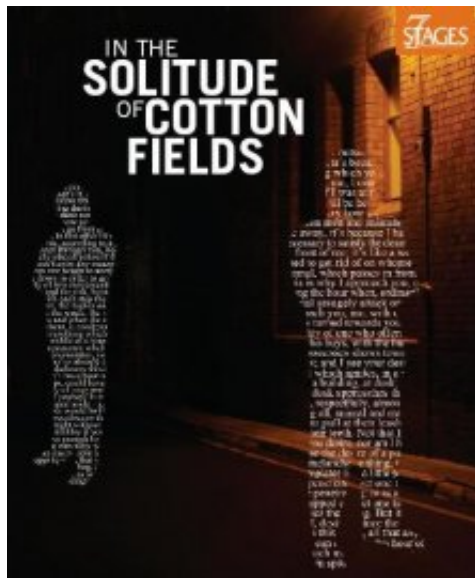


# f r e n c h C U L T U R E

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## Eric Vigner: In the Solitude of Cotton Fields

World Premiere



The Koltès Project sets its seeds in Atlanta: this project was created out of 7 Stages' desire to continue the artistic legacy of the playwright Bernard-Marie Koltès. Atlanta actor and translator, Isma'il ibn Conner teams up with 7 Stages Artistic Director and actor, Del Hamilton, in a world première translation into American English of *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* *\_Dans la Solitude des Champs de Coton\_* by the highly acclaimed contemporary French playwright Bernard-Marie Koltès.

This play is a journey of deals - both profane and sacred, of desires that must be discovered and satisfied, of light and dark - two aspects of one entity, and the powerful interaction of two men who are more familiar than they appear. There is only a dealer, a client and desires that must be satisfied at all costs.

**Forty years after the assassination of Martin Luther King (April 4, 1968), Director Eric Vigner, head of the CDDB – Théâtre de Lorient, is staging *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* by Bernard-Marie Koltès at Atlanta's 7Stages Theatre. Moving from BMK to MLK, and from French to English, Eric Vigner undertakes the creation of giving voice to theater, theater sensitive to both the location and the text – with empathy for the deeper sense of the words and the places where they are to be produced (Atlanta), and its title (solitude, cotton fields)... Eric Vigner's staging focuses on the history - or rather, the histories of BMK and MLK - and makes all the world a stage, calling in question the world and the dividing lines between individuals and peoples, dividing lines that still exist after the advent of civil rights, the end of segregation, or apartheid, in the United States and indeed all over the world. Hosting one of the hottest French directors is a coup for Atlanta, but it also means our show has the best possible person as its leader, so we are especially happy to have him, says Hamilton.**

### THE U.S. KOLTÈS PROJECT



This production marks the beginning of the US Koltès Project, a ten-year project created in order to translate and produce six of Koltès' plays, to continue the artistic legacy of the playwright Bernard-Marie Koltès. In cooperation with and through the exclusive permission of the Koltès Estate, a ten-year program was established in order to translate and produce six of Koltès' plays: *Dans la solitude des champs de coton*, *Le Jour des meurtres dans l'histoire d'Hamlet*, *Sallinger*, *La Nuit juste avant les forêts*, *Tabataba* and *Quai Ouest*. 7 Stages chose these plays because they address the curious human condition and predicament that U.S. citizens face in relation to themselves, as citizens of the world. Bernard-Marie Koltès emerged as one of the most distinctive and important dramatic voices of the 1980s. His work, based in real-life problems, expresses the tragedy of being alone and of death. His writing style accents the dramatic tension and the lyricism of his plays. Each play speaks of intense isolation, fear of the



'Other', deal-making, senseless war, misplaced national loyalty, and dysfunctional familial love/hate. Isma'il ibn Conner, Artistic Associate of 7 Stages and the official translator of the Koltès plays explains, the 7 Stages U.S. Koltès Project is a long-range effort to make new versions of Koltès' plays, including several that have not been published, as well as his novels and other writings by and about him.

## ERIC VIGNER



The driving force behind Vigner's theatrical approach is neither ideological, nor analytical, it is poetic. His direction acts as a luminating force shielding light on these significant writings. Eric Vigner develops a theater that questions the world, its frontiers between the people. Eric Vigner has directed many contemporary playwrights such as Marguerite Duras' *Savannah Bay* at the Comédie-Française in Paris (2002) as well as at Espace Go in Montreal (2007), *The Beast in the Jungle* at the Kennedy Center in Washington (2004), and *Pluie d'été à Hiroshima* (2006) for the 60th Avignon Festival. Vigner develops a new approach of the French classics as well: he directed Racine's *Bajazet* (Comédie-Française, 1995), Molière's *Ecole des Femmes* (Comédie-Française, 1999), to name a few. He develops international collaborations, searching for a genuine mutual cultural transmission: Molière's and Lully's comedy-ballet *The bourgeois gentleman* for the National Theater of Korea in Seoul in 2004; Beaumarchais' *The barber of Seville* with the actors of the National Theater of Albania in 2007.

## ISMA'IL IBN CONNER



Isma'il Ibn Conner has been awarded a coveted stageplay translation residency in Villeneuve-lez-Avignon, (France) at La Chartreuse - Centre National des écritures du spectacle for 2008. The basis of this residency is to continue translation work on *Dans la Solitude des Champs de Coton* (In the Solitude of Cotton Fields) and begin work on *Le Jour des Meurtres* (Koltès' version of Hamlet). Isma'il also performed a sneak preview/staged reading of his translation, *In the Solitude of Cotton Fields*, at the 2007 TCG Conference for The Global Tapas program in Minneapolis, Minn. Other projects include *Black Battles With Dogs* directed by Arthur Nauzyciel at the Festival d'Avignon, France and the Hellenic Festival in Athens, Greece. BBWD debuted at 7 Stages in 2001 and subsequently toured France (Lorient, Créteil, and Clermont-Ferrand). BBWD was in Chicago for the "Playing French Festival" at the Athenaeum. Isma'il reprises his role as Albouy in BBWD to be performed in May 2008 in Orléans, France at the

Centre Dramatique National, as well as Anvers, Belgium in January 2009. Isma'il is an Artistic Associate with 7 Stages Theatre and creator of 7 Stages' resident artist ensemble Group 7 (G7).

## DEL HAMILTON



As co-founder of 7 Stages, Del has been a part of the company since its inception in 1979. As Artistic Director, he has directed over 30 productions at 7 Stages, including HUSH: Composing Blind Tom Wiggins, Athol Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!*, Susan Yankowitz's *Night Sky*, *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, numerous plays by Sam Shepard. He has also acted in such notable plays as Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, *Carmen Kittel* by Georg Seidel, *Der Park* by Botho Strauss, Fugard's *A Place With the Pigs*, *Der Frosch* by Herbert Achternbusch, and the original production of Jim Glimsley's *Mr. Universe*. Del directed a very successful production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* at Teatr Nowy in Poznan, Poland, and he has acted and directed at theaters in Atlanta, New York, London, and Amsterdam. Del is the author of several plays and has received numerous awards, including the 1994 Mayor's Fellowship in the Arts and the 1992 Arts Alive Excellence in the Arts Award. He was named Best Director for 2002 by Atlanta Magazine.

## Ticket Pricing

\$10 previews April 24 & 25

\$25 for all regular performances

\$5 off for students, seniors over 65, artists and educators

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased by calling 404-523-7647.

Link: [www.7stages.org](http://www.7stages.org) | <http://www.7stages.org> |

*In the Solitude of Cotton Fields* and *The U.S. Koltès Project* is made possible through support from François Koltès, CDDB – Théâtre de Lorient, Festival d'Avignon, High Museum, Alliance Theatre Writer's Lab, Alliance Francaise in Atlanta and French Institute Alliance Française in New York and sponsored by the Cultural Service of the Consulate General of France in Atlanta, Etant donnés: the French-American Fund for performing Arts, a program of FACE and the Centre National des Ecritures du Spectacles, La Chartreuse.

## Where / When

### Dates:

- Apr. 24, 08 - May. 17, 08

**April 7 from 4 pm - 6 pm:**

The High and The Alliance Theatre Writer's Lab is hosting An Evening of Koltès at the High Museum. The evening will include a special viewing of a documentary by François Koltès and a panel discussion on the production, the life and work of Bernard-Marie Koltès featuring Eric Vigner, Del Hamilton, and Ismail ibn Conner.

**Premiere:** April 26, 8:00 pm

**April 24 – May 17, 2008:**

Thursdays – Saturdays at 8pm, Sundays at 5pm.

**Additional performances:** Monday, April 28 at 8pm; Thursday, May 1 at 10am; Saturday, May 3 at 2pm; Wednesday, May 7 and Wednesday, May 14 at 6pm

**7 Stages Theatre**

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Written on Mar. 31, 08

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