

★ ROBERTO OLIVAN ★

# GOLD

*This show reflects on the richness of diversity,  
the inner truths, everyday life, and the gold — the light —  
that we all carry within.*







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# GOLD

In GOLD, Olivan brings together dancers with very diverse profiles that make up a colour palette that responds to a reflection of social plurality: a dancer with gipsy root, a dancer with achondroplasia, a performer with all the strength of her youth and the consequent confrontational frailties of her generation and Olivan himself, with all his baggage, career and age. **A careful selection of performers** that exposes genuine particularities of their very personal perspectives.

From a present in which human beings can become disoriented by the brightness of appearances, **GOLD opens a door to coexistence, tolerance, diversity and self-acceptance.** It is a space in which the individual, despite their vulnerability, confronts the challenges and obstacles of life, because beauty is also part of fragility. In fact, true beauty may not lie in the superficiality of some of the models we idolize today that may confuse our admiration, but in those that often go unnoticed or ignored. The true light, which does not blind but enriches, dwells in the unequal, in the authentic. For all this, in GOLD, the action of the performers is embarked on a reflection on the dualism between depth and superficiality, and speaks of our own genuine character that we sometimes try to camouflage and avoid exposing.

One of the new features of this new creation by Roberto Olivan is that it is a **show designed for all audiences.** This is the first time that the choreographer has faced the challenge of making a creation aimed at a young audience as well. This piece was born with the desire to show that we are all sensitive and fragile, but also strong, proud, creative and have a spirit of excellence. The sixty-five-minute play offers a variety of reading layers and immerses the viewer (both young and old) in a journey into an exciting range of sensations.

*"I think it's increasingly urgent to bring the concerns, the problems of the world to the theatre. This has always been the case, and today, less than ever, we have the right to entertain ourselves in the aesthetic labyrinths of art for art's sake. Great is being an artist; but it is necessary to serve... and the theatre can, has to, serve spiritually."*

Alejandro Casona





## THE MUSIC

One of the sources of inspiration for this creation has been the stories of the Hindu poem 'Mahabharata' to which we are approached by the original music of the composer Riccardo Nova, with whom Olivan wanted to collaborate. 'Mahabharata' serves as a guide and symbolism for the construction of this initiatory journey of Indian symbolism and speaks of the possible arrival of the end of humanity, after a golden age followed by successive periods of decline and involution.

Riccardo Nova presents a Hindu musical composition with percussion and an electroacoustic base, creating atmospheres that revolve around the concept of whether we have reached the end of humanity or, if on the contrary, we are about to take the step toward a new age of golden, more empathetic, more emotional, more generous, dignified, tolerant and honest. Maybe we can be reborn after self-destruction, maybe there is still hope to save us from injustice, loneliness and selfishness. The original soundtrack is performed by the Icarus vs Muzak ensemble, a group of three percussionists and a fourth musician on guitar and bouzouki.

## THE STAGE

The design of the stage is clean and free of decorative objects that steal the viewer's attention. The light, sound and bodies of the performers are the main focus of the piece. The stage device consists of three metal structures specifically built for this show, with attached mirrors that symbolize the light from the gold, the reflection of the authentic and valuable character. To all this, we must add a fourth structure that is unknown and non-existent, as a symbol of the era that, as we said before,

has yet to arrive. In this way we want to symbolize the succession of the four eras described by Indian mythology, cycles that complement each other, and are part of a universal game where falls, failures and catastrophes coexist with victories, achievements and creativity. Each era is identified with a different type of metal: Krta = gold, Tretā = silver, Dvāpara = bronze, Kali = iron.







# ARTISTIC SHEET

**Concept, creation and artistic direction** Roberto Olivan

**Performers** Encarni Sánchez Mesa, Ilies Benyahya-Ounich,  
María Arronis i Roberto Olivan

**Creation and musical direction** Riccardo Nova

**Musical interpretation** Icarus vs Muzak ensemble

**Bouzouki and Guitars** Giorgio Genta

**Percussion** Marco Lazzaretti, Francesco Pedrazzini, Matteo Rovatti

**Dramaturgy advice** Encarni Sánchez Mesa

**Text** Susy Shock

**Lighting design** Sylvia Kuchinow

**Technical coordinator** Oriol Ibañez

**Lighting technician** Jordi Fusté

**Sound technician** Simone Copellini

**Stage design** ROPA/Roberto Olivan Performing Arts

**Costume and attrezzo** Andrej Mikulasek & DH Company

**Photography** Jesús Robisco, Ernest Sesé

**Vídeo** Akash Dixit (Urban Fakir Films)

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**Production** ROPA/Roberto Olivan Performing Arts

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(Spain) and Icarus Ensemble (Itàlia)

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## CREATIVE TEAM

### **Roberto Olivan | Concept, artistic direction and performance**

An international creator, he began his training at the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona and at P.A.R.T.S., Brussels. Roberto is the director of ROPA / Roberto Olivan Performing Arts, a performing arts company founded in Brussels in 2001 and currently based at L'OBRADOR Espai de Creació in Deltebre. He also directs the Festival Deltebre Dansa, an international event held annually since 2004 and of which he is also the founder. The Belgian capital was a key point in the solidification of his artistic trajectory. Roberto took his first steps as a professional dancer working for the prestigious company Rosas, directed by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, and danced under the direction of renowned creators such as Robert Wilson, Tom Jansen and Josse de Pauw. Roberto's international career is very versatile. In addition to ROPA's own productions, Roberto has established himself as a choreographer and dancer, creating commissions for dance companies, universities, schools, conservatories and dance centers around the world, as well as in the field of cinema.

In the teaching field, Roberto teaches classes and workshops around the world. He has been the artistic director of important cultural events and a member of the jury in various dance competitions. He has participated in sectorial meetings of the Department of Culture of the Generalitat de Catalunya and is part of the Advisory Council for Culture of the Generalitat de Catalunya in the Terres de l'Ebre area. A world-renowned intense

career: Deltebre Culture Award 2017 for the Deltebre Dance Festival (Catalonia), National Culture Award 2014 (Catalonia), City of Barcelona Award 2013 (Catalonia), FAD Sebastià Gasch Award for Paratheatrical Arts 2012 (Catalonia), award SACD de la Création Chorégraphique 2001 (Belgium) and SACD Prize for Contemporary Creation 2001 (Belgium) from the Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques, as well as several nominations.





### **Encarni Sánchez Mesa | Dancer and Dramaturgy advice**

Barcelona, 1982. All-terrain dancer. Encarni has a degree in contemporary dance from the Institut del Teatre de Barcelona and is a teacher of dance, stage movement and fitness. She has taught multiple workshops and collaborated with national and international artists. Co-founder and performer of the Vostok Collective documentary theater-dance company. She currently combines teaching with her work as an assistant, assistant director and choreographer of Sol Picó dance company, performer in the company Vero Cendoya, stage movement consultant and performer in the new production of theater director Magda Puyo.

### **Ilies Benyahya-Ounich | Dancer**

Paris, 1995. Dancing, actor and disabled person living in Paris. Ilies has been dancing since 2018, training mainly in Hip-hop and urban dances such as dancehall, afro but also in street jazz and contemporary dance more recently. In 2021 he worked at the Paris Paralympic Games. In September 2021, he worked as a dancer on the music video for a great French singer, Patrick Bruel, on his new song “À la santé des gens que j’aime”.

### **María Arronis | Dancer**

María started dancing at the age of 12 in a small school in Altafulla, where she trained in Latin dances. Four years later, she became interested in urban and classical dance. At the age of 18, she began training in Musical Theatre for two years at the Coco Comin school, which covered styles such as jazz, modern-jazz, hip-hop and tap, among others. In this school, she

also learnt acting and singing. Later, she trained in contemporary dance for a year at the Àrea Escola de Dansa i Creació. In 2021, she continued her training as a scholarship holder at the Descalzinha Dansa school in Madrid. This is her first job as a professional dancer.

### **Riccardo Nova | Creation and Musical direction**

He graduated in flute and composition from the Conservatory of Milan and the Academy of Siena. His music has been performed by some international leading ensembles, such as Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble L’Itinéraire and Ictus Ensemble Ensemble Musik Fabrik. In 1993, he moved to southern India to study its music, becoming one of the leading experts of southern Indian music in the West. In 2003, he composed the music for the ‘MA’ show by the Akram Khan dance company. In 2006, he collaborated with PAN SONIC and created ‘Thirteen @ terror generator’ for symphony orchestra and techno group, selected at the International Rostrum of Composers (Paris, 2007). In 2012, he composed the music for Nineteen Mantras with Shantala Shivalingappa and Giorgio Barberio Corsetti. He is currently working on an instrumental suite of his MahAbhArata opera project for the Ensemble Musik Fabrik in Cologne. He has collaborated with Icarus Ensemble in various occasions both internationally (Stuttgart, Zagreb, Nice, Berkeley, Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt) and nationally (Venice Biennale and various productions of the Aperto festival of which he was a resident composer for three years).



### **Icarus Ensemble | Musical production**

<https://www.icarusensemble.it/>

The Icarus Ensemble was born in 1994. Since then it has presented its works in: Mexico, Argentina, USA, the Netherlands, Belgium, England, Wales, Japan, Switzerland, Croatia, France, Egypt, Germany, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Lithuania, Ireland, Romania and Moldova. In Italy, they have performed at almost every major institution and festival (3 participations in the Venice Biennale, the last with Matteo Franceschini, awarded the Silver Lion in 2019). In the autumn of 2021, The Icarus Ensemble was the winner of the competition organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the project Vivere all'italiana in musica. They are regular guests on Rai radio broadcasts and their concerts have been broadcast on the national networks of Japan, Mexico, Argentina, the Netherlands, France and Switzerland, Romania and Azerbaijan. They have recorded for Ricordi, Stradivarius, Bottega Discantica, Sincronie, Ariston and Spaziomusica.

### **Icarus vs Muzak ensemble | Musical performance**

<https://icarusvsmuzak.com/>

This is an Italian music group that has counted on a significant presence at major international festivals since 1994. Among its appearances are three participations at the Venice Biennale, six at the Zagreb Biennale and four at the Cervantino Festival in Guanajuato, Mexico. Icarus has performed in four continents with major contemporary composers, often in world premieres. Past collaborations include Christian Boltanski, Yoshi Oida; Icarus vs Muzak captures the legacy of adult ensembles.









## CONTACT

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**Youtube:** [www.youtube.com/channel/UC3HFsNValAxX3ls1utpe42Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3HFsNValAxX3ls1utpe42Q)

## LINKS

### Link to Teaser 1

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rn7cLu-E4pE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rn7cLu-E4pE)

### Link to Teaser 2 / with live music

<https://youtu.be/9fLGdL1x090>

### Link to full version

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=iiBxHuQSADA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iiBxHuQSADA)

**Durada de l'espectacle 65'**

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### THIS PERFORMANCE CAN BE PERFORMED IN THREE DIFFERENT FORMATS:

- > Performance without live music.
- > Performance with live music.
- > Performance with live music and singers from India.



# 'THE POWER OF NORMAL LIFE'

By Joaquim Noguero

***"What is the body, if they are all different? The body of anatomists and physiologists, the body that science sees and speaks of? There is also a joyous body laden with erotic relationships, with no relation to the first."***

Roland Barthes: *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973)

The body is important in the work of Roberto Olivan. All bodies, all sizes, all ages, all genders and all typologies matter. What matters is what you do, not how you are doing it. It matters the truth of each body, from the political body that gives them voice. It matters the sensual body, the discovery of the bodies of others, the soul of the body and the body as a weapon. What matters in the body is the tenderness that makes you offer your heart, hold hands, open your arms and pull up your chest, not to the adverse stabs of the world, but to the friendly gaze of those who accompany us on the way. It matters the body of dance for each of those who make it up, different yes, but unique and as important as anyone else, old from the weight of human history, beautiful from the weight of human history. We are beautiful beasts, unique monsters, simple bodies, depositories, but of an ancient faith: that together we can be better, build a better humanity, make common ground with inherited bricks, break down all walls to raise us (and

raise them) again, as one who sings early in the morning. Like a child. Like a child playing. Like a teenager in love.

Sometimes, it doesn't take many gestures to do that. The simplest and clearest is enough. Profiled in the air by the contest of the body, like the language of the deaf-mute (clear and complete in the dictionary of the hands), the minimum choreography that twins at a given moment the four interpreters of Gold is pure gold, the vein that makes the mine that is everyone shine. There is anger, within them, but also fragility and generosity. Tenderness, in muscular bodies, and more warrior strength, in women. In fact, they blur the boundaries of gender, age, and the problems that separate them, to bring them together — to twin them — into an adoptive family where we are invited to enter. The sound space has echoes of the town square, the southern market, the Arab souk, the ancient Mediterranean. It smells like a village, it sounds like a neighborhood and even a schoolyard, it breathes ethnic



scents, friendly textures, family memories, close echoes, family roots that we share, an air between home and old crafts, circus of emotions, a space for coexistence.

In fact, if in *Cuculand Souvenir* (2018) Olivan came to say that we can go crazy under the incessant and fragmentary bombardment of the souvenirs of today's media and virtual culture, Gold has found the key to make peace: turn off the noise, dodging all virtuosity, undressing in simplicity, trusting in the truth of its performers (their family, ours), chosen fragility and tenderness to shun anger and fear. When Ilies or Encarni, at different times in the play, shake his hand like little children, I feel in him the maturity of a father who looks with joy and generosity at how the children play. Love prevails over Gold. And the courage to live and know how to redeem yourself to others. That's what you should take from the piece: just what we feel.. The little ones will identify with the Lego games with which blocks of pieces build dolls as fragile as us or fake houses that have doors but do not lock us inside. Teenagers will recognize the timid flirtation of the moments when Ilies and Mary seduce each other with childish shame and tremors of discovery. Everyone will be proud of the warrior princess that is Encarni, half gypsy, half punk, truth of body and word that is imposed "by the accent", an exalted and energetic attitude from head to toe, the beauty and the beast recast in a single complete role of person who rolls open-hearted, tattooed methadone, cousin of beasts like Picó or Puyo. The words of Encarni in the monologue on the microphone that

acts as the play's backbone have been written by a trans icon, but could be subscribed to by the Beauty and the Beast in the story and even Anna Frank. Gold argues that we should all be able to be as rare and as different as nature has made us, rare monsters in our singularities, but that this should not deprive us of continuing to be part of group culture. And what child is not afraid to be different and only aspires to be loved? And what teenager doesn't recognize herself in María when she struggles with the distortion of her image in the mirror or with Encarni when she wants to be free, she doesn't know how to stand still and bounces and bounces to break free?

Here is the greatest and bravest of ambitions. Teach us the greatness of small life, the most authentic force of normal life, how overwhelmed we are, how hysterical we are, how scared we are, how many things we want and how long it takes to find them and recognize them. Contact choreography finds its fullest meaning here. We are mirrors of each other. The force that moves us continues beyond each of us.





**ROPA** ROBERTO OLIVAN  
PERFORMING ARTS

