

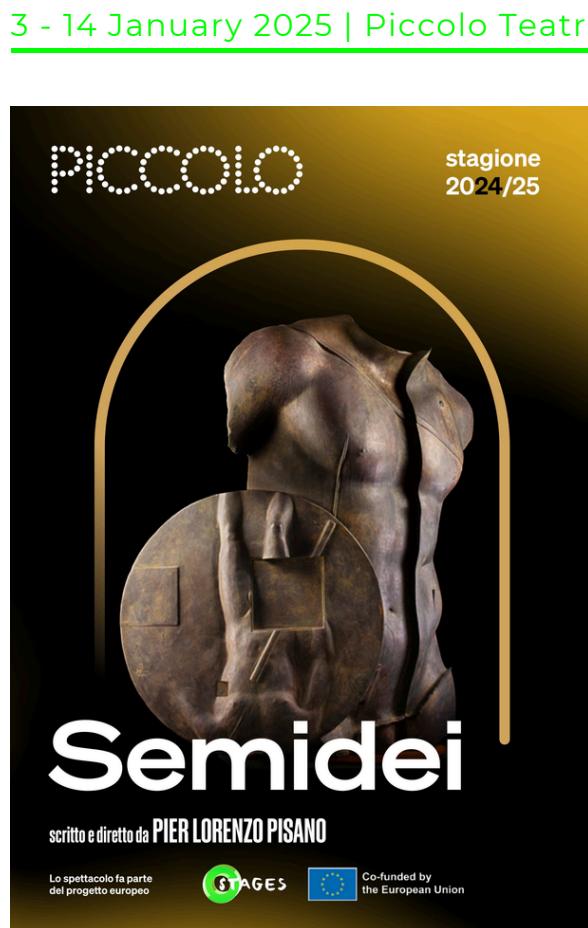
Artistic residency



PICCOLO TEATRO DI MILANO

PICCOLO

Residence in preparation of *Semidei*



The fascinating nature of legend in a text that stages the cycle of the Trojan War. Pier Lorenzo Pisano presents what the gods and heroes say (or could have said) in two moments: before the war, in a young and golden world, and after the destruction of the city, when the long and difficult journey home began amidst the smoking rubble and the cries of women.

ARTISTS INVOLVED

Artistic coordination by Pier Lorenzo Pisano

PIER LORENZO PISANO

*Born in 1991, he is a director and author in cinema, theater, and fiction. He graduated in directing from the National Film School at the Centro Sperimentale in Rome. He made his debut as a film director with the short film *Così in terra*, which was presented in competition at the 71st Cannes Film Festival, selected for the official Nastri d'Argento selection, the Globi d'Oro shortlist, and screened at over fifty international festivals. The following year, his short film *Antiorario* was produced and presented at the 72nd Locarno Film Festival. He has been a resident writer at the New York Theater Workshop and the Royal Court Theatre. He has participated in the Fabulamundi Playwriting Europe project, *Abecedario per il mondo nuovo* (Piccolo Teatro di Milano), *Playstorm* (Teatro Stabile di Torino), *Between Lands* (Emilia Romagna Teatro ERT / Teatro Nazionale), and *FUTUROpresente* (Rai Radio 3). His plays have been translated into fourteen languages and performed at international theaters and festivals such as the Festival d'Avignon and the FIBA in Buenos Aires. He has received major awards for new screenwriting and playwriting, including the Premio Riccione, the Premio Riccione "Pier Vittorio Tondelli," the Premio Solinas, and the Premio Hystrio. He has published *Il buio non fa paura* (NN), *Carbonio* (*Il Saggiatore*), *Per il tuo bene*, and *Semidei* (Einaudi). In the 2021/22 and 2022/23 seasons, he staged *Carbonio* at the Teatro Studio Melato. For *I fili dell'orizzonte*, he returns to the Piccolo with the new production *Semidei*.*

THE RESIDENCY

Pier Lorenzo Pisano decided to invest the time of Residency to work on two different fields related to sustainability. On the one hand, the focus was on lighting design, conceived not only as an aesthetic and narrative element, but also as a field for experimentation aimed at identifying innovative and sustainable technical strategies. In this perspective, solutions were explored to reduce the environmental impact of the performance, through the use of low-energy technologies and materials already available in the in-house supply.

At the same time, the residency placed great emphasis on the theme of accessibility, considered not as an afterthought but as an integral part of the creative process from the very early stages of the setup. Various solutions were therefore analyzed and tested to make the performance accessible to the broadest and most diverse audience possible, including people with sensory or motor disabilities.

In summary, the residency represented a valuable opportunity to develop a contemporary theatrical approach that combines artistic care with environmental and social awareness, based on the belief that a truly effective performance must also be inclusive and sustainable.

*For the staging of *Semidei*, our goal was to create a performance that could be accessible from every point of view, starting from the very first stages of production and aiming for a “generative” approach rather than a “corrective” one.*

*The Teatro Studio Melato, where *Semidei* was staged, already provides an environment conducive to an inclusive approach, thanks to its unusual circular arrangement of the audience around the stage. This arrangement is not only a stylistic choice but also a philosophical starting point that immediately made us think about how to make the performance fully visible and accessible. There is no “single perspective”: every spectator should be able to be an active part of the experience, regardless of their seat in the hall. This requires careful planning from the outset, with constant consideration for the protection and care of others, ensuring that every detail can meet the needs of a diverse audience.*

One further step was the introduction of a device for “poetic audio descriptions”, designed to make the performance accessible to an even broader audience. This system, using earphones, provided an acoustic accompaniment that enhanced the visual experience by poetically and sensorially describing what was happening on stage. In this way, not only blind people but also those who have difficulty interpreting certain visual stimuli, had the opportunity to experience the performance fully, without missing any emotional detail.

Attention to sustainability went beyond accessibility considerations and focused also on aspects of reuse, material selection to avoid waste, and energy savings.

For the set, we chose sand that was already prepared for reuse in other productions or for daily use in our set design workshop. This was a concrete action connected to a growing sensitivity towards sustainability, reducing waste and minimizing environmental impact.

We sought, whenever possible, to use pre-existing materials, reducing the use of new resources and trying to make the most of what already exists.

Even in terms of lighting design, the approach was oriented towards energy savings. The lights used during the performance were exclusively low-energy LEDs, a choice that not only reduces energy consumption but also fits into an energy efficiency mindset that permeates every stage of production.

*In conclusion, *Semidei* is an example of how theater can become a space of inclusion, where artistic choices intertwine with ethical ones. Our hope is that this approach can be a model for a future where every aspect of cultural and artistic life is designed to be accessible, respectful, and sustainable, creating a valuable experience for all.*

Pier Lorenzo Pisano, author and director

When Director Claudio Longhi involved me in the *Semidei* project, emphasizing that the performance was part of the STAGES project, I eagerly accepted for two main reasons. The first, of course, was the opportunity to be part of a team and offer my expertise in lighting design to the director Pier Lorenzo Pisano. The second, and most exciting, reason was that I would have to think in terms of eco and not ego — in other words, I would have a concrete opportunity to contribute to the sustainability project that the Piccolo Teatro is a partner in, doing my part for the environment.

My lighting design choices had to be made with a careful eye on the "planet," considering not only the two-hour duration of the performance but also the entire rehearsal period. I got to work immediately, starting to read the text, discuss it with the director, and plan the lighting in advance, using specific 3D software. The goal was to use low-energy service lights for as many days as possible and then, in the final week, refine the programming I had prepared earlier.

From the beginning, I chose modern projectors with LED light sources capable of changing color for the lighting. The real innovation, however, was the purchase of four tiny projectors called *Dash*, which the actors would hold in their hands like torches, illuminating each other. These projectors, of course, also have the ability to change color at will and use LED light sources.

The final result makes me very proud. The performance, in its complexity, has a truly modest environmental impact, with only 6 kg of CO2 emissions for the entire duration of the show. If I had used traditional tungsten filament lights, the emissions would have been 60 kg.

Manuel Frenda, Light designer

For the creation of the 'sculpture costumes' of *Semidei*, we relied on the precious collaboration of the historical props/support workshop *E. Rancati*. Their workshop would have allowed us to create ex novo all the elements that made up the 3 costumes that would go on stage.

In order to have a lower impact on the environment and to give new life to material forgotten in their well-stocked warehouses, we preferred instead to reuse everything that was by now discarded and ready to go to waste, reworking and processing old props, old capitals now destroyed, unfinished shields, used armour and elements of old stage sets now unusable.

The final effect is three costumes with a big impact but created using only and exclusively existing material.

Gianluca Sbicca, Costume designer



UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) LINKED TO THE WORKSHOP

