



MONTREAL THEATRE HUB

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Montréal Complètement Cirque opens strong with "Backbone"

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Review: Montréal Complètement Cirque opens strong with "Backbone"

SPECIAL FESTIVAL COVERAGE

🕒 July 6, 2018 👤 Violette Kay



montrealtheatre





“Backbone” (Photo: Darcy Grant)

The 2018 edition of **Montreal Complètement Cirque** opened last night with **Backbone**, presented by internationally acclaimed Australian company Gravity and Other Myths – and what an opening it was! If *Backbone* is any indicator of what the rest of the festival has to offer, we are about to have the time of our lives.

Backbone explores the theme of strength – physical, emotional, collective, individual – what it looks like, what it means, who has it, how it is measured, and so on. Aptly titled, the show tests the limits of both the literal and figurative backbones of its performers.

Through a series of spectacular stunts, accompanied by a hypnotic live soundscape, the acrobats illustrate the many different ways of being strong. Sometimes strength is lifting someone up; other times it is knocking them down. And other times yet, it is being emotionally resilient enough to wait out a given

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UPCOMING SHOWS

« JULY 2018 »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

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Montréal
Complètement Cirque

July 5 - July 15

SA
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The Savannah Sipping
Society

July 7 @ 2:00 pm - 8:00 pm

SA
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07

Buffy The Vampire
Slayer: Once More with
Feeling

July 7 @ 5:30 pm

SA
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07

Romeo and Juliet: Love
is Love

July 7 @ 7:00 pm

disturbance, grabbing the burden you must carry and holding it tight while being tossed around relentlessly, or continuing to dance despite a looming threat inching ever closer right above your head. In any case, strength means standing tall whether you are balanced on top of one, or two, or three (!!!) people, or, more likely, none. Sometimes our strength can move the world around us and bring people together; other times it takes the same amount of strength just to keep our own selves standing. Say our strength is measured by the weight of the burden we carry – what happens when we put it down?

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"Backbone" (Photo: Darcy Grant)

It may seem ironic, even borderline insulting perhaps, to have the notion of strength explained to us by a team of artists who each are clearly stronger than all the spectators combined, but the performers manage to be surprisingly relatable, and even funny. They play games, they bicker, they punish themselves for being wrong, they compete for the spotlight... I would say they are no different from the rest of us, but then I remember that they can literally balance one another on sticks and

throw each other around like it's nothing so... (don't mind me, I'm very jealous).

Backbone could have been just another platform for them to show off, but it isn't, not at all.

The piece is thoughtful, unpretentious and inviting – unnerving at moments, humorous at others, and thoroughly enjoyable from start to finish. And it just happens to also be visually stunning and ridiculously impressive at absolutely all times.

Backbone is a wild ride that will burn lasting images into your mind and leave you with a deep longing to go back in time and take up gymnastics as a small child. It is a truly inspiring display of camaraderie and trust, a testament to the fact that there is strength in numbers, as well as a reminder (or more accurately, an exaggeration) of just how much one can carry and how tall one can stand. This festival couldn't have asked for a greater opener.

Backbone - Gravity & Other Myths



*The Montreal Complètement Cirque Festival
presents Gravity & Other Myths's*

BACKBONE

Venue: TOHU (2345 Rue Jarry E, Montréal, H1Z 4P3)

Dates: July 5th – 14th, 2018

Admission: \$15.00 – \$45.00

Box Office: In person at TOHU, by phone at 514 376-TOHU
(8648), online

at [https://montrealcompletementcirque.com
/en/program/shows/backbone/](https://montrealcompletementcirque.com/en/program/shows/backbone/)

Check out the festival's full indoor lineup and free outdoor
programming

at <https://montrealcompletementcirque.com/en/>

About Latest Posts



Violette Kay

Theatre Reviewer at **Montreal Theatre Hub**

Violette Kay is a playwright and multidisciplinary performer who is very excited to add "reviewer" to the pile of theatre-related hats worn. A semi-recent Acting graduate of John Abbott College's Professional Theatre Program, her most recent credits are as playwright, composer and violinist for Adoration (Tantalus, Montreal Fringe 2017). These days, you can find Violette manning the box office at Geordie Productions. She once adapted Samuel Beckett's Krapp's Last Tape into a cake, by far her most delicious and least word-heavy "writing" endeavor so far.

🔑 BACKBONE CIRCUS GRAVITY AND OTHER MYTHS
MCC2018 MONTRÉAL COMPLÈTEMENT CIRQUE REVIEW
TOHU

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