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Validate your ticket at coat check for \$10 parking at the MCA garage (220 E. Chicago Avenue) and Olympia garage (161 E. Chicago Avenue). The \$10 rate is limited to six hours on date of performance.

### Lost and found

To inquire about a lost item, please call the museum at 312.280.2660. Unclaimed articles are held for 30 days.

### Seating

Please switch off all noise-making devices while you are in the theater.

Late arrivals are seated at the management's discretion. Food and open beverage containers are not allowed in the seating area.

### Reproduction

Unauthorized recording and reproduction of a performance is prohibited.

*Program notes compiled by  
Yolanda Cesta Cursach*

# SOCIETAS RAFFAELLO SANZIO HEY GIRL!

January 18 and 19, 2008

Museum of  
Contemporary  
Art

Photo by Francesco Raffaelli



All photos by Francesco Raffaelli

## **Hey Girl!** by Romeo Castellucci

With  
Silvia Costa  
Sonia Beltran Napoles

Original music by Scott Gibbons  
Projections by Stephan Duve  
Stage management by Sergio Scarlatella  
Lighting design by Giacomo Gorini and Luciano Trebbi  
Stage design by Federico Lepri  
Sculptures by Plastikart and Istvan Zimmermann  
Production assistance by Eugenio Resta

Coordination by Gilda Biasini and Cosetta Nicolini  
Promotion by Benedetta Briglia  
Administration by Elisa Bruno and Michela Medri  
Consulting by Massimiliano Coli  
American tour managed by Aldo Miguel Grompone, Rome  
Tour managed by Sandra Ghetti

The American tour of *Hey Girl!* began at the Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus, Ohio) and continues at the PUSH Festival (Vancouver), Kasser Theater (Montclair, N.J.), On The Boards (Seattle), and the Walker Arts Center (Minneapolis). It has appeared in Turin, Budapest, Paris, Rotterdam, Quebec City, and Montreal.

Special thanks to the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Chicago for its collaboration



Istituto Italiano di Cultura  
Chicago

Limousine service is provided by Citi Limousine Service.



Backstage hospitality is generously provided by Whole Foods Market.



*Hey Girl!* was coproduced by Odeon-Théâtre de l'Europe with Festival d'Automne à Paris; steirischer herbst (Graz, Austria); Le-Maillon (Strasbourg); deSingel (Antwerp); Productiehuis Rotterdam (Rotterdamse Schouwburg); Cankarjev dom (Ljubljana, Slovenia); Trafò House of Contemporary Arts (Budapest); and Societas Raffaello Sanzio.

To increase appreciation of *Hey Girl!*, the MCA in partnership with the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Chicago has organized this series of programs, creating intimate opportunities for the community and audience members to engage with the artists.

### First Night

Friday, January 18

Stay for an insightful postshow talk led by Peter Taub, Director of Performance Programs, with Romeo Castellucci and company members.

### Roundtable

Saturday, January 19, 2–4 pm

Followed by a complimentary reception

Join us for this focused discussion with Romeo Castellucci about his concept of the “drama of movement.” The director has achieved a signature study of the burdens and loneliness that characterize the human condition. In *Hey Girl!*, Castellucci conjures a parallel world to that of artist Chris Ware’s Jimmy Corrigan with the actor regarded as “a baby by definition. Ready to discover the world every time he steps on the stage, every time he faces it through his language. He is inactive because he is spinning around without going anywhere. He doesn’t start any real action. He occupies the stage without doing any work.”

### Exhibition: *Spoors*

Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Chicago  
500 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1450  
Through March 11

This first exhibition of its kind illuminates the shocking world of Societas Raffaello Sanzio. It features a selection of 25 photographs by Luca dal Pià from 1996 to 1999 involving several of the company’s productions, including *Genesi* and *Giulio Cesare*. The centerpiece of this exhibition is a site-specific sound installation by Scott Gibbons, a Chicago-based composer and longtime collaborator with the company, and company cofounder Chiara Guidi. This exhibition is curated by Stefano Questioli.

### Screening: *Tragedia Endogonidia (Endogonida Tragedy episodes #1, #2, #4, #5, #9)*

Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Chicago  
500 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1450  
Tuesday, February 5, 6 pm

Five episodes of this production, which toured Europe for the past four years, expand this retrospective tribute organized in collaboration with the MCA presentation.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The stage is enveloped in fog as slow music surrounds the audience. A gelatinous substance softly falls from a table to the floor. Then, little by little, as if shedding a skin, the naked body of a young woman emerges. She will face many challenges as a newborn. She will need to harden herself and form a protective shell. Half Joan of Arc, half Juliet, she will be torn between the desire to fight for her freedom and a powerlessness that condemns her to wait to be saved. How can she free herself from the constraints of culture and history? How can she express her individuality?

Repetition can make a gesture seem mechanical, empty, and even absurd. Nevertheless, gestures still suggest meaning to us, even when deprived of context. So this work concerns banality and the greatness of banality. Woven from images of fascinating and frightening strength, *Hey Girl!* explores the female body and sensitivity, evoking the slavery, violence, and servitude that still too often afflict women. *Hey Girl!* takes place on the border where theater, visual art, and self-awareness meet. Where images hit hardest. Where images go directly to the heart.

The character is someone without a name, who only knows herself through the greeting *Hey Girl!* She hides herself behind triviality, but at the same time she embodies a contemporary annunciation. This anonymous girl, so far from being an icon of feminism, represents all of mankind. She is just someone hidden behind the archeology of the feminine form.  
—Romeo Castellucci

The following is an excerpt from an interview with the MCA in October 2007.

### *On the relationship between theater and visual art*

In all truth, it is not really about finding a relationship between visual art and theater. It is not a question of a particular field. It is only one possibility for theater. Our theater is not narrative, and it is not linked to the concept of illustration. The images produced by our shows do not come after something else, but they appear immediately. It is just a matter of giving structure to form, and this form expands in passing of time, complicating the problem. For us, time becomes a sort of clay that has to be modified, because theater reflects its origin and continuously reinvents its needs.

### *On American audiences for their work*

The American public is not prejudiced. It doesn't have the same historical European heritage for the theater, which always has to deliver a message. The American public has more freedom and is less influenced by pedagogy. And this habit comes directly from the great American artists. In the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, the role of the theatrical script creates hierarchy, limits the public, and generates a specific criticism.

The MCA is a place where language can be invented. It forces us to do further work. People don't go to the MCA to recognize something but to be exposed to something new. And in this way we are aligned to the philosophy of the visual arts, where the viewer is confronted with questions that automatically feed a debate. This is the second time we are presenting our work at the MCA. For us it is a familiar place where the company and the public can test each other again. *Hey Girl!* relates to the theme of citizenship, and there will be 40 volunteer actors from Chicago, who will appear briefly in the work.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY



### **Romeo Castellucci**

is an actor, producer, author, and visual artist. He has been described by some as the European Robert LePage, and he arrived in theater from the fields of painting and scenography. He founded Societas Raffaello Sanzio in 1981 with Claudia Castellucci, his sister. In 2002 Romeo Castellucci was bestowed with the title Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture.

# PROJECTS AND AWARDS

## THEATER

1986  
*Khmer Theatre*

1989  
*Inanna's descent*

1990  
*Gilgamesh*  
*Isis and Osiris*

1992  
*Hamlet, the vehement externalism  
of a mollusc's death*  
*Aesop's fables*

1993  
*Hänsel and Gretel*

1995  
*Thumbkin*  
*Oresteia, an organic play*

1996  
*Donkeyskin*

1997  
*Giulio Cesare*

1999  
*Genesis: From the Museum of Sleep*  
*Voyage au bout de la nuit*

2000  
*The combat*

2001  
*Uovo di Bocca*

2002–04

*Tragedia Endogonia*

C.#01 Cesena, January 2002

A.#02 Festival d'Avignon, July 2002

B.#03 Hebbel Theater, Berlin, January 2003

BR.#04 Kunsten Festival des Arts, Brussels,  
May 2003

BN.#05 International Festival Norway, Bergen,  
May 2003

P.#06 Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe avec le  
Festival d'Automne à Paris, October 2003

R.#07 Romaeuropa Festival, Rome,  
November 2003

S.#08 Le-Maillon, Théâtre de Strasbourg,  
February 2004

L.#09 London International Festival of Theatre,  
May 2004

M.#10 Les Bernardines avec le Théâtre du  
Gymnase, Marseilles, September 2004

C.#11 Cesena, December 2004

## EXHIBITIONS

2000  
*Rhetorica. Mene Tekel Peres*, La Vignicella Hospital,  
Palermo, Sicily; La Salara, Bologna

2001  
*Uovo di Bocca*, Istituto San Michele, Rome

2002  
*To Carthage then I came*, Festival d'Avignon

2003  
*Tempo Incerto*, Avellino, Italy

## BOOKS

1992  
Castellucci, Claudia, and Romeo Castellucci.  
*Il teatro della Societas Raffaello Sanzio.*  
*Dal teatro iconoclasta al teatro della super-icona.*  
Milan: Ubulibri.

2000

Castellucci, Claudia. *Uovo di bocca. scritti lirici e  
drammatici.* Turin: Bollati Boringhieri.

Castellucci, Romeo. *Rhetorica. Mene Tekel Peres.*  
Rome: Edizioni Aldo Miguel Grompone.

2001

Castellucci, Romeo, Chiara Guidi, and  
Claudia Castellucci. *Epopoea della polvere. Il teatro  
della Societas Raffaello Sanzio.* Milan: Ubulibri.

Castellucci, Romeo, and Claudia Castellucci.  
*Les pèlerins de la matière (Theorie et praxis  
du théâtre, Ecrits de la Societas Raffaello Sanzio).*  
Besançon, France: Les Solitaires Intempestifs.

2002

Castellucci, Claudia, Joe Kelleher, and  
Nicholas Ridout. *To Carthage then I came.*  
Arles, France: Actes Sud.

## VIDEO

1995  
Romeo Castellucci. *Brentano*, 25 minutes

1996  
Chiara Guidi, Romeo Castellucci, and  
Stefano Meldolesi. *Diario Sperimentale della  
Scuola Infantile anno I*, 58 minutes

1997  
Chiara Guidi and Romeo Castellucci.  
*Diario Sperimentale della Scuola Infantile anno II*,  
49 minutes

2000  
Cristiano Carloni and Stefano Franceschetti.  
*Genesis: From the Museum of Sleep*, 60 minutes

Romeo Castellucci. *Epitaph*, 8 minutes

Cristiano Carloni and Stefano Franceschetti.  
*Le Pèlerin de la matière*, 45 minutes

2002  
Romeo Castellucci. *C.#01 Cesena*, 25 minutes

2003

Cristiano Carloni and Stefano Franceschetti.  
*A.#02 Avignon*, 27 minutes

## AWARDS

1996

Special Ubu Prize for contributions to experimental  
theater, Ministry for Tourism and Arts of the  
Republic of Italy

1997

Premio Masque d'Or for *Oresteia* as best foreign  
performance of the year, Festival Theatre des  
Ameriques, Montreal

Premio Ubu for *Giulio Cesare* as best performance  
of the year

1998

Special Ubu Prize for Children's Theater to  
Chiara Guidi for her Children's Experimental  
Theatre School

2000

Premio Europa Nuove Realtà Teatrali, Taormina  
Ubu Prize for *Genesis: From the Museum of Sleep*  
as best performance of the year

Best International Production for *Genesis: From the  
Museum of Sleep*, Dublin Theatre Festival

Grand Prix de la Critique-Paris for the scenography of  
*Genesis: From the Museum of Sleep*

## COMMENTARY



*Hey Girl!* is language as gesture. A bit of language that can only do its work with the participation of the hand and the eye. Perhaps it's a nod, a finger pointed and an eyebrow raised. Hey Girl. A laconic greeting, a moment of recognition. Or perhaps, more fiercely, a call and a summons to appear. Hey Girl. Several times, however, on the lips of Italian friends, it has sounded like the name of a famous philosopher of history. Hegel.

We might think of the practice of theatre as a kind of archaeology of gesture, and the theatre itself as an archive of gestures retrieved, reanimated, and displayed in public. Such practice is not without its perils. To retrieve and reanimate is to restore something of lived historical experience, but also, potentially, in that restoration, to crown it with a kind of inevitability that is stubbornly ahistorical: to produce it not as contingent historical artefact, but as manifest destiny. You were always going to hear voices, take up arms against the English, and die at the stake, weren't you, Jeanne?



Might this be what is going on with our everyday girl? Does destiny for her lie in the flicking back of her hair from her face, or in a precisely executed tug at the hem of a T-shirt? Or perhaps in the instantly codified terminology of her MySpace profile? Might not these tics and tremors of adolescence coerce as powerfully as the mythical seizure of a sword, or an act of dedication to doomed romance? Jeanne? Juliet?

The theatre, after all, is the place where, night upon night, the reproduction of gesture—first intentional, and soon almost involuntary—shapes a physiology, works through the body to make someone else appear. So we might be inclined to think that all this perfecting of movement and expression for stage presentation is just an intensification of the way in which we move about and make ourselves in what passes for the real world. The theatre imitates our constant self-imitation, until we have got ourselves down, just perfectly, but for someone else.

Because we sit and attend to the production of these gestures, we can hardly avoid feeling that they are being made for us. They are intended for us, for us alone; they are the response to our gesture of recognition, to our call, and our summons. Hey Girl, we said, waving our hands, and now look. Look what happens when you start calling the shots. Now the theatre is not so much about the girl and her gestures, but about whatever gesture of ours it was that made her that way.

Romeo Castellucci has been saying for a while that the central figure of the contemporary theatre is the spectator. In the London episode of *Tragedia Endogonia*, for example, a woman appeared on stage who was identified in the dramatis personae as “Yourself.” In *Hey Girl!* you seem to have moved back from the stage to the auditorium where you belong, but it’s still all about you. Hey Girl.

—Nicholas Ridout, Queen Mary University of London

### **Nicholas Ridout**

is coauthor of *The Theatre of Societas Raffaello Sanzio* with Claudia Castellucci, Romeo Castellucci, Chiara Guidi, and Joe Kelleher (London and New York: Routledge, 2008). His essays about the company’s *Tragedia Endogonia* appear in a series of publications produced by the company under the title *Idioma, Clima, Crono*, which has been translated to English and French.