

## Setagaya Public Theatre and Raphaëlle BOITEL (France) “Fierce 5” First Report: Launch of Project

Author: KUREMIYA Yurika

*Fierce 5* is an international collaborative project organized and directed by French contemporary circus prodigy Raphaëlle BOITEL. Based on Boitel's 2015 work *5es Hurlants*, one of her most renowned pieces, *Fierce 5* is a new work that is being developed together with circus artists based in Japan.

SAKAI Atsumi from the Setagaya Arts Foundation gave the following three points as the aims of this project: 1) To expand the breadth of expression for Japanese artists, who tend to focus more on technique; 2) To cultivate theater technicians who have strong technical skills and the ability to think flexibly, and at the same time, to give artists the skills and knowledge needed to be safe and creative; 3) To promote international exchange and the creation of a work that transcends genres through highly imaginative contemporary circus performance. In Japan, it is not so common for technical staff to be involved in the creation process from the early stages, and coordination with technical staff is not sufficient. In Company L'Oublié(e), Raphaëlle Boitel and Technical Director Tristan BAUDOIN cooperate closely. By creating a work with Company L'Oublié(e), *Fierce 5* aims to stimulate collaboration between artists and technicians.

In this report, I will report on the process from the workshop-style auditions held in mid-April to the selection of the cast, as well as the master class held for the cast in late June. The original plan was to do these things with Boitel in Japan. However, due to COVID-19, ultimately they were all conducted online using Zoom to connect the project members in Japan and France.

### Auditions (April 16–18)

*Fierce 5* depicts the everyday lives of people living in the world of circus performance. Its characters are five circus artists, each with a different specialty. The decision had already been made to cast HASEGAWA Aimi for the role of the aerial hoops artist. Accordingly, auditions were held to select the remaining four cast members. Before the auditions were held, applicants were screened using video submissions. Twelve people passed the video screening. These 12 people participated in workshop-style auditions held in the rehearsal studio of Setagaya Public Theatre (hereinafter referred to simply as “Setagaya”).

On the first day, the participants were judged one by one on their tightwire and juggling skills, then, on the second day, on their aerial straps and acrobatic dance abilities. Each of the participants had been sent excerpts from *5es Hurlants*. Based on this, each participant prepared solo performances (for the juggling judging, there was also a duo dance challenge). First, Boitel explained the work's concept and its characters. Next, she asked the participants some simple questions such as what they thought about the video they had been sent, and what their interpretations of the characters were. Boitel also asked the participants why they were interested in this project. Many of the participants gave answers such as they were interested because they had seen *When Angels Fall* and *Drop Shadows* when these were performed in Japan in 2019; because they wanted to take on the challenge of circus performance as performing arts/artistic expression; and because they wanted to collaborate with artists in a genre different from what they were used to.

Next, the participants were asked to give a performance according to

set instructions. The participants were instructed to get as close as possible to what they felt when they watched a reference video while adding their own choreography in line with their own body language. The participants were judged in part on how they reacted to these vague instructions. After a participant went through their whole performance, Boitel provided some comments and, if necessary, the participant would re-perform parts as directed by Boitel. The judging time for each participant was 30 minutes. If there was any time remaining after their performance, the participants were also asked to do some improvisational work.

Eight participants passed this round of judging, and on the third day they did group work together.

In all, the remaining participants were given seven tasks. They were informed on these tasks on the morning of the same day. At 1:00 p.m., they began practicing individually in the rehearsal studio. At 4:00 p.m., auditions began. First, Boitel went over additional points she wanted to see with regard to the participants' solo performances. Then the participants began doing group work. There were two types of group work. For one type, predetermined groups of participants had to recreate a sequence from a video. For the other type, all of the participants had to engage in improvisational work together. Lastly, each participant had to give an improvisational performance incorporating everything they had experienced in the audition process.

After the auditions were over, Boitel praised the participants' memorization abilities and how much they had practiced. Setagaya Producer Sakai said that doing the auditions online went smoothly thanks to the participating artists' explosive power and quick response to directions. Sakai said that although there were some difficulties with doing things online, she believed that the Japanese team learning that it was possible to do this much online was one accomplishment of the auditions. Just as Sakai said, the artists participating in this project are all highly experienced. Even before things started, they showed excellent teamwork, and were practicing together in a friendly and unguarded manner. It is also likely the Hasegawa had a positive effect. She knew Boitel and most of the audition participants, and was present each day for the auditions as an assistant.

### Cast Selection

It took longer than planned to select the cast. The production staff were unable to finish selecting the cast after an online meeting, and Raphaëlle Boitel and the Setagaya team discussed the matter repeatedly via email over several days.

Based on the comments Boitel wrote about each participant, it seems she had difficulty perceiving things online such as the atmosphere in the rehearsal studio, the participants' understanding of and passion for the work, and the relationships between the participants during group work. The Setagaya team proactively provided supplemental explanations and suggestions in these areas. The Setagaya team knew a lot about the participants' activities outside of the auditions and had also worked with some of them before. The views of such local staff, based on long-term experience, were likely particularly important in this project's situation where the director was participating remotely.

Ultimately, the following artists were chosen as the project's cast:

Tightwire: YOSHIKAWA Kento / Juggling: MEGURO Yosuke  
Aerial Hoops: HASEGAWA Aimi\* / Aerial Straps: SUGIMOTO Shun  
Acrobatic Dance: MINAKAWA Mayumu

Secondaries: YASUMOTO Asami\*, YAMAMOTO Hironobu\*

Assistant and Understudy: YOSHIDA Aki

\*These members were cast before auditions.

Originally, there was no plan to have an assistant and understudy role. It was an idea proposed by the Setagaya team.

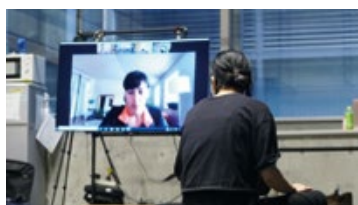
The cast composition was well balanced. It was conveyed beforehand that the cast members would be chosen taking into consideration the characters they would play, and my impression was that the focus was on the artists' adaptability and how well they matched the piece's roles. As a result, the artists chosen were the same genders as those who had appeared in *5es Hurlants*. It also seems that the equipment used will also be close to that of the original piece. For example, Yoshikawa Kento used the slack wire in the auditions. However, he is being required to learn the tightwire, which enables more dynamic movement, for the piece.

### Master Class (June 23–24)

Raphaëlle Boitel and Technical Director Tristan Baudoin were scheduled to come to Japan for the master class for the chosen cast members. However, travel restrictions remained strict, and it was difficult to obtain permission to enter Japan. Boitel and Baudoin were also unable to schedule enough time for the 14-day quarantine periods before and after. Because of this, the master class was also conducted using Zoom to connect France and the Setagaya rehearsal studio. Accordingly, the master class was shortened to two days from the originally planned three. The content was also significantly revised. The aerial performance part was canceled because it involved learning how to set up and use equipment brought from France. In addition, because the class would be conducted remotely, this would make it difficult for all of the cast members to acquire common physicality through joint exercises. Accordingly, the choice was made to make group work the focus of the class, which would give the participants more autonomy.

There is a seven-hour time difference between Japan and France. This limited the hours during which Boitel could participate. Accordingly, for both days of the class, practice started in the afternoon led by Japanese team Assistant YOSHIDA Aki and with only the cast members. Then, from 4:00 p.m., Boitel would join in on the training. Secondaries (performers providing technical support on-stage as part of the stage management section, such as setting up devices and equipment) YASUMOTO Asami and YAMAMOTO Hironobu joined in on the second day. In addition, acrobatic dancer MINAKAWA Mayumu injured her back. After discussion with the

Taken during the master class (photo credit: Setagaya Public Theatre)



Boitel and Yoshida in conversation



Solo number rehearsal



Choreographing a group scene based on a video



Rehearsal during the second day with all cast members, including the secondaries

Setagaya team, it was decided she would not attend the first day of class. On the second day, she participated by switching in and out with Yoshida, who was also the understudy, as appropriate.

Beforehand, the artists were given a complete recording of a performance of *5es Hurlants*, a run sheet of the course of the show including a program and scene nicknames, and notes Boitel had written for each performer. The cast was given the challenge of working out the choreography composition, including the movements, lines of flow, and cues, using the video and practicing until they were able to do a rough run-through for scenes one through 14 (of the total 16 scenes). These scenes contained many sequences the cast had already tried out during the auditions. Even so, there was a lot of work, and the master class moved forward at a high pace according to a timetable divided into 30- to 60-minute segments.

Boitel stated that the purpose of the master class was to “embed a rough memory” of the entire piece into the minds of the cast. Boitel’s aim was to create an opportunity for the entire cast to get together and rehearse and thus get an overall image of the piece, together, and embed this in their memories. Doing this would make it possible to focus on details of the performance and movements details during the development process in September. It would also make it possible to spend more time on adding staging matched to each individual cast member, and on practicing with the devices and equipment that will be used during performances. For these reasons, more time was spent checking group scenes with complex compositions over solo parts in which individual cast members get to show off their specialty skills. When Boitel provided direction, she focused on detailed explanations of her aims, such as the scene’s situation, the purpose of the movements, the image she had when writing the scene, and character background. It was a difficult program. However, doing a rough run-through at the end connecting all the scenes made things such as story developments and character relationships much clearer than if the cast members had only rehearsed individual scenes one by one.

Yoshida, a highly experienced artist who possesses numerous skills and is also highly adaptable and quick to understand, was also the perfect rehearsal facilitator. Sakai also praised Yoshida’s work in this area. Interacting remotely via interpreter can easily result in directions and communication becoming one-sided. However, Yoshida was effective at facilitating communication with the director, summarizing everyone’s opinions and questions. In addition, the fact that the artists had strong relationships of trust not only with each other but also with Producer Sakai helped things to go smoothly. This was concisely expressed by Boitel’s remark that they had a “good team.”

Conversely, there were issues with numerous requests that the cast members be able to do the same things as the original cast members in *5es Hurlants*. The project’s current direction requires not only that the



Promotional photos taken on the second day of the master class (photo credit: Takehiro Goto)  
Right photo: From left to right, Yoshikawa Kento, Meguro Yosuke, Minakawa Mayumu, Hasegawa Aimi, and Sugimoto Shun

choreography composition but also the equipment used and even the techniques in each cast members' solo performances follow the original piece. This makes it hard to see the significance of developing this new piece in Japan. That being said, at the end of the master class, Boitel stated that he felt they would be able to add new, individual tweaks different from *5es Hurlants*, so the piece may undergo detailed changes in accordance with each individual cast member after Boitel comes to Japan. As *Fierce 5* is being developed as a new piece in collaboration with Japanese artists, I hope to see new staging and direction unique to this production.

### The Possibilities and Limits of the Internet

In order to conduct the auditions and master class remotely, the Setagaya team set up two large monitors and video cameras at different angles. These were connected to Zoom and could be switched between as necessary. (For the first two days of auditions, only one of each was used.) The video feed was high resolution and there were no connection difficulties. Spikes were added with tape beforehand to show camera angle limits. However, the master class rehearsal studio was small and the cameras could not be placed very far away. This made the acting area very small.

The most difficult part was adjusting the sound. There were various volume problems. During the auditions in April, the music being played over the PA was hard for the French team to hear. Conversely, the sound of rustling clothing was over-amplified. During the master class in June, audio feedback occurred frequently because so many devices were set up so close to each other. It was also difficult to prevent unwanted noise while also delivering both the voice of the interpreter and sounds onstage at appropriate volumes.

Other problems pointed out by Producer Sakai included the amount of time required to communicate and the limited ability of the director to provide demonstrations. Sharing the physicality upon which the work was based and conveying detailed nuance online were especially difficult because the group was developing a project together for the first time.

On the other hand, one merit was increased freedom in terms of spaces. During auditions, some participants did part of their performances remotely from distant rehearsal studios. Being online made it possible to choose a better environment when working with equipment that could not easily be moved or would require a lot of time to set up.

### Future Development

Going forward, the cast members have been instructed to repeatedly practice their solo numbers and improve their technical abilities while at the same time also using videos to deepen their understanding of their characters. Detailed notes and questions will be conveyed through Yoshida.

With regard to project development in September, there are two main issues. The first is getting permission to enter Japan. Raphaëlle Boitel, Tristan Baudoin, and Assistant Julieta SALZ are scheduled to come to Japan. As of June, the application process has already been started. However, it is not clear whether they will all be given permission. The application process has not been made public, and the burden on the sponsoring organization is large.

Secondly, the company's schedule has to be secured. At the present time, it is not certain whether they will be able to secure the two-week quarantine period prior to the development process, which is scheduled

to start on September 13. In addition to the company being very busy, in France, entry restrictions have already been greatly relaxed. Because of this, it is difficult to get people to understand Japan's quarantine measures and secure enough time for the trip to Japan. Depending on the situation, it is possible that for the first week of the development process, Boitel and her team will participate online from their hotel. For the master class in June, the schedule was only decided less than two weeks before it was scheduled to start. In addition, the start date was set several days earlier than originally planned. From the perspective of the artists' conditioning, however, changing the schedule on very short notice is not good. In addition, the more that work is done online, the more work that cannot be done online has to be left for later. This results in the timetable just before actual performances becoming increasingly busy, which can pose a direct danger in a performance where there is a high burden on cast members and staff, as in this work. Although there are many uncertainties under the circumstances, a schedule with sufficient leeway should be created.

## Setagaya Public Theatre and Raphaëlle BOITEL (France)

### “Fierce 5” Second Report: Rehearsals

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In this report, I will report on the concentrated production development process that took place over about one month. Because entry restrictions remained strict and the French team was unable to secure sufficient time for the quarantine period before the scheduled start, they participated in part of the rehearsals remotely.

#### Rehearsal Schedule

A period of time was set aside to set up the rehearsal studio and for independent rehearsals. After this, general rehearsals were officially resumed on September 13. Director Raphaëlle BOITEL and Assistant Julieta SALZ arrived in Japan on September 13, while Technical Director Tristan BAUDOIN arrived in Japan on September 19. After their individual two-week quarantine periods, they met up with the rest of the group to participate in rehearsals in person.

Week 1: Resumption of general rehearsals: MINAKAWA, HASEGAWA, SUGIMOTO, MEGURO, YOSHIKAWA, and YOSHIDA joined in.

Week 2: French team participated remotely, YASUMOTO joined in.

Week 3: Boitel, Salz, and YAMAMOTO joined in; stage began being used.

Week 4: Baudoin joined in; sound and lights added.

#### Week 1 (September 13–17)

In week one, Stage Manager KIMURA Mitsuharu explained the rehearsal studio. After that, the five main cast members and Assistant Yoshida Aki reviewed the work they had done so far.

The rehearsal studio had been reserved for the group's exclusive use for the entire period. The rehearsal studio had ceilings high enough to hang equipment as high as it would be during actual performances. This enabled the group to practice using the equipment and doing aerial performances. In June, tightwire work was only simulated without equipment. This time, however, they were able to train using a tightwire that was as high and as long as it would be during actual performances.

#### Week 2 (September 20–24)

In week two, similar to the master class in June, each day from around noon, the Japanese team began rehearsing on their own. Then, from 3:00 p.m., Raphaëlle Boitel and the rest of the French team participated over Zoom. Each day, the group engaged in detailed rehearsals of three to four scenes, in chronological order and focusing on group scenes, with the aim of doing a full run-through at the end of the week. Separate, individual rehearsal times were created for each cast member to practice their solos.

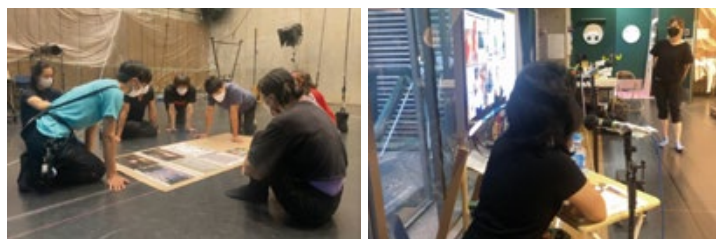
Based on the experience from the previous week, this week KURASAWA Eiji, in charge of video shooting, attended rehearsals for multiple days in a row. In addition to shooting video for publicity (released on September 30), he also provided support for Zoom communications. Additionally, Stage Manager Kimura was there each day, and people in charge of lighting and sound were also frequently present, providing technical support as needed. Because of this, things proceeded smoothly, despite the need for the French team to participate remotely.

After the master class in June and the independent rehearsal period,

the overall composition of the piece was largely established. Because of this, during this week, much time was spent on stopping for each scene to confirm points that were not clear and to carefully add details of the performance and movements. Boitel talked about her own role, saying, “The artists learn from the image provided by the video. Because of this, if they are wondering why they are doing something in the piece, it means they don't fully understand what's going on. I'm here to convey that information to them.” Boitel made efforts to, talk extensively and provide demonstrations over Zoom in order to convey the intentions behind the end result shown in the video.

Meanwhile, Technical Director and performer Tristan Baudoin and Julieta Salz, who had appeared in *5es Hurlants* for six years, provided practical advice, such as equipment operation procedures and lines of flow. *Fierce 5* has many individual performances and also requires flexible responses to unpredictable situations. Because of this, there are many things only those who work on stage can understand. Accordingly, sometimes other cast members from *5es Hurlants* who hadn't come to Japan also participated and helped confirm things. Through this process, the precision of each scene was gradually increased. The concrete advice of Salz and Baudoin, and the words of Director Boitel conveying the piece's image, seemed to have a complimentary effect.

One thing that became a problem as the project moved forward was creating break times. Unlike being there in person, it was difficult to see how tired the cast members were when watching over Zoom. It also made it difficult for everyone to synchronize, and sometimes when things heated up, it was difficult for others to make their voices heard. Because a lack of attention could directly result in a dangerous situation, measures were taken such as taking breaks every 90 minutes, and taking care to ensure that rehearsals didn't last too long.



The Stage Manager explaining the stage layout      Rehearsals over Zoom (photo by the author)  
(photo by the author)

#### Week 3: September 27–October 1

In week three, all cast members participated, including the secondaries. All of the equipment, props, and costumes that would be used in performances were also ready. Further, on September 28, after around five months of remote communications, Boitel and the Japanese artists were finally able to meet in person. That same day, work also began on setting up the stage, and preparations for actual performances were fully underway.

This week, there were three main challenges. These were: 1) developing a common physicality among all the cast members through exercises; 2) completing setup in preparation for stage rehearsals starting on September 30; and 3) focusing on the development of the last two scenes, on which work had not yet started—especially the large-scale aerial performance scene called the “spider.” At the same time, importance was also placed on repeated run-throughs in order to adjust the overall flow.

Because work would be conducted at the same time in two different locations, it was divided so that Boitel traveled between the rehearsal studio and performance stage, while Assistant Julieta Salz and Interpreter KATO Ritsuko worked on the stage preparation. Because Technical Direc-

tor Baudoin was still in quarantine and participating remotely, each time there was a break in the work, Salz called him to convey questions from the theater's technical team. Salz knows a lot about the piece as well as the stage situation. She served as Baudoin's eyes, and this seemed to make the remote collaboration process go a little smoother.

I will briefly describe the exercises the cast members did. These exercises were the same as Company L'Oublié(e) always does each day before moving on to the project development process. The exercises consisted of two stages. The first stage was solo work, which also served as a warm-up. The cast members did basic exercises such as "become part of the floor," "spiral," and "slide," and had to improvise variations on these based on directions such as "faster," "add pauses," "asymmetrically," and "acrobatically." The aim was for all the cast members to share the same basic physicality. Boitel's ability to move nimbly and precisely is supported by strong inner muscles and was greatly influenced by martial artist HINO Akira. Her explanations also frequently included the phrase "like martial arts."

Next, the cast members did group work to connect with other people—in other words, to build relationships between the cast members. They started with the same simple work they had done during the auditions in April. Then they gradually built on this to ultimately create an experimental scene. According to Boitel, Company L'Oublié(e)'s development process is to research what resources each artist possesses through this work and then incorporate these resources in order to develop the piece.

All of the work was similar to that often done in dance workshops. Not all circus artists, however, are familiar with this kind of work, and it took a lot of time for the cast members to get used to them.



Setting up the stage (photo by the author)



Raphaëlle Boitel directing a group scene (photo by the author)

#### Week 4 (October 4 –8)

In week four, Tristan Baudoin began participating in person, and the pace of final technical adjustments increased. On October 4, lights and sound were added for the first time. On October 5, the team did its first run-through on stage. On October 8, the team did a dress rehearsal. Each day, technical matters were adjusted in the morning and the cast members rehearsed in the afternoon.

One of the unique characteristics of this piece is the extremely large number of things that must be checked on stage. The piece has the cast members themselves using equipment, ropes, and lighting equipment, and the audience can see them doing these things. Because of this, it is necessary for the cast members to repeatedly practice in a real environment and to become able to use the equipment properly, with precision, and as appropriate to the situation, even with many unexpected things happening around them.

The "spider" scene, the climax of the piece, can only be rehearsed on an actual stage. In the scene, five of the cast members (Hasegawa Aimi, Sugimoto Shun, Meguro Yosuke, Yoshikawa Kento, and Yasumoto Asami) must pull on ropes in synchronization to raise Minakawa Mayumu, wear-

ing a harness, into the air. It is the piece's most difficult and most dangerous scene. Time was taken to practice this scene every day. The scene was finally perfected on the morning of the dress rehearsal.

With opening day almost here, there were four things Boitel emphasized in this week's rehearsals: increasing the precision of sound and light staging, increasing the group's energy, adding emotion to the cast's performances, and getting used to dealing with problems. After each full rehearsal, Boitel gave detailed comments and, while proactively incorporating the cast members' opinions and ideas, made adjustments to the overall piece.



Rehearsing the "spider" scene (photo by the author)



Discussing after going over comments for the entire piece (photo by the author)

Finally, on the morning of the 9th, opening day, Boitel concluded her final comments as follows:

Some audience members may have avoided going to the theater due to COVID-19.

I do this job because I want to give people hope that even though there are many difficulties in life, there are also amazing things.

When you perform, I want you to keep in mind and convey to the audience this message: "Together, we can carry on."

#### Rehearsal Content

The amount of time available to do in-person rehearsals was a little under two weeks, half that originally planned. This made the overall schedule extremely tight. In addition, the piece makes use of many pieces of equipment and tools that could not be acquired in Japan and had to be brought from France. These tools and equipment only arrived shortly before opening day.

The amount of time to adjust the technical aspects was particularly limited. Technical Director Tristan Baudoin's quarantine period ended on October 4, and he was scheduled to return to France on October 10, the day after opening day. Accordingly, he only really had six days during which he was able to work on-site. It was expected that there would be a shortage of time, but thanks in part to the fact that the same staff members were working in each section as the last time Company L'Oublié(e) staged a piece in Japan, coordination was smooth. Further, all of the artists were highly skilled, and the result was that they were able to pull off all the performances they had planned.

Particular effort was put into the following areas:

#### Real Emotion

Raphaëlle Boitel highly praised the artists' high professionalism, devotion, and uncommon abilities to concentrate and learn. Their work was extremely meticulous, and Boitel was unable to hide her surprise at their ability to immediately reflect her directions in their performances.

Conversely, the artists' emphasis on performing correctly often made it difficult for their acting to feel natural. As Boitel said, their "technical aims win out over emotion." The artists' performances were also too close to those of the original cast of *5es Hurlants*, which hid their own individuality, and they were frequently caught up in comments from the Company L'Oublié(e) side. I believe that two partial causes of these were that the artists had, for the past five months, constantly rehearsed while referencing videos of *5es Hurlants*; and that during the remote rehearsals, communication was entirely language-focused. Because of these factors, going beyond faithful recreation to achieve realistic acting and adding real emotions on top of skill and accuracy became huge challenges. As the team repeatedly engaged in dialogue and both parties engaged in trial and error with regard to the give and take of communication, these points noticeably improved.

### Establishing a Group Consciousness

I frequently heard the phrase "everyone together" during rehearsals. Boitel emphasized that a group's energy can add something extra to the quality of a piece.

It's true that during the early stages, especially during the solo scenes requiring especially high concentration, the relationships between the artists and everyone else tended to become weaker. In group scenes, at first the artists were reserved, taking care not to get in each other's way while learning about how their fellow performers behaved. This made it hard to maintain a rhythm and often caused the group's energy to fall. However, once a real group consciousness began to form, the scenes gained greater depth and the drive of the work overall increased.

### Clarifying Aims

Although the team had a limited amount of time, one thing Boitel did not compromise on was how to show the aims of each scene. Boitel made detailed adjustments so that the audience would not have any unintentional misunderstandings. These adjustments included not just the relationships between the piece's characters but also the lighting positioning and even the sounds of breathing and equipment.

### Emphasis on Safety

The thing that was given more importance than anything else was safety. The cast members were directed not to take any risks and to personally stop a technique or rehearsals anytime they sensed danger. They were also given advice on how to incorporate a problem into their performance if one did occur.

Another thing that was impressive to me was that Boitel watched and learned about each artist's personality and, when giving them comments, she would adjust her wording and the timing of her comments to match their personalities. Setagaya Producer SAKAI Atsumi says that when they were doing remote rehearsals, she frequently received questions from Boitel about the artists' personalities. Accordingly, the production team provided Boitel with additional information that was difficult for her to understand just by watching the rehearsals via a screen.

From the time that in-person rehearsals began, Boitel was always paying attention to the entire situation, and she spoke to every member of the team, from artists to staff. This can also be seen in the fact that all of the artists praised Boitel, describing her friendly and passionate character by saying that she was "enthusiastic," "filled with love," "energetic," and that "her vision is clear and never wavers."

There is a difference in the amount of information that is conveyed

when you are working with someone face to face versus when you are not there in person. In a short yet very dense amount of time, the team rapidly built strong relationships of trust, and as these relationships of trust deepened, the piece's performance also improved strikingly.



Everyone checking the composition while looking at a run sheet (photo by the author)