

Created by Yaron Lifschitz and the Circa ensemble
Director and Lighting design: Yaron Lifschitz
Costume Design: Libby McDonnell
Composition and Sound Design: Gabriel Cazes
QLAB Programming: Jethro Woodward
International representation: Wolfgang Hoffmann / Aurora Nova
Worldwide booking & coordination: Yaron Lifschitz / Circa
Photos: Nick Mitmanski
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Website: www.circa.org.au
Duration: 60 minutes



NORTH OF NOW

CIRCA (BRISBANE)

World premiere

Thu 08 – Sun 11 Oct 2026

The use of mobile phones, cameras and audio recording devices is not permitted during the performance.

fabrik Potsdam, Schiffbauergasse 10, 14467 Potsdam
www.fabrikpotsdam.de

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Directed by circus visionary Yaron Lifschitz and performed by core members of CIRCA's peerless ensemble, *North of Now* strips circus back to its essentials: the weight of one person held entirely in another's hands, and the breathless question of whether the catch will come in time.

"In the rivers north of the future, I cast the net," wrote the poet Paul Celan, describing a place beyond time where hope persists anyway. That is where these acrobats work. The catch that hasn't happened. The landing that exists only as trajectory. The future we create by reaching for it.

Falling and flying become the same gesture seen from different angles. Seven bodies find equilibrium in a world that refuses to stand still, searching for transcendence in the ordinary miracle of holding each other up. *North of Now* transcends spectacle and reaches for presence. In an era of digital saturation, live bodies doing thrilling things together has become genuinely radical, and deeply affirmative.

Yaron Lifschitz makes shows. Big ones, small ones, and ones that defy easy categorisation. More than 80 productions have toured across six continents and played to over two million people picking up a shelf's worth of awards including six Helpmanns, The ISPA Distinguished Artist Award and the Australia Council Theatre Award. As CEO and Artistic Director of Circa he has brought circus to the Barbican, string quartets and acrobats to Brooklyn Academy of Music, four years of performances to Berlin and major shows to major festivals and venues around the world. He's created strange, beautiful things in tents, concert halls, spiegel tents, and opera houses as well as cemeteries and cathedrals. His film work has appeared at the Berlin and Melbourne Film Festivals. Yaron was the founding Director of the Australian Museum's Theatre Unit, he has taught directing at NIDA and ATYP and has directed opera, concerts and events. In 1999 he was the first Artistic Director of Rock 'n' Roll Circus which, in 2004, he transformed into Circa. In 2018 he was Creative Lead of Festival 2018, the cultural program of the 21st Commonwealth Games - one of the most ambitious arts events in Queensland's history. At the heart of Yaron's work is restless curiosity and a fierce belief in the power of performance to connect and transform. He describes his creations as "love letters to a species that not always easy to like".

CIRCA is one of the world's great performing arts companies. Since 2004, they have called Brisbane, Australia, home while touring the world, captivating audiences in over 46 countries and reaching more than two million people. Their award-winning performances have earned standing ovations, rave reviews and sold-out shows across six continents. Everything they do is fueled by their core values: quality, audacity, humanity. They are at the forefront of the new wave of contemporary Australian circus, redefining the art form by showcasing how extreme physicality can forge powerful and emotive experiences. They are relentless in the way they push boundaries, blending movement, dance, theatre and circus. Under the visionary leadership of Yaron Lifschitz, and in collaboration with their extraordinary ensemble of circus artists, they craft a diverse array of productions that constitute "a revolution in the spectacle of circus" (Les Echos). Each year they tour their shows across the world and premiere multiple new creations. They are a staple at prestigious festivals and venues in New York, London, Berlin and Montreal as well as throughout Queensland and across Australia. Their extensive engagement programs, including Circa Academy, Circability and Circa Cairns (a First Nations-led circus initiative) provide access, participation and professional development outcomes. They have delivered major projects including the Creative Lead on the Commonwealth Games Festival 2018 and managing Artour for the Queensland Government.

Interview with Yaron Lifschitz

Mr Lifschitz, could you tell us about the creation process? What sparked this production?

Yaron Lifschitz: *North of Now* began as a kind of distillation. Last year I made a very large work, *To See the Stars Again*, which premiered in a Roman amphitheatre in Lyon, later at the Grand Palais in Paris and in Montpellier. Twelve acrobats, four musicians, enormous spaces. When something that big finishes you find yourself asking what it was actually made of. The answer, for me, was humans, the connections between them and the hope this inspires. So this work strips everything else away and starts there.

The process is the ensemble in a room in Brisbane. I set tasks, create languages, the acrobats generate material, and we edit. Most of what we make is discarded. What survives tends to be the material where the relationship between the bodies is legible, where you can see people negotiating weight, trust and risk in real time. It has been an intense creation period. The work is being built quickly, which suits it. It keeps everything close to the moment.

The info of the company suggests a process-oriented approach. A search to reach a certain state, frame of mind, utopia or someone?

Yaron Lifschitz: The search is for presence. Now is the hardest place to reach. We spend our lives slightly ahead of ourselves or slightly behind, planning and regretting, and the present keeps slipping away. The proposition of the show is that now might be reachable, but only together. Presence is something we make between us, in the exchange of weight and attention. Acrobatics is a good instrument for this because it cannot be faked. When someone is standing on your shoulders, you are both entirely in the present. The stakes see to it. So the acrobats are searching for a state, yes, but the state only exists as a relation. There is no utopia at the end. There is just the possibility of arriving, briefly, where you already are.

Could you elaborate on the atmosphere / setting?

Yaron Lifschitz: The setting is deliberately bare. Seven bodies, an empty stage, light to see them by. The acrobats emerge without explanation or past. Nothing shelters them and nothing distracts from them. Within that frame the

work moves through very different weathers. There are passages of real velocity and force, and there are passages of great stillness and tenderness. Intensity in circus is often confused with speed. For me it lives just as much in slowness, in a held balance, in the moment before a catch. The atmosphere shifts the way relationships shift. Sometimes charged, sometimes brutal, sometimes very quiet. The audience is close to all of it. There is nowhere for the performers to hide, and after a while, nowhere for the audience either. I think it functions like a poem - you are inside it, you live within it; rather than an object, it's an experience.

"In the rivers north of the future, I cast the net," wrote Paul Celan. Could you elaborate?

Yaron Lifschitz: Celan has been a companion of mine for decades. That line describes an impossible geography. You cannot go north of the future, just as you cannot go north of now. And yet he casts the net. The gesture is made anyway, into waters that cannot exist, in the hope of catching something. That is very close to what acrobats do. Every throw is a net cast into a future that has not arrived. The catch is not guaranteed. What makes it bearable, and beautiful, is that someone is waiting. Celan wrote from inside genuine desolation, and still the line reaches forward. I take from him the idea that hope is a practice rather than a mood. You cast the net because casting is what hope looks like. The show lives in that gesture, repeated for an hour, between seven people.

You worked with a composer, Gabriel Cazes. How has his music influenced the creation?

Yaron Lifschitz: Gabriel's music breathes with the performers rather than pushing them, and it carries a melodic, emotional line that the acrobatics can lean into or resist. He is working with a wide pallet - voice, instruments, piano, sound. We are figuring out how to get his theatrical frame to fit our circus one. The collaboration has been close. Gabriel sends sketches, we put bodies against them, and the structure of the show and the structure of the score have grown up together rather than one being fitted to the other. We argue productively about endings. His music has pulled the work towards tenderness in places I might otherwise have kept cool or demanded energy and I have learned to trust that.