

COMPANY PORTMANTEAU
& Helga Stentzel



PYYKKI

Lost in Laundryland

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PYYKKI - Lost in Laundryland

PYYKKI - Lost in Laundryland is a new performance for children and families by the company **Portmanteau**, in collaboration with the award-winning visual artist **Helga Stentzel**.

Inspired by Stentzel's photographic series Clothing Line Animals, the performance looks for magic in the everyday, exploring the whimsical world of "Household Surrealism".

Using optical illusions to transform clothes into playful characters and creatures, it invites audiences into a magical universe of little visual delights.

Blending circus, dance, puppeteering, and new magic, PYYKKI follows two friends determined to solve the mystery of where missing socks go. A quest that leads them into a vibrant, surrealist realm filled with fantastical characters and playful transformations.

« Perhaps socks could remain lost if, by hiding, they encourage us to imagine other worlds. »

~ Henna Raatikainen
Helsingin Sanomat

Pikku ITU
Performance
2025

www.portmanteau.fi

www.portmanteau.fi

PYYKKI - Lost in Laundryland

On a stage crossed by several clothing strings, two friends hang their laundry. What starts as a very banal everyday chore, gets little by little transformed into a magical universe of little visual delights when a piece of clothing goes missing...

Determined to solve the mystery of where missing socks go, they venture into a washing machine to look for their missing sock, landing in a surrealist and colourful universe inhabited by fantastic characters.

Two ordinary sweatpants hanging together become a camel as soon as one of the legs is folded in a certain way. An old jacket becomes the body of a cow when getting next to a coloured t-shirt.

As soon as white shorts are combined to a line of hanging white socks, they quickly become a scary moving dinosaur (or is it a “laundrosaur”?).

By manipulating household objects, clothes and fabricv, different characters appear, disappear and get transformed, creating a magical and imaginative universe to act in, based on the photographic work of Helga Stenzel.

Using magic techniques combined with puppeteering and object manipulation, the characters move and become alive. Through the means of circus and dance, they canmagically interact with the performers.



Helga Stentzel

“My art is about finding magic in the mundane, seeing beauty in imperfections, and connecting to reality in a new way. It’s observation without expectations, which sometimes brings fascinating insights. I love noticing playful similarities - be it a sweater on a clothing line looking like a horse or a slice of bread resembling a dog’s head.

I hope that my work will help people to connect with their inner child and rediscover the joy of savouring little visual delights in and outside their homes.”



PYYKKI - Lost in Laundryland

PYYKKI - Lost in Laundryland is a non verbal indoor stage performance, primarily for children, yet to be enjoyed by all audiences.

After the creation of the acclaimed “*Piste, piste, piste*” performance, it became clear for us the desire in keeping developing high quality performances for young audiences, investing in it the same time, energy, attention and resources as when creating a work for adult audiences.

With a focus on poetic and visual metaphors, delicate and minimalistic aesthetics, our goal is to leave space for the children’s own imagination and interpretations, never underestimating their creative minds.

Not underlining but rather suggesting, we aim to stimulate children’s curiosity and observation, hopefully arousing in them an appreciation for the hidden magic that can be found in the most unexpected places.

As performing artists we feel personally obliged to ensure the continuity of a project once it has been born, allowing the work to be seen by a vast and diverse audience. The show is designed as a touring performance, with the intention of touring internationally after its premiere in Finland, speaking to a wide range of audience, regardless of age, language or origin.





*“You see it’s like a **portmanteau** - there are two meanings packed up into one word.”*

~ Lewis Carroll
- Through the Looking Glass

Portmanteau is a Finnish contemporary circus company focused on creating multidisciplinary performances, exploring the dialogue between circus and other art forms.

In a constant search for new and poetic aesthetics within the performing arts, Portmanteau was founded as a

collaboration between the circus/visual artist **Luis Sartori do Vale** and the dancer/circus artist **Mira Raval** in 2018.

It has been touring internationally ever since, warmly received by both audiences and critics alike.

With its first production, the multidisciplinary performance Portmanteau, the company has received the *Sirkuksen Lumo Award 2018*, as an acknowledgement of the work done to promote Finnish circus arts.

With *Piste, piste, piste*, they were selected as the *ITU Performance 2020*. In 2023, the same show was nominated as one of the three finalists for the Finnish Assitej’s “Children’s and Youth Theatre Award”.

In 2021 the company was nominated for the Outstanding Emerging Company category in the International Circus Awards.

In 2025, *PYYKKI - Lost in Laundryland* was selected as the *Pikku ITU Performance 2025*.



DIRECTION

Luis Sartori do Vale

PERFORMANCE

Mira Raval

Luis Sartori do Vale

CHARACTERS DESIGN

Helga Stentzel

LIGHT DESIGN

Jere Mönkkönen

SOUND DESIGN

Petteri Rajanti

MAGIC CONSULTANT

Kalle Nio

PRODUCTION

WHS

Portmanteau

SUPPORT

Arts Promotion Centre Finland, Finnish Cultural Foundation,
WHS Teatteri Union, Cirko, Stoa, Lastenteatterin ideahautomato ITU

* Project awarded as *Pikku ITU Performance 2025*

PREMIERE

22nd October 2025 - Stoa - Helsinki, Finland

Credits

Luis Sartori do Vale

Luis is a versatile performing artist, director and visual artist born in Brazil, based in Finland.

After a diploma in Visual Arts (UFMG - Brazil), he graduated from ESAC (Belgium) as a circus artist.

Besides his own projects, he has worked and collaborated with several directors and companies worldwide, having performed in more than 30 countries.

With his previous works he has received several awards, such as the Special Prize of the Jury in the 35th Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain, and being a laureate of the Circus Next platform.

In 2023 he became the first circus artist in Finland to be awarded the State's grant and honorary title of *Artist Professor*.

He's a co-founder of the company *Portmanteau*. When not performing, Luis develops works as a visual artist, between illustration, video and photography.

www.luis-luis.com

Mira Raval

Mira is a performing artist working within dance, contemporary circus and physical theatre.

Specialized in dancing on a tight wire, Mira has graduated from Salpaus Further Education school in Lahti (Finland) in 2009.

With her solo works Mira is interested in exploring the borderline of dance and circus through movement based practices, musicality and poetic motion in search of new and fusion-like perspectives.

She's a co-founder of the company *Portmanteau*.

Besides performing, Mira develops also projects with video. In 2020, her short dance/circus film OMI has gained international recognition for its experimental kind.

Previously Mira has worked in various theater productions, musicals, dance theatres, and free-lance groups both in her home country Finland as well as in Sweden and Switzerland.

www.miraraval.com

Helga Stentzel

Helga Stentzel is a Russian-born, London-based visual artist known for her imaginative and heartwarming creations, working across a wide range of media including photography, sculpture and installation.

She has studied at Central St Martin's in London and started her career as an art director in the advertising industry.

Her acclaimed *Clothesline Creatures* series- featuring animals made from household laundry- has earned her a devoted global following and widespread recognition.

Helga's work has been exhibited internationally, from China to Germany to the United States, and continues to resonate with audiences of all ages. In 2023, she was named a *Hasselblad Heroine*, and in 2024, she received the *People's Choice Award* at NordArt.

Her work can be found in many publications, private collections all over the world and online on her Instagram account [@helga.stentzel](https://www.instagram.com/helga.stentzel), which has over 380,000 followers.

www.instagram.com/helga.stentzel



Jere Mönkkönen

Jere is a Finnish light designer, with a MA in Light Expression.

He has designed lights for several theater, dance and circus projects, playing an important role in the development of the Finnish contemporary circus.

His work has been seen in more than 30 countries in Europe, Asia and Americas.

He has worked as a technical producer and a lighting supervisor in several contemporary circus groups, including WHS, Race Horse Company, NUUA, Cirko Aereo and Portmanteau, as well as Savonlinna Opera Festival, Helsingin Juhlaviikot, Mad House and Cirko - Center for New Circus.

Petteri Rajanti

Petteri is a multiskilled musician, a sound designer, a sound recordist and a mixer.

He feels home on the stage and has even been acting in a professional theater company.

He does anything in a small ensemble, composing, acting, soldering and driving, with quite a long career as a lecturer and teacher on sound design, composing, recording and mixing music.

As a sound designer / composer, Petteri has created music and soundtracks for several acclaimed performances, such as *Lento*, *Dois*, *Taival*, *Moby Mick*, *Fig Tree Waltzes*, *Pendulum*, *Perto*, *Piste*, *piste*, *piste* and others.





GENERAL INFO

Age: +4 years old & whole family

Duration: 55 minutes

Language: non verbal

Disciplines: Object manipulation, dance, magic illusions, puppeteering

Web & trailer: www.portmanteau.fi/pyykki

PRO AREA

(Full performance video, dossier, photos and technical riders)

www.portmanteau.fi/pro

Password: **pro**

TECH INFO

(Complete information in technical rider)

STAGE

	Optimal	Minimum
Width:	10m (opening) 14m (wall to wall)	8m (opening) 11m (wall to wall)
Depth:	10m	8m
Height:	6m to light rig	5m to light rig

Theatrical conditions are required and a black-out must be possible.

Set-up time: > 10 hours

Take down: 2 hours

The show can be performed 2 times a day

TOURING CONDITIONS

Crew

5 people

- 2 artists
- 1 tech director/light & sound tech
- 1 toddler (>2 years old)
- 1 child care taker (situation to be discussed case by case)

Transportation

Round trips from Helsinki, Finland

Material

Sent by cargo or transported as extra luggages (8 checked bags), depending on specific location and dates

Accommodation

- 1 double room + 1 toddler
- 2 single rooms

Meals

Per diems / meals for the whole crew for all the days

CONTACT

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www.portmanteau.fi

An original performance by recognized artists offers everyday magic

Helsingin Sanomati
Helsinki, Finland - 23.10.2025

Company Portmanteau's **Pyykki** is full of reminders that the familiar and tangible always feel different from the technically complex.

Everything begins with a lost sock. Circus artists **Luis Sartori do Vale** and **Mira Raval** hang clothes to dry on a tiny rack. In the background, sheets spread on clotheslines divide the stage like curtains. Shirts dry above, hanging in the air. The situation is familiar; the atmosphere pleasantly strange.

The sock must be found, so Raval squeezes herself into the washing machine, which starts to spin — a moment that makes part of the premiere's child audience laugh, and others squeal with excitement. Raval disappears, and Sartori do Vale follows her into the machine.

Then things begin to happen on the lines. First comes a glimpse of a cat, and soon a fox is formed out of underpants, a shirt, and trousers. During less than an hour, animals appear on the clotheslines — an elephant, a worm, a dog, a camel.

The clothespins have their own roles too: giraffe's horns, horse's mane, elephant's food, crab's claws.

The laundry figures are based on the award-winning artist **Helga Stentzel**'s photo series Clothesline Creatures, which is also on display at Stoa. Stentzel's playful touch is a natural continuation of Company Portmanteau's work, which stretches the limits of contemporary circus toward other art forms.

The internationally recognized group received the Sirkuksen lumo (Charm of Circus) award already with its first piece Portmanteau in 2018. Last year Luis Sartori do Vale was granted a five-year state artist professorship, the first ever given to a circus artist. Mira Raval, for her part, has steadily led contemporary circus towards dance and movement.

In Pyykki — Lost in Laundryland, Company Portmanteau's skill appears in a new light. The team takes a step toward concreteness and homeliness. At the center are characters and moods.

The stylish whole challenges the familiar with optical illusions and gentle suggestions to look at everyday life differently. There is something almost retro in its calm touch.

When Sartori do Vale rides his clothes horse with a serious face, the illusion of speed is created, in all simplicity, by sheep moving in the opposite direction on the clotheslines. The choices show both courage and skill.

An original work that enchants with its visuality. The performance relies firmly on the charm of the laundry animals. They appear one by one, each with its own small world within the piece, their moods shaped by **Jere Mönkkönen**'s lighting and **Petteri Rajanti**'s jazz-tinged music.

The piece depends so strongly on the presentation of its characters that the transitions and relations between

different animals and moods sometimes feel thin. I found myself wishing, for example, for one stage image in which the animals would appear together.

Although a loose story builds around the search for the sock, the dramaturgy at times resembles Stentzel's fine photo exhibition a bit too much: we look at one laundry figure, and then at the next.

Still, the originality of the piece captivates through its visuality. Particularly beautiful are the moments that sink into everyday surrealism — the laundry-water juggling and the red dragon blowing smoke.

Toward the end, a Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton appears on the line, made of white socks and tights.

Perhaps socks are meant to stay lost, if by hiding they encourage us to imagine other worlds.

~ **Henna Raatikainen**

Thank you!

