

FILIP BARANKIEWICZ

Artistic Director of the Czech National Ballet

## The Czech National Ballet will present a premiere of Bigonzetti's work *Kafka: The Trial* on June 13, 2019

The third premiere of the Czech National Ballet in the season 2018/2019 is a modern production created by a renowned Italian choreographer Mauro Bigonzetti. He draw inspiration from the famous novel *The Trial* (Proces) that Franz Kafka wrote in 1914. Fascinated by the irresistible language of the novel, its traumatizing plot and still valid message as well as by the visual appeal of the Orson Welles film, Bigonzetti entered the dark world of Josef K. We will present a work of art that reminds us of the personality of Franz Kafka but also resonates with current political situation in the world.



Photo: Anna Rasmussen

The German-speaking Bohemian Jewish writer Franz Kafka is closely connected with Prague. Genius loci of the Old Town where he spent a great part of his life had a crucial impact on his work. His letters, diaries, short stories and existential novels belong to the most influential artworks of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Franz felt estranged from his family, his health was poor, he was tortured by doubts and lack of self-esteem. His novels reflect this inner fight and open up profound existential questions. His characters find themselves in absurd situations they cannot control, become victims hopelessly searching for their true self and sense of security.

Národní divadlo

Ostrovní 1, 112 30 Praha 1, Česká republika, [www.narodni-divadlo.cz](http://www.narodni-divadlo.cz)  
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*Kafka's Trial is monstrous. Nothing is normal there, nothing is easy. We can concentrate on the history of the origin of the novel, the style of writing, the plot or meaning – it always leads to the same conclusion: There is darkness everywhere, no matter where you look.*

(Reiner Stach)

Josef K. is also a victim. He is arrested but is not present at his own trial, he has no idea what the charges are about, the dark game devours him and he cannot extricate himself.

In an atmosphere of madness and horror where light alternates with darkness the dancers express the agony of characters thrown in a sheer nightmare symbolizing a downfall of a man destroyed by regulations he cannot understand, rules he cannot fight.

The famous Italian choreographer Mauro Bigonzetti took the novel (one of the three novels of Franz Kafka concerned with “the tragedy of loneliness”) and transformed it into a dance performance. Would you like to feel the mystery? Come to The Estates Theatre.

*The character of Josef K. touched me, it talks about a man feeling lonely in the world. I saw and felt the body of this sad, alienated human being. This is what Kafka's work is about – loneliness. Not simple detachment but insurmountable inner estrangement. Doubt, superficiality, misunderstanding. Those are the themes he offers.*

(Mauro Bigonzetti)

#### **Mauro Bigonzetti**

He was born in Rome where he studied Opera academy. After finishing his studies he joined the Rome Opera Ballet where he spent ten years. From the season 1982/1983 he was a member of Compagnia Aterballetto, he appeared in all the important ballets and cooperated with famous choreographers such as Alvin Ailey, Glen Tetley, William Forsythe or Jennifer Muller. In 1990 he created his first choreography *Sei in movimento* accompanied by music of J. S. Bach. It was first presented at Teatro Sociale in Grassano, Italy. Bigonzetti then left Aterballetto and became a freelance artist. He collaborated with Balletto di Toscana, English National Ballet, Ballet National Marseille, Stuttgarter Ballett, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Dresden, Ballet Teatro Argentino, Balè da Cidade de São Paulo, Ballet Gulbenkian, Ankara State Ballet and Ballet Capitole Toulouse. He created choreographies for La Scala, Opera Rome, Arena Verona or Teatro San Carlo Naples.

From 1997 to 2007 he was artistic director of Compagnia Aterballetto and from 2016 to 2017 of La Scala Ballet.

His most significant works are *Pression, Cantata, Rossini Cards, Vespro, Les Noces, Wam, Romeo & Juliet, InCanto, Certe Notti, Le Sacre, Festa Barocca, In Vento, Oltremare, Luce Nascosta, Le Quattro Stagioni, Caravaggio, Il Concertone, La Piaf, Der Prozess, Pietra Viva, Vertigo, Alice* and others.

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***Kafka: The Trial (Kafka: Proces)***

Choreography: Mauro Bigonzetti

Music: Antonio Bononcini, Dietrich Buxtehude, Henryk Górecki, Carlo Gesualdo, Tarquinio Merula, Claudio Monteverdi, Modest Mussorgsky

Set and Light Design: Carlo Cerri

Costume Design: Mauro Bigonzetti

Projection: OOPStudio

**Czech Premieres: June 13 & 14, 2019**

**The Estates Theatre**

Further performances: June 16 and 18, July 1 and 2, 2019

**Hats for KAFKA: The Trial has been donated by TONAK a.s., a traditional hat manufacturer for 220 years.**

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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<http://www.facebook.com/ndbalet>

[www.narodni-divadlo.cz](http://www.narodni-divadlo.cz)



## **IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF FRANZ KAFKA**

We invite you to a guided tour that will put you in context and whet your appetite for attending the subsequent performance. We will take a walk through the places in Prague that inspired Kafka, the nooks and crannies of the Old Jewish Town, where the world-renowned author lived and wrote his books. Moreover, we will talk about the current production, its creators and more. The tour is free of charge, including in the price of your ticket.

**14 and 18 June, 1 and 2 July 2019: 5.30 – 6.30 pm**

**16 June: 12.30 – 1.30 pm, or 5.30 – 6.30 pm**

**The guided tour will start in front of the Estates Theatre.**

Reservations at: [balet@narodni-divadlo.cz](mailto:balet@narodni-divadlo.cz) or [k.hanackova@narodni-divadlo.cz](mailto:k.hanackova@narodni-divadlo.cz)

<https://www.narodni-divadlo.cz/cs/balet/bnb>



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