



SÁNDOR MÁRKUS

**Theatre-based visual artist
and professional puppeteer**

*Working at the Budapest
Puppet Theatre*

*Developing inflatable
puppets and performative
installations*





I am a theatre-based visual artist and professional puppeteer, currently working at the Budapest Puppet Theatre. I work as a puppeteer as well as a stage and costume designer. I hold a degree in puppet acting from the University of Theatre and Film Arts in Budapest. My practice is rooted in contemporary puppetry and theatre, and expands into stage and costume design, visual design, fine art installations, and moving image.

Alongside my theatre work, I direct music videos and visual film projects. I studied music video directing at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME), which strongly influenced my visual language and my approach to space, rhythm, and composition. I regularly collaborate on productions across theatre, opera, and performance contexts, where visual thinking and dramaturgy meet.

In recent years, my artistic focus has been the development of inflatable puppets and performative installations. Through these works, I explore scale, collective manipulation, and the fragile relationship between body, object, and space. I am particularly interested in situations where theatrical presence, material experimentation, and audience perception overlap.

My installations and inflatable puppet projects have been presented internationally across Europe, the United States, and Central Asia, in theatrical, festival, and exhibition contexts. Based on this ongoing professional practice, I also engage in workshop-based formats and teaching, including experience at the University of Theatre and Film Arts in Budapest.

SELECTED PROJECTS

The visual sense of touch



Performative installation and inflatable puppet project combining physical presence, projected imagery, and audience interaction. The work explores touch, perception, and control through a large-scale inflatable hand structure, operated from within and functioning simultaneously as a sculptural object, a performative body, and a projection surface.

The project has been presented in various contexts across Europe, Central Asia, and North America. The inflatable structure can be adapted to different spaces and narratives, and its internal control system allows for both performative use and participatory workshop formats, connecting material experimentation with theatrical thinking.

Nylon Group



The Nylon Group is a performance-based puppetry project exploring new forms of object animation through inflatable and soft materials. The work experiments with a “reverse marionette” logic, where the puppeteer operates the structure from inside, using minimal internal control systems.

Developed as part of my ongoing research into contemporary puppetry, the project investigates the relationship between body, material, and control, expanding traditional puppetry into performative and spatial contexts.

Out of order



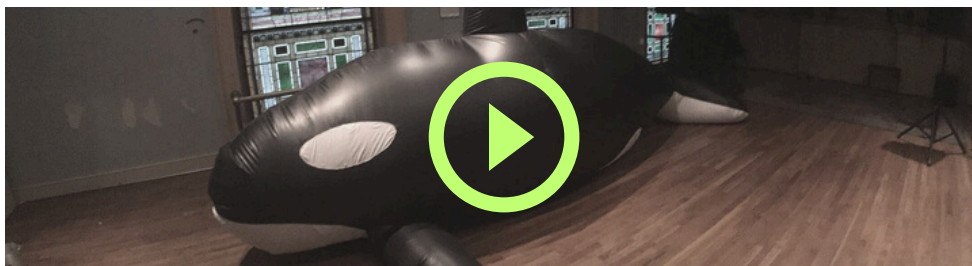
Public art installation / social intervention

Out of Order is a public art installation using blinking yellow traffic lights placed in front of cultural institutions and public spaces. The yellow signal operates as a dual symbol: it can indicate a technical malfunction, but also a state of waiting—hesitation between stopping and moving forward.

The installation visualizes a psychological and emotional condition of suspension that often appears in social relationships, personal decisions, and collective situations. By inserting a familiar urban signal into an unexpected context, the work creates a subtle disruption in everyday perception, inviting reflection rather than direct instruction.

The project operates at the intersection of public space, performative gesture, and social awareness, emphasizing observation, waiting, and unresolved tension as shared human experiences.

Whale Me! - Contemporary Confessional Whale



Interactive installation / performative environment

Whale Me! is an interactive installation built around a large-scale inflatable whale, functioning as an intimate, performative space for one-to-one encounters. Inside the structure, participants are invited into a private situation of conversation, confession, and listening.

The project uses the image of a beached whale as a metaphor for vulnerability, isolation, and the human need for mutual support. Rather than offering resolution or instruction, the installation creates a temporary space of suspended judgment, where honesty can emerge through direct human presence.

The work has been presented internationally, including at the Judson Memorial Church in New York and at the Sziget Festival in Budapest. It operates at the intersection of installation, performance, and participatory practice, transforming spectators into active participants and emphasizing the fragile dynamics between exposure, trust, and shared responsibility.

Project me



Experimental puppetry project / installation

Project Me is an experimental puppetry project exploring new forms of inflatable, internally operated puppet structures combined with projected visual content. The work builds on a self-developed “reverse marionette” technique, where a large-scale, air-filled puppet is animated from the inside, allowing direct physical control and performative presence.

The project integrates theatrical puppetry with moving image and projection, creating a hybrid language between stage performance and cinematic visual communication. The projected imagery is controlled from within the puppet, enabling real-time interaction between body, object, and image.

Project Me represents a key step in my ongoing research into inflatable puppetry and performative installations, and has been presented in performance and exhibition contexts. The project highlights the potential of inflatable structures as both performative bodies and flexible visual platforms, adaptable to different spatial and narrative settings.

Hide



Public space installation / observational intervention

Hide is a public space installation built around a temporary observation structure resembling a hunting hide. One side of the structure functions as a one-way (detective) mirror. Inside the hide, participants observe passersby from a protected, invisible position, while those outside see only their own reflection in the mirror.

The people being observed are unaware of the observation, while those inside gradually recognize themselves through the behavior of others—how people look at their reflection, how long they stay, and what insecurities or gestures appear in front of the mirror.

The installation creates a subtle shift between observer and observed, turning self-reflection into a shared psychological experience. Hide explores vulnerability, surveillance, and self-perception by allowing participants to step outside the crowded city and momentarily view both others and themselves from a detached perspective.

EDUCATION

**University of Theatre and Film Arts
Budapest
(2008-2013)**

puppet actor

**Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design
(2023)**

music video directing

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