

**nova**  
C O M P A N Y

# MEANWHILE

EXPERIENCES ON THE PASSAGE OF TIME





DOSSIER UPDATED 1.7.2024

## MEANWHILE

Meanwhile is a world that mirrors today's culture and makes merry with all the pointless ways people can spend their time. It is a mix of riveting and dramatic atmospheres that combine with minimalistic comedy through juggling, object manipulation, and visual theater.

The surrealistic and whimsical Meanwhile examines our experiences with the passage of time and how it's used. The modern world's absurd priorities gain new dimensions as the work praises things societally considered pointless. Two jugglers test the spectator's understanding and how our values might change simply by doing something we feel is unnecessary.

Duration: 60 minutes.

**Direction:** Olli Vuorinen

**Performers:** Merri Heikkilä, Onni Toivonen

**Costumes:** Jenni Räsänen

**Lighting design:** Teo Lanerva

**Sound design and live music:** Konsta Leinonen

**Scenography:** Jenni Räsänen, Olli Vuorinen

**Prop build:** Kalle Oja

**Production:** Nuua Company

**Support:** City of Helsinki, Arts Education Center, Kone Foundation, Culture house STOA, Näyttämö, Sirkus Faktori

## ARTISTIC RESEARCH

Meanwhile was created in collaboration with jugglers and movers Onni Toivonen, Merri Heikkilä, and director Olli Vuorinen as Nuua Company's pandemic special and its 5th creation.

Juggling has a 5000-year-old cultural history, existing worldwide in various cultural and spiritual contexts, from ancient Egypt to Polynesian islands. However, today a juggler seems to have a strangely different position and is unfortunately overlooked as merely a pastime activity and unimportant.

To embrace this history, we started playing with the idea of questioning our European cultural values and taking a closer look at what should be considered societally important. By comparing daily human activities, our values, and how we use our time, we grew closer to appreciating all things considered unimportant and what happens within us when we engage in them.

We wanted to provide our audience with an outlet for these current thoughts and concerns about the state of our values, the daily rat race, and how we seem to spend our time through the form of a performance.

During the creation, we worked with various everyday objects that could create an aesthetic suited to the theme. Through the magnifying glass of a juggler's perception, we looked for objects and choreographies that unfold absurd yet relatable content that can fill the premises.

We see juggling as an art form very close to puppetry, like an abstract form. In our work, the symbolism of everyday objects comes together with the juggler's approach to manipulation, creating ambiguous worlds where precise and rhythmic manipulation in a theatrical context produces disarming, suspenseful, entertaining, and thought-provoking experiences

-Olli Vuorinen





## NUUA COMPANY

Founded in 2013, Nuua Company is a Finnish new-generation contemporary circus and visual theater group that redeemed its place in the international field of contemporary circus with its experimental works.

On its ten-year journey, Nuua Company has been selected for a Circus next program. Nuua's award-winning performances have received notable mentions from critics and books about the contemporary circus, and the performances have been touring in 20 countries.

*By freely mixing different performing arts, we look for an approach based on artistic versatility.*

Nuua renews juggling as object theater, concepts connecting body and object movements and explores circus techniques as tools of expression. Depending on the viewer's personal experiences, our multilayered performances open up to everyone differently. We are awakening the emotions, imagination, and sensitivity into an empowered state more receptive to new dreamlike experiences.

# CREATIVE TEAM

## **OLLI VUORINEN - DIRECTOR**

Circus performer, director, and founder of Nuua company graduated from a French circus school, Academie-Fratellini, in 2011. Vuorinen did two award-winning performances at the Cirque de Demain Festival, and his company was selected in 2012 for an EU-funded Circus Next project. Alongside Nuua company, Vuorinen has worked with circus and physical theatre companies like Les Objets Volants, Kallo Collective, Racehorse company, Gandini juggling, and l'Expedition. Olli Vuorinen is a very productive Finnish contemporary circus artist. In past years, he has been performing in over 20 different countries. Vuorinen is known for his personal approach to performing, innovative juggling techniques, and varied object theatre skills.

## **ONNI TOIVONEN - PERFORMER**

Graduating from Stockholm University of the Arts in 2016, his original and energetic juggling has since been seen on stages in 16 different countries. Cirque de Demain special jury award winner 2017. Toivonen has worked with contemporary circus companies Cirko Aereo, Sirkum Polaris, and Nuua Company. He created and performed his first dramatic work, Amalgam in 2019. Onni is a creative artist who seamlessly combines juggling and contemporary dance.

## **MERRI HEIKKILÄ - PERFORMER**

In 2013, he decided to pursue a professional career and was admitted to the circus department of Codarts University in Rotterdam, Netherlands, where he graduated in June 2017. Combining movement and acrobatics with juggling, Merri seeks to create performances that offer a unique experience for the audience, aside from working with Nuua company and Sirkum Polaris. Merri is also working on another show, "3 Men from the North," with a new circus company, the Nordic Council.

## **TEO LANERVA - LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Teo Lanerva is a freelance lighting and video designer (MA, Theatrical Arts) based in Helsinki, Finland. He works with contemporary performances, concerts, and events ranging from small underground clubs to festivals. He has been granted a SÄDE-award, and his designs have been performed in more than ten countries. Lanerva's recent works include Nuua's Vaarna at



Cirko in 2021, choreographer Mikko Niemistö's solo Odd Meters at Zodiak in 2019, opera FLASH FLASH composed by Juhani Nuorvala at Musica Nova Festival 2019, and light art piece Liquid Line at Lux Helsinki 2019.

## **KONSTA LEINONEN - SOUND DESIGNER**

Finnish musician Konsta Leinonen fuses his experience working with film, recording studios, and multiple performative arts to find new ways to bring his perception of (post-)modern living into sound and music. Leinonen merges live instrumentation with highly dynamic hands-on electronics and has a fascination for new technological frontiers via generative AI music and multimedia. Currently working mainly in the contemporary circus, Leinonen enjoys working closely with artists to reach a consistent, shared artistic vision.

## **JENNI RÄSÄNEN - COSTUME DESIGNER**

Jenni Räsänen is a Bachelor of Art and Design graduate from Aalto University, majoring in Costume Design. She is currently completing her studies in a master's degree program. Jenni has been involved in several productions of the Department of Film, Television, and Scenography and the Theater Academy as a Scenographer. Räsänen is interested in the agency of the costume and the interaction between the costume, the body, and the space. Her designer identity is based on Post humanist thinking and she often finds her inspiration from fine arts.

# PERFORMANCE & TECHNICAL DETAILS

## STAGE

Theatre space with no curtains  
theatrical conditions are required and a  
complete black-out must be possible.

**AUDIENCE CAPACITY:** 200-800

**SET UP TIME: 16H** | PLAN A IN TECH RIDER

**SET UP TIME: 8H** | PLAN B IN TECH RIDER  
(requires extra technician)

**MINIMUM SET DOWN TIME:** 2H

**FOR ALL AGES:** +10

## ON TOUR: 4-5 PEOPLE

Two performers,  
Two technicians (light & sound)  
One producer / +1 extra technician for plan  
B set up times)

## PREFERRED STAGE DIMENSIONS:

- Width: 10m + 1m for lights / props on each side = 12 from wall to wall
- Depth: 10m + 1m for lights / props behind = 11m
- Height: 6m of free height, 6.5m to grid/pipes

## MINIMUM STAGE DIMENSIONS:

- Width: 8m + 0.5m for lights / props on each side = 9 from wall to wall
- Depth: 7m + 1m for lights / props behind = 8m
- Height: 5.5m of free height, 6m to grid/pipes

## SET & CARGO:

We travel by VAN, using the FERRY transport:

Helsinki - Travemunde / Tallinn / Stockholm  
for economic and sustainable touring

 60 MIN

 ALL AUDIENCE

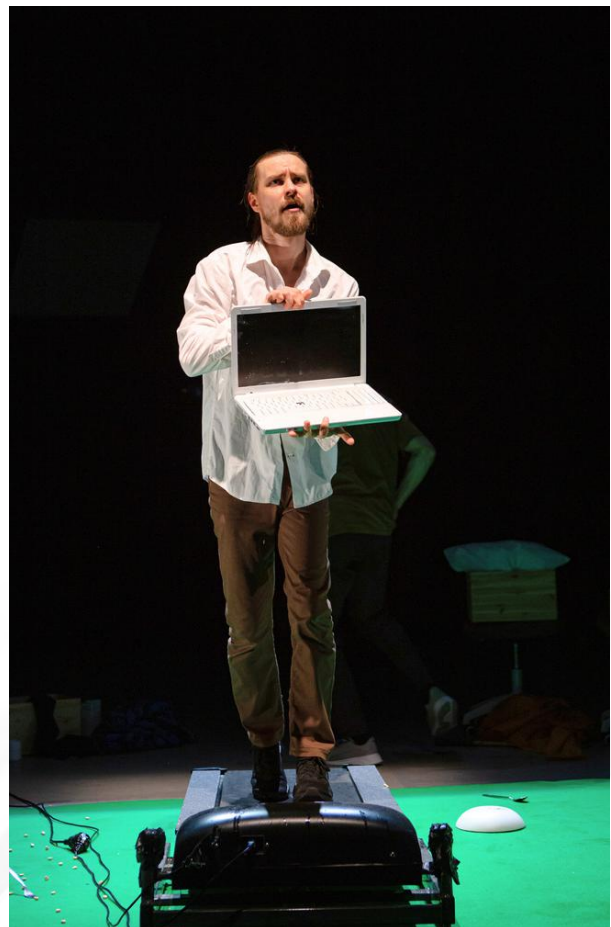
 INDOOR

 WITHOUT WORDS

 16H

 W 9M | D 8M | H 5.5M

 200-800



**DETAILS AND LIGHT PLOT, PLEASE  
CHECK TECHNICAL RIDER**



**NUUA**

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BOOKING / PRODUCTION

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GENERAL INQUIRIES

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