

# Spring

A production from Gandini Juggling in  
collaboration with Alexander Whitley

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**Co-produced by :** Cambridge Junction (UK), London International Mime Festival (UK), Plateforme 2 pôles Cirque en Normandie / La Brèche à Cherbourg et le Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf (FR).

**Supported by:** Arts Council England, Arts Depot (UK), Dance East (UK), Theater op de Markt, Dommelhof (BE).

Gandini Juggling and choreographer Alexander Whitley are joining forces to create a visually arresting and cutting edge new work. A production of live art forms, entitled *Spring* this courageous, avant garde and cross art form experience will challenge notions of movement and physicality, exploring the relationships between Dance, Circus and Music.



## SHOW SYNOPSIS

*"Colours are light's suffering and joy"*  
Goethe

*Spring* is a show about colour and perception. In cinematographic terms, *4 x 4 Ephemeral Architectures* (company previous work), was in white & black while *Spring* will be in Technicolor. In *Spring*, the twinning between dance and juggling is assumed as an accepted premise, and the company travels from the aerial ballet to the earthly contemporary dance.

Sean Gandini and Alexander Whitley share a passion for the pure form. They both are interested in the differences between what a word describes and the thing it-self. It's in the limits of the language where the dance and the juggling unfold their revealing power. The light will play a primal role in the piece, as it will be necessary to play with the presence of colours and their eco, as they disappear from the stage. Lighting designer Guy Hoare completes this artistic trinity on this sensational cross art experience.

Performed to an electronical musical univers, where magical baroque meets techno, *Spring* is set to be transendant and colourful, staging live vocals. With a virtuosic cast of five jugglers and three contemporary dancers, it will embrace deconstructed rhythms and jubilant patterning with the talents on trial primal and emblematic. Notions of self referentiality will be visited and the score itself will be taken into the piece using text to introduce fragments of narrative.

*Spring* follows on from the Gandini's successful forays in dance and theatre - delving deeper into their obsession with juggling as pure choreography. This new large-scale show is a result of their time flirting with various neighbouring art forms, from their findings directing the Skills Ensemble in ENO's *Akhnaten* to performing their Pina Bausch inspired show *Smashed* and marriage with ballet in *4x4: Ephemeral Architectures*.

## ARTISTIC PROCESS

« In *4x4*, the work we have undertaken with ballet didn't reach but the surface of things : it was necessary to explain, even justify, that collaboration between dance and juggling. Here, we assume that encounter, which we share since several months now ; and we arrive at that moment of the encounter when any introduction nor preamble are necessary anymore. We have approached Alexander Whitley, whose work I love, as well as his interest in complicated structures. Him and I, we agree on the idea of at least three dancers and four jugglers on stage. And we have both chosen contemporary dance, while in *4x4*, it was classical ballet that the company has invited on stage. »

**Sean Gandini, November, 2016.**

The piece's roots lay on the idea of spring - with ecos to the Stravinsky "Rite of Spring"- , and all its *joyeux* implications; the nature blooming in the garden, the lightness and the brightness of little details.

*Spring* is also a reflexion on the act of choreographing. In *4x4*, dance and juggling operated at the same time, while in *Spring* the notion of countrepoin is introduced. Another difference is the approach to gravity. While in classic dance, the weight is very high, aerial; in contemporary dance, the weight is attracted by the floor, to the earth.



## ARTISTIC COLLABORATORS

### **Alexander Whitley**

Working alongside the creative powerhouse that is Sean Gandini, Gandini Juggling are thrilled to be collaborating with choreographer Alexander Whitley. Whitley has created work for several of the UK's leading organisations including the Royal Ballet, Rambert, Balletboyz and Birmingham Royal Ballet. He is a New Wave Associate artist at Sadler's Wells theatre, an associate artist at DanceEast and is an associate of Rambert.

### **Guy Hoare**

As with their previous shows, *Spring* will see the company produce a high quality and technically ambitious production working with Guy Hoare – a prestigious lighting designer with a list of accolades and awards to his name. Hoare's collaborations include work with Rafael Bonachela, Christopher Bruce, Mark Bruce, Shobana Jeyasingh,, English National Opera, National Theatre, Young Vic, Royal Court, Donmar Warehouse and the list goes on.

### **Charlotte Westenra**

*Spring* has also benefited from the expertise of Director and Dramaturg Charlotte Westenra who recently made her Royal Ballet debut co-creating the scenario for Christopher Wheeldon's new one-act ballet for the Company with Wheeldon. Charlotte was a Resident Assistant Director at the Donmar Warehouse and is currently an Associate Artist at the Gate Theatre where her productions include *Sunset Baby*.

## WITH

<b>Director</b>	Sean Gandini
<b>Choreographer</b>	Alexandre Whitley
<b>Lighting Designer</b>	Guy Hoare
<b>Jugglers</b>	Kati Ylä-Hokkala Kim Huynh Owen Reynolds Sakari Männistö
<b>Dancers</b>	Wu-Hsien Wu Leon Poulton Erin O'Toole
<b>Dramaturgy</b>	Charlotte Westerna
<b>Management</b>	Marina Arranz Rae Boswell Anne-Agathe Prin George Warren

## PARTNERS

The international success of the Gandini's previous productions has helped to enlarge the company network and touring opportunities. With *Spring* Gandini Juggling hopes to expand on these relationships and create new partnerships to help support sustained platforms for the presentation of contemporary circus. Building, developing and diversifying audience's from the dance, circus and classical music worlds.

Gandini Juggling have received Arts Council England funding for the initial research and development period of *Spring* with support from the **London International Mime Festival**, **Arts Depot**, **Dance East** and **Cambridge Junction** in the UK, **Plateforme 2 pôles Cirque en Normandie / La Brèche à Cherbourg et le Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf** in France and **Theater op de Markt**, Dommelhof, in Belgium.

## THE COMPANY

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

Ferociously prolific Gandini are constantly creating new work, which ranges from edgy visual art experiments to family friendly entertainment; from narrative infused dance escapades to humorous shenanigans.

Liberation call them the “Kings of Juggling” whose works are “...marvels of originality”, whilst The Guardian says of the company “juggling that is not just artful, but art”.

Since their inception, the Gandini's have performed over 5,000 shows in 50 countries. They continue to perform at many of the most prestigious festivals and venues throughout the world. Their work transcends cultural barriers: the simple pleasure of watching people move whilst keeping objects in the air has a natural theatrical quality that has beguiled audiences globally.

Gandini continue to collaborate with a wide range of leading artists ranging from ballet choreographers to computer programmers; from costume designers to set makers; mathematicians to composers. They have spent several seasons working with symphonic orchestras, their choreographed juggling patterns lightly meshed to canonical classical works.

In addition to performing, Gandini continue to be very much in demand at leading circus school; teaching workshops, creating performances and supporting the next generation of circus artists. Alongside this, Gandini publish their own books and DVDs, continuing to support the wider understanding of the beautiful possibilities of juggling, for jugglers and non-jugglers alike.

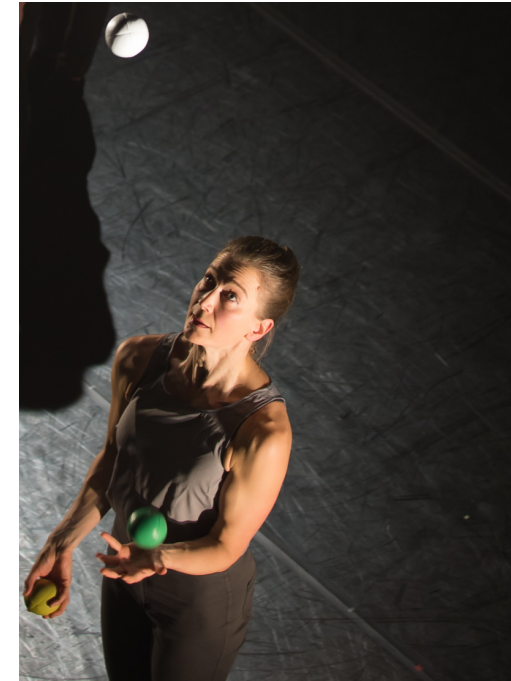
The company is currently touring *4x4*, *Smashed*, *Director's Cut* and *8 Songs*.

A book documenting and celebrating the last twenty years of Gandini Juggling “Juggling Trajectories: Gandini Juggling 1991 - 2015”, has been written by Thomas JM Wilson to celebrate the 24th anniversary of the company.

## ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

### SEAN GANDINI

As a child growing up in Havana, Sean was fascinated by magic and mathematics. In the 1980s, he was a regular performer in London's Covent Garden and toured with various theatre groups. Since then, Sean has spent the last 25 years researching and contributing to all aspects of juggling; he is a prolific creator and his work also extends to choreography and directing. With Gandini Juggling, Sean has performed in over 2,500 shows from art galleries to palaces; street corners to stadiums. In 2016 Sean worked as juggling choreographer on English National Opera's acclaimed production of Philip Glass' opera *Akhnaten*.



### KATI YLÄ-HOKKALA

Kati is one of her generation's iconic jugglers. Renowned as one of the leading innovators in dance/juggling, her ability to combine movement and extremely complex coordination is second to none. A former rhythmic gymnast, Kati's juggling has a unique calm precision, which comes from 25 years of throwing whilst standing on one leg. In recent years she has co-directed many of the company's pieces.



## DEVELOPMENT AND TOURING

### 2016

February: first encounter R&D sessions with choreographer.

3 - 9 July: R&D at Arts Depot, London, UK.

14 – 20 August: R&D at Cambridge Junction, UK.

### 2017

January: R&D London, UK.

3 – 15 April: R&D at la Brèche, Pôle national des arts du cirque de Basse-Normandie / Cherbourg-Octeville.

3 – 14 July: R&D at Theater op de Markt, Dommelhof, Belgium.

27th November – 3rd December: R&D at Dance East, Ipswich, UK.

December: soft premier at Dance East, Ipswich, UK.

### 2018

January: Premier at the London International Mime Festival, UK

March: French premier in the context of Spring Festival, at Cirque-théâtre d'Elbeuf, Pôle national des arts du cirque/Normandie

Late March : Arts Depot, London, UK.

From February: UK Tour, venues to be announced.

7th February: Cambridge Junction, UK.

From March: EU Tour, venues to be announced.

24 – 26 April: German premier.

**All current and future tour dates will be listed separately. Please contact us for more details: [info@gandinijuggling.com](mailto:info@gandinijuggling.com) and visit [gandinijuggling.com/en/tour-booking/](http://gandinijuggling.com/en/tour-booking/)**

## CONTACT

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