



THE Mad Hatter

CREATION 2025

Circus show, puppets and live music, ages 6 and up.
Indoor and street versions (courtyards, parks and gardens).

Inspired by our previous show "ALICE" premiered in December 2023 at Jules Verne Circus, National Circus Center in Amiens. 15,000 children watched, in wonder, as Alice fell from the circus's magisterial dome to the bottom of the white rabbit hole. In this new creation, I'm staging the mythical tea scene with the enigmatic Mad Hatter as the main character, played by a tightrope walker. As for Alice, she is sometimes a puppet, sometimes the one who manipulates them...



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PERFORMERS

Giuseppe Germini - tightrope walker

Rakoo de Andrade - puppeteer

François Goliot - musician

Stage direction and set design: André Mandarino

Musical creation: François Goliot

Puppet creation and writing : Rakoo de Andrade

Choreography: Sibille Planques

Lighting: Paul Galéron

Costumes: Jennifer Minard

Lighting and stage management: Mike Vignot

Apparatus construction: Franck Breuil

Administration: Anne Delépine

THE SHOW: INTENTIONS AND READING KEYS

Freely inspired by Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, this show reinvents the mythical tea scene in a delightfully offbeat way. The Mad Hatter balances on a tightrope. He moves along a thin line drawn between madness, dreams and reality.

He takes us, young and old alike, to a land that's not always wonderful, where everyone's a little crazy and you can't escape your childhood. And where you can't escape tea-time either!
Where's Alice?

She magically changes size, shrinks, grows and then disappears. A little evil, a lot crazy, the Hatter is always having tea with his companions, the March Hare and the Dormouse.
But what's Alice doing? It's tea time!

A wonderfully zany journey
where time stands still at teatime.

A moment when the impossible becomes possible, objects come to life and puppets move to the sound of live music.

This show is an awakening to novelty and freedom, an initiation ritual, the passage from childhood to adulthood. We work to awaken the senses of young audiences, encouraging them to sharpen their perception, express their emotions, enrich and stimulate their imagination and creativity.

For adults, we want them to rediscover the incandescence of their innocence.

The set, lighting, music and staging choices all help to achieve this. At the heart of the project, contemporary circus, dance, puppetry and music combine to weave the story.



Mixing techniques: here, among other things, Alice is sometimes a shadow, a rod puppet, a girdle puppet, or the one who manipulates her... Doesn't she lead our hatter by the nose? She disappears, changes shape, grows and shrinks to the point of madness.

Music

The music, written for this creation, is played live by violinist François Goliot. Pedal effects and loops reinforce the idea that time here is relative. It carries the energy of the bodies while accompanying the stage direction. It serves as an emotional thread, allowing the spectator's vision to evolve in a universe where sound becomes image.

READING KEYS

It's a land of the most incredible fantasies, with a jumble of objects and characters familiar from Lewis Carroll's tale.

My aesthetic and writing choices have been directed towards a free interpretation of this tea scene, which I rewrite and transpose into the world of contemporary circus, in order to explore its dreamlike poetry in my own way.

In this creation, you discover the story through the prism of the Mad Hatter, an extravagant being with a colorful, psychedelic universe. He's a kind of elegant, whimsical gentleman, wearing a vertiginous top hat.

Puppets

Some anthropomorphic characters are embodied by puppets, objects or masks, to create another, new narrative dimension. Mixing materials: paper, cardboard, foam and fabric to go against realism and join the fantastic, poetic and dreamlike world of the play.



Setting

Tables covered with teacups, pots, saucers and cakes... everything is mismatched: tables, chairs and armchairs give a bohemian style to the décor.

Everything evokes the mythical tea scene from the fairy tale, except for one detail: The set is monochrome, black and white. The furniture and objects have been redesigned as if straight out of a comic book, as if to transpose a realistic space into two dimensions. This inspiration comes from comic books, where the Hatter appears in the role of a super villain.

On stage, two performance spaces define and give meaning to a non-narrative reading:



The tightrope (circus apparatus) symbolizes the Hatter's inner world. This is where his madness is expressed in its entirety: his inconsistencies, his doubts, his contradictions, as well as his emotions.

When he wants to express himself, it's on the rope that movement takes the place of reason, speech and logic. Funnily enough, the first synonym for "mad" is "unbalanced".

The tea table. Here, the place of the real, the everyday. Yet time seems to have stopped. It's 6 a.m., tea time! Repeated gestures. Déjà vu. Back and forth...

CIE. LES ESCARGOTS AILÉS (WINGED SNAILS)

ANDRÉ MANDARINO, REIMS (FRANCE)

Les Escargots Ailés –*Winged Snails*– is a singular language at the service of the imaginary. So many possibilities and opposites in a single name. Opposing the image of a body constantly moving from earth to sky, in a desire for infinite flight. This same body inexorably brought back down to earth by gravity. Travel and itinerancy: notions that characterize the circus artist like the snail, two beings between gravity and lightness. A great oxymoron of life, where antitheses live together as unlikely as a flight of snails.

The Compagnie Les Escargots Ailés was founded in 2000 by French -Brazilian artist André Mandarino.

The company's artistic project is based on research, which feeds into its creations, and on numerous artistic education projects involving the community. With a strong commitment to transmission, the company is developing a repertoire of creations aimed at young audiences.

Since 2012, the company has been thinking about the “restrictions” of creation for young audiences, asking how to combine them with circus language. Height, duration, audience size, dramaturgy and themes are adapted to children's sensory, emotional and intellectual perceptions.

The company's writing is both demanding and rigorous, addressing everyone. Our shows have several levels of interpretation, so that they remain a family and intergenerational experience.

After *It's raining cats and dogs*, *Crush* and *AL!CE*, *The Mad Hatter* is the company's new show for families and schools. An opportunity to spend some quality time together.

ANDRÉ MANDARINO artistic director

Research mind behind the contemporary circus. Director, artist and circus teacher (state diploma). Graduated from ENCLO in Rio de Janeiro and CNAC in Châlons-en-Champagne (11th class Fattoumi/Lamoureux). This Franco-Brazilian artist began acting at the age of 9. A specialist in aerial circus, “suspended” between two cultures, his research is based on a subtle blend of genres, between fluidity of movement, poetry and technique.



GIUSEPPE GERMINI tightrope walker

Of Italian origin, he began walking the tightrope at the age of ten. A graduate of the Cirko Vertigo circus school in Turin and the CNAC in Châlons-en-Champagne (32nd class Raphaëlle Boitel / Cie L'Oublié.e). He has worked with Cie Inhérence / Jean- Charles Gaume and Cie Lunatic / Cécile Mont-Reynaud. Winner of the Coal student prize in 2020 with the project cirque en nature: L'envers d'un monde. Master's degree in Artistic Creation, Performing Arts course at UGA.

RAKOO DE ANDRADE puppeteer

Plastic puppeteer and performer from Brazil. Graduate of a Master's degree in Contemporary Studies, and the ENSAM of Charleville-Mézières. She has worked for Cie Mossoux-Bonté, Cie Yokai, Cie Pseudonymo, Cie Succursale 101, Cie Les Faubourgs Bleus. In 2022 she founded the Collectif Artistique Spectrolab, where she continues her research into performance, public space and puppetry.

FRANÇOIS GOLIOT violinist musician

This composer and performer has been on the French music scene for 10 years. After studying at the Troyes conservatory and the Music Academy International in Nancy, he has accompanied various ensembles and shows. He has performed with Raphaëlle Boitel's l'Oubliée company, Barzingault, Grand Camino, Otomo de Manuel and the cabaret La Blavatsky and the Erosophes. He can be seen singing, playing violin or bass, piano or guitar.



Teaser link

<https://youtu.be/oZoMPPIVADc>

a short description

Freely inspired by Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, this delightfully offbeat show reinvents the mythical tea scene. The Mad Hatter walks a tightrope, balancing between dreams and reality. He's looking for Alice to drink tea with her. The Mad Hatter and his companions, the March Hare and the Dormouse, are just as crazy as he is, and they evolve in a land that's not always wonderful, where objects come to life and puppets move to the sound of live music. A wonderfully zany journey where time stands still at teatime.

Contact

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