



Advance Program Notes

Certified Lunatic and Master of the Impossible

Tomáš Kubínek

Friday, April 11, 2014, 7 pm

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

TOMÁŠ KUBÍNEK

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In the past couple of years, Tomáš Kubínek has appeared as the headline performer at the First International Congress of Fools in Moscow, has played to capacity crowds in a two-month tour across Italy, and has performed a sold-out run at London's prestigious Royal Festival Hall Purcell Theater as the featured solo-artist of the London International Mime Festival.

He has appeared in over 30 countries at theatres, opera houses, international festivals of theatre and humor, in television specials, and on Broadway.

Tomáš Kubínek (*toh-mawsh koo-bee-neck*) was born in Prague and at the age of three was smuggled out of the country by his parents to escape the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. After two months in a refugee camp in Austria, the Kubínek family was granted asylum in Canada and it was there, in St. Catharines, Ontario, that Tomáš witnessed his first circus. He became passionately interested in clowns, circus, theatre, and magic, and his perplexed yet well-adjusted parents took him to see every show that passed through town.

At age nine he presented his first performance before a circle of elderly magicians. By age 13 he had an agent and was performing sleight-of-hand in coffee-houses between folk-music acts, and while still in his teens, he made his circus debut with a Brazilian clown duo as the rear half of a two-person horse. There was no turning back...

Working any and all jobs related to showbiz, the enterprising young Kubínek was able to save money and travel to Europe to study with some of the world's greatest teachers of theatre, including Monika Pagneaux, Pierre Byland, Jacques Lecoq, and Boleslav Polívka.

These studies, combined with many years of independent experimentation in the art of live performance, gave birth to his unique style of work.

Besides his solo work, Kubínek has enjoyed collaborating with other artists. He has been featured on Czech National Television with the celebrated actor and clown Boleslav Polívka on Polívka's annual TV specials, and with writer and comedian Frank van Keeken, he has performed in numerous guerilla-style absurdist theatre sketches at the HBO Workspace in Los Angeles.

Kubínek has also appeared with the U.S. theatrical circus Circus Flora on numerous occasions. As "guest villain," he masterminded an elephant kidnapping, terrorized spectators, and later plummeted 40 feet into the ring after fencing on the highwire with Tino Wallenda of The Flying Wallendas.

In 1991/92, with Britain's The Right Size physical theatre company, Kubínek created and performed *Moose*, a surreal comedy about three men braving the elements of the Arctic Tundra. The play toured Europe for one year and received *Time Out Magazine's* #1 Critic's Choice Award.

In 1997 and 1999 Kubínek played limited engagement runs at Broadway's New Victory Theater. Both runs sold out in advance and received rave reviews from audiences and critics alike. *The New York Times* lauded his work as "absolutely expert and consistently charming!"

In 2000 with director and writer Jim Jackson, Kubínek co-created and starred in *Bed*, a performance about the nightmarish adventures of an insomniac cabaret artist imprisoned in his hotel room.

In 2003 the play *Bed* was adapted to the screen and became the film *Tucked into Bedlam*, which aired nationally in the U.S. and Canada on both *Bravo!* and *CBC* and was voted one of the top cultural specials of the year to be produced in Canada.

While touring with his solo work Kubínek teaches master classes for theatre students and professionals and occasionally writes and directs new works, collaborating on pieces for solo artists and theatre companies. In 2000 he co-created and directed *Not Yet, At All*, a one-woman show starring Edith Tankus. He later wrote and directed the play *...all god's children...* for three Portuguese actors from the company Teatrinho, and most recently co-created and starred in Denmark in *Don't Let Me Down*, playing a wealthy businessman opposite Louise Hansen, a published Danish poet who has down syndrome and who played his angel.

In the summer of 2009 Kubínek was artist-in-residence as guest of The John Micheal Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wis. He created, directed, and hosted *The Big Sheboygan Shebang*, an amazing vaudevillian extravaganza featuring over 200 local performers, two horses, and a boa constrictor. The performance celebrated the history, people, and culture of Sheboygan and played to a sold-out audience in the historic Weill Center for the Performing Arts.

His most recent work *Professor Kubínek Meets The Symphony* features Kubínek as a special guest artist with symphony orchestras. The performance was commissioned by The University of Iowa's Hancher Auditorium and had its premiere tour of five cities in Iowa and Nebraska this winter with both Orchestra Iowa and The Omaha Symphony. The performance will continue to tour to symphony orchestras around the world.

Kubínek is the recipient of international awards, including The Moers Comedy Prize from The International Comedy Arts Festival in Germany; The Schneestern Award from the International Festival of Humor in Arosa, Switzerland; and The Samuel Beckett Theatre Award from The Dublin Theater Festival in Ireland. He now resides in rural Connecticut. For more information, please visit www.kubinek.com.