

# **CIRCUS RONALDO**

## *Fidelis Fortibus*



**Creation June 2015 (Marke, BE)**

Evening performance (starting from 20h) for adults and children over 12 years old

The company's own tent holds 250 people

Minimum 3 days of performances, longer period possible

Playing time: 75-80 minutes

***Fidelis Fortibus* has won the culture prize for best circus show 2017 in Barcelona and was nominated as best production of 2016 at Theaterfestival BE/NL.**

*“What Danny Ronaldo manages to do here will leave you utterly amazed. ... The way he celebrates the grandeur of the circus with such intimacy is quite spectacular.” – Knack Focus (29/6/2015)*

In 2015 Circus Ronaldo presented the production *Fidelis Fortibus*. It is a highly unusual solo created and performed by Danny Ronaldo. The theme is the old loyalty and almost absurd solidarity that gives the old circus families such a mystical melancholy. Danny appears in the ring alone and is surrounded by a circle of buried circus artistes. The powerful illusions he creates bring the dead souls back to life.

*“The performance is not specifically about being alone and is only a very little about loneliness.*

*It is mainly about ‘loyalty’.*

*Undying loyalty.*

*Loyalty to family, to a beloved.*

*Loyalty to your forebears’ work.*

*Loyalty to your betters, to your native country.*

*Loyalty to your unspoken promises.*

*And about the point where loyalty borders on insanity.*

*Fidelis Fortibus will be a comical and poetic performance with a warm human humour and a slightly lugubrious melancholy.*

*A performance about my deepest feelings for the circus and its traditions.*

*But I am certain that it will also provide recognisable metaphorical images for many of today’s human situations.*

*Because we never have to look far to recognise old patterns that are kept alive by an unconscious loyalty to the past.”*

*(Danny Ronaldo)*

In *Fidelis Fortibus*, the audience enters a circus tent where all the artistes have died. There may have been an epidemic or a major accident. Only the clown remains, and he refuses to leave. He has buried everyone around the circle of coloured sawdust. The graves are recognisable: there lies the tightrope-walker with her ballerinas, decorated with withered roses. There lies the white clown with his trumpet, polished every day in front of the cross. There lies the director, around whose grave the clown still fearfully makes a large detour.

He is alone, but all the other characters play a part, because he keeps them alive. When people come to watch, he loyally and dutifully performs. The trumpet, tuba and bombardon still resound as if someone were really playing them. The audience is witness to his imagination, which is a reality.

Worth living for. The audience is also complicit in maintaining the illusion of the ‘grand’ spectacular.

The applause, the waves of laughter, the wind instruments... It still sounds live, like a reality.

He will never leave. Or perhaps he might. But would that be to give up? To be disloyal?

One of the main sources of inspiration was the story of Hiroo Onoda, a former Japanese soldier who persevered as 'the last man standing' in the jungle of the Philippine island of Lubang for almost 30 years after the end of the Second World War. He remained loyal to his country and task for almost thirty years, with a strength verging on insanity.

*Fidelis Fortibus* has nothing to do with war, but it does shed light on the similarity to stories of old circus performers and even Circus Ronaldo's own family tradition. The old circus families have a strong code that basically says 'never give up; always carry on, whatever happens'. Even if the tent collapses, everyone is dead and you are utterly alone, the show must go on!

**LOTTE VAN DEN BERG** (final direction & coaching)

From 1997 until 2001 Lotte van den Berg studies Theatre Direction at the Amsterdam School of the Arts. After graduation, Lotte van den Berg works as a freelance director for a number of Dutch and Flemish theatres. From 2005 until 2009 she works as Toneelhuis's in-house director in Antwerp. In 2009, she creates her own company, OMSK. During the first years of its existence, she works from the Energiehuis in Dordrecht. By the end of 2012, OMSK moves from Dordrecht to Utrecht. Lotte van den Berg moves into Het Huis a/d Werf, together with other theatre makers, such as Boukje Schweigman and Dries Verhoeven.



**TONY DECAP & DAVID VAN KEER** (music)

Circus Ronaldo will for the third time be collaborating with Tony Decap. His experiment – the bombardon from which notes emerge of their own accord as if by magic, stimulated Danny's illusion of 'living graves'. So apparently a wind instrument does not need air to vibrate and make a sound, it is the musician who needs the air to make his lips vibrate.

David Van Keer has in the meantime become Circus Ronaldo's house composer. He is better able than anyone to bring to life the old circus music with its nostalgic sound.

**CREATION AND PERFORMANCE**

Danny Ronaldo

**TECHNIQUE**

Seppe Verbist

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**

Annelies Mylemans

**FINAL DIRECTION**

Lotte van den Berg

**COACHING**

Lotte van den Berg , Steven Luca , Rafael en Jo De Rijck

**MUSIC**

David Van Keer

**WITH THE CREATIVE INPUT FROM**

Andreas Ketels, Erik Van den Broecke

**COPRODUCTION**

Theater op de Markt - Dommelhof, Festival PERPLX, MiramirO, Théâtre Firmin Gémier/ La Piscine,  
Pôle national des arts du cirque d'Ile de France & Third Space

**SUPPORTED BY**

De Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Provincie Antwerpen, Werkplaats Diepenheim, Oerolfestival, Dok Gent,  
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**INFO & BOOKINGS**

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