



EL PATIO TEATRO (La Rioja, SPAIN) presents:

A MANO (By Hand)

Terracotta puppets and objects theatre performed by 4 hands. Non verbal show.

AWARDS

AWARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL AND REFINED MASTERY IN PUPPETRY
IMPULS FESTIVAL 2015. BUCHAREST. ROMANIA.

BEST SHOW AWARD at KUSS FESTIVAL - MARBURG, GERMANY, 2015.

BEST PERFORMERS AWARD - XXVII VALISE FESTIVAL at LOMZA, POLLAND, 2014.

AUTONOMIES' DRAC D'OR AWARD - FIRA DE TITELLES DE LLEIDA 2013.
(INTERNATIONAL PUPPET FESTIVAL, LLEIDA). SPAIN.

AWARDED BEST SMALL FORMAT SHOW – FESTIVAL FETEN 2013. GIJON. SPAIN.

AWARDED BEST SHOW - FESTIVAL ENCINART 2012. ENCISO. SPAIN.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED SHOW by LA RED-Profesional Net of Spanish Public Theatres
and Auditoriums.

PRESS RELEASES

"A tender and delicate performance ... of very small dimensions where the protagonists are "produced" from a small piece of clay and the puppeteers' hands act as the body, legs and feet... ". **Josep Vilaplana. Portal Jovespectacle.cat FETEN-Gijón, 2013**

"Both breakout companies were also big hits, one of them being El Patio from La Rioja with its first piece *By Hand*, which presented us with a real jewel in small format". **Ferran Baile. Ciberpadres. FETEN 2013**

"Izaskún Fernández and Julián Sáenz-López have transformed a pottery degree final project into a theatrical diamond ... a tribute to an aging artisan in agony. What a privilege to be there... Moving, full of tenderness, humour, surprise, magic and sadness... A small wonder". **Jonás Sáinz. DIARIO DE LA RIOJA 2012**

"A miracle... I had the great fortune of seeing *BY HAND* - by four hands - those four hands that seem like a thousand, all equally delicate, wise and mesmerizing, belonging to Izaskún Fernández and Julián Sáenz-López. Portrayed with primitive inspiration, embedded in the potter's workshop at the heart of plastic arts' first expressions and performed with minimal scenery and common household wares. *By Hand* is a fable about the sale of our lives, deficient and malleable: about our exhibition of ourselves before the markets ... Izaskún and Julián should tour the world's theatres with *By Hand* for many years to come... Seeing *By Hand* - emotions growing with each discovery - was, I guess, like seeing Chaplin's bread roll ballet in *Gold Rush* for the first time, or the first performances of Chaplin's daughter, Victoria, in *The Imaginary Circus* - or her last! (the opening scene of *L'Oratorio de Auréli* where hands emerge from boxes)". **Bernardo Sánchez. Ojo de Buey. DIARIO DE LA RIOJA 2012**

"A small size show but a real gem full of tenderness, sensitivity, poetry and charm. The manipulation of the puppets and the creativity on stage is extraordinary. Julián Sáenz-López and Izaskún Fernández, authors, directors and performers, play excellent interpretative roles. The direction and the show itself are delicate and extremely well accured. 'A mano' should be seen and enjoyed by all people who love puppets and theatre creations made with love, talent and sensibility". **Ferrán Baile-Portal Jovespectacle.cat. Press review of FETEN 2013**

"The company EL PATIO has elevated the level of originality and quality of this XV International Puppet Festival of Granada with its show. Soft and tender clay, molded by the hands to create a variety of sensitive beings, made by the same tenderness of their own puppeteers. The scenes are amazing and extremely beautiful." **Andrés Molinari- IDEAL Journal. Granada. 2013.**

"A Mano is full of humour and tenderness, and its simple aesthetic belies a concentrated beauty that will reward the attentive spectator. El Patio Teatro have succeeded, like the potter, in creating something really special from almost nothing". **Sara Keating. The Irish Times. Dublin Theatre Festival 2014.**

"El Patio Teatro has produced a moving and believable show with just enough subtle naughtiness to hook in the adults in the audience. The universal message carried in the simple and loving human interaction of touching and holding hands speaks to all ages at different levels. This is a remarkable miniature fantasy that beautifully reflects real life". **Irene Brown. Edinburgh Guide. Edinburgh Imagine Festival 2015.**

“There's no spoken text in *A Mano*. Instead, it's the fingers that do the talking in this beguilingly quaint production by El Patio Teatro (Spain). Wonderfully flexible fingers that can conjure bits of clay into heads, and those heads into little puppet characters who find humour and pathos in a deftly-nuanced quest for love, freedom, happiness”. **Mary Brennan. Herald Scotland. Edinburgh Imagine Festival. 2015.**

Handmade tale of love, loss

AWESOME FESTIVAL

A Mano (By Hand)

El Patio Teatro

AGWA Theatrette

REVIEW **DAVID ZAMPATTI**



We have no more supple, subtle and sensitive tool than our hands. With theirs, the Spanish artists and performers Julian Saenz-Lopez and Izaskun Fernandez make faces and bodies, tell stories and create emotions in front of our eyes, all from lumps of clay.

The story they tell in *A Mano (By Hand)* is shrewd, funny, touching but unsentimental, and sad.

And for children (*A Mano* is recommended for 5 years plus), the work of Saenz-Lopez and Fernandez is a thing of wonder.

Fernandez, with her gentle smile, works on a tabletop stage with clay the exact colour of her hands, so where the material ends and the maker begins is often impossible to tell. Her palms become bodies, her fingers arms and legs.

As she and the clay metamorphose there are peals of laughter, and that sure-fire indicator of a kid's engagement, the “mummy/granddad, is that a...” questioning from the young audience.

Fernandez is joined by Saenz-Lopez, and his hands become the little man on sale in the window of a second hand store. All around him are little knick-knacks — figurines, jars, toys, ceramic and porcelain, all clay like him.

A cash register rings, a hand reaches in and



Hands and clay metamorphose into figures.

whisks the sold item away, but it's never the little man. He pushes other items aside, swaps price tags, gathers pretty objects around him to make a family group. No sale.

A little clay three-handled cup is put in the window, and, gingerly, the two objects bond. Their romantic dance — to Edith Piaf's *La Vie en Rose* — is a thing of tender beauty. They cling together through the night, but when morning comes, the cash register rings and the little cup is gone. And the sign in the window now says “closing down sale”.

It was unsettling how sad the end is, but perhaps it is an adult expectation that in children's stories we will all live happily ever after.

Certainly, the kids who flocked around Saenz-Lopez and Fernandez after the show for their little piece of clay to make their own story, a *mano*, had no such qualms.

A Mano (By Hand) is on at 10am and 11.30am daily until October 8.

THE IRISH TIMES

SEPTEMBER 30TH, 2014

Review: A Mano

This children's show creates a concentrated beauty from almost nothing



Sara Keating

First published: Mon, Sep 29, 2014, 12:00

A Mano

The Ark

El Patio Teatro bring clay to life in this exquisite non-verbal show for audiences of 6+. Opening on an almost bare stage, the show is sculpted before our eyes, as two black-clad puppeteers emerge from the darkness to create characters from nothing more than their fingers and a lump of featureless clay. How easily they animate an entire world: with a gentle thumb-press they render eyes on a ball of clay, a simple pinch yields a nose, while the movement of digits, fast and slow, bespeaks a whole history of happiness or suffering.

Concieved and performed by Spanish team Julian Saenz-Lopes and Izaskun Fernandez, *A Mano* is suffused with the sepia-tinged tone of nostalgia for a time gone by. The playful opening gags - where the pair experiment with clay-form characters - eventually give way to a single strand: the story of a crudely carved figurine left behind in the window of a second-hand shop, as finer china figures get chosen by passing customers. Our terracotta hero drifts into fantasy. He takes a family of porcelain under his wing, makes various attempts at escaping his trapped fate, and sets sail in a cup that is oared by a spoon. Finally, he falls in love with a potter's jug, whom he woos and handles with care until she is snatched from his embrace by a beady-eyed shopper. At the end he is, literally, left on the shelf. You will never look at your household ornaments in the same way again.

A Mano is full of humour and tenderness, and its simple aesthetic belies a concentrated beauty that will reward the attentive spectator. El Patio Teatro have succeeded, like the potter, in creating something really special from almost nothing.

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A Mano (By Hand), Traverse, Imagine Review

 By [Irene Brown](#) - Posted on **11 May 2015**


Show Details

Venue: [Traverse Theatre](#)
Company: El Patio Teatro

Production: Julián Sáenz-López and Izaskun Fernández (Co-directors)

Performers: Julián Sáenz-López and Izaskun Fernández

Running time: 45mins

It is a belief held in some religious faiths that man has been created from clay. In this highly skilled production from Logroño Spain, the two gentle young artists perform their own creation through the use of clay and their digital dexterity (that is meant in the flexibility of their fingers rather than the contemporary more technical meaning!)

While being seduced by the rhythmic ticking of what sounds like a cog turning mill with a breathing life of its own, the audience contemplates a small and rather lovely four drawered chest under two small spotlights. Between its Queen Anne legs are a pair of black curtains that will reveal miniature delights over the piece.

In moves, some of which call to mind the old horror film starring Peter Lorre, *The Beast with Five Fingers*, hand and fingers appear in an apparently disconnected way but this is just a warm up to show what these maestros can do in morphing a part of the human body to what feels like a piece of credible humanity. Their work holds echoes of Tony Hart's famous character called Morph, a wee plasticine man who starred in his stop motion films and were great fun but the fact of their doing it live creates a new and magical dimension.

Once their skills have been established, they move on to a stronger narrative that involves a sepia toned second hand shop where one figure who is up for sale goes through a futile bid for freedom till he finds a highly significant other on whom he can project his love. His joy in finding someone that he perceives to be just like him may be brief but it is shown with incredible

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poignancy that completely draws the audience in through this deceptively simple medium.

[Festival Theatre Studio, Imagine Review](#)
11 May '15

With background music from a range of instruments including piano, strings, woodwind, guitar and accordion and ending with Piaf's classic and heart wrenching rendition of *la Vie en Rose*, El Patio Teatro has produced a moving and believable show with just enough subtle naughtiness to hook in the adults in the audience.

The universal message carried in the simple and loving human interaction of touching and holding hands speaks to all ages at different levels. This is a remarkable miniature fantasy that beautifully reflects real life.

Monday 11 - Wednesday 13 May

Age recommend 6+

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