

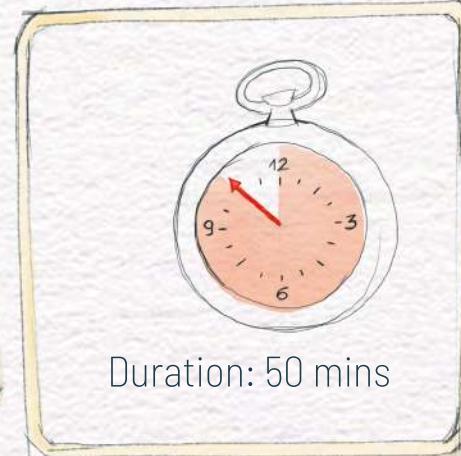


# Gretel

by Clara Storti  
QuattroX4 company

# GRETTEL

Contemporary  
circus solo



Duration: 50 mins

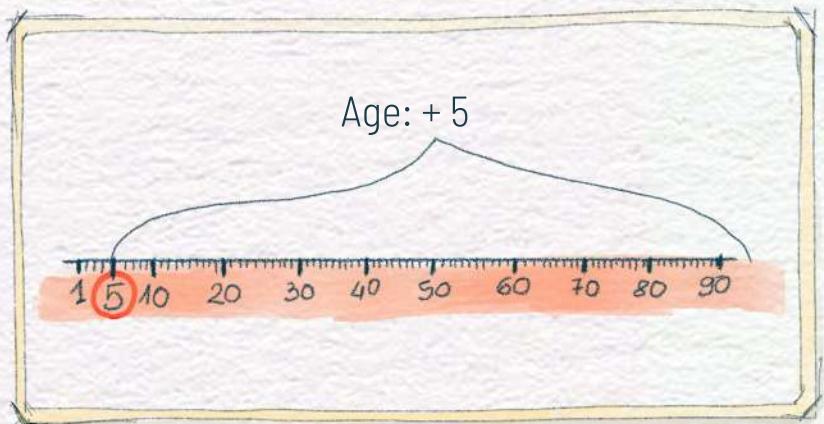
Circus technique: aerial  
rope, object manipulation  
and object  
balancing



Show for theaters  
and circus tents



Age: + 5



# NOTE OF INTENTION

"At the core of this project there is the desire of investigating the universe of the fairy tales. However, my main focus is not their moral aim or their psychoanalytical background, but rather their narrative apparatus and the small acts of magic or poetry that we can trace throughout the story."



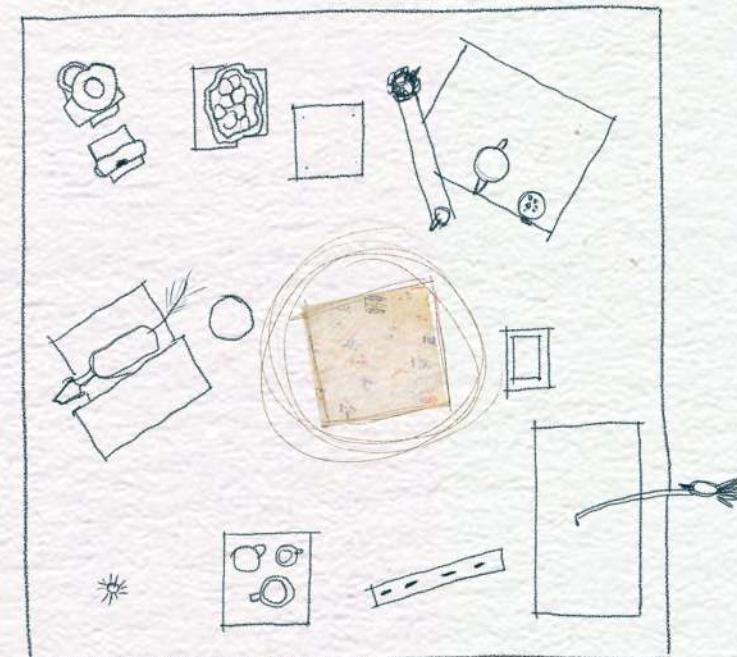
"I am looking for a very precise aesthetics, which is simultaneously delicate and surreal. In my work, I want to evoke **childish and dreamy atmospheres** and give them substance, in order to break with realism and dive into existential feelings – perseverance, hope, recklessness. The fairy tales allow me to do it within an **unordinary context**, rich in odd and **misplaced objects**."

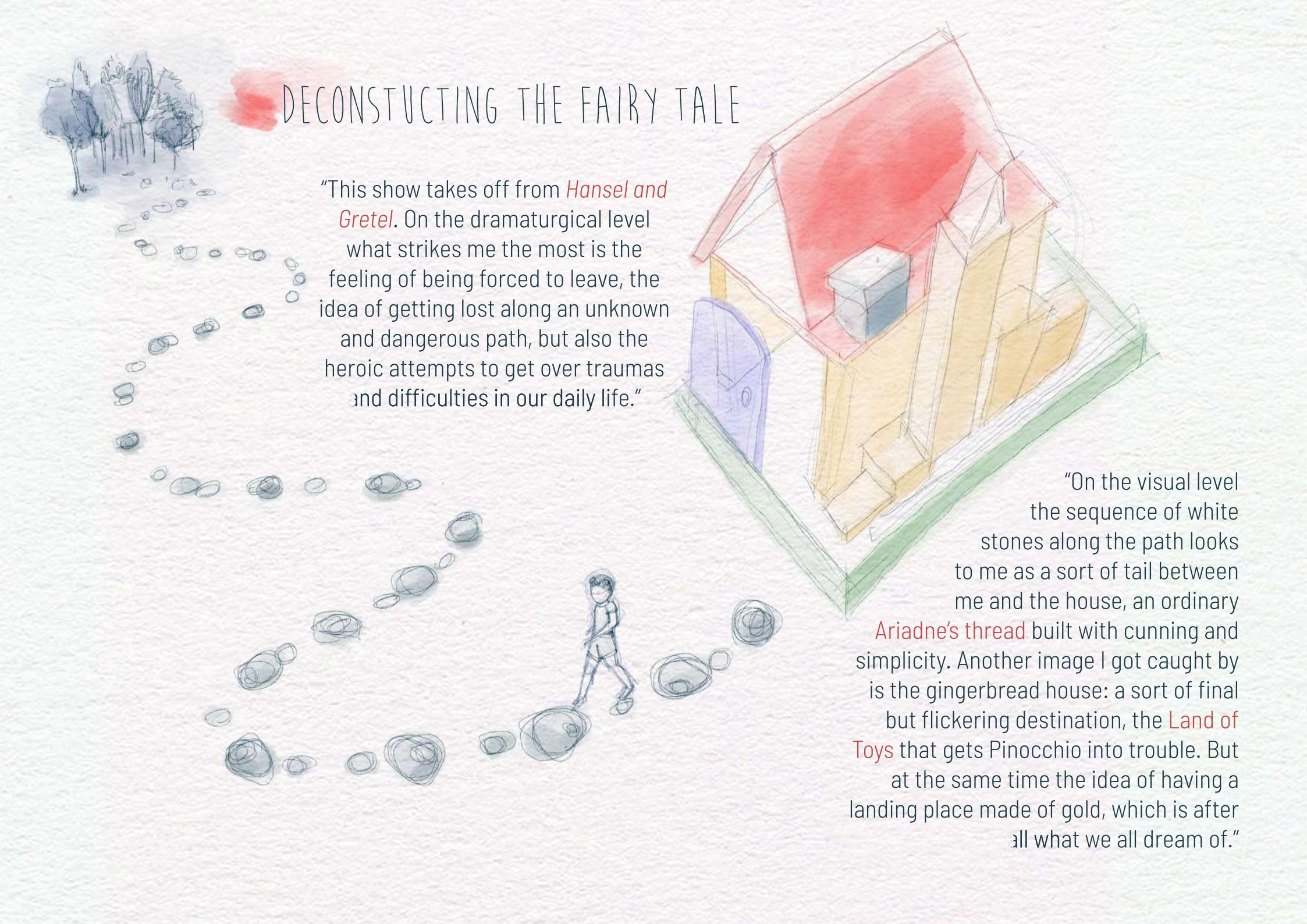




## SYNOPSIS

Blank scene. A square. Several little objects - a tray, a teapot, an English grass, a small table. And then Fritz and Oscar, cute and silent housemates. Gretel goes back and forward in her tiny house made of crazy little things. She is mindless and rigorous, chaotic and still very careful in making everything stick to her bizarre logic. Everything is out of range and out of place. Then, suddenly, the catastrophe happens. What is home? Who are we? Through the immediacy of the fairy tale, GRETEL walks alone along the paths of existence. It is a **joyful** hymn to obstinacy and perseverance, a celebration of migration and the need for re-inventing oneself when **everything collapses**. A light and deep investigation on the meaning of staying and leaving through the powerful images of circus.





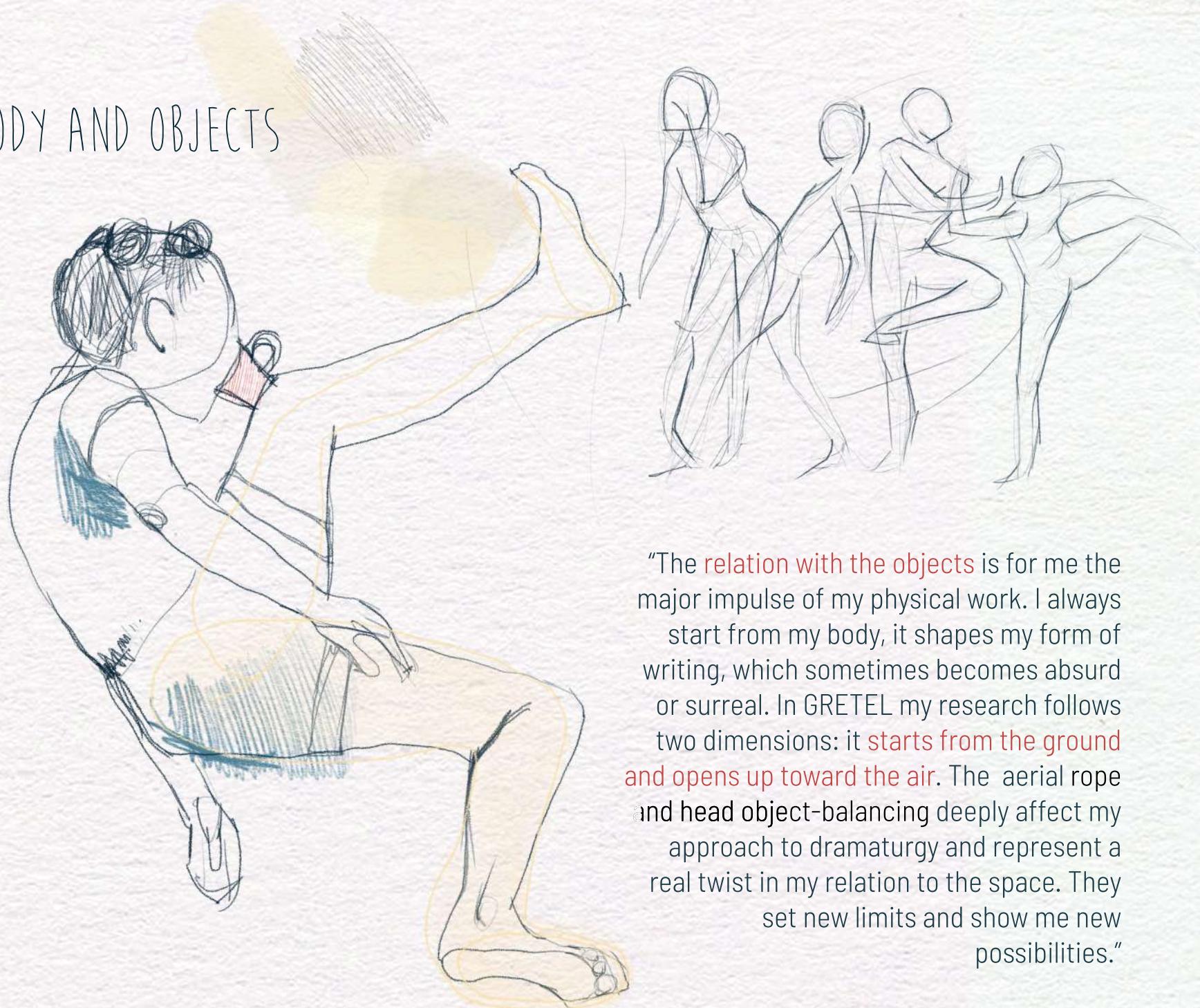
## DECONSTRUCTING THE FAIRY TALE

"This show takes off from *Hansel and Gretel*. On the dramaturgical level what strikes me the most is the feeling of being forced to leave, the idea of getting lost along an unknown and dangerous path, but also the heroic attempts to get over traumas and difficulties in our daily life."

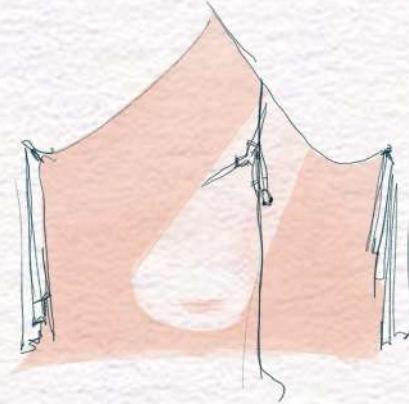
"On the visual level the sequence of white stones along the path looks to me as a sort of tail between me and the house, an ordinary *Ariadne's thread* built with cunning and simplicity. Another image I got caught by is the gingerbread house: a sort of final but flickering destination, the *Land of Toys* that gets Pinocchio into trouble. But at the same time the idea of having a landing place made of gold, which is after all what we all dream of."

# A DANCE FOR BODY AND OBJECTS

"The core of the project if the relation between my living body and unanimated objects. Me being in constant relation with objects results in metaphorical, unexpected and poetic images. GRETEL is the expression of a **hybrid language** (both visual and physical) which reflects my creative approach where set design, visual images and circus skills are completely merged in a unique artistic form."



"The **relation with the objects** is for me the major impulse of my physical work. I always start from my body, it shapes my form of writing, which sometimes becomes absurd or surreal. In GRETEL my research follows two dimensions: it **starts from the ground and opens up toward the air**. The aerial rope and head object-balancing deeply affect my approach to dramaturgy and represent a real twist in my relation to the space. They set new limits and show me new possibilities."



## WHY A CIRCUS SOLO?

"I wanted to dive into a creative experience which gave me total freedom in the pursuit of my own **artistic signature**."

## CONSTRUCTING WITH THE CIRCUS

"I do firmly believe in the **evoking power of circus** and in its capacity of abstracting reality through visual metaphors. I think that circus can display the human as an epic and fragile subject at the same time.

This is why I chose to work with **head-balancing**. It forces me to keep searching for a center of gravity which is always missing, bringing me to be absurd and delicate at a time. As far as the aerial **rope** is concerned, I see it as a partner with which I always establish a dialogue. It opens a vertical space, it shows me a new direction and gives another option, a challenge, an escalation and a chance to dance."

Production director:  
**Filippo Malerba**

Lightning design:  
**Luca Carbone**

Support for the creation:  
**Gaia Vimercati**

Author, director  
and interpreter:  
**Clara Storti**

Sound design:  
**Andrea Ferrario**

Costume design:  
**Rosa Mariotti**

Production **QuattroX4**

Supported by:

**RSGT/FLIC – Residenza Surreale, Dinamico Festival, Circo all'inCirca, Fabbrica C – Puntata Zero, Spiazzo\_Circo fuori dal vaso**



Scenography and objects:  
**Maddalena Oppici**  
and **Clara Storti**

External eyes:  
**Ulisse Romanò** and **Nadia Milani**

The dialogue among different arts is a core question in my personal research. The analysis of the importance of methodology within the creation processes is something I have always been interested in.

The encounter with Civilleri/Lo Sicco was the moment when I started looking for my physical skills as a means of expression within a broader narration

## CLARA STORTI

Clara Storti has grown as an artist following two parallel paths: the **circus** practice and **visual arts**. They converge today in the activity she carries out within QuattroX4, a contemporary circus center based in Milan, which she co-founded in 2011.

She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Brera with a thesis "Collaboration as a working methodology in the field of entertainment". She works as a **set designer** with the director Francesco Micheli and collaborates with the studios Lightning and Kinglyface, Map-architecture and Vogue Italia.

After practicing artistic gymnastics, she approaches the circus and she specializes in **aerial rope** studying with artists such as Leo Hedman, Roman Fedin and Nacho Ricci. She deepens his work on circus research with Elodie Donaque, with whom he collaborates as an assistant at the Flic Circus School in Turin, and with Roberto Magro.

Throughout the years she works intensively on the quality of movement, always searching for a synthesis between floorwork and the aerial move. She uses **dance** as a tool to develop circus work by following several choreographers including Shai Faran, David Zambrano, Martin Kilvady, Peter Jasko, Idan Sharabi and Erez Zohar, Ambra Senatore, Fighting Monkey and Judith Sánchez Ruiz. She participates in a long training on "the **actor's authorship**" with Sabino Civilleri and Manuela Lo Sicco with whom she later worked as an acrobat and an actress.

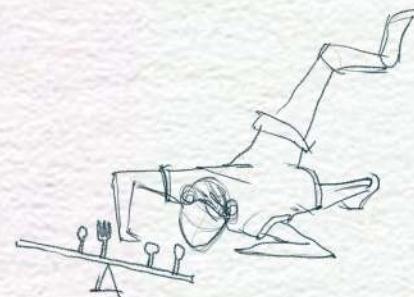
Through the years, she extensively teaches aerials in several and professional contexts, such as Civica Scuola di Teatro Paolo Grassi.

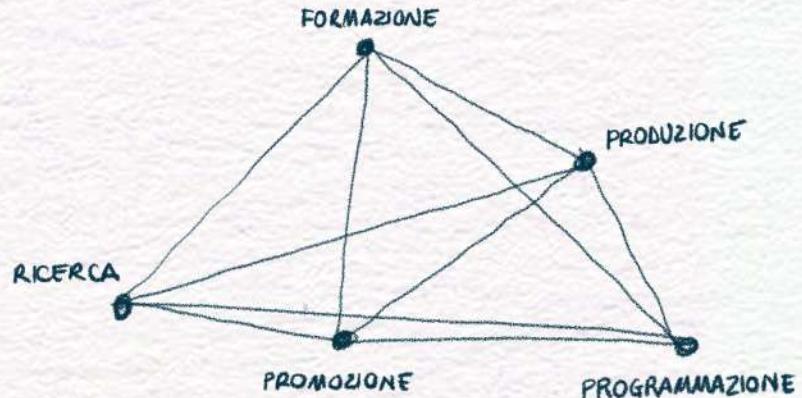
She has worked as a **performer** with several directors and choreographers including Dario Fo, Arturo Brachetti, Willi Dorner, Suzan Boogaerd & Bianca Van der Schoot, Roberto Olivan and Roberto Paci Dalò.

She created **PIANI IN BILICO**, an aerial duo built on 7 ropes, and she took part in **DALL'ALTO**, a contemporary circus show inspired to Samuel Beckett's *Act Without Words* and **LA RANA E LE NUVOLE**.

The inspiration for my career was Emma Dante. In her shows I noticed how the bodies can be used in a powerful and poetic way.

This experience led me to think of my research as an embedded method where my body is always the trigger of all my creative impulses.





## QUATTROX4

Quattrox4 is a 450mq **contemporary circus center** based in Milan (Italy). It was founded in 2011 by Marco Dellabianca, Clara Storti, Filippo Malerba, Elisa Angioni and Gaia Vimercati. Quattrox4's mission is to promote contemporary circus as a practice for cultural development, both as a physical activity and as a cultural practice, leading the way in the creation, production, training, research and dissemination of contemporary circus in Italy. Especially in the current political and social context, contemporary circus promotes international cooperation and intercultural networking for its production as well as its reception. Quattrox4 exists to empower and ignite creativity within diverse communities and artistic languages (dance, theatre, visual arts) and works tirelessly to overcome traditional barriers – including age, socioeconomic background and geography – to achieve full engagement with the arts for everyone.

In 2017 Quattrox4 launched **FUORI ASSE**, a season of contemporary circus shows organized in cooperation with theatres and cultural hubs around the city of Milan.

Its last co-productions are: **DALL'ALTO** (2018) a blending between circus and contemporary music, inspired to *Act without words I* by Samuel Beckett; **LA RANA E LE NUVOLE** (2019) circus, dance and theatre show, commissioned by Festival della Valle d'Itria; **GRETEL** (2021) a circus solo by Clara Storti.

In 2020 Quattrox4 took part in **SAMUSÀ** by Virginia Raffaele under the direction of Federico Tiezzi, production ITC 2000. **9 GESTI**, a new show blending circus and black light theatre for children, is being produced at the moment.

# CONTACTS

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