

# BIANCO \$3 TIME FOR BEAUTY





#### **Director's notes**

An elephant. A journey. A community on the go.

An elephant and its accompanying cortège journey through time, seasons and territories unknown. Bianco is the story of a journey inside and outside ourselves, of beauty rising out of fear, ugliness and decay. A hundred shades of white create the fabric of our dreams and nightmares.

But is the elephant real or imaginary? Who or what is the elephant? What does it look like? The elephant is the unexpected, what is unknown and forbidden, the marvelous and wondrous, the event that shakes up prejudice and beliefs. The elephant turns the world upside down transforming the life of people, be they paupers or emperors. Everybody is confronted by an elephant at some point in their life: those moments, strange correspondences, events good or bad which unexpectedly change the course of things. Ultimately, these elephants take us out of our comfort zone and force us to think, fight, invent new paths and shortcuts.

Thrown together by circumstances and sent on an improbable journey, the convoy becomes a village, a community, a travelling world, forced to think, create, work together, forge new friendships and alliances, invent new rules: in other words, build a world from scratch and out of scrap. Just like the circus. The journey of the elephant becomes the metaphor for our creative process: theatre, dance, circus, live music, a creation based on interaction and collaboration of idioms and artistic languages. The performers like the characters will have to deal with the unexpected, from storms to falls, to the most challenging unknowns: the wonder and fragility of live performance. Indeed, our own story is always the story of a journey and the performance provides the perfect vessel.

And if theatre was the elephant itself? We wonder, marvel, search, wait for the elephant to appear and don't realise that she has been there all along, right before our eyes. After all, it isn't every day that an elephant appears in our lives.

The inspiration comes from Josè Saramago's The Elephant's Journey. Sent as a wedding gift by the king and queen of Portugal to archduke Maximilian of Austria, an elephant journeys on foot across the whole of Europe, from Lisbon to Vienna. Everywhere the elephant brings joy, awe and bewilderment, transforming people's lives. It is a time for wonder and marvels. It is a time for beauty.

# nofitstate circus

NoFit State is the UK's leading large-scale contemporary circus company. Described by the Guardian as 'the future of British circus', NoFit State fuses circus, music, dance and drama into spine-tingling spectacle.

The company was founded in Cardiff in 1986 by five friends, during a politically charged time and in a recession, as a creative reaction to the world around them. Twenty-six years on, NoFit State still believe that the total outweighs the sum of the parts. The company lives together, works together, eats together, laughs and cries together. This is what creates the spirit that is NoFit State and gives the work its heart and soul.

From 2004 to 2010 NoFit State toured their critically acclaimed productions *ImMortal* and *tabú* across the UK and Europe. Both productions gained cult status, had sell-out runs in nine countries, and played to over 250,000 people. *BIANCO* marks the company's second co-production with the Eden Project after sell-out performances of *Labyrinth* in 2011.

The company's training space in the centre of Cardiff is a thriving community circus centre and hotbed of circus creativity with an extensive and vibrant programme of classes and workshops, masterclasses and training opportunities, as well as a rehearsal space for theatre and circus companies.





#### Firenza Guidi - Artistic Director

Milan-born Firenza Guidi is an independent theatre/circus/film director, writer and visual artist who has developed NoFit State's style of performance through all incarnations of ImMortal and tabú. Whilst creating BIANCO, two of her shows are playing to full houses in Avignon and Queretaro, Mexico. Firenza trained as a performer with international masters such as Dario Fo, Philippe Gaulier, Enrique Pardo and Ida Kelarova; and as an actress/singer at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. In 1989 she founded ELAN (European Live Arts Network), and since 2004 has been running her Creative Centre housed in an old olive press in Tuscany, Italy. She has a PhD in Renaissance Tragedy and an MA in Film, For the last 20 years she has been developing her unique style of training and performance creating scores of small and large scale performances throughout Europe and beyond. Her allencompassing methodological approach and ongoing research are based on two fundamental beliefs: that the performer is an all-round, time-based being with a self-ironic approach to delivering one's own skill in performance and that the space and that the spectator are co-players in the artistic process. The vision for each show creates a world which the spectators enter and not simply watch from afar.



#### Tom Rack - Producer

Tom Rack has never had a proper job in his life. Aged 19 along with 5 friends he founded NoFit State. In the early years it was all about street performing, travelling the festival circuit and living the alternative lifestyle. By the end of the 80's the original 5 friends still together bought their first big top and began touring all around the country. Tom tried to run away from the circus in the mid 90's and got as far as Art college where he studied Interactive Arts. After he left college the circus lured him back in and with his new interests and some new friends he started to develop the early incarnations of the new NoFit State style of work.

In the later 90's, the need to feed two small children led to freelance work with both interactive and new media in the theatre and conference worlds. Although he had a brief career as an artist, exhibiting interactive installations that was quite successful, it didn't feed the children.

These days out of the founding 5, only Tom Rack and Ali Williams remain. Now, with the pressures of booking and running the international tours, producing the show and managing over 50 people sometimes it feels like a lot more than a proper job.

### **BIANCO COMPANY**

Written and directed by Firenza Guidi

Produced by Tom Rack for NoFit State Circus

Original music written by Gareth Jones with the band

Musical Director

Gareth Jones

Costume Designer

Rhiannon Matthews

**Design Associate** 

Saz Moir

Design team

Tom Rack, Firenza Guidi, Lyndall Merry,

Saz Moir, Tarn Aitken

**Lighting Design** 

Adam Cobley

Creative collaborator

Natalia Fandiño

**Performers** 

Adie Delaney, Agustina Castro, Andreane Leclerc,

Anne-Fay Johnston, August Dakteris, Foucauld Falguerolles, Freya Watson,

Howard Morley, Hugo Oliveira, Kevin McIntosh,

Leire Ramirez, Lyndall Merry, Marco Fiera,

Max Calaf Seve, Sage Cushman, Vanina Fandiño

The Band

Gareth Jones, Andy Moore, Ashley John Long,

aka Fireproof Giant Calum McIntyre

**Associate Producer** 

Zoe Munn

Stage Manager

Ashling Deeks

**Operations Manager** 

**Production Manager** 

**Company Manager** 

Wardrobe

Tim Adam

Jules Howarth

**Emily Morgan** 

Helen Ognjenovic-Morgan, Elfie Berry,

Stacey Lloyd

**Lighting Operator** 

**Production LX** 

Sound

**Head Rigger** 

Rigging Team

**Build Crew** 

Site Crew

**Physiotherapist** 

Catering

**Production Assistant** 

**NoFit State Trainees** 

Leif LePage

Steve Isherwood

Pete Storer

Lyndall Merry

Tanwen Watson, Paul Smith, Barney Wreyford

Iolo Lavender, Saz Moir, Tarn Aitken,

Karlos Fandango, Hazel Bryan

Kate Bevan

Joni Anderson

Lily Stephenson

Pascalle Rowland

Ellis Grover, Emily Nicholl, Pete Spence

IN THE END, WE ALWAYS ARRIVE AT THE PLACE WHERE WE ARE EXPECTED.



## **CIRCUS PERFORMERS**



Adie Delaney – swinging trapeze Φ

Tasmanian Adie began as a gymnast. Since graduating from the National Institute of Circus Arts in Melbourne she has worked in everything from large sporting ceremonies to traditional circus before joining NoFit State in 2009. Over 20 countries have seen her performing swinging trapeze, flying trapeze, hula hoops, trampolining, bungees, whipcracking and acrobatics.



Agustina Castro - clown

Argentinian Agustina, originally a dancer, is a self-taught circus performer. She started performing in the streets of Buenos Aires with Salpicon Pop, before coming to Europe in 2008. In Brussels, she spent one year learning Jacques Lecoq physical theatre, whilst training and creating work at L'Espace Catastrophe including hula hoop, silks, singing, dance and comedy.



Andreane Leclerc - contortion

Andreane was born in Québec and began her circus career at the age of 9, attending the National Circus School of Montréal. Since then, she has travelled the world with several companies including Cirque Éloize, the Tiger Lillies Circus and Freakshow, as well as studying for a masters degree on the art of contortion at the University of Québec. She is currently working on her own creation.



Anne-fay Johnston – swinging trapeze, hand balancing 
Anne-fay was born in Quebec City. She attended the National Circus School of Montréal, graduating as a specialised swinging trapeze and handstand artist in 2009. She has worked on many different projects, from Impro-cirque and special events to street shows and cabaret. She is also a member of Les Confins, a contemporary Quebecois company.



August Dakteris - straps

Originally from Lincolnshire, August started out in circus as a stilt-walker and fire performer. He first stumbled across NoFit State during a tour of  $tab\acute{u}$  in 2009, and immediately knowing that it was for him, he stayed with the company for the rest of the tour as a volunteer. Since then August has completed a degree at The Circus Space in London specialising in Aerial Straps.



Foucauld Falguerolles - chinese pole •

French-born Foucauld was self-taught until joining L'Espace Catastrophe in Brussels in 2002. He worked in street festivals with the Dujoli Cirkus then toured in 'Fin de siesta', directed by Louis Spagna. He has performed his Chinese Pole act around Europe, joining NoFit State in *tabú* in 2010, and performing in the Helsinki Winter Circus in 2009.



Freya Watson – cloudswing Φ

Freya was born in North Wales and spent much of her childhood living the circus life with her siblings. She studied at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance and Circomedia before training with cloudswing coach Roman Fedin. She has toured with NoFit State and many other circuses, as well as performing at the National Theatre and the London Palladium.



**Howard Morley** •

Born in Sheffield in 1967, Howie developed a passion for circus after seeing Norman Barrett and his performing budgies. Inspired by seeing Archaos and NoFit State at Glastonbury, he volunteered on a NoFit State show as a scaffolder and ended up with a large role. His speciality is eccentric characterisation combined with classic circus skills of balance and manipulation.



Hugo Oliveira - juggling

Hugo was born in Portugal, and started his work in circus with Portuguese company Circolando, before coming to the UK to study at Circomedia in Bristol, and LISPA in London. Since finishing studying, Hugo has created a solo show called The Fridge that has been touring Europe, and has also worked with the Glynderbourne Opera and Citrus Arts.



Kevin McIntosh - rope •

Born and bred in Thompson Pen, Jamaica. When studying Fine Art at Cardiff Art College, Kevin began performing circus as a fire swinger and stiltwalker, soon to ascend the trapeze. He now specialises in Aerial Rope, performing freelance and has been touring with NoFit State for 6 years. Kevin is also an accomplished dancer and salsa teacher.



#### Leire Ramirez - static trapeze

Leire is a Basque Country born artist. After trying different jobs, and while studying theatre and dance, she became increasingly interested in physical expression. This led her towards circus performing and she moved to Bristol to specialise in aerial and acrobatics in Circomedia. This is Leire's first time performing with NoFit State.



#### Lyndall Merry – swinging trapeze $\Phi$

Starting out with traditional circus from Norwich to New Zealand, Lyndall gained inspiration and first experiences of flying from Mike Wright at Circomedia in Bristol. He was trained in swinging trapeze by Viktor Fomine in Montreal and Juliette Hardy-Donaldson in London. His aerial and specialist rigging skills often overlap with his role as a performer.



#### Marco Fiera

From Cardiff, Marco trained in gymnastics as a child and then mime at Desmond Jones School in London, starting flying trapeze in his 40s. He worked as a stage technician with the Welsh National Opera and the National Theatre, joining NoFit State 11 years ago and rediscovering his love of heights and bouncing on things.



#### Max Calaf Seve - trampoline

Born in Barcelona, Max studied at Rogelio Rivel Circus School in his hometown, and then moved to London to study at The Circus Space and Royal Holloway University. His career milestones have been starting his own solo company, his first professional show in a large theatre in 2008 in Madrid, and touring Europe with his solo show *Anyday*.



#### Sage Cushman – dance trapeze

Hailing from Oregon in the US, Sage studied visual arts and completed her tattoo apprenticeship before she came to work with NoFit State. She has a circus degree from the National Institute of Circus Arts in Melbourne, and has continued to expand her knowledge by participating in workshops with NoFit State and C!RCA. Sage has worked with Teatro ZinZanni and the Aerialistas as well as becoming a core member of Tick Tock.



#### Vanina Fandiño – tightwire Φ

Vanina was born in Argentina and studied contemporary dance. She worked with Argentinian company Circo Volante before creating the company Circo Fantasma in Belgium in 2002. She developed her tightwire skills, moving on to 'Le Lido' Centre des Arts de Cirque in Toulouse. She toured with NoFit State's *tabú* from 2008 – 2010 and *Mundo Paralelo* in 2011.

### MUSICIANS



#### Gareth Jones - musical director

Brought up in Swansea, Gareth graduated in 2008 with an acting degree from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Since then he has worked professionally in theatre and circus across Europe, dividing his time between playing piano, guitar, saxophone, accordion and percussion, and aerial rope and acting.



#### Andy Moore

Freemoore trumpeted for Orkestra Del Sol for as long as his shirts could stand it and spent 10 years with drum crews in Beltane Fire Festival. Chronically unable to stick to one instrument, he now plays trumpet, guitar, double bass, synths, samples, and sings, but cannot play poker due to his face.



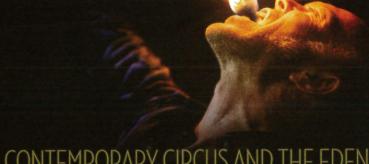
#### Ashley John Long

Ashley John Long graduated in 2008 from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Since then, he has divided his time between Britain and Europe working performing with some of the World's leading Orchestra's, Jazz and Pop artists whilst appearing extensively as a soloist. Rare moments of free time are spent composing, reading and kite flying.



#### **Calum McIntyre**

Calum McIntyre graduated in 2004 from Napier University and is currently working as a session musician and teacher in and around central Scotland. He has recorded performances for BBC television, live sessions on Radio 1 and Radio Scotland. Calum is currently recording and touring with The Banana Sessions, The Horndog Brass Band and The Kris Drever Band.



# CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS AND THE EDEN PROJECT

When we were looking for a suitable event to celebrate Eden's 10th birthday last year, we approached NoFit State Circus because they physically embody the values that Eden aspires to celebrate and share with the wide constituency that comprise it's past, present and future visitors, staff and friends.

My introduction to what was then known as 'New Circus' was seeing the legendary French company Archaos at Edinburgh in 1988. They were European revolutionaries led by the visionary Pierrot Bidon. At the same time Canada's Cirque du Soleil were emerging with their approach, while British companies struggled for years to attain such artistic heights.

Eden's Creative Programme Producer, Hilary Garnham and I went to see NoFit State's tabú in Taunt r in 2008. Under the direction of Firenza Guidi, what had become 'Contemporary Circus' had finally caught up with and was ready to move on from what Archaos had started twenty years before.

Eden Project showed the courage of its convictions to commission Labyrinth in 2011, and despite these difficult times and much robust debate, has shown the same resolve with this year's co-production of BIANCO, which has its world premiere at Bodelva before touring far and wide throughout 2013 and 2014. Last year twenty thousand people saw NoFit State Circus perform at Eden Project, to critical acclaim, and we thank you for choosing to come and join us this year. In what often feels like a somewhat hellish world, we hope to share with you something that is truly celebratory of all that is good in what it means to be human... nothing less and nothing more!

In case you hadn't guessed ईडन is Eden in Hindi script.



**Tom Critchley Producer for Eden Project** 

# THANKS TO ...

Thank you to last year's astonishing audience for making this year's show possible.

The entire **Eden Project Team** who, despite having experienced a tough and challenging year, have worked ferociously hard to continue the unique producing relationship with NoFit State Circus that is set to tour BIANCO until 2014 and hopefully continue long beyond that with future joint ventures. Thank you for your hard work, enthusiasm and patience, and the shared belief that the improbable can make the seemingly impossible a reality... again!

#### **NoFit State Core Company**

**Executive Director** 

Creative Directors

Communications & Marketing Manager

Community Programme Manager

Four Elms Officer

Finance Officer

Health & Safety Officer

Administrator

Receptionist

Associate Producer

Assistant Producer

Alison Woods

Tom Rack & Ali Williams

Rhys Fowler

Lvnn Carrol

Zoe Munn

Wendy Hii

Tim Adam

Leaf Brailey

Beth Coffev

Camille Beaumier

**Emily Morgan** 

#### NoFit State Board

Clare Sain-ley-Berry, Helen Crocker, Helen Protheroe, Jane Davidson, Lisa Every, Mark Robson, Paul Ralley, Toby Phillpot

#### **Programme Photography**

Steve Tanner

#### **Programme Design**

Paul Barrett

#### **Programme Producer**

Emily Morgan



Huge thanks to Avolites and Bishops Lifting for their ongoing support.

# nofitstate

# eden project

# 28 JULY - 2 SEPTEMBER 2012

To keep up to date with our latest news visit www.nofitstate.org

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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND









Noddir gan Lywodraeth Cymru Sponsored by

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