Benjamin, dernière nuit
WALTER BENJAMIN, THE LAST NIGHT

September 25th 1940. Walter Benjamin, the last night tells a story of solitude, of a refugee chased by the Nazis. Lyrical drama in fourteen scenes by Michel Tabachnik Libretto by Régis Debray World premiere, commissioned by the Opéra de Lyon

FILMED AT Opéra de Lyon IN March 2016 TV DIRECTOR Vincent Massip RUNNING TIME 90'
ARTISTIC INFORMATION

SYNOPSIS
The action takes place in 1940; Walter Benjamin, a German-Jewish intellectual, has just arrived in Portbou, a Catalonian village close to the French border. He has finally followed his friends’ advice and fled the country. In his miserable hotel room, he relives his life in a range of flashbacks about his pathway, meetings and regrets… Despair overruns him as he discovers that a law could send him back to France. He kills himself. The law will never be applied. Once again, the Opera of Lyon partners with two French-speaking intellectuals: the philosopher Regis Debray, and the chef and composer Michel Tabachnik. They here work together to evoke the personality of a fascinating, but contested man.

PERFORMERS
Walter Benjamin (singer) .......................................................Jean-Noël Briend
Walter Benjamin (actor) ........................................................Sava Lolov
Asja Lacis .................................................................Michaela Kušteková
Hanna Arendt .................................................................Michaela Selinger
Arthur Koestler ...............................................................Charles Rice
Gershom Sholem ..............................................................Scott Wilde
Bertolt Brecht .....................................................................Jeff Martin
André Gide ........................................................................Gilles Ragon
Theodor Adorno ...............................................................Karoly Szemeredy
The cabaret singer ............................................................April Hailer
Mme Henny Gurland ........................................................Elsa Rigmor Thiemann
Joseph Gurland ...............................................................Baptiste Mansot
The Boss .........................................................................Emmanuel Amado
The Doctor ........................................................................Bruno Froment
Archivist player ..............................................................François Leviste

Orchestra and Chorus of the Opéra de Lyon

ARTISTIC STAFF
Conductor: Bernhard Kontarsky | Staging: John Fulljames
Sets: Michael Levine | Costumes: Christina Cunningham
Lighting: James Farncombe | Choreography: Maxine Braham
Video: Will Duke | Sound: Carolyn Downing
Choral director: Philip White

PRODUCTION
PRODUCTION COMPANIES Telmondis, Opéra de Lyon, Mezzo, France Télévisions and the support of the CNC.
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS Antoine Perset, Denis Morlière

Distribution
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VIDEO FORMAT HDCAM, Digibeta, stereo sound and dolby 5.1

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