

Brooklyn Academy of Music

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Non Solus

Recirquel Company Budapest

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House
Feb 14—16 at 7:30pm

Running time: approx. 55 minutes, no intermission

Writer, director, choreographer **Bence Vági**

Performers **Renátó Illés** and **Gábor Zsíros**

Visual concept by **Bence Vági, Árpád Iványi**

Music by **Gábor (Fiddler) Terjék**

Set design by **Árpád Iványi**

Projections and animation by **András Sass, Tamás Vaspöri,**
László Czigány (Maxin10sity)

Lighting design by **Attila Lenzsér**

Costume design by **Kriszta Berzsenyi**

2019 Winter/Spring is programmed by Joseph V. Melillo.

Season Sponsor:

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Non Solus (not alone) is the formulation of a direct statement, or rather an instinctive aspiration. I do not imagine life on my own—I am not alone in the universe. We all wish to find our life companion while we search the world for our personal God; however, only late do we recognize that our sole true companion is our own soul.

Maybe today I can understand why Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's pilot crashed in the desert. He arrived in an empty space where he had no escape; he simply had to encounter his own soul—the little prince, who taught him how to fly again...

Non Solus was written when I first arrived at the desert. The infinite sands became my passion, just as theater did. An empty space, creative imagination, and an audibly beating heart.

There are times when the fear of death awakens me.
A rare notion, an inner pressure,
in which my heart beats in panic.

You were still asleep and I felt I had the need to go, to get up, to get out in the open air. I stepped out but all my powers left me; I was astonished. Desert and sky were glowing with the same redness in the setting sun: a perfect, mundane infinity running from the soles of my feet to the final horizon from the sight of my raised head.

I could not wake you up; you were fast asleep and I was left alone in the middle of the desert with an elated heart.

I took out my sketchbook and drew the world, scene by scene, what it meant for me: not alone. *Non Solus*.

For you.

Then you woke up...

Often, new circus is distinguished from classical circus, as if one was more prominent than the other. As if we said that modern dance is much better than ballet... nonsense. For me there is only theater!—and really good theater can be born in the circus ring just as it can on stage. Theater is a kind of sacred space that accommodates all art forms; only the people in the audience will decide if they are willing to sympathize with, identify with, and believe in what they can see.

Since the ancient times, in art we are telling the same stories over and over again, regardless of genres. We are messengers, storytellers who are trying to gain ground for the soul in the hearts of people.

We return here thousandfold to understand the simplest teaching: we are one and the only creation of our progress is love.

—*Bence Vági*



Photo by Roland Pozsonyi

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Technical director **Tamás Vladár**

Assistant to the stage set designer **Áron Pintér**

Assistant to the costume designer **Klára Muladi**

Featured on the recording—organ **László Fassang**

A Müpa Budapest production





BENCE VÁGI (founder and artistic director), has a background of contemporary and classical dance, and trained as a director and choreographer. He has matured into a progressive artist pioneering in ground-breaking forms of circus and physical theater. In 2012, he created a show with 11 talented acrobats for the world famous Sziget Festival that takes place each summer in Budapest, Hungary. After the rapid success of this production there was no question that they would continue their path together, so they founded Recirquel Company Budapest, and set on a journey leading them beyond what they imagined possible. Vági has since directed and choreographed one production after another, and has by now achieved international success with his very distinct form of performing arts that has laid the foundations of a new genre, "cirque danse." He says: "I could never give up on that quality of dance, its ability to communicate about anything and everything through its abstracting power. Dance communicates in a very delicate way. Circus on the other hand has a very different, a rather rough way of communication— that moment of surprise, taking our breath away when we experience the existence of the superhero for real. Merging these two, the poetic delicacy represented by dance and the enchantment quality of circus is the foundation of this new genre. It is a novel form of theater, a new way of expression for the storytellers of art."

RENÁTÓ ILLÉS (performer) is a circus artist graduate of the Imre Baross Circus Institute. Illés is a multiskilled talent in circus arts and has won awards in several competitions since his childhood. In 2013 he joined Recirquel during the creation of the company's show *Night Circus* and ever since he has been working as a principal performer in all productions of the company. Besides being a stunning performer on stage, he is working as an acrobat choreographer and artistic adviser at Bence Vági's side.

GÁBOR ZSÍROS (performer), after finishing his studies at the Hungarian Dance Academy, became an iconic figure in the contemporary dance scene in Hungary. His creativity soon led him to start working as a choreographer for theater and television. Zsíros joined Recirquel during the creation of the company's second show *The Naked Clown* not only as a performer but as the assistant choreographer to Bence Vági. Zsíros, using his dance skills, continued

his studies in the world of circus arts and soon became a highly trained porter in aerial trapeze. He has become an important member of the Recirquel creative team.

GÁBOR TERJÉK (music), known by his artist name, "Fiddler," is a music composer and an audio engineer. He has been awarded a scholarship and graduated from SAE Institute Dubai magna cum laude. In the past decade he has been working on various projects as a music composer and sound effect designer, including Recirquel's *Night Circus* and *Non Solus*. Besides theatrical compositions, he also composes music and provides recording, mixing, and mastering services to singers and musicians at his own studio. He enjoys being a part of various live concerts and theatrical shows as a live sound engineer.

ÁRPÁD IVÁNYI (set design) graduated in 2012 from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. Since then, he has been working in Hungarian and international productions in different fields of theater, television, and interior design as a set and costume designer. Besides his several designer creations he is also known as the director and co-founder of the Hungarian Noir Theatre.

ATTILA LENZSÉR (lighting design) has been working as the lighting designer of prestigious events and concerts for over 20 years, including lighting worldwide, reknowned international festivals. Among his theatrical works, his collaboration with director György Böhm is particularly notable.

MAXIN10SITY (projections and animation) is a high-level projection mapping production studio driven by passion and creativity, established by multi-award winner 3D mapping artists László Czígány and András Sass with internationally experienced sales specialist Tamás Vaspöri. With many projects, Maxin10sity has built a new kind of entertainment in Karlsruhe with their shows in recent years, especially the most recent, *I'MMORTAL*, where projection mapping combined with Recirquel's acrobats, creating something unusual and spectacular to the audiences at Schlosslichtspiele Karlsruhe. They also created the largest scale projection mapping event in Hungary for the opening ceremony of the Budapest 2017 FINA World Championships.

KRISZTA BERZSENYI (costume design) graduated from the scenography program of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in 1996. She has worked at various theaters in Budapest and in Hungary. In recent years she has worked on productions in a wide range of foreign, especially European theaters, such as in Graz and Avignon. In addition to that, she often designs costumes for film productions, yet her favorite genres remain opera and dance. She started to work in the field of contemporary circus when she created costumes for Recirquel's *The Naked Clown*, then for *Paris de Nuit*.

RECIRQUEL COMPANY BUDAPEST, founded in Budapest, Hungary in 2012 by director and choreographer Bence Vági. Recirquel has become one of the leading contemporary circus companies in the world, representing a unique style of circus combined with dance and theater, offering the flair of mid-eastern European/Hungarian classical theater culture. The productions of this pioneering company bewitch audiences worldwide with the immersive quality of the magical universes they create. Recirquel Company opened the gate for contemporary circus in Hungary with a mission of acquainting people with this new form of circus. The company is resident at the Palace of Arts – Müpa in Budapest, Hungary's leading cultural institution.

With the foundation of Recirquel, Vági's aim was to develop a unique expression of Eastern/Central Europe's cultural heritage that would narrow the distance between physical theater, dance, and circus. Since Recirquel's formation, the artists—still in their late teens when they started working with Vági— have grown with the company. Together they have gained new perceptions and impressions that have shaped

each of the company's productions and created new forms of artistic language. The company's team spirit nurtures the artists' individual talents, furthering the vision of Vági. Instead of choosing new artists for each creation, Recirquel emphasizes the creative development of each individual performer, revealing new aspects of their characters in each performance.

Frédéric Jérôme, director of the Folies Bergère in Paris, has described the company's productions as being "like a remedy for the human soul." Recirquel's first show, *Night Circus*, premiered in 2013 and was an overnight success. The company attracted appreciative audiences and gained practical support from Hungary's leading cultural institution, the Palace of Arts – Müpa Budapest. Csaba Káel, Müpa's CEO, provided a home for Recirquel in an institute known for hosting classical, jazz and world music, and dance. The company has presented all subsequent productions there. In 2014, *The Naked Clown*, Recirquel's second show, premiered at the Budapest Spring Festival. That year the company presented its third production, *Paris de Nuit*, bringing to life the artistic work of Hungarian photographer Brassai, who captured the decadent but lovely nights of 1930s Paris. In 2015 Vági created *Non Solus*, a blend of dance and circus in a world of illusions, telling the story of two humans finding one another, and exploring the innermost depths of imagination. In 2017 Vági was invited to direct the closing ceremony of the 17th FINA World Aquatics Championships in Budapest. The show, based on Hungary's most ancient legend, *The Golden Stag*, united 200 circus artists and dancers from all over the world, while *My Land* premiered at Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018, where it was the best-rated show by critics among the productions of the entire festival.