

# DALL'ALTO

Try again. Fall again. Fall better.

Production Quattro4 / Milano Musica



# Circus music drama by Riccardo Nova and Giacomo Costantini

tribute to Samuel Beckett's *Act without words I*

duration: 50 min





DALL'ALTO ("from the top") is a tribute to *Samuel Beckett's Act without words I*.

P. is the misplaced protagonist of an absurd world ruled by sounds and weird characters, who keep total control on him. P. is thirsty but he cannot reach the water hanging from the top: who are those characters? Are they antagonists? Are they allies? Or just mere hallucinations?

The whole movement becomes circular: sounds and actions take part in this parade of nonsense. Aerial rope, juggling balls, balance ladders, percussions and whistles govern his world and become the true actors of a contemporary Beckettian scenario.





*Contemporary circus* is a multidisciplinary and cross-cultural language which makes culture accessible to several audiences. Through upside-downs, somersaults and stunts *the spectator is actively engaged* by the mise-on-scene and becomes an active part in the (re)construction of the meaning of the show. In contemporary circus virtuosity is not the aim of the show itself, but the starting point for a *unique theatrical experience* where the body of the artists carries the audience into aesthetic universes far beyond their physical skills.



## Composition notes – Riccardo Nova

After reading *Act without words I* by Samuel Beckett I dreamed of being "three" birds " in a thick forest exchanging signals with other animals, either to alert, calm or frighten them. When the dream was over I woke up with the desire to recreate – through voices and whistles – the sounds that I uttered as a bird while dreaming. So I took my cell phone, I recorded everything I remembered and that I was able to reproduce. Then I went back to sleep. The next morning I overlapped the various whistles and the sounds that I had recorded the previous night: I was extremely surprised in listening to them, so I decided to replace the *14 whistles* in the Beckettian text with the sounds that I had recorded.







## Composition notes

From a formal point of view, the music of this show follows and amplifies the shape of Beckett's text, which is used as a "cantus firmus".

In the original text by Samuel Beckett, the protagonist is accompanied by a character who shows up only in the form of a whistle repeated 14 times, which beats the stage rhythm as a ritual signal. In DALL'ALTO, the whistles turn into a choir of imaginary birds governing the events of the action and alternating with the sound of gong, wooden drums, tubophones and water percussions.

The introduction deconstructs a text taken from the XIII book of the Mahābhārata where the son of the Goddess of the rivers declaims a long series of verses and keeps only their metric crystallization. What remains is the rhythm of the words without the words themselves ("without words") together with the **sound of the flowing waters** and the **songs of the imaginary birds**.

The imaginary birds, pointing upwards, appear to the spectators under the shape of divine messengers. When the protagonist enters the scene, isolated **percussive consonants** determine all his movements: they are no longer connected to things / words but only to archetypal movements, i.e. the straight lines drawn by the protagonist who bounces back when the three percussionists block his escape attempts emitting sequences of percussive guttural k\*.





## Composition notes

The *metal sounds of the ladder* lead P. to the first attempt to ascend... a hoquetus of whistles will pull him towards the pleasures of dance and perhaps of love... then another final attempt to escape... a pre-recorded choir consisting of 19 *female voices* introduces pure vowel sounds: a contemplation where time stops, thanks to the absence of the motion impressed by the consonants, before returning to the "word" of the gran finale where the Goddess of the Rivers "emerges from the sounds of the flowing waters" (30 samples of streams / streams / fountains / dams recorded in the upper Chiavenna valley). Through her voice and her ascent the Goddess leads the "son" beyond the limits of action and therefore of suffering. In the end, the sound produced by 7 *drops falling from the top* together with the *song of imaginary birds* will close the scene.

Composer **Riccardo Nova**  
Director **Giacomo Costantini**  
Choreographer **Roberto Olivan**

Circus actors  
**Caterina Boschetti**  
**Giulio Lanfranco**  
**Clara Storti**  
**John Simon Wiborn**

Musicians  
**Pino Basile**  
**Simone Beneventi**  
**Lorenzo Colombo**

In collaboration with  
**Teatro del Buratto**  
**Circo El Grito**  
**AGON acustica informatica musica**  
**Zaum\_percussion**

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**Spazio Agreste**

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Project born in the ambit of **Intercettazioni – Artistic Residence Center of Lombardy**  
(project by Circuito CLAPS e Milano Musica, Industria Scenica, Teatro delle Moire, Zona K)

Lights **Flavio Cortese**  
Costumes **Beatrice Giannini**  
Live electronics **Riccardo Nova**  
Coordination **Filippo Malerba**

Audio technology implementation  
edited by **AGON acustica informatica musica**

Original music by **Riccardo Nova**  
for percussion and electronics (Ed. Ricordi, 2018)  
Milan Music Commission with the support of Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung  
VPre-recorded voice **Varijashree Venugopal**  
Pre-recorded Indian percussion **BC Manjunath**



Production **MILANO MUSICA**  
ASSOCIAZIONE PER LA MUSICA CONTEMPORANEA



Executive production





## Riccardo Nova *Composition*

He graduated in flute and composition at the Conservatorio di Milano and at the Siena Academy. His music is performed by some of the most important world ensembles, including Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble L'itinéraire and Ictus Ensemble. Since 1993 Nova has repeatedly lived in South India to study music, thus becoming one of the top experts in the West. In 2003 he composed the music for *MA di Akram Khan*. In 2006 he collaborated with PAN SONIC e crea *Thirteen@terrorgeneratingdeity* and created Thirteen@terror generating deity for symphony orchestra and techno group, selected at the International Rostrum of Composers (Paris, 2007). In 2012 he composed the music for *Nineteen Mantras* with Shantala Shivalingappa and Giorgio Barberio Corsetti. He is currently working on an instrumental suite of his *MahAbhArata* opera project for the *Musik Fabrik Ensemble* in Cologne.

## Giacomo Costantini *Direction*

He is considered one of the pioneers of contemporary circus in Italy and since 1990s he has been researching the synthesis between circus and music. He is the artistic director of the company Circo El Grito, founded in 2008 with Fabiana Ruiz Diaz: "One of the companies with the most vivid imagery, not French but Italian" (CdS). He creates the shows *Scratch and stretch*, *20 decibel*, *Johann Sebastian Circus*, *Uomo Calamita 1945*. For the Pergolesi Spontini Foundation he writes and takes care of the direction of "opera circo": *Caffè Bach*, *Gran Circo Rossini*.

## Roberto Olivan *Choreography*

He studied at the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona and P.A.R.T.S. Brussels. Dance in the Rosas company and under the direction of Robert Wilson, Tom Jansen and Josse de Pauw. He is the director of the R.O.P.A. and founder of the Deltebre Dansa Festival. For his internationally recognized career as a choreographer and teacher, he received the awards: Nacional de Cultura 2014, Ciutat de Barcelona 2013, Sebastià Gasch FAD Awards 2012, Prix SACD de la Création Chorégraphique 2001.



## Caterina Boschetti

He attended the Flic Circus School in Turin specializing in juggling and manipulation. She enriches his training through the teaching of Roberto Magro, Raymond Peyramaure and Firenza Guidi. Since 2015 she has been working with the Gandini Juggling company in the shows *Meta*, *Clowns & Queens* e *8 Songs*. Since 2016 she is under creation Stefan Sing for the show *Critical Mess DODAI*. In 2017 she was chosen to stage *Entre Ciel & Terre* directed by Martin Palisse.

## Clara Storti

He specialized in aerial rope through professional seminars in Italy and all over Europe. She has developed her own research on movement and actor physicality with Roberto Magro, Elodie Donaque, Shai Faran, Fighting Monkey and Judith Sánchez Ruíz. He worked with Dario Fo, Arturo Brachetti, Willi Dorner, Civilleri / Lo Sicco, Boogaerdt / Van der Schoot. She is the co-founder of the contemporary circus center Quattro4 in Milan. She is the author and performer of the contemporary circus shows *PIANI IN BILICO* and *FLOCK*.

## Circus actors



## Giulio Lanfranco

He began his career as a young boy and later attended the Flic Circus School in Turin specializing in the balance ladder and hand-to-hand. In 2012 he graduated from the ESAC Academy in Brussels and founded MagdaClan, a contemporary circus company under the tent, with which he created the shows *Era*, *Extra\_Vagante*, *È un attimo ed Emisfero*. In 2014 he founded the company Zenhir with Elena Bosco and Flavio Cortese and he produced the show *Ah, com'è bello l'Uomo*.

## John Simon Wiborn

He started his circus career as a boy, attending the Circus Gymnasium in Stockholm. He later graduated from the AFUK Circus Academy in Copenhagen and the DOCH in Stockholm. He develops constant physical research through contemporary dance, martial arts and theater, investigating self-expression through movement. Co-founder of Svalbard Company, he is currently on an international tour with the show *All genius, all idiots*.



## Pino Basile

Pino Basile graduated in percussions at the Matera Conservatory. He develops musical experiences in the jazz field, music theater, dance theater, contemporary circus. He actively engages in the study and research of frame and friction drums of the popular culture of Southern Italy with the aim of spreading the peculiarities of these popular instruments as a form of cultivated art. He cooperates with Italian and foreign choreographers. He is the musical author of several contemporary circus shows.

## Lorenzo Colombo

Graduated in percussion instruments at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen, he won the National Arts Award, the Yamaha Foundation Prize and the International Percussion Competition as a solo artist. In 2016 he was identified as a promising young performer by the Ulysses Network. He lives in Copenhagen where he pursues his musical research in connection with new technologies and multimedia. He is co-founder of the Zaum\_percussion trio.

# Musicians

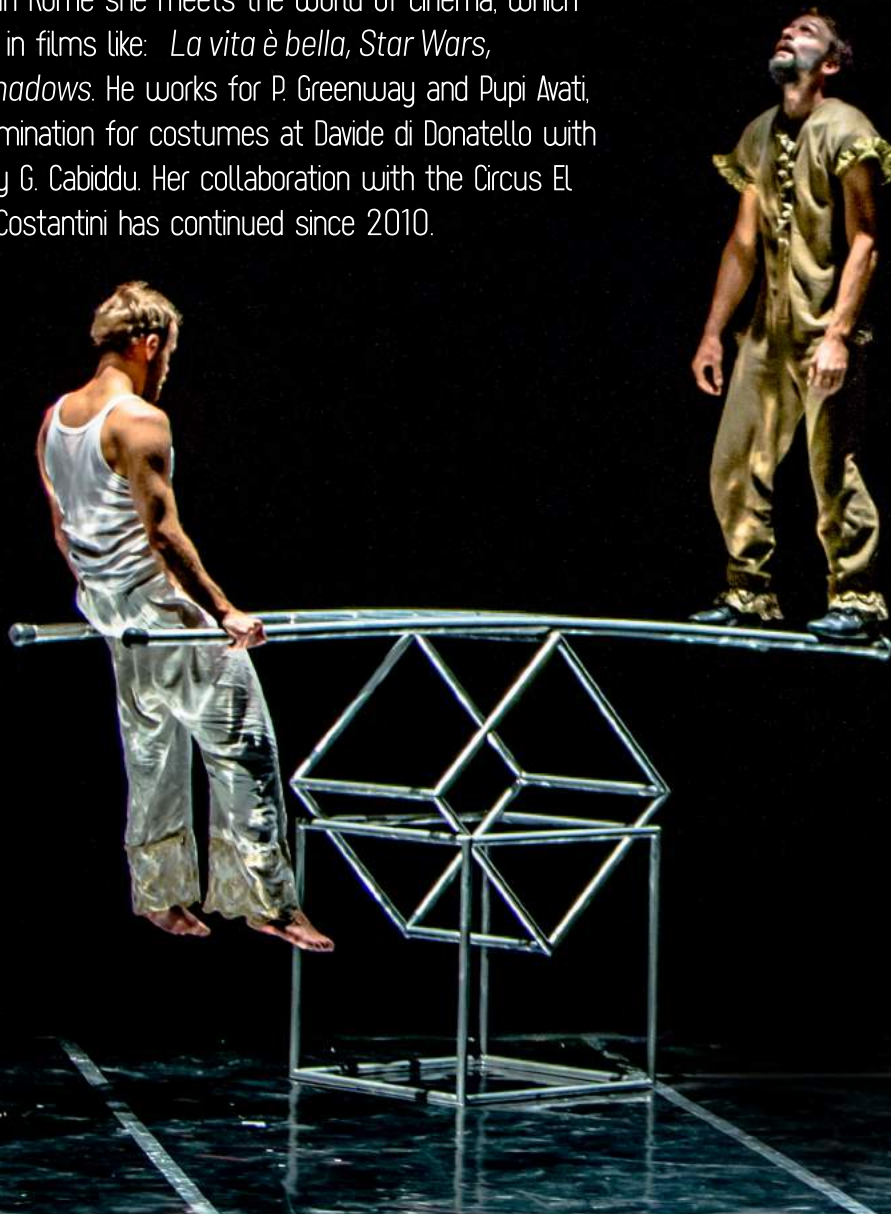
## Simone Beneventi

Percussionist and performer, he received the Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale 2010 with Repertorio Zero. His choice of designing new instruments and researching new compositional solutions led him to collaborate with: Daniele Abbado, Pierluigi Billone, Peter Maxwell Davies, Ivan Fedele, Heinri Goebbels, Helmut Lachenmann, David Lang, Ennio Morricone, Riccardo Nova, Fausto Romitelli, Salvatore Sciarrino and also Klangforum Wien, Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, Ensemble Prometeo, mdi ensemble. He is co-founder of the Zaum\_percussion trio.



## Beatrice Giannini *Costumes*

He attended the Art Institute in Siena, then the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence and began working in the theater as set designer and costume designer. In Rome she meets the world of cinema, which allows her to train in films like: *La vita è bella*, *Star Wars*, *Casanova*, *Dark shadows*. He works for P. Greenway and Pupi Avati, and obtains the nomination for costumes at Davide di Donatello with *Lastoffa dei sogni* by G. Cabiddu. Her collaboration with the Circus El Grito and Giacomo Costantini has continued since 2010.



## Flavio Cortese *Lights*

Sound and light technician, in 2011 he trained at the MusicLab in Turin. Here he works at the Circolo dei Lettori, in many theaters and in festivals such as Torino Spiritualità and the Salone del Libro. In 2014 he entered the world of contemporary circus. Throughout Europe he currently collaborates with the companies Magdaclan, Zenhir, Compagnia Roberto Magro, Quattrox4, Catalyst, Lapso Cirk. He took part in several festivals such as African Circus Arts Festival in Ethiopia and Dinamico Festival in Reggio Emilia.





## Milano Musica

Milano Musica was founded in 1992 to promote the rich repertoire of contemporary music and in particular of the XX century, with the aim of supporting new music and opening up to new audiences. Every year Milano Musica organizes a Festival, internationally recognized and organized in cooperation with the Teatro alla Scala. Festival Milano Musica programs pieces by contemporary Italian and foreign composers of XX century and commissions the production of new works every year.

## Quattrox4

Quattrox4 is a contemporary circus center based in Milan. Born in 2011 from the idea of Marco Dellabianca, Clara Storti, Filippo Malerba and Elisa Angioni, Quattrox4's mission is to promote contemporary circus both as a physical activity and as a cultural practice in Milan, thus contributing to enrich and develop the whole panorama of performing arts in Italy. In 2017 Quattrox4 launched FUORI ASSE – contemporary circus in Milan, a yearly season of contemporary circus shows organized in cooperation with theatres and cultural hubs. Quattrox4 is also a contemporary circus company, which produced *PIANI IN BILICO* (theatre venues), *FLOCK* e *VOLTEGGI* (urban spaces).



3 November 2018

World premiere, within

**27th Milano Musica Festival** — György Kurtág. Listening to Beckett  
**FUORI ASSE** – contemporary circus in Milan, curated by Quattrox4



**ANSA** – Contemporary music has started to do stunts to conquer young audiences... And the double soldout together with an extraordinary replica set for November 13 and the comments and applause of the children, clearly explain the success of this work inspired by Samuel Beckett.



# 2019 Tournée

21 October, Macerata for **Appassionata**

3 November, Milano for **Festival Milano Musica – FUORI ASSE**

8–9–10 November, Roma for **Romaeuropa Festival**

13–14 November, Reggio Emilia for **Festival Aperto**

16 November, Milano for **Musica al Tempio**\_DALL'ALTO Suite





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