

RUBBERBAND

Vic's Mix

Saturday, February 15, 2020

7:30 pm



Photo: Bill Hebert



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RUBBERBAND

Saturday, February 15, 2020, at 7:30 pm
Hancher Auditorium, The University of Iowa

Choreography
VICTOR QUIJADA

Music
JASPER GAHUNIA

Lighting Design, Sound and Lighting Director
YAN LEE CHAN

Costumes
CAMILLE THIBAUT-BÉDARD

Dancers
JEAN BUI, DANIELA JEZERINAC,
SYDNEY MCMANUS, BRONTË POIRÉ-PREST,
JERIMY RIVERA, RYAN TAYLOR, PACO ZIEL

Vic's Mix

The fruit of a unique meeting between classical ballet and 1990s West-Coast Hip-Hop, for the past 17 years, RUBBERBAND has been redrawing the boundaries of contemporary dance with its singular language.

Sometimes humorous, at times emotional, *Vic's Mix* spans the immense creative territory of Victor Quijada, extracting a number of jewels from the choreographer's repertoire. Remixing his own work and orchestrating the clash of urban pop and classical composition, Victor continues to experiment here, challenging notions of theatricality and audience reception, ensuring that each of the bodies moving onstage in these highly athletic tableaux exemplifies the RUBBERBAND Method.

A reflection of the freedom and openness of the ebullient Montréal dance scene, *Vic's Mix* is sure to astonish by its stylistic breadth.

Vic's Mix is produced by RUBBERBAND and benefitted from a creation residency offered by Festival international de DansEncore.

RUBBERBAND would like to thank the Board of Directors for its generosity and support, and Anne Plamondon for her passion and commitment.

RUBBERBAND wishes to express its appreciation for the dedication and the high quality of the work of the creators involved in the company's productions from its beginnings. *Vic's Mix* carries traces of each of them.

RUBBERBAND also wishes to thank Michael Slobodian and Marc Bourgeois, photographers, Marie-Noële Pilon, videomaker, and the extraordinary team of 180 g, Chris de Muri, Cristina Marziale, and Charles-Étienne Brassard.

RUBBERBAND benefits from the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, and the Ontario Arts Council.

Pentacle Arts is the booking agency for RUBBERBAND.
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About the Artists

In **RUBBERBAND**, Victor Quijada reconciles the two poles that inhabit him: the spontaneity, risk, and fearlessness of the Hip-Hop culture of the American West Coast where he grew up, and the choreographic refinement of contemporary dance, the milieu in which he developed as a professional dancer. The revolutionary character of the aesthetic Victor has created is illustrated in more than 20 works during 15 years of artistic research. Imbued with the inherent independence of the street and a sharply perceptive sense of staging, his choreographies explore human relations, particularly focusing on the passion of obsession, the brutality of violence, and the delicacy needed for tragedy and comedy.

With his street-dancer sensibility intact, Victor Quijada seeks to integrate the spontaneity of Hip-Hop circles into stage performance and break down the barrier between performers and audience, as often as possible.

Besides his performance and film works, Victor has developed a training program, the RUBBERBAND Method, that prepares professional dancers for the choreographic requirements of the company. This program initiates dancers to the hybridity of a movement influenced by both urban and contemporary dance, while emphasizing interpretation, decision-making, rhythmic variations, and partnering. Workshops and lecture presentations are offered regularly during company tours.

VICTOR QUIJADA (Choreographer) and his RUBBERBAND have not only redefined breakdance codes within an institutional context and enlivened the Québec dance scene, but have opened the way for new creators fascinated by this dance form. Armed with a technique he conceived for dancers, the RUBBERBAND Method—an electrifying vocabulary combining the energy of Hip-Hop, the refinement of classical ballet, and the angular quality of contemporary dance—and some 40 creations and collaborations in Canada and abroad behind him, Victor Quijada has always continued to evolve and innovate throughout his prolific career.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, the child of Mexican parents, Victor first danced in the b-boying circles and hip-hop clubs of his native city. He trained with Rudy Perez from 1994 to 1996, then moved to New York City to join THARP! After spending three years with that company and following a stint with Ballets Tech, in 1999, he came to Montréal to join Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in 2000. In 2002, he founded RUBBERBAND, throwing himself into deconstructing the choreographic principles he had learned by blending them with the raw ideology of his street dance origins. His creations—numerous short works and 14 full-length productions—are distinguished by a powerful theatricality, the energy of improvisation, and certain codes of film language, the whole sculpted with an incomparable precision of movement.

Victor has taught the RUBBERBAND Method for several years throughout the world in workshops and internships for many dance companies, dance schools, and universities, as well as on a yearly basis in RUBBERBAND's workshop for professional dancers; at the Académie du Domaine Forget in Charlevoix every summer; and in his classes at the Gloria Kaufman School of Dance at the University of Southern California (USC). As guest choreographer, he has created new works for dance and circus companies; notably in return commissions for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Scottish Dance Theatre.

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About the Artists

Besides his stage productions, Victor has been involved in almost a dozen dance films, as director, choreographer, or dramaturge. His short film, *Hasta La Próxima*, was a finalist at the American Choreography Awards in 2004. He also choreographed the music videos *Man I Used to Be* by k-os, *La garde* by Alexandre Désilets, and Elton John's *BLUE WONDERFUL*. His *Gravity of Center—The Movie* won Best Experimental Short at the CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival of 2012, among other awards, and was shown at several exhibitions and national and international festivals.

In the area of peer recognition, Victor Quijada was artist-in-residence at Usine C (2004) and at Place des Arts (2007–2011), and has won many awards, including Britain's National Dance Award for Outstanding Modern Repertory (2003), the Bonnie Bird North American Award (2003, U.K.), the Peter Darrell Choreography Award (2003, U.K.), the International Touring Award of the Canadian Dance Alliance (2012), and two awards from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA (Choreography Fellowship, 2010; Work in Progress Residency, 2016).

In December 2017, Victor Quijada received the award for cultural diversity at the Prix de la danse de Montréal.

JASPER GAHUNIA (Musician; aka, DJ Lil' Jaz) is a DJ, producer, songwriter, musician, and teacher. He began his career in the mid-nineties as a specialized DJ (turntablist), winning the Toronto DMC DJ competition title three times and becoming the Canadian DMC Champion in 1998. During this period, he also shared the International Turntablist Federation (ITF) Western Hemisphere Team title with his crew, Turnstylez; he became ITF World Beat Juggling Champ a year later. Jaz has graced stages worldwide as a DJ and keyboardist with Nelly Furtado and k-os. At Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music, where he graduated in piano, Jaz currently teaches the first-ever Scratch from Scratch: DJ Fundamentals course. He has also collaborated with the Canadian Opera Company in the production of a series of mini-operas fused with hip-hop beats and scratching, and created the musical score for many of RUBBERBAND's stage productions and commissions carried out by Victor Quijada.

YAN LEE CHAN (Lighting Designer, Sound and Lighting Director) began studying lighting design and subsequently earned a degree in stage management and technical direction in the theatre arts program at Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe. He worked in Europe, assisting Olivier Duplessis and other dance artists before settling in Montréal, where he has worked in the performing arts for over a decade. Starting in his early teens, Yan performed as a sleight-of-hand magician, and he has brilliantly applied these skills to lighting concepts that create stage illusions. He has collaborated with many Canadian choreographers and performing arts companies, including Sonya Biernath, Lin Snelling, Bill Coleman, Andrew de Lotbinière Harwood, Nicole Mion, Stéphan Gladyszewski, Jenn Goodwin, Pamela Newell, Hélène Langevin, Momentum, Théâtre du Grand Jour, Théâtre du Rideau Vert, Ondinnok, and Pigeons International. He began his relationship with RUBBERBAND as a lighting designer in 2003, becoming the company's technical director in 2009. This close collaboration has led Yan to accompany Victor Quijada in various commissions, notably with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Scottish Dance Theatre.

CAMILLE THIBAUT-BÉDARD (Costume Designer) graduated in fashion design from Collège LaSalle and began her career as a seamstress for several





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About the Artists

Montréal companies, until her fascination for bodylines drew her to create made-to-measure clothes. In 2010, she met Liz Vandal, which led to costume-making for La La La Human Steps, Compagnie Marie Chouinard, Washington Ballet, and Cirque Éloize as assistant designer and seamstress. As a costume designer, she has collaborated with Manon Oligny (*Boire le bouillon de onze heures*, 2009; *Icônes*, *À VENDRE*, 2011), Marie-Hélène Panisset (*Sublime*, 2013), David Pressault (*Mûre*, 2012; *A Melancholic Journal*, 2013), Nancy Gloutnez (*Débile Métal*, 2014), and Les 7 Doigts de la Main (*Triptyque*, 2015). Camille's artistic path has taken her into the fashion world as much as into the dance world. Working with emerging young designers such as Betina Lou, Bon Vivant, and Christian L'enfant Roi, her two fields of expertise are closely linked in her perpetual study of clothing the body in movement.

JEAN BUI (Dancer) studied visual arts and urbanism, prior to dance. He put his studies on hold to explore the potential of the human body, both as an artist and an athlete. This newfound interest led him to delve into parkour and the circus arts. He undertook general circus training in 2011 after which he plunged wholeheartedly into the world of dance, earning a B.A. in contemporary dance at UQÀM in 2015. Over the course of his career, he has worked with George Stamos, Manuel Roque, Katya Moutaignac, and Maud Saint-Germain, as well as appearing in numerous music videos, commercials, TV shows, and movies. Bui joined RUBBERBAND in 2015.

DANIELA JEZERINAC (Dancer) grew up in Mississauga, Ontario, where she began dancing at a local studio. At the age of 15, she became a company member of Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre, where she stayed for three years. Upon her training there, she performed works by José Limón, Colin Connor, Kevin Wynn, Robert Glumbek, and Ofillio Sindadhino. She just finished her studies at the Conservatory of Dance at SUNY Purchase College in New York. Jezerinac joined RUBBERBAND in 2018.

SYDNEY MCMANUS (Dancer) is originally from London, Ontario, and is a multidisciplinary artist working between Montréal and Toronto. As a freelance artist her experience includes performances with TOES for Dance, Fog in Hand, and Alysa Pires Dance Projects, among others. Besides her work in performance, she is also a practising visual artist with continued studies at OCAD University. McManus joined RUBBERBAND in 2016.

BRONTË POIRÉ-PREST (Dancer) hails from Montréal, Québec. She fell in love with the art of movement at Ballet Divertimento, where she started her classical dance training in 2010. She then continued her studies at L'École de danse contemporaine de Montréal, where she had the fortune to work and collaborate with renowned choreographers such as Angélique Willkie, Hélène Blackburn, and Alan Lake. Upon leaving school, she was invited to work with several well-established companies from Montréal such as Van Grimde Corps Secrets, Le Carré des Lombes, and as a freelancer for Compagnie Marie Chouinard. Poiré-Prest joined RUBBERBAND in 2018.

JERIMY RIVERA (Dancer) hails from New York, where he was initiated to gymnastics as a child. After accumulating a number of experiences with the New York City Ballet, he decided to dedicate himself entirely to dance. While training at Steps on Broadway, he broadened his repertoire, exploring contemporary dance, hip-hop, ballet jazz, and musical theatre dance. As a teenager, he studied for two years at the JKO School of American Ballet under Franco De Vita and Raymond Lukens, then joined the junior branch of

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About the Artists

Manhattan Youth Ballet. Rivera continued his training under François Perron and Nadege Hottier at the French Academie of Ballet, and in 2012, toured with *West Side Story—The Musical*. In 2013, he moved to Montréal to join Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, dancing with the company for four years. Rivera joined RUBBERBAND in 2017.

RYAN TAYLOR (Dancer) is a native of Colchester, England. He was introduced to dance via Hip-Hop and breakdancing, joining the Battalions Crew and participating regularly in European competitions. Wishing to broaden his horizons, he joined the National Youth Dance Company, working with Akram Khan. This inspired him to further his studies at the London Contemporary Dance School, where he had the opportunity to train with a number of artists, including Hofesh Shechter, Dane Hurst, and Sasha Roubicek. In 2017, he performed *Rosalind* with the James Cousins Dance Company at the Edinburgh Fringe, winning the prize for best moment of the festival. Taylor joined RUBBERBAND in 2018.

PACO ZIEL (Dancer) began studying music and art at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes in Mexico, his country of origin. He won a scholarship to attend Estudio Profesional de Danza Ema Pulido, where he honed his technique and performance skills. Paco came to Montréal in 2011 to continue his classical training at l'École supérieure de ballet du Québec. Among Ziel's choreographies, *Huapango* won first prize at the 2011 Bravissimo competition, and another work, *Mexica*, garnered positive reviews from eminent Mexican dance critics. He is also a co-founder of the Montréal-based dance collective, Quantum. Ziel joined RUBBERBAND in 2015.

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The New Colossus

Brings our Stories to the Stage



Photo: Ashley Randall

In *The New Colossus*, The Actors' Gang members tell their ancestors' stories, their struggles, and their journeys from oppression to freedom. The play celebrates the courage and great character of the refugees who came to this country throughout the last 300 years. The ensemble of twelve reflects the great diversity that has defined who we are as a nation; *The New Colossus* is a celebration of our diversity.

Set somewhere between the 19th century and now, the play tells the story of forced migration and the constant struggle for survival and dignity in an uncertain and hostile environment. The members of the acting company are from different parts of the world; they tell their stories, each in a different language, and each in different dress. Actors from Iran, Turkey, Malaysia, Germany, Vietnam, Louisiana, Mexico, Finland, Hungary, Soviet Union, and Austria will be in the company.

The director of *The New Colossus* is Academy Award-winner Tim Robbins (*Mystic River*, *Dead Man Walking*, *The Shawshank Redemption*). He said, "I live in Los Angeles, where one can only be struck by the contributions made to our city by immigrants and people who came here as refugees. The Actors' Gang felt compelled to respond to the government's anti-refugee and anti-immigration policies—and to tell a story that draws attention to the true nature of people that live in this country. Save for the Indigenous, all of our families came here as refugees, immigrants, or were brought here against their will.

"The characters in the piece all seem different, from different parts of the world, travelling at different times—but the stories are remarkably the same: the common experience of all refugees is that they are fleeing some kind of oppression and moving toward safety and hopefully, freedom. Our hope is that we will be able to illuminate the courage, fortitude, and humor of the refugees that have defined this land and, in doing so, discover the similarities that exist between our ancestors and those who are currently struggling for dignity and freedom today."

The New Colossus

by Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-brided harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”



The New Colossus shares a title with the sonnet written by poet Emma Lazarus in 1883 for an exhibit to raise funds for the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty, which opened in 1886. Even though the Statue of Liberty was not conceived as a symbol of immigration, Lazarus’s “The New Colossus” reinvented the statue’s purpose, turning Liberty into a welcoming mother, a symbol of hope to the outcasts and oppressed of the world.

At the end of each performance the actors will engage the audience and ask them to share either their experience of immigration or their family’s experience.

The New Colossus has its beginnings in The Actors’ Gang 2017 Refugee Project Workshop Production, in which actors told true, personal stories about their ancestors—where they came from, why they had to leave, and where they arrived and settled.

The New Colossus is at Hancher Auditorium February 29, 2020. For tickets, visit hancher.uiowa.edu or call 800-HANCHER.

The Actors’ Gang

Over the past 36 years, The Actors’ Gang has produced over 200 plays in Los Angeles, in forty-five U. S. states, and on five continents. The company was founded in 1981 by a group of young artists looking to build a theatre that would present relevant and vibrantly entertaining plays.

Guided by Founding Artistic Director and Academy Award-winning actor Tim Robbins, the company provides a supportive environment for a diverse ensemble of artists and the development of their groundbreaking work.

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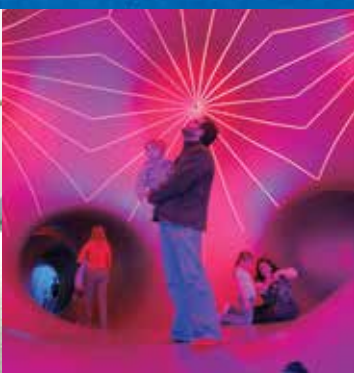
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Above: The Dustbowl Revival, Tino Wallenda, Architects of Air, high-diver Dana Kunze, Red Baraat, a float design for The Amazing River Parade by Quixotic, The Flying Cortes, Master of Ceremonies Tomáš Kubínek, Machine Dazzle, Anne Glover, Terrance Simien, RUBBERBAND, The Flying Wallendas, Brien Engel, Al Simmons.

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César Pelli (1926–2019)

Hancher architect and friend

César Pelli was a brilliant architect, and it was truly an honor to have him design the current Hancher Auditorium. We were even more honored to call him our friend.

That friendship began immediately after Pelli Clark Pelli Architects was selected to design a new Hancher Auditorium following the destruction of the original building by the flooding of 2008. César felt a personal connection to Hancher's work, and he made sure to connect with members of the staff and the University of Iowa community to ensure his ideas honored Hancher's past and elevate its future. At his firm's offices in New Haven, Connecticut, he devoted an entire room to the project, and he was always happy to share his thoughts about the building with visitors.

César was delighted by the beautiful setting—often commenting that it was the most gorgeous site for which he had designed a building—and he was committed to making the most of the space. He brought the indoors and the outdoors together in the lobby spaces and rehearsal room and designed an exceptional performance space.

His joy for the project was palpable from beginning to end. He came to Iowa City for the major milestones of the project, including our Site Ceremony connecting the original Hancher to the new, our Leave Your Mark beam signing (after which he joined hundreds of construction workers on the as-yet-unfinished stage for lunch), and our Gala Opening. On opening night, César took the stage with Hancher Executive Director Chuck Swanson to launch a new era for Hancher. We'll always remember his words that night: "Hancher was built with love."

We are saddened to lose our friend. We are blessed to have the opportunity to serve our campus and community in a building that will always stand as a tribute to César.

Above: César Pelli at the opening night of the Hancher Auditorium, 2016 (Photo: Bill Adams)

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The Vision for Hancher Auditorium: Cultivating the Arts at Iowa

This is the third in a series of essays about Virgil Hancher and his vision for the arts in general, and Hancher Auditorium in particular, at the University of Iowa. The essays will appear in playbills throughout this season and will be available on the Hancher website, as well.

By Daniel Boscaljon

Virgil Hancher was an important part of a larger context that championed innovations in the fusion of academics, the arts, and student life that coalesced in the vision for what is now called Hancher Auditorium on the University of Iowa campus. Hancher had recognized the need for a vital student center due to his experience of isolation as a freshman. Then he was part of campus life in the early 1920s when administrators first began to envision Iowa as a cultural leader.

President Walter Jessup and Graduate Dean Carl Seashore initiated the *Iowa Idea* of integrating creative and critical work and bringing artists into academic contexts. Thanks to them, Iowa was one of the first schools to reward creative work with graduate degrees beginning in 1922. This work came in conjunction with the creative leadership of departments in the arts that were beginning to emerge.



Walter Jessup



Carl Seashore

Philip Clapp came to Iowa in 1919 and both created and led the School of Music until his death in 1954, with courses earning academic credit beginning in 1921. One of Clapp's innovations was to broadcast his music appreciation/music theory course over the radio beginning in 1931, with a positive response



Philip Clapp



E. C. Mabie

from "students" all over the state. The Department of Speech was not far behind following the appointment of E. C. Mabie, who led the department from 1923-1956. Mabie worked together with the Englert Theatre and the university (using what is now Macbride Auditorium) as stages.

A third important ingredient in the foundation of what became Hancher Auditorium is the Iowa Memorial Union and its director Rufus Fitzgerald, who was also active in the cultural scene of the early 1920s. He left the YMCA in 1923 to become as the director of the IMU, which was beginning to raise funds to construct a building that would house extracurricular clubs as well as serve as a place where students and faculty could socialize. Virgil Hancher recognized the need for a Union early on, writing of the need for one in a 1919 editorial. He became one of Fitzgerald's active fundraisers among alumni in 1923.



Rufus Fitzgerald



Above: a map of proposed Fine Arts campus, The University of Iowa, 1933

By 1933, following SUI's acquisition of land on the west bank of the Iowa River, Jessup, Clapp, and Fitzgerald joined together to dream about an arts campus along the river.

Soon after, the campus saw an explosive expansion of academic and artistic hybrids in various departments throughout the liberal arts. Wilbur Schramm



Campus planning conference in UI president Jessup's office about fine arts campus, 1930s

began the Iowa Writers' Workshop in 1936, and Lester Longman, the first chair of the Department of Art, merged Art History and Studio Arts together beginning in 1938. Grant Wood taught at Iowa from 1934–1941, as did Robert Penn Warren in 1941.

This innovative foundation led to additional new developments. For example, a collaboration between Norman Foerster (English) and Harrison J. Thornton (History) using history and the social sciences as a way to discuss the production of literary texts became the American Studies program in 1947 with Alexander Kern serving as its first director.

Thus, by 1941 and Hancher's inauguration as President of SUI, the campus had created a clear culture of aesthetic and academic innovation—one that



Hancher had participated in from its beginnings. Some changes were made in leadership at this time, including Paul Engle taking over the Writers' Workshop. The idea for an auditorium was important as an expansion on the space of the IMU, one that was designed to provide a home that would showcase work of the caliber of its increasingly esteemed faculty and serve as a home for a vital, creative student body.

The larger international context of conflict and racialized hatred made the success of SUI's innovative leadership even more important. In an age of nationalistic attempts to use fear to unite people in hatred, the creation of a space of unity via the arts was an important alternative. It is in this spirit that Earl E. Harper—who took over Fitzgerald's role as Director of the IMU in 1938, declared in his October 30, 1943 speech *Fine Arts when Peace Comes*:

...the more the limited interests of the present keep the minds of the people narrowed and subjugated, the more urgent becomes the desire to unite the politically divided world under the flag of truth and beauty. ...[while] the fine arts as the free expression of the free spirit of mankind are driven out or forgotten for a while in ancient centers where they once reigned supreme, they will find new homes.

The State University of Iowa had developed a forty-year legacy of becoming an inviting home of the free expression of the free spirit of humans under the flag of truth and beauty. Hancher's vision for an auditorium would cement this vision and commit the University of Iowa to continuing to create, innovate, and promote a liberated and expanded vision of human community.

Daniel Boscaljon is a longtime contributor to arts writing in the ICR, often providing interviews, reviews, and essays on aesthetics for Little Village and The Englert as well as for Hancher. An independent scholar, teacher, and arts critic, he is committed to inviting others to incorporate wisdom and joy as part of everyday life. In addition to teaching workshops and holding free public conversations in the area, Daniel also has three current ventures including the Center for Humanist Inquiries (professional consultations), Coffee with Dan (spiritual direction and philosophical life coaching), and The Thoughtful Life (a non-profit venture that includes his "Making Space for Yourself" podcast). You can find his writing and more information about his services at danielboscaljon.com.



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