



**MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**

Thursday, February 3, 2022, 7:30 PM
Friday, February 4, 2022, 7:30 PM

CIRQUE MECHANICS

Birdhouse Factory

Moss Arts Center
Street and Davis Performance Hall
Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre

VT VIRGINIA
TECH

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Cirque  MECHANICS

BIRD

HOUSE
FACTORY

Fall Day
Locker Room
Charivari
Rope Lamp
Spin Cycle Contortion
Birdmunch / Boss Juggling
Action Flash
Clown Radio
Tango Handstand Duo

INTERMISSION

Spring Day
Rube Goldberg
German Wheel
Hula Hoop
Aerial Hoop
Tramp Wall
Finale

About *Birdhouse Factory*

Enter the most unlikely setting for a circus: a factory. One where the workers are acrobats and the machines are circus props.

Welcome to *Birdhouse Factory* by Cirque Mechanics.

A place where spectators will watch a contortionist perform on a turntable powered by unicyclists, be captivated by the trapeze artist flying high thanks to the spins of an acrobat inside a giant gear-like wheel, and be stunned when the trampoline wall artists defy the laws of physics by virtually flying and walking on air. All the while they will be giggling at the antics of the comedic characters, impressed by the acro-dancing, and enchanted by the story of laughter, love, flight, and birdhouses.

Birdhouse Factory was inspired in part by the masterful industry murals of Mexican-born artist Diego Rivera, the outrageous illustrations of cartoonist Rube Goldberg, and the slap-stick style humor of Charlie Chaplin's film, *Modern Times*. While its inspirations make *Birdhouse Factory* artful, nostalgic, and funny, the true essence of the show comes from the circus.

This is a simple story of daily life in a "widgets" factory circa 1935, where workers are brought together by the most unlikely of events—a bird accidentally injured by the main steam boiler. The accident and caring for the bird brings the workers closer and inspires them to break away from the efficiency and monotony of the assembly-line mentality to display their true inner talents and abilities. In the process, they use their bodies and machines to build birdhouses in a less efficient albeit joyful and soulful way.

Birdhouse Factory delivers a timeless message of hope, camaraderie, and the power of the collaborative human spirit when presented with adversity. Although conceptualized prior to the pandemic and inspired by the Great Depression, *Birdhouse Factory* addresses the challenges faced by industry and workers during unprecedented times. The story is one of imaginative recovery, where humans create magic when working together towards common goals.

Biographies

CHRIS LASHUA, *founder, creative director, producer, and machine designer*

Company founder Chris Lashua hails from Boston, Massachusetts, where he spent most of his youth riding a BMX bike. Lashua was discovered by Cirque du Soleil and created/performed a BMX bike act that was entirely his own. He was then commissioned to build a German wheel act for the company, an act he performed for several years in Cirque du Soleil's production of *Quidam*, cementing his reputation as a visionary of circus gadgetry. His engineering chops and creative energy led him to "run away" with his own circus company, Cirque Mechanics.

Lashua believes that innovative mechanical apparatus and the relationship between performer and machine sets his company apart and is at the heart of what makes Cirque Mechanics unique. He has delivered on this unique approach in the company's theatrical productions. His innovative machines interact with acrobats, dancers, jugglers, and contortionists on a 1920s factory floor in *Birdhouse Factory*, a gold rush-era town in *Boom Town*, alongside renowned symphonies in the *Orchestra Project*, in a bicycle shop in *Pedal Punk*, and inside a circus ring in *42ft: A Menagerie of Mechanical Marvels*.

Lashua continues to build on the might of his engineering mind and his passion for the circus and all things mechanical by designing performance apparatus in real world settings that amaze and awe. He's currently developing material for a new production, *Zephyr*, that will premiere fall of 2022.

When Lashua is not developing material for a theatrical show, he is building other wacky performance devices for events, most recently the Paddle ship, a portable stage that not only floats, but also can be navigated by pedal-powered paddle wheels.

Lashua is a producing partner of the Vegas International Variety Arts Festival, a founding board member of the American Circus Alliance, and founding member of the Producers Alliance of Southern Nevada.

AIDA LASHUA, *co-producer and collaborator*

Aida Lashua has been Chris Lashua's co-producer and creative partner in life and work for nearly 30 years. Their partnership includes a decade of touring and work experience with Cirque du Soleil, as well as 15 years running their own company, Cirque Mechanics. Aida Lashua worked for Cirque du Soleil sponsor AT&T, implementing its multi-million dollar sponsorship agreement on tour, which included product placement, sales staff training, and supervision of special sales promotions. She also worked as a box office

Biographies, continued

AIDA LASHUA, *continued*

supervisor and house manager for Cirque du Soleil, where she trained and managed a staff of 60 and implemented customer service policies and helped develop and revise training manuals and VIP package tests.

Thanks to her experience with Cirque du Soleil, Lashua has an appreciation for the business and a passion for the circus arts. She currently manages the day-to-day operations of Cirque Mechanics and family with poise; she is a creative force and a stabilizing influence. Her education and background in direct marketing allow her to use a targeted message approach in the development of the company's website and social media presence. As a mother of three boys, she is an avid supporter of the educational component and community outreach programs offered by Cirque Mechanics. She has written the education outreach support materials and study guides, and developed the structure of the educational workshops. Lashua, who is a native of Puerto Rico, feels most at home near the ocean. She recently began freelance writing for CityLife Publications and hopes to one day publish that elusive next great American novel.

CREATIVE DESIGN TEAM

ALOYSIA GAVRE, *co-director, choreographer, and costume designer*

Aloysia Gavre co-founded both Cirque School and Troupe Vertigo in Los Angeles in 2009 after 22 years of touring internationally with the Pickle Family Circus, Cirque du Soleil, and symphonies around the globe, including at the Sydney Opera House and the Kennedy Center. Gavre's passion and knowledge for the circus arts has led her to a career as a director, choreographer, and educator, including Cirque Cracker with Phoenix Symphony; Cirque Broadway with Baltimore Symphony; and Cirque Cinema with Indianapolis Symphony, as well as her own creations, including *Tableaux*. She has both coached and choreographed for film and television, including *Water for Elephants*, *Pitch Perfect 2*, Bravo, NBC, and BuzzFeed. She has been recognized in *Dance Teacher Magazine*, *Dance Informa*, and at speaking engagements with TED-X, Center Theater Group, Directors Lab, Chicago Circus Festival, American Youth Circus Organization, and VIVA Fest Las Vegas. Gavre has been a long-time artistic collaborator with Cirque Mechanics, having had creative involvement in over five shows since 2004 after meeting Chris Lashua while performing in Cirque du Soleil.

SEAN RILEY, *set designer and artistic rigger*

Sean Riley has a 20-year career combining suspension, kinetic movement, and design with performance. Through scenic design, rigging design, and mechanical design, often in concert with each other, Riley creates unique performance environments. Concentrating his design for performance on site-specific and non-traditional work, Riley has created installations in collaboration with a wide spectrum of accomplished artists and collaborators. Known for his bold and often surprising use of space and for large-scale movement, Riley's installations commonly reflect his lifelong obsession with gravity and Newtonian physics. His works have been installed from backyards to Broadway and continue to tour internationally. He is a founding member of Cirque Mechanics and his company, Gravity Design, through which he has developed an arsenal of specialized tools, pushing the bounds of performance as well as industrial safety. Riley was the host of the National Geographic Television series *World's Toughest Fixes* and the four-part docuseries *Speed*, currently on Curiosity Stream. For more information, please visit visiblegravity.com and gravitydesign.org.

STEVEN RAGATZ, *writer*

An original *Birdhouse Factory*, *Boom Town*, and *Orchestra Project* cast member collaborator, plus lead writer for *Pedal Punk* and *42ft: A Menagerie of Mechanical Marvels*, Steven Ragatz has been entertaining audiences with his juggling, physical comedy, stilt walking, and general antics for the past three decades. As a 10-year veteran of Cirque du Soleil, Ragatz has toured throughout North, South, and Central America, as well as Asia and Europe, performing multiple juggling acts and an eclectic array of characters. Ragatz was on the staff of Bloomington's Stage Flight Circus Arts, where he taught juggling and unicycle skills workshops. He has also toured his one-man show, *Under the Umbrella*, *Life Is a Circus*, an evening with a juggling virtuoso and stories from world-wide circus adventures. Ragatz holds a bachelor's degree in variety theatre and a master's degree in computer science from Indiana University. He studied mime, stage movement, and circus arts with Fred Garbo, Tony Montanaro, George Pinney, and Michael Moschen. Ragatz and his wife, Lisa, have two children, Melissa and Andrew, and currently live in Maine, where they have perfected the art of making the perfect margarita.

CODY WESTHEIMER AND JULIA MARIE NEWMANN, *composers*

Cody Westheimer and Julia Marie Newmann run a family-owned music scoring facility in Santa Barbara, California. Versatile music makers and

Biographies, continued

CODY WESTHEIMER AND JULIA MARIE NEWMANN, *continued*

creatives, Westheimer and Newmann have brought heart and soul to hundreds of projects over the past two decades. Newmann garnered four ASCAP awards during her nine-year stint on the hit Fox show *Bones*, and has also worked on *Medium* and *The Finder* alongside Emmy-winning composer Sean Callery. In 2016 Westheimer and Newmann teamed up with Callery on the CBS series *Doubt*. Westheimer has been a force in independent cinema, documentary film/TV, and nature films. He has scored nearly 50 feature films and over 100 hours of television, but he is perhaps most known for his iconic theme for the Tour de France, airing each July on NBC. Westheimer and Newmann's 4,000 track catalog, the *New West Collection*, has been in high demand for both temp scoring and as an alternative to typical production music libraries.

KALIN HENNING, *costumer*

Kalin Henning has spent their life so far bouncing around between theatre, acrobatics, and complete and utter confusion. Henning developed a love for historic costuming early on and was the head costume designer for four different Shakespeare productions before the age of 21. Since then, they have spent their time, when not working as a performer, making costumes as a freelance designer. Henning cannot decide if the favorite costume they've ever made was an Andolite or an historically appropriate hand-sewn 1901 ballgown.

JOE D'EMILIO, *lighting director*

Joe D'Emilio is a New York City-based lighting designer with over a decade of experience in theatre, dance, concerts, and circus. D'Emilio joined the Cirque Mechanics family in 2013 on the original tour of *Birdhouse Factory* and continued on to tour with *Pedal Punk* and *42ft*. Additionally, D'Emilio has designed for Circus Juventas in St. Paul, Minnesota; Bindlestiff Family Cirkus in New York City; and Circus Sarasota. When not on tour, he designs new shows and immersive experiences in New York City, as well as concerts and special events. He is a proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829. D'Emilio's portfolio is available at joedemilio.com.

LEO HIDALGO, *lighting director*

Leonardo Hidalgo is a New York-based lighting designer, production manager, and educator with a focus on theatre, opera, and dance. Currently

Hidalgo is the production manager and lighting designer for Battery Dance Company, with whom he has internationally toured workshops built to create community, tolerance, and acceptance. Additionally, he works with several New York area schools teaching lighting and theatre technology, as well as safety in their programs. Past works include *Madcap Motel* (associate lighting director), an immersive space in the Arts District of Los Angeles, and *McKittrick Hotel* (guest designer), home to *Sleep No More*, the Manderley bar, and the Club Car. Hidalgo is excited to be joining the Cirque Mechanics team this year as lighting director.

RACHEL A. LANTOW, *production stage manager (on tour)*

This will be Rachel Lantow's second show with the Cirque Mechanics team. Lantow joined with the tour of *42ft*, including the off-Broadway residency at the New Victory Theatre. Her selected stage management credits include three years with Circus Juventas for *Steam*, *Twisted*, *Galaxium*, *A Hygge Holiday*, and the spring shows of 2018, 2019, and 2021; Loyce Houlton's *Nutcracker Fantasy* (Minnesota Dance Theatre); *Solo* (McKnight Foundation); *In the Margins* (THREADS Dance Project); *Heaven and French Twist* (Flying Foot Forum); *Hatchet Lady* (Walking Shadow Theatre Company); *Momentum: New Dance Works 2017 and 2019* (Cowles Center, The Southern, Walker Arts Center, and the O'Shaughnessy); *Flying Foot Forum* (Flint Hills Children's Festival at the Ordway, the Guthrie, and the Cowles Center); *The (curious case) of the Watson Intelligence* (Park Square Theatre), CLIMB Theatre; *Medora Musical 2016* (StageWest); *Four Saints in Three Acts* (VocalEssence and Black Label Movement at the Cowles Center); and *Taiko Groove* (Mu Performing Arts Center). Lantow is a proud Minnesotan and earned a bachelor of fine arts in theatre technology/design from Minnesota State University, Mankato. For my audience of one and for Kaela.

JANEEN JOHNSON, *production manager (remote)*

Janeen Johnson is an independent arts administrator, stagecraft specialist, and activist with over 20 years of experience in arts management, event operations, and theatre arts production. Johnson supports projects, artists, and organizations through planning, fund development, executive producing, touring, and partnerships. She is a maven for dance, theatre, and special events, a production tour de force on any team. Johnson facilitates creative visions to be realized and is often sought out for her expertise in theatre production and event management. For the past 11 years, she has worked with Cirque Mechanics as principal touring production stage

Biographies, continued

JANEEN JOHNSON, *continued*

manager, directing the administration and logistics of its four theatrical touring productions—*Birdhouse Factory*, *Boomtown*, *Pedal Punk*, and *42ft: A Menagerie of Mechanical Marvels*. With the company, she has toured North America, Europe, and Asia, installing its creative works that cross platforms, genres, cultures, and language barriers. Currently, she aims to leverage arts and culture as a viable service industry with a sustainable impact to arts communities locally and beyond. Johnson's hope is to continue service in collaboration with Cirque Mechanics and local agencies that work to develop a model of art creation for sustainability, community building, and public sharing.

CAST

WES HATFIELD, *captain, coach, and acrobat*

Wes Hatfield was born in California and his parents raised him in Germany, where he got his start in gymnastics. At age 10 Hatfield joined trampoline and tumbling when he and his family moved to Colorado. In the world of trampoline competition, his resume includes several state and national championship titles. At age 19 he quit competition and became a circus performer, traveling around the world wowing audiences with his technical prowess and zany comedic antics. Hatfield has been an integral cast member in all of Cirque Mechanics' touring productions, *Birdhouse Factory*, *Boom Town*, *Pedal Punk*, and *42ft: A Menagerie of Mechanical Marvels*, performing trampoline, Chinese pole, cyr wheel, and general acrobatics along with group choreography. Over the years Hatfield has become part of the Cirque Mechanics production team, acting as team leader for the cast and head artistic rigger for the setup of the show. He now lives in Las Vegas, where he continues his work with Cirque Mechanics. Hatfield is a fan of avocados, needing only a spoon to enjoy them. His favorite breakfast entree is steak and eggs with hash browns—not potato chunks, hash browns. Don't forget the ketchup.

BROOKE NEILSON, *acrobat*

Brooke Neilson has been a gymnast most of her life. Neilson majored in dance performance at Valencia College in Orlando, Florida, where she was born and raised. After college she performed at Universal Studios Orlando in the Superstar Parade, *Terminator 2: 3D Experience*, the 8th Voyage of

Sinbad stunt show, the Macy's Holiday Parade, and the Mardi Gras Parade. Neilson got her first break into the circus world at Sea World San Diego's summer show, *Cirque De La Mer*. There she performed Chinese pole and trampoline wall with aquatic dismounts. She continued to develop her circus skills on the Carnival Dream Cruise Ship, performing hand to hand, Chinese pole, tumbling, and dancing acts. Neilson spends most summers bouncing on the trampoline wall at the San Diego Zoo. This is her second show with Cirque Mechanics, her first being 42ft. Neilson is obsessed with traveling and horses, and she spends all her money on both travel adventures and her horse, Echo.

MICHAEL RUBINO, *trampoline wall acrobat*

Michael Rubino was born and raised in gymnastics; his parents owned a gymnastics gym in North Carolina called the Cat's Pajamas. After the age of 10 Rubino and most of his family packed their bags and headed to California. He bounced around gymnastics gyms until the age of 18, when he got his first performing gig at Legoland California. Rubino has been performing for over seven years, working at Disneyland California, Six Flags, *Cirque De La Mer* at SeaWorld San Diego, and the San Diego Zoo. He has performed overseas in Canada, Belgium, and France doing different acts, like Chinese pole, trampoline wall, diving, and tumbling. When Rubino is not working, he likes to spend his time surfing, hiking, creating and playing video games, and following his beautiful, amazing wife-to-be, Brooke, around the world.

DANIEL ALBERTO BABILONIA TORRES, *trampoline wall acrobat*

Daniel Alberto Babilonia Torres was born and raised in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. Torres is a dancer and acrobat. He began training in hip-hop dance at the age of 10. He performed in MTV's *America's Best Dance Crew* with 787 Crew. At age 18 he auditioned for Cirque du Soleil and moved to Las Vegas, Nevada. He has performed in three Cirque du Soleil shows (*MJ One*, *Mindfreak Live*, and *Run*). In 2021 he completed a bachelors' degree in liberal arts from St. Mary's College of California. He first saw the trampoline wall when he was in *MJ One* and started training under Wellington Lima. Eight years later, Torres is combining his love for dance and acrobatics to spread wonder and laughs wherever God takes him.

Biographies, continued

ELENA SANDERS, *contortion and hula hoops*

Elena Sanders is a multi-disciplinary circus artist and currently has three solo acts: contortion, hula hoops, and aerial straps. Sanders' career highlights include *America's Got Talent*, *The Steve Harvey Show*, *Tengo Talento Mucho Talento*, and winning a mechanical bull contest at a cast party. Sanders is very excited to join the legendary *Birdhouse Factory* show for her *Cirque Mechanics* debut!

CORNELL FREENEY, *German wheel acrobat*

Cornell joined a youth circus in Chicago at the age of 13 in search of excitement. Freeney first took an interest in tumbling and mini trampoline. In 2005 he started to train on the German wheel. Preparing for the World Championships in wheel gymnastics, he practiced every day before and after school. After two years of training, he was awarded a silver medal and became the first American to ever compete in the international competition. Winning four gold medals, Freeney has also shown success in national competitions. Upon graduating from high school in 2008, he transitioned from competition to performing professionally. His career started with the German wheel on ice, performing for Royal Caribbean Cruise Line. Understanding the importance of education, later that year, he enrolled in Illinois State University. Along with earning a degree in elementary education, he was able to grow his circus skills through Illinois State's Gamma Phi circus program. After graduating, Freeney started coaching youth circus artists in Chicago and performing on and at various stages, TV shows, and arenas. In July of 2020 Freeney moved to Las Vegas, where he founded the Unity Circus Project, a youth circus that focuses on building kids' self-confidence using circus art as a tool.

THOM WALL, *boss juggler*

Thom Wall is an American juggler who specializes in juggling disciplines from the past. After completing a five-year tour juggling for *Cirque du Soleil's Totem* (2014-2019), Wall now resides in Philadelphia, where he researches circus history, consults for nonprofits, and coaches juggling and performance at *Circadium: School of Contemporary Circus*. When not at home, he's performing his solo show, *On the Topic of Juggling*, on cruise ships and stages around the world. Wall holds a masters' of science in nonprofit arts administration from Drexel University (2015). He was awarded *La Medalla Crotalus Scholaris* by the Mesoamerican University in Puebla, Mexico, for his work revitalizing forgotten juggling disciplines. Wall is the founder of

Modern Vaudeville Press (2018), an independent publishing company that produces academic titles about the circus arts. In 2021 the International Jugglers' Association honored him with the Excellence in Education Award. Wall is delighted to be back on tour, sharing what he loves with circus fans across the U.S.

LINDSEY COVARRUBIAS, *aerialist*

Lindsey Covarrubias, a San Francisco Bay area native, began performing as a child and continued to pursue her love of the stage in college at the University of California, San Diego. Shortly after graduation, Covarrubias found a home in the circus arts after moving to Los Angeles, where she taught and trained at Cirque School Los Angeles. Maintaining a strong emphasis on *corde lisse*, she has performed as an aerialist with various companies across the country, including Troupe Vertigo and Cirque Mechanics, with whom she joined for two touring shows (*The Orchestra Project* and *Pedal Punk*). Additionally, as a freelance performer, she has worked commercially for companies such as Dick's Sporting Goods and Neutrogena and has performed at many private events for similar corporations. Covarrubias currently resides in Paris, France, where she likes to hang from her hair, eat lots of weird cheeses, and practice her accordion.

GARRETT ALLEN, *acrobat and aerialist*

Garrett Allen, originally from San Diego, California, began his circus journey at 10 years old at a small local studio in his hometown. Almost instantaneously, Allen fell in love with the art and went full steam ahead. Learning handstands, aerial acts, contortion, dance, and other forms of performance art, he began showcasing his skills around California and neighboring states from a very young age. After turning 18 he began performing in various festivals, theatres, touring shows, night clubs, theme parks, and cruise ships around the world (India, Cuba, China, Caribbean, Mediterranean, Latvia, and just about every nook and cranny of the U.S.). Now 26, Allen is so grateful and excited to start traveling and performing again in a post-pandemic world. He now specializes in aerial rope, stacking chairs, and duo trapeze, in addition to whatever else a client may request. When Allen is not on stage, you can find him tending to his garden of organic fruits and vegetables and exotic tropical plants at home in San Diego.

Biographies, continued

JULIAN CALLARI, *trampoline wall acrobat*

Beginning his circus career at age 19, Julian Callari first discovered the trampoline wall after moving from his hometown of Maui, Hawaii, to California. Callari attended Ecole de Cirque Quebec with the trampoline wall as his primary discipline, performing in shows with Catwall, productions Haut-Val, and FLIP Fabrique. Within just four years, Callari was cast for *Kurios* by Cirque du Soleil, performing Acronet. Callari is excited to be bringing a total of nine years of circus experience to the Cirque Mechanics cast.

CHASE CULP, *clown and comedic character*

Chase Culp grew up in Houston, Texas, and started performing in theatre at a young age. Culp began his circus career as a teenager, spending summers touring New England with Circus Smirkus. He then joined Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey straight out of high school, touring the U.S. for the next two years. Since then, his career has taken him to 11 different countries around the world to perform in arenas, theatres, circus tents, and more. Some of these adventures included a festival in India, a theme park in Abu Dhabi, a circus in Switzerland, and the award-winning *Slava's Snowshow*. Culp was with the Venardos Circus when live performances had to pause, but he used the break to return to teaching the next generation of performers at Circus Smirkus. He also took some time to pet his dogs, fix up his tiny house, and become a certified laughter yoga leader. Culp is happy to be back on stage performing for live audiences again.

CIRQUE MECHANICS

Cirque Mechanics was founded in 2004 by Boston native and German wheel artist Chris Lashua after the success of a collaborative project with the Circus Center of San Francisco, *Birdhouse Factory*. Cirque Mechanics quickly established itself as a premiere American circus, with its unique approach to performance, inspiring storytelling, and innovative mechanical staging. *Spectacle Magazine* hailed it as "the greatest contribution to the American circus since Cirque du Soleil."

Cirque Mechanics, although inspired by modern circus, finds its roots in the mechanical and its heart in the stories of American ingenuity. The shows, rooted in realism, display a raw quality rarely found in modern circus that makes their messages timeless and relevant. The stories are wrapped in circus acrobatics, mechanical wonders, and a bit of clowning around.

The troupe has created five extraordinary productions: *Birdhouse Factory*, *Boomtown*, *Pedal Punk*, *42ft: A Menagerie of Mechanical Marvels*, and, most recently, the wind-inspired *Zephyr*.

Cirque Mechanics first performed at the Moss Arts Center in 2014 with

A Note of Thanks From the Producers

We want to thank our family—our three wonderful sons, Zion, Quinn, and Iago, for their unconditional love and support, their enthusiasm, their imagination, and for adopting the spirit of a true circus family by discussing act ideas, narrative, and plot points at the dinner table and helping in the shop with painting, building, and clean up! Our parents for taking us to the circus as children and allowing us to dream.

Our cast and crew for their tireless efforts and their collaborative energy. The team at Alliance Artists Management for believing in our company and for their extensive support during the pandemic. Bo Bogatin and Kurt Nelson for keeping us honest and legal. Andy Espo for his friendship, clear head, and objectivity. Bryan Schuette and the boys at United Machine for fabricating and creating and trusting us with their equipment. Don Seiersen at Vishnu Creative for his great graphic support. Our family at Cirque du Soleil and our fellow American circus companies for their commitment to this art form and for continuing to set the bar higher.

The creation process was long and arduous, but extremely rewarding. We had so much fun designing and exploring, training and rehearsing. Our goal is that you are entertained and our hope that you are moved. Finally thank you to our audiences for venturing once more to the theatre, for your loyalty and your faith in our company, for the laughs, the applause, and the appreciation for the circus arts.

Tell Us What You Think!

We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Chontadelia on Thursday, March 24, 2022.



bit.ly/cirque-mechanics-feedback

Engagement Events

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2022

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCE

CIRQUE MECHANICS: *BIRDHOUSE FACTORY*

Students, teachers, and families from Radford City and Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties attended this performance for public, private, and homeschools.

Go Deeper

Which circus routines in *Birdhouse Factory* impressed you the most? How did those feats mesh with the narrative of the show, which Cirque Mechanics describes as “a simple story of factory workers facing job loss and the creative ways in which they bounce back (quite literally)?”

In the Galleries

NAMWON CHOI: *THE SHAPE OF DISTANCE*

Thursday, January 27-Saturday, March 26, 2022

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Based in Savannah, Georgia, Namwon Choi's vivid monochromatic blue landscapes compress distance and invite an intimate perspective. Trained in traditional Korean painting, Choi's multi-perspectival, geometric, and finely detailed depictions of scenic byways evoke poetic ideas of time, transition, and states of in-betweenness.

SHIN-IL KIM: *IN BETWEEN FIVE COLORS*

Thursday, January 27-Saturday, March 26, 2022

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery

Based in Seoul, Korea, Shin-il Kim explores the limitations of language to make video sculptures and animations that shift between perception and reality. With light and color, Kim builds form from the negative spaces of characters and the gaps between lines. Language becomes a barrier to seeing, and its absence reveals meaning under the surface of knowledge.

GALLERY HOURS

Wednesday-Friday, 10 AM-5 PM

Saturday, 10 AM-4 PM

To arrange a group tour or class visit, please contact Meggin Hicklin, exhibitions program manager, at megh79@vt.edu.

Land Acknowledgement

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Health and Wellness

The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for distancing, face coverings, and cleaning and sanitation. Our status may change according to changes in university operating procedures. Find the most up to date information at artscenter.vt.edu/visit.

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

Moss Arts Center Staff

Office of the Executive Director

Ruth Waalkes, executive director, Moss Arts Center, and associate provost for the arts
David Ehrlich, outreach fellow for the fine arts
Molly Parker, executive assistant

Development

Rachael Carberry, associate director of advancement
Bernadette Bascom, assistant director of leadership gifts

Finance and Administration

Liz Scharman, director of administration
Toni Cartee, business manager
Austin Elliot, building manager
Katherine Fifer, housekeeper
Matt Hudson, IT specialist
Jamie McReynolds, fiscal, HR, and grants technician
Shirley Rose, housekeeper

Marketing and Communication

Katie Gehrt, director of marketing and communication
Reneé Alarid, associate director of creative services

Susan Bland, associate director of communication
Jonathan Boulter, associate director of patron services
Avery Eliades, content manager
Tracie Hughes, marketing manager
Jamie Wiggert, box office manager

Production

Doug Witney, director of production
Gustavo Araoz, lighting supervisor
Robert Gainer, audio supervisor
Laine Goerner, production coordinator
Ryan Hasler, stage and rigging supervisor
Joe Ingram, staff technician

Programming

Margaret Lawrence, director of programming
Jon Catherwood-Ginn, associate director of programming
Meggin Hicklin, exhibitions program manager
Brian Holcombe, curator
Sarah M. Johnson, program manager
Gwyneth Strobe, artist services assistant

Institute for Creativity, Arts, & Technology Staff

Benjamin Knapp, executive director
Tom Martin, deputy executive director
Lisa McNair, director of Center for Educational Networks and Impacts
Doug Bowman, director of Center for Human-Computer Interaction
Andrea Kavanaugh, associate director, CHCI
Ico Bukvic, director of the Creativity + Innovation Community
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