

Circoneuro [Blackcircus], 1996

With *Máquina Hamlet* still on, the group rehearsed this black comedy that would premiere at the Sala Orestes Caviglia of the Teatro Nacional Cervantes. The project found its inspiration in two sources, which it sought to subvert: a book of rules for children's parlour games and a 1950s manual of acting exercises. The play was structured around a series of competitions (with Alejandro Catalán acting as the emcee), circus duels, and battles to the death between humans and dolls. The question each number of this 'horror freak show' posed was: who can best represent death? Suffocating yet compulsively playful, it questioned the boundaries of representation and presentation through diabolical experiments in which the dolls always appeared to be better at portraying the experience of death than the humans.

How could they continue to create after *Máquina Hamlet*? How could they continue to disrupt when the market had already accepted and absorbed everything the group was capable of subverting? *Circoneuro* was thus kind of a digression, a melancholic piece created from references to previous works: the playful spirit of *Úbu Rey*, the humour and cruelty of the blind in *Variaciones sobre B* It was a transitory experience that allowed them to brush off the weight of the political and philosophical discourse of their previous work. In short, it was a return to the refuge of the absurd, an escape through a temporary homecoming to the theatre of transhumance, to travelling players, traditional puppetry.