



2024

Heka

Everything is not as it seems

**In collaboration with
Kalle Nio & Yann Frisch**

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THE SHOW

Introduction & artistic process





A conjurer is not a juggler; he is an actor playing the part of a magician; an artist whose fingers have more need to move with deftness than with speed.

Robert Houdin, Secrets of Conjuring and Magic, 1868

THE SHOW

Juggling and Magic are like long lost sisters. So similar and yet so different.

Drawing inspiration from the intricate connection between the two, **Heka** (the Egyptian goddess of magic!) transports audiences into a mesmerising realm where reality blurs with illusion. **Heka** transcends boundaries, inviting spectators on a journey where objects materialise and vanish, levitate, and transform before their eyes. Yet, beneath the surface lies a tantalising question: what is real and what is merely a trick of perception?

Infused with a captivating blend of humour and philosophy, **Heka** marks a departure for Gandini's renowned repertoire. Director Sean Gandini, whose artistic journey began in Havana half a century ago, revisits his magical roots in this hybrid performance.

Above it all it is a celebration of the silliness and absurdity of entertainment, a homage to the delights of the absurd.

Watch the trailer: <https://vimeo.com/1039049718>

INSPIRATION

Magic as a Choreographic Language

In *Heka*, Gandini Juggling draws inspiration from 20th-century magic tricks to create an artistic fusion between magic and choreography. They utilise choreographic language as a means to interpret and present magic tricks in a new and captivating manner.

Rather than simply replicating traditional movements of magicians, Gandini Juggling deconstructs these actions and reassembles them in a contemporary and surprising way. This approach results in juggling-magic acts that defy expectations and push the boundaries of illusion.

By intertwining magic and choreography, Gandini Juggling crafts unique artistic forms where fluid and graceful movements combine with object manipulations to produce moments of surprise and wonder. The jugglers at Gandini Juggling rethink classic magic tricks, transforming them into visually captivating performances infused with a contemporary aesthetic.

With their innovative approach, Gandini Juggling offers an artistic experience that allows rediscovering magic in a new light by exploring the endless possibilities of the combination between magic and choreography. The result is a show where creativity, originality, and audacity converge to deliver a unique and unforgettable artistic experience.

The Question of Gender in Magic

In *Heka*, Gandini Juggling challenges the gender stereotypes that have long persisted in the field of magic. They aim to centralize women and liberate them from the traditionally assigned role of a personality-lacking assistant.

By reinterpreting magic tricks through a choreographic language, Gandini Juggling creates performances where female jugglers emerge as the true protagonists. They are no longer mere accessories but talented, powerful

INSPIRATION

artists who defy expectations and captivate audiences with their skill and stage presence.

By placing women at the core of their creation, Gandini Juggling aims not only to overturn gender stereotypes but also to open new artistic perspectives in the realm of magic. They offer an opportunity to witness magical performances from a different viewpoint, characterized by unique sensitivity and expression.

By challenging conventions and giving a voice to women in the field of magic, Gandini Juggling contributes to broadening diversity and inclusion in this art form, thereby allowing new forms of artistic expression to flourish.

COLLABORATORS



Yann Frisch

Magic Consultant

Yann Frisch is a French magician. He performed in the shows Baltass (2011), Octobre (2013) before creating his own company L'Absente in 2014 and created Le Syndrome de Cassandra, Le Paradoxe de Georges and Le Camion Théâtre.



Kalle Nio

Magic Consultant

The work of visual artist, magician and stage director Kalle Nio is a combination of magic, visual arts, cinema, art-history, circus and theatre. In his stage performances and cinematic installations, he is an inventor, performer and a researcher creating encounters between past and the present.

COLLABORATORS



Guy Hoare

Lighting Design

As with 4x4, Meta and Spring, Award-winning lighting designer has created a simple and stunning design



Georgina Spencer

Costumes

A skilled Designer and Stitcher currently working within the Costume Department for various companies. 5 years of experience building and breaking down both costumes and fashion apparel!

02



INFORMATION

Press, marketing, credits, technical information





PRESS

“They are confoundingly good” **The Stage**

“One Hek-uva good time” **The Times**

“The strange steals the show with irresistible allure!” **Le Figaro**

“Magic envelops pure dexterity with mysterious whimsy.” **Libération**

“Whether you’re drawn to magic, dance, juggling, or simply looking for an unforgettable experience, Heka will deliver on all fronts!” **A Young(ish) Perspective**

“Mind Blowing” **A Young(ish) Perspective**

“An entertaining and mesmerising hour passes in a flash of trompe l’oeil, sleight of hand, distractions and revelations” **British Theatre Guide**

“The sine qua non of British circus” **Broadway World**

“Another magic chapter of the Gandini story” **Broadway World**

“A vivacious flurry of ideas and illusion” **Ballet Position**

“It was astonishing” **Sceneweb**

“We are left in awe at a perfectly synchronised ballet” **Cult News**

CREDITS

Directors: Sean Gandini & Kati Ylä-Hokkala,

Magic consultants: Yann Frisch, Kalle Nio

Performers: Kate Boschetti, Sean Gandini, Tedros Girmaye, Kim Huynh, Sakari Männistö, Yu-Hsien Wu, Kati Ylä-Hokkala with Doreen Grossman and Jose Triguero in alternance

Costumes: Georgina Spencer

Lighting design: Guy Hoare

Soundtrack: Andy Cowton

Coproduction: Maison des Jonglages, Scène Conventionnée (FR), Théâtre d'Orléans / Scène nationale (FR)

Residence: La Batoude, Beauvais (FR), La Garance, Cavaillon (FR), The Place, London (UK), The Point, Eastleigh (UK), 101 Outdoor Arts - National Centre for Arts in Public Space (UK)

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Format: indoor

Duration: approx. 60 minutes

Touring party: 7 performers, 1 technician

Set: no set, we bring most of the props in suitcases

Age guidance: 8+

Ideal stage dimensions: 10m x 8m x 5m

Minimum stage dimensions: 8m x 6m x 4.5m

Full technical rider available on demand: axel@gandinijuggling.com.

EDUCATION

One of the most joyous occasions in Gandini Juggling touring life is when we meet a good juggler who tells us that they did a workshop with us many moons before.

This seemingly obvious realisation pushed us to embark on an educational drive. We find that there is a shortage of performers with the specific skill sets they need as well as that there is a shortage of female jugglers.

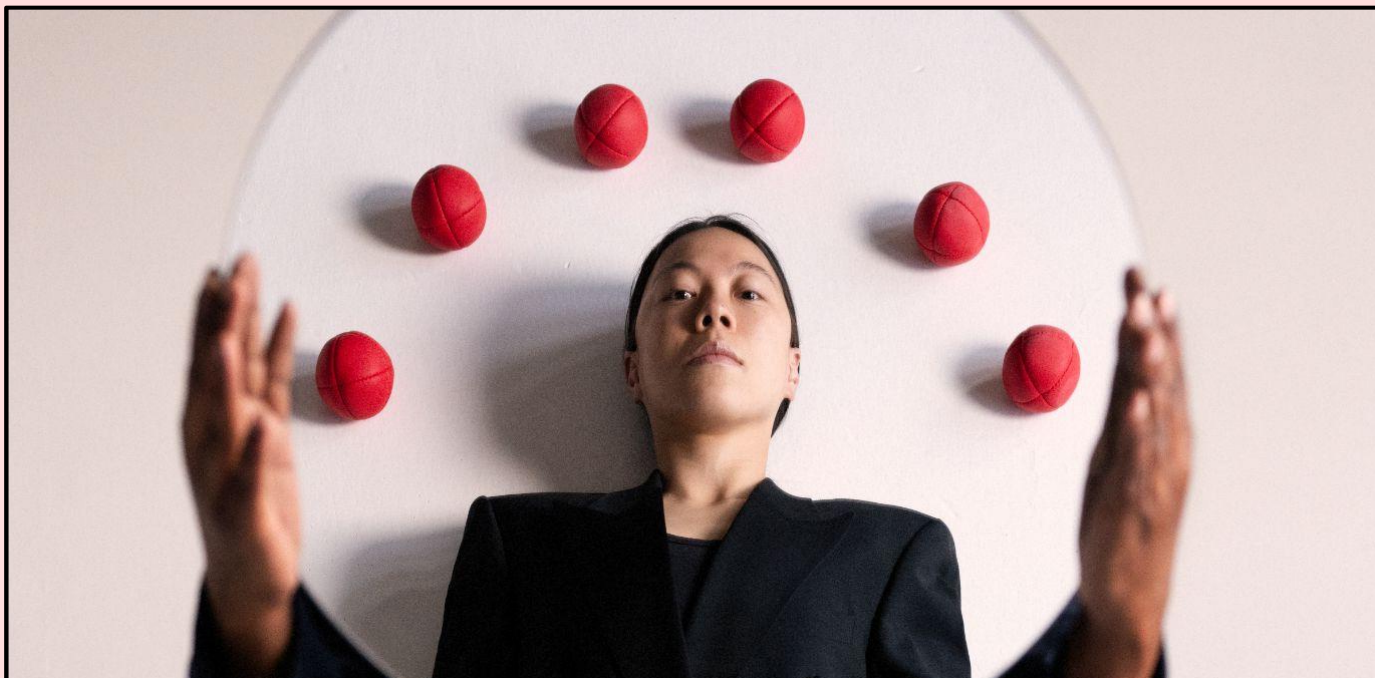
So, to plant seeds for the future Gandini Juggling's aim is to inspire, educate and motivate acting as highly experienced facilitators, teaching in not only the world's best circus schools but providing workshops in community centres and cold church halls...

We have a range of workshops available, aimed at both professional jugglers/performers and those that are new to the art form:

- Each workshop last 2 hours and will be led by 1 or 2 performers.
- Group size can range from 20-30 participants, depending on space.
- Workshops and lecture can take place in person or online
- All of the workshop titles below can be used as lecture topics.

For more information, contact info@gandinijuggling.com.

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ABOUT US

Biography and contact





The Guardian
***Gandini is at the forefront
of British circus' quiet
revolution***

THE COMPANY

Formed in 1992 by world-renowned jugglers Sean Gandini and Kati Ylä-Hokkala, Gandini Juggling continues to be at the vanguard of contemporary circus, reinventing and reinvigorating juggling for the 21st Century.

Gandini Juggling celebrates juggling in all its facets, exploring not just what juggling is, but what juggling can be. Currently an ever-evolving ensemble made up of a virtuosic core group of jugglers, they regularly expand to include up to 20 performers for specially commissioned events and performances. Ferociously prolific, they are constantly creating new works, which range from radical art/juggling fusions to accessible theatrical performances, from choreographic studies to commercially commissioned routines.

Since their inception the Gandinis have performed over 6,000 shows in 50 countries. They continue to perform at many of the most prestigious festivals and venues throughout the world. These venues range from Contemporary art museums in France to Opera houses in Germany, from theatres in Lebanon to tents in Argentina. Closer to home the Gandinis can be seen performing at the UK's major outdoor festivals and theatre houses including London's Royal Opera House, English National Opera, The Royal National Theatre and Sadler's Wells.

In creating their work Gandini Juggling collaborated with a wide range of cultural leaders, initially teaming up with the pioneering and influential dance artist and choreographer Gill Clarke. The Gandini's continue to be influenced by a range of disciplines, which include amongst others, composers, ballet choreographers, fashion designers, computer programmers, sound designers, set makers and mathematicians. They have spent several seasons working with orchestras, choreographing juggling patterns to a wide range of classical compositions and have had music specially composed for them by leading composers Tom Johnson, Nimrod Borenstein and Gabriel Prokofiev.

In addition to performing, Gandini Juggling is very much in demand at leading circus schools. Teaching workshops, creating performances and supporting the next generation of circus artists. Alongside this, Gandini publishes books and delivers virtual classes to support the wider understanding of the beautiful possibilities of juggling, for jugglers and non-jugglers alike. The Gandini's have an insatiable thirst for juggling pieces and a fiery desire to collaborate, communicate and provoke. They aim to reposition juggling as a versatile, engaging and malleable art form for our times.

THE COMPANY

SEAN GANDINI

Sean Gandini is one of the pioneers of contemporary juggling. Working as a performer, choreographer and director he has, for over 25 years, pushed the boundaries of juggling as a discipline and as an art form.

Growing-up in Havana, Cuba, Sean was fascinated by Magic and Mathematics, but shortly after he began juggling, prompting a life-long fascination with all aspects of the art form. Sean's professional career began in the 1980s, regularly performing in London's famous Covent Garden and touring with various theatre companies – including the pioneering Ra-Ra Zoo. In 1991, with Kati Ylä-Hokkala, he co-founded Gandini Juggling and together they have been at the forefront of experiments into what juggling is and what juggling can be.

Sean is a prolific creator. Whether working with the technicality of 'pure' juggling, crafting spectacular street art shows, or exploring the ways juggling might blend with other art forms, Sean is guided by a natural curiosity and delight in the myriad possibilities of throwing objects into the air.

This has led to the creation to a diverse array of shows, including the playful Sweet Life; the fiendishly complex celebration of the London Olympics Twenty/Twenty; and their smash hit, the darkly humorous and theatrical homage to Pina Bausch Smashed.

THE COMPANY

KATY YLÄ-HOKKALA

Kati Ylä-Hokkala is one of her generation's iconic jugglers. As a co-founder of Gandini Juggling she has built a reputation not only as a highly-skilled technical juggler but is also renowned as one of the leading innovators in dance-juggling.

Kati's professional career began in the 1980s, performing with the influential Ra-Ra Zoo. In 1991, with Sean, she co-founded Gandini Juggling. Since then she has been instrumental in the company's experiments into the possibilities of juggling, including working to create unique 'two-person sharing' juggling patterns.

A former rhythmic gymnast, Kati's distinctive ability to combine movement with extremely complex coordination is second-to-none. In this she has crafted an intimate and extensive knowledge of the relationship between dance and juggling. Knowledge that has ensured that Gandini Juggling's work is always of the highest technical standard. Kati's own performances are always accompanied by a unique calm precision, a precision that comes from decades of throwing whilst standing on one leg. Kati has used this same calm precision to steer Gandini Juggling for the past 25 years.

Kati has performed in all of Gandini Juggling's works since 1991, performing in over 2,500 shows throughout the world – in art galleries and palaces, in town squares and in stadiums, in intimate theatres and on the stages of some of the world's most iconic venues. In recent years Kati has co-directed many of the company's pieces.

THE COMPANY

REPERTOIRE

1992 <i>nEither Either both and...</i>	2010 <i>Smashed</i>
1994 <i>Caught Still / Hanging</i>	2011 <i>Blotched</i>
1995 <i>... and other curiOus questions</i>	2011 <i>Motet</i> (with Circo Aereo)
1996 <i>Septet</i>	2012 <i>Chinoiseries</i>
1998 <i>Septet/2</i>	2012 <i>Twenty/Twenty</i>
1999 <i>Remembering Rastelli</i>	2013 <i>CLOWNS & QUEENS</i>
2000 <i>Big</i>	2014 <i>4 x 4 : Ephemeral Architectures</i>
2000 <i>Cube</i>	2015 <i>8 Songs</i>
2000 <i>Dome</i>	2015 <i>Meta</i>
2002 <i>Don't Break My Balls</i>	2016 <i>Sigma</i>
2002 <i>Vivaldi Light Balls</i>	2016 <i>SmashedXL</i>
2002 <i>Quartet</i>	2017 <i>Akhnaten</i>
2002 <i>Racketeers</i>	2017 <i>Spring</i>
2004 <i>No Exit</i>	2019 <i>stackKcats</i>
2006 <i>Mozart Glow Clubs</i>	2020 <i>Smashed2</i>
2008 <i>Downfall</i>	2022 <i>LIFE</i>
2009 <i>Night Clubs</i>	2023 <i>The Games We Play</i>

For more information on production currently available for touring, visit:
www.gandinijuggling.com/en/our-shows

Fore more information on previous shows, visit:
www.gandinijuggling.com/en/previous-shows/

CONTACT



Do you have any questions?

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