

PRESS RELEASE *for immediate release*

THE BEST OF CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS FROM HERE AND ABROAD!

Let the third edition of **COUPS DE CŒUR** begins FEBRUARY 22 TO MARCH 4, 2018

Presented by NATIONAL Public Relations



Montréal, January 15, 2018 • As of February 22, **TOHU's** circular hall will host a remarkable array of contemporary circus artists from here and abroad, stars of this third year of **COUPS DE CŒUR**. Again this year, renowned stage director **FERNAND RAINVILLE** will lead this great gala-type show, a dazzling display of disciplines. Each show will be hosted by Les 7 Doigts' flamboyant **SÉBASTIEN SOLDEVILA**. Everyone, **TOHU's** present and future enthusiasts, will appreciate this new selection of original feats and impressive acts. Here are the select artists of **COUPS DE CŒUR 2018**, stunning portrait of today's circus and annual celebration of circus excellence, diversity and creativity!

HUGO OUELLET CÔTÉ (QUÉBEC), FLIP FABRIQUE (QUÉBEC), AERIAL STRAPS:

As a kid, Hugo Côté Ouellet wanted his jumps and spins to always be higher and higher. His quest brought him to train at two Québec circus schools and to perform with Cirque Éloïze. He had the opportunity to travel the world, refine his passion, perfect his craft. He is a member of Flip FabriQue.

MARIE-ÈVE BISSON (QUÉBEC), CIRQUE DU SOLEIL (QUÉBEC), AERIAL HOOPS:

Marie-Ève Bisson joined Cirque du Soleil in 1998 and offered her first aerial hoop performance in *Quidam*. It was the beginning of a long and brilliant career which led her to perform over 5,000 times in more than 35 countries. Known as a pioneer of her art, she brought aerial hoops to a remarkable level.

JULIUS AND CÉSAR (GERMANY, FRANCE), CIRQUE ÉLOÏZE (QUÉBEC), HAND-TO-HAND:

German Julius Bitterling begins his professional training in France, before joining the acrobats of the Beijing Troupe. He further pursued his artistic development at the National Circus School. He draws on his artistic and cultural versatility to develop ever more daring creations. As for French artist César Mispelon, he discovers the circus at 4 years old at the Centre régional des arts du cirque de Lomme. The numerous artists he sees there became great sources of inspiration. At 18 years old, he sets sail to the National Circus School of Beijing. He later completed his training at the National Circus School in Montréal.

JOHATHAN MORIN (QUÉBEC), CROSSED WHEEL:

Jonathan Morin took his first circus steps with Cirque du Soleil. Since then, he set foot on stages in some forty countries, performing more than 3,400 times. In 2005, he created an apparatus which only he uses: the crossed wheel. This innovation got him many honours at the greatest festivals in the world. At 40 years old, he is at the top of his art.

NICOLE HEASLEWOOD (ENGLAND), FIRE HOOP:

This irresistible artist of British origin now calls Montréal home. She recently charmed international audiences with *Magma*, an act which took first place at a major fire competition in North America, Les Maîtres du Feu 2017. Characterized by her gracefulness and raw energy, Nicole Heaslewood blends a variety of choreographed artistic forms.

MATTHEW RICHARDSON (UNITED STATES), DREAMCATCHER WHEEL AND FLOOR PAINTING:

Born in Georgia, Matthew Richardson developed his passion for the circus after years of researching various disciplines. He professionally studies aerial arts in San Francisco before moving to Montréal to fully devote himself to Cyr Wheel training. He had the opportunity to perform solo for Cirque du Soleil's *Varekai*.

DUO TRANSCEND, MARY WOLFE AND TYCE NIELSEN (UNITED STATES), TRAPEZE:

Mary Wolfe and Tyce Nielsen get acquainted as high divers in a show. Mary has a background in musical theatre and dance, Tyce is trained in acrobatics and high diving. They become aerial partners and get married in 2011. They won the award for best overall performance and for public appreciation for their duo trapeze act at the Aerial Acrobatic Arts Festival.

ERDENESUVD GANBAATAR AND BUYANKHISHIG GANBAATAR (MONGOLIA), CONTORTION:

Contortionist sisters Erdenesuvd and Buyankhishig were born in Mongolia. Trained at the Mongolian State Circus, Erdenesuvd started performing at 12 years old everywhere in Mongolia, Japan, Russia, Portugal, Germany and Italia. Buyankhishig was never too far away, observing her older sister's movements. Witnessing her younger sister performing a backbend, Erdenesuvd was impressed with her unique skills and perception. Since then, they have been performing together and travelling around the globe.

SÉBASTIEN SOLDEVILA (FRANCE), 7 DOIGTS (QUÉBEC), MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Co-founder and co-artistic director of Les 7 Doigts, Sébastien Soldevila co-directed *Loft*, *La Vie*, *Séquence 8*, *Cuisine & Confessions* and *Le Murmure du coquelicot*, which he wrote. He is acrobatic trainer for most creations of the company as well as Montréal's National Circus School. He won numerous awards at the Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain. After leading Les 7 Doigts performances at the Vancouver Olympic Games (2010), he directed the first part of the opening ceremony at the Sochi Games (2014). In 2016, he directed a new version of Viennese operetta *The Circus Princess* in Moscow and, most recently, *Crystal*, first ice show by Cirque du Soleil.

EXTRA BONUS: TWO NATIONAL CIRCUS SCHOOL ARTISTS (QUÉBEC)!

BRIN SCHOELLKOPF (UNITED STATES), TIGHTWIRE (February 22 to 25):

Born in Vermont, Brin Schoellkopf is 14 years old when joining Circus Smirkus, and performs everywhere in New England and New York. Later, Brin develops his tightrope skills, both technical and artistic, at Montréal's National Circus School. Perceiving his discipline as a form of dance, he always pushes his feats and technical skills further.

MIZUKI SHINAGAWA (JAPAN), SILKS (March 1 to 4):

Having grown up in Tokyo, Mizuki Shinagawa starts practising rhythmic gymnastics at 12 years old. In 2012, while visiting a workshop in Tokyo, she falls in love with aerial silks. After three years of training in Japan, she devotes her time to aerial training and, in 2015, is admitted to the National Circus School in Montréal.

FERNAND RAINVILLE, STAGE DIRECTOR

Theatre figure and skillful director, Fernand Rainville made his mark directing more than a hundred theatre and variety shows such as bilingual production *Les Misérables* (1990-1991), *Les légendes fantastiques* (1998-2007) and *Saka*, equestrian show performed under a big top (2007-2009). Artistic director for Télé Québec's *Le plaisir croît avec l'usage* (2001-2003), he is given in 2006 the artistic direction and production of the Outgames opening show at the Montréal Olympic Stadium. With Cirque du Soleil, he co-produced the opening show for the XI FINA World Championships in Montréal in 2005, produced the Miami Super Bowl pre-game circus performance in 2007, and was creative director and producer for *Wintuk* at Madison Square Garden in New York. He also produced *Aqua*, the One Drop Foundation multimedia experience. During Guy Laliberté's trip to space in 2009, Fernand Rainville was content producer and artistic director for *Mission sociale et poétique*. Creative director for *Amaluna*, he worked with 45 Degrees on the circus show presented at Astana World's Fair in Kazakhstan in 2017.

COUPS DE CŒUR

Presented by NATIONAL Public Relations

FEBRUARY 22 TO MARCH 4, 2018, AS PART OF MONTRÉAL EN LUMIÈRE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 8 P.M.: TOHU FUNDRAISER*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 8 P.M.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2 P.M. AND 8 P.M.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2 P.M.

THURSDAY, MARCH 1ST, 8 P.M.: FOLLOWED BY A MEET-AND-GREET WITH THE AUDIENCE

FRIDAY, 2 MARCH, 8 P.M.

SATURDAY, 3 MARCH, 2 P.M. AND 8 P.M.

SUNDAY, 4 MARCH, 2 P.M.

Commentaire [MJC1]: C'est plutôt WITH THE ARTISTS

DETAILS AT TOHU.CA

TICKETS FOR COUPS DE CŒUR 2018 ARE ON SALE NOW:

TICKETS: BETWEEN \$15 AND \$48 • TICKETS FOR FEBRUARY 22 FUNDRAISER: \$95

ONLINE AT TOHU.CA ON SITE AT TOHU BOX OFFICE, 2345 JARRY STREET EAST, MONTRÉAL

BY PHONE AT 514 376-TOHU (8648) OR 1 888 376-TOHU (8648).

BOX OFFICE OPEN DAILY FROM NOON TO 5 P.M. BECOME A MORDU DE LA TOHU AND SAVE 25%.

* THE TOHU FUNDRAISER EVENING WILL BE HELD FEBRUARY 22, 2018

TOHU and its honorary committee invite the public to embrace the extraordinary in the name of generosity at a unique event!

A great way to contribute to a rich and active cultural offering in addition to supporting Saint-Michel's youth socio-professional integration program. **On the menu:** cocktail reception, Deutz champagne (courtesy of Air France), the opening of TOHU's **COUPS DE CŒUR 2018** and a party after the show. Various packages available.

For more information: MARIE-JOSÉ FISET: 514 686-5586 — MARIE-JOSE.FISET@TOHU.CA

LOCATED AT THE CENTRE OF THE CITÉ DES ARTS DU CIRQUE, TOHU IS A PLACE FOR DISSEMINATION, CREATION, EXPERIMENTATION AND CONVERGENCE BETWEEN CULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN NORTH AMERICA. TOHU CONTRIBUTES TO HELPING

MONTRÉAL BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL OF CIRCUS ARTS WHILE POSITIONING ITSELF AS AN EXAMPLE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CULTURE.

TOHU IS FINANCED IN PART BY THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC, THE CONSEIL DES ARTS ET DES LETTRES DU QUÉBEC, THE MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE ET DES COMMUNICATIONS DU QUÉBEC, THE CITY OF MONTRÉAL, THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, AND THE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE MONTRÉAL. TOHU CAN ALSO COUNT ON THE VALUABLE COLLABORATION OF MAJOR PARTNER CIRQUE DU SOLEIL, COMMITTED TO ITS COMMUNITY, AND THE OFFICIAL CARRIER AIR FRANCE. WE ALSO WANT TO THANK OUR ANNUAL PARTNERS: LA CAISSE DE DÉPÔT ET PLACEMENT DU QUÉBEC CASCADES, TD FRIENDS OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION, LE FONDS DE SOLIDARITÉ FTQ, ÉNERGIR AND KEURIG CANADA. THANKS ALSO TO OUR MEDIA AND PRIVILEGED PARTNERS: INFOPRESSE, LA PRESSE, TÉLÉ-QUÉBEC, BCF S.E.N.C.R.L., BRASSEUR DE MONTRÉAL, ESKA, UNIVINS AND SPIRITS.

-30-

Source: TOHU

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