

Friday, May 3, 2013, 8pm
 Saturday, May 4, 2013, 2pm
 Sunday, May 5, 2013, 3pm
 Zellerbach Hall

Les 7 Doigts de la Main



Peggy Faye

PSY

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LES 7 DOIGTS DE LA MAIN translates literally as “the seven fingers of the hand.” It is a twist on a French idiom (“the five fingers of the hand”) used to describe distinct parts united tightly, moving in coordination towards one common goal. Here it refers to the seven founding directors of the company (Isabelle Chassé, Shana Carroll, Patrick Léonard, Faon Shane, Gypsy Snider, Sébastien Soldevila, and Samuel Tétrault), who, by combining their distinct talents and experiences, work toward their common artistic goals with the beautifully awkward dexterity of a seven-fingered hand.

Founded in Montreal in 2002, Les 7 Doigts de la Main’s initial goal was to bring circus to a human scale. They began as artists on stage, creating collectively, and soon branched out, expanding their creative talents as directors, choreographers, writers, and coaches, passing on their collaborative and unique 7 Fingers process to a new generation of circus artists. Out of this emerged *Loft*, *Traces*, *La Vie*, *Psy*, *Fibonacci Project*, *Patinoire*, *A Muse*, and *Sequence 8*. A relaxed and funky artist’s loft, a bunker, purgatory, or a psychiatrist’s office, an international collaboration of cultures, or a solo clown show, each show offers a distinct setting and yet carries the same 7 fingerprint.

Celebrating their tenth anniversary this season, Les 7 Doigts de la Main are constantly developing new shows back home in Montreal, applying their unique brand of hands-on creativity to all their ventures.



Guillaume Biron grew up in France and discovered the circus at age ten. Five years later he enrolled in the École Nationale de Cirque de Châtellerauld, where he majored in hand-to-hand, trampoline, and static trapeze. When he was 18 years old, he was drawn to the National Circus School in Montreal. There he specialized in Korean board and static trapeze, while also practicing juggling, balancing, acrobatics, dance, and theater arts. His professional career subsequently has taken him to points around the globe: the

Olympic Games closing ceremonies in Turin, the Montreal Jazz Festival, and Mexico, France, and Norway.

Main role: Michel Michel, who Hears Voices. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, little boy, several park passers-by, guy in bar, drugee, psy. *Disciplines:* Trapeze fixe, hand-balancing, group juggling.



Héroïse Bourgeois began to study acrobatics when she was five years old, then moved on to equestrian vaulting, trampoline and dance. After obtaining a university diploma, dreams of travel impelled her toward the circus. Further training at Circus Space in London and the National Circus School in Montreal helped her become a hand-to-hand vaulter. Upon completing a tour of European street festivals, Ms. Bourgeois joined the 7 Fingers and contributed to creating *Traces*, in which she has performed more than 500 times over three years. While still passionate about hand-to-hand, she is also fascinated with Chinese pole and created, in tandem with her partner William Underwood, a new acrobatic duo on the apparatus.

Main role: Claire the Insomniac. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian/love interest, little girl, several park passers-by, girl in bar, drunk girl, psy. *Disciplines:* Hand to hand, Chinese pole.



Mohamed Bouseta grew up in a family of eight children in the north of France. Hyperactive by nature, he began to try different sports as a means of channeling this energy. His life took a turn for the better when he met the great Romanian gymnast Adrian Munteanu, then retired, who had opened a circus school in front of his home. Beyond a teacher he found a true mentor, and the circus quickly became more than a passion. Before joining the 7 Fingers, Mr. Bouseta continued his training at Rosny-sous-Bois and the

Centre National des Arts du Cirque in Châlons-en-Champagne.

Main role: Danny the Manic. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, psy, Papa, guy in bar, WWF Wrestler (the Head Shrinker). *Disciplines:* Hand to hand, fly mat.



At age seven, **Danica Gagnon-Plamondon** began training in artistic gymnastics through which she developed acrobatic agility and a great deal of determination. She then vaulted into the world of the circus by enrolling in the National Circus School in Montreal. There she not only acquired performing experience but forged an artistic persona. Even though versatility is second nature to her, the desire for a specialty number led her to focus on the swinging trapeze. This artist maintains a comprehensive tool kit that includes the arts of juggling, dance, and acting.

Main role: Lily the Agoraphobic. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, Maman, several park passers-by, girl in bar, drunk girl, prostitute, psy. *Disciplines:* Swinging trapeze, group juggling.



At age 15, **Gisle Henriët** left behind his family, martial arts school, and childhood friends to enter the Cirkus Cirkor school in Stockholm. The next three years would see him trying his hand at almost everything: tight-rope, aerials, juggling, trampoline, hand-to-hand, theater, and dance. He then made another big move, this time crossing the ocean to attend the National Circus School in Montreal where he majored in teeterboard. Mr. Henriët has performed with several circus companies, from street performances to major stage appearances, most notably the closing ceremonies at the Turin Olympics and Quebec City's 400th anniversary celebrations.

Main role: Dexter, with Multiple Personality Disorder. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, little boy,

several park passers-by, guy in bar. *Disciplines:* Teeterboard, hand-balancing, group juggling.



From a very young age, **Naël Jammal** transformed his garden in the south of France into a circus ring and his parent's bed into a trampoline. At the École Nationale de Cirque de Châtellerault, he worked on hand-to-hand, banquine, Russian bar, and juggling before specializing in balancing on canes. He then enrolled in the National Circus School in Montreal and was involved in a variety of projects, exchanges, and shows. The circus for him is a sort of nexus, a place to mingle and share. With a skill set acquired through practicing parkour, classical dance, hip-hop, capoeira, and clowning, Mr. Jammal has forged a special style which continues to evolve. Before embarking on the adventure of *Psy*, Mr. Jammal appeared in several performances of *Traces*.

Main role: Jacques the Hypochondriac. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, baby, several park passers-by, drag queen, psy. *Disciplines:* Principle hand-balancer, group juggling.



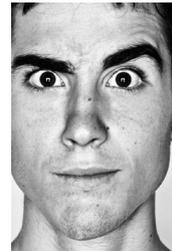
Originally from Kiev, Ukraine, **Olga Kosova** emigrated six years ago to the United States. After a promising debut in competitive rhythmic gymnastics, she also was a dancer. She trained on the aerial rope and in Chinese acrobatics with Master Lu Yi at the Circus Center in San Francisco, at the same time performing with Trapeze World, Vau de Vire, and New Pickle Circus. Olga then went on to the National Circus School in Montreal. While training there she developed theatricality, dance, music, and clowning skills, and perfected a new apparatus, the aerial net.

Main role: Suzi, with Intermittent Explosive Disorder. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, little girl, several park passers-by, girl in bar, psy, prostitute. *Disciplines:* Knife manipulation, corde lisse.



Florent Lestage is an artist who uses juggling and other circus techniques to create a timeless universe of heightened senses. In this weight-defying atmosphere objects take on new life, encouraging the juggler to help them take flight. Mr. Lestage finds inspiration in silent films, dance, music, visual arts, travel, personal interaction, and cultural exchanges. They have helped him evolve, as have his dreams and delusions. He was introduced to the circus at age eleven in Lomme, France, then at the École Balthazar in Montpellier. He subsequently moved on to the National Circus School in Montreal, at which time he decided to make the circus his life.

Main role: John? Joe? Jim? the Amnesiac. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, guy in bar, psy. *Disciplines:* Juggling, solo and group.



Passionate about dance from a very young age, **Tom Proneur-Orsini** expanded his repertoire at Cirque de Nexon in France where he practiced juggling, trampoline, and acrobatics. There he studied towards a degree with a "dance option" in association with the Conservatoire de Danse Contemporaine. At the same time, he pursued regular circus training and coached French trampoline champions before entering the École Nationale des Arts du Cirque de Rosny-sous-Bois. He went on to major in hand-to-hand at the Centre National des Arts du Cirque in Châlons-en-Champagne where he trained for two years. In parallel to his academic career and to help underwrite his studies, Mr. Proneur-Orsini was also a dramatic artist with the Entr'acte circus company.

Main role: Smith/Mr. OCD. *Secondary roles:* Little boy, several park passers-by, guy in bar, psy. *Disciplines:* Hand to hand, hand-balancing, group juggling.



Julien Silliau spent much of his childhood at his mother's circus school before entering the École de Cirque Balthazar in Montpellier and the École Nationale des Arts du Cirque de Rosny-sous-Bois, both in France. During this training he acquired great versatility as both juggler and acrobat, and performed in several events in association with the Acrobacirque Circus School, École Nationale de Cirque de France, and Festival du Cirque de Demain in Paris. He has also performed in Tunisia and Argentina and was part of a circus company of street performers. Upon enrolling in the National Circus School in Montreal, he majored in the German wheel, not only making the discipline his own but bringing a new dynamic to it.

Main role: Johnny the Addict. *Secondary roles:* Pedestrian, older brother, dog, several park passers-by, guy in bar, psy. *Disciplines:* German wheel, hand-balancing, group juggling.



William Underwood grew up in San Francisco. At age seven, he discovered Chinese acrobatics with Master Lu Yi, training in the discipline for ten years and performing with the New Pickle Circus. He has practiced skateboarding, kayaking, piano, and magic. In 2002 he enrolled in the National Circus School in Montreal, where he majored in hand-to-hand. After a tour of European street festivals, he joined the 7 Fingers in creating the *Traces* show. During the three-year tour, Mr. Underwood also performed a hand-to-hand number with vaulter Héloïse Bourgeois.

Main role: George the Paranoiac. *Secondary roles:* Psy, Pedestrian, clown, several park passers-by, guy in bar. *Disciplines:* Hand to hand, Chinese pole, group juggling, fly mat.