



Creative Dossier

April 2021

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Lifted: An overview

Lifted is a collection of funny, poetic and surprising moments which explore in different ways what it means when one body is carried by another. Or when one person carries two people. Or when a person doesn't want to be carried. Or when three people find the perfect balance.

The constant presence of physical contact and trust in *Lifted* is even more powerful post-pandemic. Our human need for touch, as well as our complex relationship to the safety of and consent to physical contact, are both addressed in playful and serious ways.



Creative Team

Devised and performed by Silvia Fratelli, Jaide Annalise and Freya Stokka.

Developed in collaboration with Arthur Bernard Bazin (HURyCAN), Gary Clarke and Yi-Chun Liu (Peeping Tom).

Director | Lina Johansson

Composer | Ted Barnes

Costume Designer | Bettina John

Partners and Support

Lifted is supported by Without Walls and Arts Council England, and commissioned by Stockton International Riverside Festival.

About Mimbre



Mimbre create nuanced, breathtaking and highly-skilled acrobatic theatre. We use movement, high physicality and circus innovatively as a physical language to illuminate human connections and promote a positive image of women. With an artistic voice that is physical and accessible, Mimbre build relationships with broad, non-traditional audiences and participants, creating unexpected moments in unusual spaces and reclaiming some beauty within the urban environment.

Formed in 1999 and female-led, the creative and performance pedigree of Mimbre's Artistic Directors Lina Johansson and Silvia Fratelli have earned the company a notable reputation; it has received NPO/Core funding from Arts Council England since 2006 in recognition of the company's innovative approach and contribution to excellence within the performing arts. Mimbre's previous performances *Sprung*, *Trip-tic*, *The Bridge*, *Until Now*, *Bench*, *If I could I would* and *The Exploded Circus* have toured widely and been performed across four continents.

Mimbre's Artistic Directors have worked with organisations such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, The Roundhouse, National Theatre Wales, the Royal Opera House and English National Opera. In 2019, Mimbre was commissioned by Dior to choreograph 18 acrobats to animate the runway for their Spring-Summer 2019 Haute Couture show at Paris Fashion Week. In 2020, Mimbre was commissioned by BBC Arts to create *The Sofa Dance* – a short film created with 30 acrobats during the Covid lockdown.

Every year Mimbre reach 20,000-30,000 people through shows, youth programmes and professional development training.

"Women stood on other women's shoulders. They strode along the walkways, held high and visible from every angle, breaking gender barriers and breaking hearts with the symbolism of so much female support: She ain't heavy—she's my sister. . ."

Sarah Mower, Vogue on *Dream Parade* with Dior

About *Lifted*

Lifted is a collection of funny, poetic and surprising moments, which explore in different ways what it means when one body is carried by another. Or when one person carries two people. Or when a person doesn't want to be carried. Or when three people find the perfect balance.

Teaming up with three guest choreographers - Yi-Chun Liu from Peeping Tom, HURyCAN and Gary Clarke - this captivating performance experiments with new approaches to Mimbre's trademark acrobatics. *Lifted* mixes dance, theatre and circus to celebrate the expressions and impressions that appear when three strong women move, lift and balance each other.

Inadvertently, post-pandemic, *Lifted* is also a performance dealing with themes around human touch – our need for it – but also the importance of consent around how it is approached. Incorporating material from *To Untouch* – our physically distanced show in 2020 – we acknowledge the emotional weight and importance that physical choreographies carry, for the performers and audiences alike. It becomes a celebration of hope, trust, laughter and the beauty that humans can achieve together.

Following the success of the national tours of *The Exploded Circus* and *If I could I would*, as well as a number of exciting collaborations, including the Dior Haute Couture Show at Paris Fashion Week, *Lifted* takes Mimbre back to its roots, creating world-famous, nuanced and breath-taking outdoor theatre.

*“A beautiful display of interplay between bodies and personalities showcasing what the human body is able to do, and how working together you can achieve seemingly impossible tasks.
A wonderful display of female strength!”*

Audience feedback



About *To Untouch*

In the current times of uncertainty we have built in additional resilience to make sure that the show can go on...

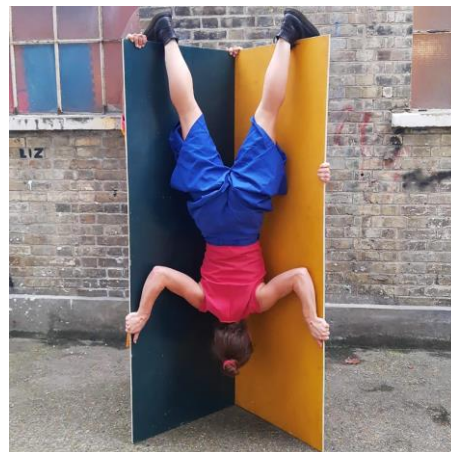
So we can still tour a production if circumstances change, we are offering *To Untouch*, a low-touch or no-touch performance created in 2020, as an alternative to *Lifted* in case of national or regional restrictions around physical proximity.

We also have an understudy programme for both productions, working with two performers who can step in should the need arise.

A creative response to current times, *To Untouch* is a live performance exploring new and different ways of keeping physical connections and complicity between each other, when the impulse of direct physical touch has to be restrained.

To Untouch is a live performance originally created specifically for Greenwich+Docklands Festival in September 2020 in response to the Covid-19 social distancing restrictions.

This show has been created in direct opposition to Mimbre's usual ways of working; instead of exploring what happens when one body is carried by another, these virtuosic acrobats are now examining what happens when they are not so reliant on physical contact, instead mimicking the very idea of 'touch' whilst remaining untouched.



Directors Statement



“Over the last few years, Mimbre has expanded the range and style of our work through a host of circus productions and interesting collaborations, ranging from Shakespeare to opera to haute couture fashion. For *Lifted* we wanted to go back to our roots: outdoor acrobatic performances, performed by three women. We also wanted to re-examine the origins of Mimbre's style by incorporating fresh movement ideas into our own unique cannon.

“We made a wishlist of people we would be most inspired to collaborate with, and we were over the moon that our top three choices wanted to work with us. We spent a week each with Yi-Chun Liu (Peeping Tom), Arthur Bernard Bazin (HURyCAN) and Gary Clarke, all bringing their different

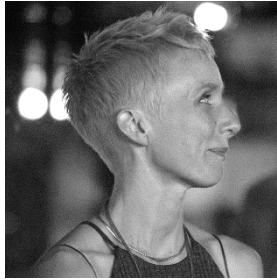
approaches, creative eyes and fantastic energies to look at Mimbre's physicality from a different point of view. Giving them *carte blanche* to plan the week with play and discovery in mind, and no pressure for a finished product, we were left with laughter, bruises, an enormous amount of new physical material and a notebook bursting with more ideas than we could squeeze into this show. Choosing our favourites, the performers, Silvia Fratelli (my joint Artistic Director), Freya Stokka, Rosy Roberts (whose role is taken over this year by Jaide Annalise) and I then spent the next part of the creation pursuing, developing and polishing the seven choreographies which form the show *Lifted*.

“The different influences have helped to shape a performance full of surprises, moments of beauty and a broad range of energies. Although all the choreographies are purely physical, stories have grown from within, about friendships, consent, human connections and trust. The show also evokes plenty of laughter about the absurd situations we end up in when bodies get crammed together close. Mimbre's long term collaborator Ted Barnes has composed a beautifully quirky original score and Bettina John's colourful costume design makes the acrobats pop out even in the busiest of urban settings.

“The Covid-19 pandemic put a pause on our live performances in 2020, apart from a couple of chances to create physically distanced responses to the situation: *To Untouch* and *In The Park*. This period where touch and physical proximity equalled danger and risk, highlighted even more to us how important physical touch and trust is, both for our physical work as well as for our mental wellbeing. Re-rehearsing *Lifted* for touring in 2021, we are incorporating some of our contradictory reflections from *To Untouch*, giving even more significance to the physical complicity that runs through the performance and the choreographies.”

Lina Johansson, 2021

Creative Team



Lina Johansson | Director

Lina founded Mimbre together with Silvia Fratelli and Emma Norin in 1999. Her directing and choreography credits include: *Dream Parade* (Mimbre/Dior, Paris Fashion Week), *Fierce Sisters* (Mimbre/Shakespeare Birthplace Trust), *The Exploded Circus* (Mimbre, UK Tour), *Aida* (ENO), *Wondrous Strange* (Mimbre/RSC), *City of The Unexpected* (National Theatre Wales/Wales Millennium Centre) and *Orfeo* (National Opera House/Roundhouse).



Ted Barnes | Composer

The multi-instrumentalist, composer and performer best known for his work with Beth Orton has also formed the band Clayhill and released three solo albums. Ted now writes for film, theatre, circus, dance, art installations, music libraries, whilst still continuing to work with songwriters.



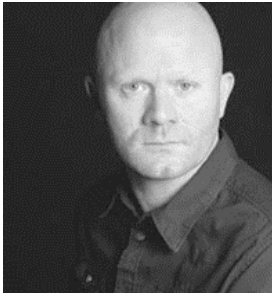
Bettina John | Costume Designer

Bettina John is a freelance designer and artist active in Germany and Great Britain. She works regularly with and for other artists, musicians, choreographers and dancers, theatre makers and photographers. She has worked with various choreographers and companies. Whilst being most active in contemporary dance she also designs regularly for musicals and opera.



Yi-Chun Liu | Guest Choreographer

Originally from Taiwan, Yi-chun Liu finished her BFA in Dance from Taipei National University of the Arts and danced with Cloud Gate Dance Theater of Taiwan internationally. In 2009, she moved to Europe to work with Balletto Teatro di Torino, anoukvandijk dc, Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, and Ann Van den Broek WArD/waRD. Currently she is a member of **Peeping Tom** in Brussels, Belgium, and working as a teacher internationally.



Gary Clarke | Guest Choreographer

Winner of a UK Theatre Award, A Critics Circle National Dance Award, The Herald Angel Award and the 1998 Brian Glover Memorial Award, Gary Clarke is currently regarded as one of the UK's leading independent contemporary dance artists. Born in South Yorkshire, Gary Clarke trained at The Electric Theatre Studios and The Northern School of Contemporary Dance where he graduated in 2001 with a Bachelor of Performing Arts Dance Degree.



Arthur Bernard Bazin | Guest Choreographer

Arthur's beginnings were in drama in the outskirts of Paris, coached by Frederic Batiste. He then combined his drama background with visual arts in the University of Paris 1, and graduated with a General University Diploma in Plastics Arts (DUG). In 2010, he began research with Candelaria Antelo, and in 2013, they built their own company **HURyCAN**.



Silvia Fratelli | Performer

After graduating from the National Centre for Circus Arts (NCCA) in 1998, Silvia founded Mimbres alongside Lina Johansson and Emma Norin. Her performance credits include: *Dream Parade* (Mimbres/Dior), *Ruby Robinson* (Sky Arts), *Aida* (ENO), *The Party* (Nearly There Yet), *Wondrous Strange* (Mimbres/RSC) and *If I could I would* (Mimbres). She speaks Italian, English, Spanish and French.



Jaide Annalise | Performer

Jaide Annalise is a London based Circus Artist specialising in Cyr wheel and Acrobatics. Having competed in Artistic Gymnastics for 11 years, Jaide went on to train at The National Centre for Circus Arts. After graduating in 2019, Jaide became a Resident Artist at the Roundhouse in Camden. Jaide likes to bring a little bit of herself to every piece she creates - contemporary circus with an urban edge.



Freya Stokka | Performer

Freya Stokka is an acrobat and physical performer. She is a Bristol based Norwegian, trained at Circomedia. Freya has been doing circus since her early teens, but it was only upon finishing her BA in Nursing that she decided to take the leap into professional performing. She is an acrobatic base, specialising in group acrobatics. Freya has worked with companies such as Cirque Bijou and Citrus Arts.

Summary Technical Information



Set

- The set of *Lifted* is very simple with a floor cloth laid over mats. The set can be flown, packed within 3 normal hold luggage bags, with the festival providing 3 normal chairs and a small table for the performance.

Performance Area

- Space required is 8m width, 6m depth, 5m height clearance (without trees, branches, roof, etc.).
- Ground needs to be very even and smooth, ideally on pavement/tarmac or low level stage. Grass possible if well drained and flat.
- The show is designed for an audience in a semi-circle and requires a backdrop (a wall, a bush, a tree etc).

Sound

- Festival/organiser to provide a minimum 2k sound system with audio mini-jack connection.

Lighting

- For performances at or after dusk please contact the company for a basic lighting specification.

Technical Staff

Festival/organiser to provide:

- 1 sound technician to set up sound system, sound-check and be present during the show (cues are operated by the performers from within the show)
- 1 crew member to help with set-up and get out.
- 1 event staff to supervise set while performers get into costume/warm up
- 2 stewards during performance times (15 min before to 15 min after show).

Set-up and Get-out

- Set up: 15 minutes. We need access to performance site earlier than this before the first show.
- Get out: 15 minutes

Dressing Rooms

- We require one dressing room with mirrors, running water and decent toilets.

Warm Up Area

- Ideally performers will warm up at the performance space. If this is not possible, the performers need an indoor space big enough for warm-up and safety tests (3m x 4m x 5m).

Audience Seating

- We recommend that the organiser provides benches or chairs for some of the audience, to allow for a mid-level of audience (with people sitting on floor in front and standing behind). This also makes it accessible to disabled audience members or people unable to stand for the duration.
- Capacity no seats: 300 – 400
- Capacity with seats: up to 600

Inclement Weather

- Due to performer health and safety, inclement weather may prevent the show going ahead.
- Mimbres will strive to perform whenever possible, but reserve the right to cancel after conversations with organisers.

Audience Feedback

“Immensely powerful!!! So moving, energetic, playful with such depth. Best thing I've seen in a long time!”

“...the choreography, chemistry and cooperation between the 3 performers was mesmerising [...] so compelling it nearly brought me to tears.”

“Absolutely mesmerising! Honestly, one of the best pieces of street theatre I've seen. Felt very emotional watching it too.”

“Phenomenal demonstration of the power and gentleness of the human body!”

“Beautiful, tender and mesmerising - I was very moved.”



“Wonderful show. I love how multicultural you all are in this Brexit age - beautiful, mystical, ethereal.”

“I loved it. The whole show was superb! A true reflection of art, talent and partnership!!!”

“A beautiful display of interplay between bodies and personalities showcasing what the human body is able to do, and how working together you can achieve seemingly impossible tasks. A wonderful display of female strength!”

“So much texture and beauty”

“It made me cry”

“Amazing strength, agility and beauty – truly stunning”

“One of the most beautiful performance I have ever seen”

“Breath-taking! Inspiring women, love the comedy and the drama. Outstanding!”

“Beautiful, funny, inspiring”

“The clarity with which the women sought each other’s permission to physically engage and the support they gave one another particularly struck a note with me.”

Additional Activities

Mimbre are able to offer workshops in acrobatics, acrobalance, movement or performance skills for both young people and adults alongside the production of *Lifted*.

We could deliver these as either:

- Two-hour taster drop-in workshop for any ages
- One-day masterclass workshop for professional & aspiring performers or students
- Five days' residency with a small performance at the end by the participants

The workshops could be run at schools, youth clubs, theatres or with community partners. Mimbre has run a youth programme in London since 2008 and we are happy to share our experience in how to best set up workshops and attract participants.

Costs for these workshops would be in addition to the performance costs (please request quotes if interested) and we are happy to advice on format and content we think might be best suited for your set-up.



Marketing



All marketing materials for *Lifted* can be found in our Dropbox here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ev68v0wsncycbdk/AADQVo3kxDiMxQKZH9IUM1jCa?dl=0>

This includes rehearsal images, promotional images, artwork, trailer and copy as well as regular updates of production images from our 2019 tour.

The trailer for *Lifted* can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/nnPcD0YdRK4>.

Tour Summer 2019 and 2020

Due to the pandemic, our tour for **2020** was postponed, but we had a chance to create adapted performances at these festivals:

Taliesin Arts Centre's Dance Days 2020, Wales

Lifted, 25 July 2020

<https://www.taliesinartscentre.co.uk/en/performances?id=58693>

Newham Unlocked Online Festival, UK

In the Park, 16 August 2020

<https://www.newhamunlockedfestival.org/artists/mimbre-in-the-park/>

Greenwich+Docklands International Festival, UK

To Untouch, 12 September 2020

<https://festival.org/whats-on/gdif-oyd-eltham/>



2019

Bath Fringe Festival, UK

2 June 2019

<https://www.bathfringe.co.uk/>

Internationale Stra entheater Festival Holzminden, Germany

7 – 8 June 2019

<https://www.holzminden.de/1720.html>



Greenwich+Docklands International Festival, UK

22 – 23 June 2019

<https://festival.org/whats-on/lifted/>

Imagine Watford, UK

29 – 30 June 2019

<http://www.imagnewatford.co.uk/>

Ana Desetnica Festival, Ljubljana, Slovenia

3-7 July 2019

<https://www.anamonro.si/ana-desetnica-2019/>

Mouth of the Tyne Festival, UK

13 – 14 July 2019

<http://mouthofthetynefestival.com/>



Worthing Theatres, UK

20 July 2019

<https://worthingtheatres.co.uk/show/lifted/>

Stockton International Riverside Festival, UK

2 – 3 August 2019

<https://sirf.co.uk/>

Live and Creative Hatfield, UK

14 August 2019

<https://www.welhat.gov.uk/article/9306/Live-and-Creative?eventid=0943-1501-0924-7327>

Just So Festival, UK

17 – 18 August 2019

<https://www.justsofestival.org.uk/three-mimbre/>



Spoffin, The Netherlands

23 – 25 August 2019

<https://spoffin.eu/>

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