



# ROYAL DE LUXE

NANTES

LIMERICK / September 2014

## The Vikings

May the four cardinal points quarter me here and now if there is any doubt as to the veracity of this story.

And may the first member of the audience to question my words have his head sliced off.

Then let the Frankish axe be sharpened in front of the audience.

In the year of Our Lord 832, at the end of summer when the heavy heat scarred the memory of the Celts, the forest fires, stinky animal carcasses and dry wells being so many. The sun appeared cold as if enveloped in a jaw of ice, nailed to the sky.

A sleepy fog heavier than a pile of transparent hailstones had settled on the whole of Munster and stretched a great distance out to the ocean.

High above, the sound of birds flying away could be heard, like a cry of horror announcing the tremors of a future disaster.

The shadows of an infinite number of gigantic boats slipped silently on the Shannon like cannibal swans, ready to bite the flesh of lost children.

Limerick did not exist yet;  
Only a few isolated farms  
stretched along the banks  
sheltered some Celts and their families,  
asleep beneath the thin blankets of morning.

Suddenly several flaming arrows sprang from the ships.

Like comets that had crossed the galaxy to come crashing down on the roofs of the houses

from which frightened people with pale faces were emerging, eyes swallowed by their bones, flesh lost in their bodies, whilst the army, thirsty for terror, landed on Irish soil.

The Vikings, having crossed the hell of ice and come to warm themselves on this island, carved women, children, old people and warriors to pieces.

Axes, spears, swords spoke the same language, leaving on the ground only limbs, pieces, Celtic remains that our archaeologists are still finding today.

However, one young Celt was able to escape.

On the way he swallowed small pebbles to make his body a rock.

Eventually his skeleton grew; soon he could swallow stones then rocks.

Over time he became a giant.

The strength of his voice, through his breath, uprooted the trees stretched out on the hills, throwing them into the sea.

His very powerful voice turned into a song coming from the earth

and the Vikings, brutally enticed by the voice, were immediately transformed.

They then, became more Irish than the Irish.

**© Jean-Luc Courcoult, Author / Director of the street theatre company Royal de Luxe**