

2023 London International Mime Festival  
in association with The Place presents

**GANDINI JUGGLING** (UK)

# THE GAMES WE PLAY

A LECTURE PERFORMANCE

World Premiere

**THE PLACE**

**Fri 20 - Sat 21 Jan**

Sat 21 Jan: After-show discussion led by  
Emma Lister, dancer/choreographer,  
BSL interpreted by Jeni Draper.

Running time approx. 50 mins,  
no interval

Age guidance: 14+  
(contains partial nudity)

*The Games We Play* is a new piece  
by the emblematic contemporary  
circus company Gandini Juggling,  
a pioneering duo that created the  
organisation in a bedsit in West  
Hampstead in 1992, to explore the  
joyous and complex worlds of juggling  
and choreography.

Sean and Kati invite you to enter their  
world of making and choreographing  
juggling in a lecture that pretends to be  
a show. Or is it a show that pretends  
to be a lecture? It is an animated  
self-portrait of the company and their  
work, presented by a duo who have  
unparalleled alchemy on and off stage.

*The Games We Play* embarks on a  
journey through the idea of juggling.

Directed & performed by:  
Sean Gandini & Kati Ylä-Hokkala

Lighting design: Guy Hoare

Sound design: Sakari Männistö

Dramaturg: Emma Lister

Clay balls made by Clare Day

Images: Camilla Greenwell

The piece features extracts from  
*nEither Either both*, choreographed  
by Gill Clarke, and *Stop Breaking my  
Balls* J-P Zaccarini & Gill Clarke

Commissioned by  
London International Mime Festival  
With the support of  
Watermans Arts Centre

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Christina Elliot & the team at  
The Place.



photo: Camilla Greenwell

## GANDINI JUGGLING

Formed in 1992 by world-renowned  
jugglers Sean Gandini and Kati Ylä-  
Hokkala, Gandini Juggling continues  
to be at the vanguard of contemporary  
circus, reinventing and reinvigorating  
juggling for the 21st Century.

Gandini Juggling celebrates juggling  
in all its facets, exploring not just what  
juggling is, but what juggling can be.  
Currently an ever-evolving ensemble  
made up of a virtuosic core group  
of jugglers, they regularly expand to  
include up to 20 performers for  
specially commissioned events and  
performances. Ferociously prolific,  
they are constantly creating new  
works, which range from radical art/  
juggling fusions to accessible theatrical  
performances, from choreographic  
studies to commercially commissioned  
routines.

Since their inception the Gandinis  
have performed over 6,000 shows in  
50 countries. They continue to perform  
at many of the most prestigious  
festivals and venues throughout  
the world. These venues range  
from Contemporary art museums in  
France to Opera houses in Germany,  
from theatres in Lebanon to tents  
in Argentina. Closer to home the  
Gandinis can be seen performing at  
the UK's major outdoor festivals and  
theatre houses including London's  
Royal Opera House, English National  
Opera, The Royal National Theatre and  
Sadler's Wells.



## London International Mime Festival

[mimelondon.com](http://mimelondon.com)

Directors:

**Helen Lannaghan & Joseph Seelig**

Founded in 1977, London International  
Mime Festival (LIMF) promotes  
contemporary visual theatre. Its  
productions have been nominated for  
and won Olivier Awards and, in 2017,  
the festival was honoured with the  
Empty Space Peter Brook Special  
Achievement Award for its work over  
four decades.

Technical Manager:

**Bill Deverson**

Artists' Manager:

**Silvia Maroino**

Press:

**Anna Arthur**

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**Richard Fitzmaurice & Clare Nugent**

[mobiusedustries.com](http://mobiusedustries.com)

LIMF Advisory Board:

**Jeni Draper, Kane Husbands, Alison  
King (Chair), Andy Lavender**

London International Mime Festival is an  
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Organisation.

THANK YOU

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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

In creating their work Gandini Juggling collaborated with a wide range of cultural leaders, initially teaming up with the pioneering and influential dance artist and choreographer Gill Clarke. The Gandini's continue to be influenced by a range of disciplines, which include amongst others, composers, ballet choreographers, fashion designers, computer programmers, sound designers, set makers and mathematicians. They have spent several seasons working with orchestras, choreographing juggling patterns to a wide range of classical compositions and have had music specially composed for them by leading composers Tom Johnson, Nimrod Borenstein, Gabriel Prokofiev and Caroline Shaw.

In addition to performing, Gandini Juggling is very much in demand at leading circus schools. Teaching workshops, creating performances and supporting the next generation of circus artists. Alongside this, Gandini publishes books and delivers virtual classes to support the wider understanding of the beautiful possibilities of juggling, for jugglers and non-jugglers alike. The Gandini's have an insatiable thirst for juggling pieces and a fiery desire to collaborate, communicate and provoke. They aim to reposition juggling as a versatile, engaging and malleable art form for our times.

#### **Gandini Juggling at LIMF**

1994 *nEither Either boTH*  
Battersea Arts Centre

2004 *Duet & Quartet*  
Purcell Room, Southbank Centre

2008 *Downfall*  
Clare Studio, Royal Opera House

2012 *Smashed* Royal Opera House  
Linbury Studio Theatre

2013 *Smashed* Royal Opera House  
Linbury Studio Theatre

2015 *4x4 Ephemeral Architectures*  
Royal Opera House Linbury Studio  
Theatre

2017 *Smashed: Special Edition* for LIMF's  
40th Anniversary, Peacock Theatre

2018 *Sigma* Lilian Baylis Studio, Sadler's  
Wells

2019 *Spring* Sadler's Wells Theatre

2022 *Life: A love letter to Merce  
Cunningham* Lilian Baylis Studio, Sadler's  
Wells

2023 *The Games We Play* The Place



#### **Sean Gandini**

As a child growing up in Havana, Sean was fascinated by Magic and Mathematics. In the 1980s, he was a regular performer in London's Covent Garden and toured with various theatre groups. Since then, Sean has spent the last 25 years researching and contributing to all aspects of juggling; he is a prolific creator, and his work also extends to choreography and directing. Throughout his career he has collaborated with many other acclaimed artists, including pioneering American musician Tom Johnson and the influential British choreographer Gill Clarke.

With Gandini Juggling, co-founded with Kati Ylä-Hokkala in 1992, Sean continues to perform at many of the most prestigious festivals and venues throughout the world, reinventing, and reinvigorating juggling for the 21st Century. In 2018, Sean directed *Spring* in collaboration with choreographer Alexander Whitley. In 2016 he worked as choreographer on Philip Glass opera *Akhmaten*, for the English National Opera. *Akhmaten* won Olivier Award for Best New Opera Production in 2017 and has been presented at The Metropolitan Opera in New York in 2019 and 2022.



#### **Kati Ylä-Hokkala**

Kati is one of her generation's iconic jugglers. As a co-founder of Gandini Juggling she has built a reputation not only as a highly-skilled technical juggler but is also renowned as one of the leading innovators in dance-juggling.

Kati's professional career began in the 1980s, performing with the influential Ra-Ra Zoo. In 1991, with Sean, she co-founded Gandini Juggling. Since then she has been instrumental in the company's experiments into the possibilities of juggling, including working to create unique 'two-person sharing' juggling patterns.

A former rhythmic gymnast, Kati's distinctive ability to combine movement with extremely complex coordination is second-to-none. In this she has crafted an intimate and extensive knowledge of the relationship between dance and juggling. Knowledge that has ensured that Gandini Juggling's work is always of the highest technical standard. Kati's own performances are always accompanied by a unique calm precision, a precision that comes from decades of throwing whilst standing on one leg. Kati has used this same calm precision to steer Gandini Juggling for the past 25 years.

Kati has performed in all of Gandini Juggling's works since 1991, performing in over 2,500 shows throughout the world – in art galleries and palaces, in town squares and in stadiums, in intimate theatres and on the stages of some of the world's most iconic venues. In recent years Kati has co-directed many of the company's pieces.