



Show One Productions Presents

The tragedy of
HAMLET
Prince of Denmark

**A World Premiere dance theatre collaboration between
Robert Lepage and Guillaume Côté**

**Limited engagement begins on April 3 and runs through April 7, 2024
at Toronto's Elgin Theatre
Five performances only!**

Toronto, ON November 30, 2023 - Ex Machina, Côté Danse, Dvoretzky Productions, and presenting partner Show One Productions, are thrilled to announce the hotly anticipated premiere of a new dance theatre collaboration from the internationally celebrated artists – legendary director **Robert Lepage and dancer/choreographer **Guillaume Côté**. The pair come together again following their brilliant collaboration on *Frame by Frame* made for The National Ballet of Canada, to re-imagine one of the theatre's most persistent and haunting stories, **Shakespeare's HAMLET**, making its **World Premiere in Toronto at the prestigious Elgin Theatre from April 3 through April 7, 2024****

A wordless take on the emblematic tale of a man consumed by doubt and perhaps descending into madness, after his father dies under troubling circumstances, this new HAMLET from Côté and Lepage mines the essential narratives of Shakespeare's complex examination of the human condition, with a weaving of classic and contemporary choreography. Performed by a company of hand-picked dancers, Côté himself stars as the troubled Dane.

Côté and Lepage's creation pulls the audience deep into a world of deceptiveness, where phantoms and humans mingle on a minimalist set on which light, shadow and transparency play a central role. This metaphorical reinterpretation of the Shakespearian drama draws a fine line connecting movements of the body with what may or may not be lurking within the corners of the mind.

“Robert has staged numerous award-winning productions of Hamlet worldwide and has performed the role himself – he has deep and nuanced understanding of the play, and we began to talk about it during the creation of Frame by Frame,” recounts **Côté**. *“We are all faced with choices in life - whether to do right or wrong - and must always accept the consequences of our actions. Robert and I frequently discuss this irrevocability.”*

“Hamlet is a play that I know very, very, well,” adds **Lepage**. *“When Guillaume expressed an interest in revisiting the character, the proposition of working with him to find a nonverbal expression all of the inner contradictions and the paradoxes of Hamlet, was for me, a very, very exciting idea.”*

“As we further explored the possibilities together it became clear that the story of Hamlet goes well beyond the dialogue and lends itself well to a physical storytelling,” continues **Côté**. *“And the piece seemed to offer continued creative challenges to us both as well as continued resonance. Hamlet remains a deep mirror to human experience, and by gaining a deeper understanding of this character, we can appreciate the importance of taking action to address the problems of humanity. Shakespeare's works exemplify the power of art in this regard, and there is no better time than now to unite through shared experiences in art.”*

Developed over the last several years including multiple intensive sessions run in Quebec City and Toronto, a first work-in-progress draft of the piece was presented at the Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur, where Côté is Artistic Director, in August of 2023.

Moving away from the projection driven visuals of *Frame by Frame*, for HAMLET Côté and Lepage take a theatrical, narrative approach emphasizing the movement of the nine-dancer company. Lepage brings his renowned visual signature to the production, creating a powerfully symbolic world through expressive lighting design, moveable set pieces, and a striking original score from award-winning composer **John Gzowski**.

“This piece is really based on bodies, on movement, on how to use the space,” shares **Lepage**. *“I think people will recognize my signature....any technology we employ is very supportive of the strong ideas underpinning the production.”*

HAMLET is produced by Lepage’s Ex Machina and Côté’s Côté Danse, in partnership with veteran producer Svetlana Dvoretzky’s Dvoretzky Productions, and is presented by Show One Productions, which celebrates 20 years as a leading global arts producer and presenter in 2024. Dvoretzky recently produced a new work with Côté on the acclaimed multimedia dance production TOUCH and with Lepage, presenting his immersive VR project *The Library At Night* in Toronto.

“I am overjoyed to have these relationships with these two extraordinary artists come together on this absolutely stunning and innovative new work,” commented **Dvoretzky**. *“Guillaume Côté and Robert Lepage are both singular artists working on a global platform and their visual worlds come together beautifully. A project like this is the dream of a lifetime for a producer and it is an honour to be part of their ongoing collaboration.”*

Tickets for Côté and Lepage’s HAMLET go on sale December 6 beginning at 10:00 AM, with tickets beginning at \$55.00. The World Premiere run at the Elgin Theatre in Toronto begins April 3 and runs through to April 7, 2024.

For more information visit:

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About the artists:

Choreographer and dancer **Guillaume Côté** is one of Canada's most celebrated dance artists. He has been the leading male figure of The National Ballet of Canada as a Principal Dancer since 2004 and has choreographed many works for the company including *Frame by Frame*, *Being and Nothingness* and *Le Petit Prince*. He has also been invited to perform at the most prestigious companies in the world like The Royal Ballet in London, Teatro alla Scala in Milan and the New York City Ballet. Côté is also Artistic Director of the Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur.

Robert Lepage is one of Canada's most versatile and esteemed theatre artists. His original approach to theatre has won him international acclaim, particularly for his use of new technologies. He is the recipient of the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement and was made a Companion of the Order of Canada.

About Ex Machina

Led by artistic director Robert Lepage, Ex Machina creates, produces, and disseminates multidisciplinary artistic works, most often theatrical.

The company brings together creators from several fields of activity and offers a broad range of artistic production: original plays written and performed solo or collectively, plays based on existing texts, productions in which various disciplines (dance, music, museology) mingle with theater, operas and multimedia productions featuring a predominantly technological dimension. Ex Machina mainly develops its shows in the city of Quebec, then presents them abundantly in Quebec, Canada and elsewhere in the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Oceania.

Beyond their diversity, the company's projects have some features in common. Anecdotes lead to the exploration of ideas such as the revelation of identity through exposure to the other. Cultural intersections, the nature of the creative act, interrupted communication and states of dependence are recurring themes.

Several dramatic situations oppose the quotidian to the extraordinary, the naturalism to the metaphor, and somehow diffident characters to historical figures. The multilingualism, the massive use of images, the reversal of perspective, the variations in scale, the use of narrative codes borrowed from the cinema and the use of technological tools aim to spark meaning and emotion, reflecting a desire to poeticize theatrical expression.

About twenty permanent employees and a large number of artists, artisans, designers, authors, performers, and freelance technicians work each year to create Ex Machina's shows. They are seen year after year by hundreds of thousands of spectators.

About Cote Danse

Côté Danse burst onto the Canadian dance scene in 2019, thanks to the collaboration between Choreographer Guillaume Côté and Producer Etienne Lavigne. Since then, they have been actively presenting a range of original works, films, and immersive dance experiences.

Under the artistic direction of Guillaume Côté, Côté Danse establishes a unique vision, combining classical dance knowledge with captivating geometries and intense human connections. Their style is characterized by contemporary lines, sleek contours, and refined athleticism, creating a distinct and dynamic aesthetic.

Through collaborations with a diverse group of designers, artists, and partners such as Robert Lepage, Mirari Studios, and Son Lux, Côté Danse has successfully produced four full-length productions. These creations have garnered significant attention, with over 125 performances, over four years, in more than 20 cities.

About Show One Productions

Founded by Svetlana Dvoretzky back in 2004, Show One celebrates 20 years of operations as a leading cultural presenter and producer in 2024.

Since its inception, Show One quickly became well known amongst Canadian presenters and audiences for its commitment to global artists, exceptional taste, and personal touch.

Initially focused on classical music, the company has since expanded greatly and is now a leading North American presenter of international music, and theatre, and dance companies from around the world. Show One has proudly collaborated iconic artists such as Michael Baryshnikov, Guillaume Côté, John Malkovich, Robert Lepage, Sondra Radvanovsky, and other world leading orchestra, theatre, and ballet companies.