Performances that will ASTONISH & DELIGHT
I am pleased to welcome you to the inaugural Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival! Today, puppetry is a living and thriving art; this Festival is a celebration of its many forms. More than a dozen Chicago presenting organizations have joined together to ignite the spirit of this citywide event, which spans 10 days and features artists from abroad and across the nation, as well as unique work born here in Chicago—fresh from the soil!

The Festival features public performance across the city and a symposium organized by the University of Chicago and held at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

For those of you whose imaginations are curious and whose hearts are young, I hope you can join us. And for those of you who have yet to see a contemporary puppet show, I can guarantee it will be like nothing you have ever seen before.

—Blair Thomas
Festival Founder & Artistic Director
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**Jabberwocky Marionettes**

Open Mic Puppetry

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Joshua Holden**

The Joshua Show

1:00 p.m.

**Laurent Bigot**

Le Petit Cirque

2:00 p.m.

**Logan Center for the Arts**

Family Saturday Festival

12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Manuel Cinema**

Mementos Mori

7:30 p.m.

**Michael Montenegro**

Drunken Half-Angel

7:30 p.m.

**Nasty Brustih and Short**

A Puppet Cabaret

7:30 p.m.

**Nick Steur**

Freeze!

6:30 p.m.

**Noah Ginex Puppet Co.**

SNORF!

1:00 p.m.

**Sandglass Theater**

D-Generation

7:00 p.m.

**Stan's Cafe**

The Cardinals

7:30 p.m.

**Stephanie Diaz and Co.**

Mariaposa Nocturna

6:00 p.m.
Explore the world of puppets at the drop-in festival for all ages. Catch Bullooney Puppetworks’ adaptation of Rudyard Kipling’s classic short story *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, told using hand puppets, rod puppets, and masks within a lush landscape of leaves, trees, and original music (see pages 16-17). Then visit *Puppets!*, an interactive installation where you can create a story and act it out with handmade puppets inspired by artwork in the museum’s collection and special exhibit *Temptation: The Demons of James Ensor.*

**THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO** presents: **FAMILY FESTIVAL**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 17**

**ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, RYAN EDUCATION CENTER**
159 E. Monroe St.
Box Office: 312-443-3600

Free

Saturday 10:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Interactive family gallery tours at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.*

*Proof of admission or member card is required for adults and children 14+

[www.chicagopuppetfest.org](http://www.chicagopuppetfest.org)
The Selfish Giant features puppets by Blair Thomas and original music performed live by Chicago folk legend Michael Smith. Enormously imaginative and gigantically whimsical, this all-ages spectacle is based on Oscar Wilde’s classic story about a grumpy giant who forbids children from playing in his garden. After the children are locked out, however, the garden plunges into an eternal winter. Then one morning, the children sneak back in, bringing with them the joyous rebirth of spring.

CHICAGO CHILDREN’S THEATRE presents:

BLAIR THOMAS & CO.  
THE SELFISH GIANT

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23-SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

CHICAGO CHILDREN’S THEATRE AT THE RUTH PAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS
1016 N. Dearborn St.
Box Office: 872-222-9555

$28 Children; $38 Adults; $5 off with promo code PUPPET

Friday 6:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

50 minutes

www.chicagopuppetfest.org
Meet Moses—a cantankerous puppet with a cardboard head immersed in an existential crisis on a table. Intended to be a theatrical interpretation of the biblical story of Moses, *The Table* is performed by a grizzled, crotchety old man who strays far from the planned storyline. Hilarious, beautiful, and occasionally profound, London-based theatrical innovators Blind Summit have created puppetry for Anthony Minghella, Complicé, and Danny Boyle’s Olympic Opening Ceremony.
Explore the world of puppets at the drop-in festival for all ages. Catch Bullooney Puppetworks’ adaptation of Rudyard Kipling’s classic short story *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, told using hand puppets, rod puppets, and masks within a lush landscape of leaves, trees, and original music. Then visit *Puppets!*, an interactive installation where you can create a story and act it out with handmade puppets inspired by artwork in the museum’s collection and special exhibit *Temptation: The Demons of James Ensor*.

**ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO, RYAN EDUCATION CENTER**
159 E. Monroe St.
Box Office: 312-443-3600

Free, space limited*  
Saturday 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.  
*Free tickets will be distributed in the Ryan Education Center an hour prior to each performance.

www.chicagopuppetfest.org
Street theaters and festivals in China featuring shadow puppets can be traced back for hundreds of years. The stories within these traditional performances have become legendary. Don’t miss a unique opportunity to see this beautiful tradition come to life in a shadow puppetry performance by renowned New York-based Chinese Theatre Works (CTW). Featured works will take inspiration from The Field Museum’s own shadow puppet collection and will include famous stories like Monkey King and Journey to the West.

THE FIELD MUSEUM presents:

CHINESE THEATRE WORKS

RICH IN TRADITION—SHADOW PUPPETS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

THE FIELD MUSEUM
1400 S. Lake Shore Dr.
Box Office: 312-922-9410

Free with Basic admission ticket ($13-$18)

Saturday 3 p.m.

50 minutes

www.chicagopuppetfest.org
Montreal-based artist Daniel Barrow returns to Chicago with a world premiere story of a jewel thief who wears the mask of a sad clown. His deep, emotive eyes charge the mask with supernatural powers—so captivating is his expression that his gaze can permanently inscribe his visage in the glass. Exploring forgotten sexual mores and kitschy characters, Barrow uses his signature style of manual animation to walk the razor edge of irony, challenging systems of class and control in our culture.
This show features beautifully handcrafted trick marionettes that roller skate, perform on the tight rope and trapeze, transform, juggle, and much more in the traditional cabaret style with the puppeteers in full view of the audience. Dave Herzog has been a puppet artist for more than 40 years and is Great Lakes Regional Director of the Puppeteers of America. Marc Dunworth grew up with a father as a magician, created his own degree in puppetry at Columbia College Chicago, and formed The Dunworth Puppets in 2014.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

LINKS HALL
3111 N. Western Ave.
Box Office: 773-281-0824

$10-$15 or $30 NASTYPASS

Sunday 1 p.m.

45 minutes
The first piece by this New York-based artist, *In Flight*, mocks the market of mis-focusing information and our potential for mass apathy. Join the passengers of a crashing airplane as their crew tries to distract them from their fiery fates. Next, Commander moves to the miniature sets of *Sacrament Burger*, which explores our need to ritualize the act of eating and how this ceremony is performed within restaurant culture. He focuses on our disconnection from the function and value of food and how that contributes to waste.
THE FIELD MUSEUM presents:

Dozin' With The Dinos

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16 - SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

Spend the night at The Field Museum—Sue the T. rex is having a special puppetry-filled sleepover! Enjoy puppet shows, activities and self-guided tours, then spread your sleeping bag amidst some of the most popular exhibitions. Bring your family and friends for a night of puppetry and fun you’ll never forget at Chicago’s Field Museum, one of the largest natural history museums in the world. Pre-registration required.

THE FIELD MUSEUM
1400 S. Lake Shore Dr
Box Office: 312-922-9410

$55-$88

Friday 5:30 p.m. to Saturday, 9 a.m. (overnight)

For families with children 6-12

Photo: The Jabberywocky Marionettes
Chicago-based FlipFlap Productions’ *The Temp* is a darkly comic tale exploring the life of an over-age temp who wants to be anything else. Told with music, puppets, and video, *The Temp* confronts demons, strangers, and the eternal search for the bathroom. Stretching the boundaries of what makes a comedy show, FlipFlap explores people and places that aren’t normally seen on stage in a weirdly natural, weirdly believable, weirdly weird way.
A live-action three-dimensional cartoon performed by a cast of fifteen, *Cartoon* was created by Steve Ackerman and directed by Ackerman and Ellen Conn. Jerry-rigged puppet effects, a pit ‘orchestra,” a mad conductor, and a narrator who’s in on the joke work in perfect harmony to bring this Tex Avery-tweaking masterpiece to life. You’ll be glued to your seat from the first chainsaw-wielding chase scene to the anvil-dropping finale in this show that includes people running into brick walls, falling pianos, and an entire scene of dynamite.

**REVA AND DAVID LOGAN CENTER FOR THE ARTS**
915 E. 60th St., Theater East
Box Office: 773-702-2787

$5-$15

Friday 9 p.m.; Saturday 7 p.m.
All-ages show: Saturday 2 p.m.*

*Part of the Logan Center Family Festival, (see p. 41). Sponsored by the Logan Center and Theater & Performance Studies.

[www.chicagopuppetfest.org](http://www.chicagopuppetfest.org)
Inspired by singer-songwriter Dar Williams’s song of the same title, Mortal City uses music and visual imagery to puppeteer a poem of a city. Set during an ice storm at night, Mortal City explores creating and finding the warm pulse of the city in its layered soundscape, fragile infrastructure, simple light, and periwinkle winter skies. In the Heart of the Beast Theatre, based in Minneapolis, has been at the vanguard of theater melding performance with the rich history of puppetry.
Chicago’s Jabberwocky Marionettes hosts a startling array of area puppeteers – young and old, professional and amateur, solo and ensemble – who perform family-focused puppet shows throughout the day on one of two stages at The Field Museum. Performers include: Sea Beast Puppet Company, Clothespin Puppets, Matteson Public Library Puppet Pals, Adventure Sandwich, Puppetfolk Productions!, and Mother Goose and her Ventriloquist Puppets.

**THE FIELD MUSEUM**
1400 S. Lake Shore Dr.
Box Office: 312-922-9410

Free with Basic admission ticket ($13-$18)

Saturday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
When Mr. Nicholas, the sock puppet, makes an unnerving self-discovery that causes him to spiral down a path of loneliness and despair, his soul mate Joshua teaches him to celebrate his differences in this show full of songs, comedy, whimsy, abundant joy, and just a smattering of tap dancing. Don't miss this chance to see the show awarded “Best Performance” and “Audience Favorite” at the 2013 Puppeteers of America’s National Festival. Joshua Holden is an award-winning puppeteer actor and joy-maker based in NYC.
Within a circus-like, table-top installation, French electroacoustic musician Laurent Bigot sets various objects in motion. A “circus of sound” and a theater of objects, Le Petit Cirque is made from odds and ends, salvaged material, and cheap gadgets. Action nourishes sound and sound gives new meaning to action, via improvisation and the chance of mechanics. The spectator skips from one point of view to another, engaging ears, eyes, skin, imagination, and thought associations.
The Logan Center’s monthly family series draws inspiration from the world’s puppet and mask traditions with a family-friendly performance of Heart of the Beast’s *Cartoon* at 2 p.m. (see pages 30-31), plus drop-in activities, a photo booth, a “Make and Take” puppet workshop, and a “Puppet Zoo” with House Theatre, FlipFlap Productions, Heart of the Beast, Adventure Stage and more.
Manual Cinema, the endlessly inventive group of Chicago artists, uses disarmingly simple tools — live music, paper puppets, overhead projectors — to tell transformative stories that unsettle the boundaries between cinema and theater. With *Mementos Mori*, Manual Cinema offers a beguiling meditation on how digital culture is changing our relationship to death and dying. Shadow puppets interact with live actors in silhouette, while a chamber ensemble and video complete the immersive multimedia experience.
Drunken Half-Angel is a presentation of several new puppet theatre pieces accompanied by live music from Jude Mathews and Noah Silver-Mathews. A man carries his burden without end... two aspects of the same individual at war with each other... a dream of the inevitability of departure... lamentation of one who is rebuked... the struggle between Little and Big... a Medieval Ballad... Drunken Half-Angel is part of Nasty, Brutish & Short Presents... curated by Links Hall Artistic Associates Mike Oleon and Taylor Bibat.

www.chicagopuppetfest.org
A Puppet Cabaret showcases Chicago’s rich puppet scene through short- and medium-length works of puppet and object theater. Program A features: VONORTHAL PUPPETS’ interpretation of the classic short story A White Heron by Sarah Orne Jewett; a buffet of short works by SEA BEAST PUPPET COMPANY; a mead-soaked, toy theater exploration of the classic epic poem Beowulf by HEARTS AND BRAINS; and a Ray Charles-inspired glimpse into the lives of two people falling in and out of love in Ruby and Charlie by JESSICA SIMON.

LINKS HALL presents:

NASTY, BRUTISH & SHORT—PROGRAM A

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18 - MONDAY, JANUARY 19

A Puppet Cabaret showcases Chicago’s rich puppet scene through short- and medium-length works of puppet and object theater. Program A features: VONORTHAL PUPPETS’ interpretation of the classic short story A White Heron by Sarah Orne Jewett; a buffet of short works by SEA BEAST PUPPET COMPANY; a mead-soaked, toy theater exploration of the classic epic poem Beowulf by HEARTS AND BRAINS; and a Ray Charles-inspired glimpse into the lives of two people falling in and out of love in Ruby and Charlie by JESSICA SIMON.

LINKS HALL
3111 N. Western Ave.
Box Office: 773-281-0824

$10–$15 or $30 NASTYPASS

Sunday-Monday 7:30 p.m.

100 minutes
A Puppet Cabaret showcases Chicago’s rich puppet scene through short- and medium-length works of puppet and object theater. Program B features: The Hubrist, a grandiloquent farce of tiny proportion by Joe Mazza; Cabaret Interludes, three short tales of love, seduction, and heartbreak by Meredith Miller; And Dream of Teeth, a dive into the psyche of the Dreamer using glue, paper, fabric, and flashlights by Rough House; and some aspirational clowning by Vanessa Valliere in Nice Try and Your Best Self.

LINKS HALL presents:

NASTY, BRUTISH & SHORT PROGRAM B

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22 - THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

A Puppet Cabaret showcases Chicago’s rich puppet scene through short- and medium-length works of puppet and object theater. Program B features: The Hubrist, a grandiloquent farce of tiny proportion by Joe Mazza; Cabaret Interludes, three short tales of love, seduction, and heartbreak by Meredith Miller; And Dream of Teeth, a dive into the psyche of the Dreamer using glue, paper, fabric, and flashlights by Rough House; and some aspirational clowning by Vanessa Valliere in Nice Try and Your Best Self.

LINKS HALL
3111 N. Western Ave.
Box Office: 773-281-0824

$10–$15 or $30 NASTYPASS

Sunday-Monday 7:30 p.m.
100 minutes

www.chicagopuppetfest.org
Creator and performer Nick Steur welcomes audiences as he artfully balances stones without glue or other manipulations. Chicago Shakespeare Theater presents the U.S. premiere of this one-of-a-kind live performance event from The Netherlands. Winner of the Edinburgh Fringe First award in 2013, Freeze! blurs the line between performer and audience as all collectively experience the unexplainable harmony that comes from balance and focus.
Come see a special Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival presentation of SNORF! (The Saturday Afternoon Monster and Piggie/Comedy Variety Show), a monthly variety show appropriate for all ages. Featuring puppets from the Jeff Award-nominated Noah Ginex Puppet Company, SNORF! has sketches, improvised scenes, songs, and a special guest!

**LINKS HALL presents**

**NOAH GINEX PUPPET COMPANY**

**SNORF!**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 17**

Come see a special Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival presentation of SNORF! (The Saturday Afternoon Monster and Piggie/Comedy Variety Show), a monthly variety show appropriate for all ages. Featuring puppets from the Jeff Award-nominated Noah Ginex Puppet Company, SNORF! has sketches, improvised scenes, songs, and a special guest!

**LINKS HALL**

3111 N. Western Ave.
Box Office: 773-281-0824

$10–$15 or $30 NASTYPASS

Saturday 1 p.m.

50 minutes
The Center for Community Arts Partnerships at Columbia College Chicago presents:

SANDGLASS THEATER

D-Generation: An Exaltation of Urbs

Friday, January 16 - Saturday, January 17

A full-length theater piece performed by Vermont’s Sandglass Theater, D-Generation is based on stories written collaboratively by people with late-stage dementia. Three puppeteers (the caregivers) and five puppets (the residents of a care facility) create a complex world of people living with the disease—from playful story circles to dark private terror, from lyrical inner visions to demanding confrontations, from the reflections of caregivers to the fragmented memories of residents of care facilities.

www.chicagopuppetfest.org

The Dance Center of Columbia College
1306 S. Michigan Ave.
Box Office: 312-369-8330

$20

Friday-Saturday 7 p.m.

70 minutes
In this thought-provoking, witty, and hugely entertaining show from Britain’s Stan’s Cafe, three cardinals are touring a puppet show to broaden knowledge of the Bible. Undeterred by the loss of their puppets, they take to the miniature stage themselves amid the two-dimensional scenery and act their roles with touching deadpan sincerity. Witty and almost wordless, The Cardinals draws humor from its engaging performances and ingenious staging, which expose frenetic backstage efforts to create beautiful onstage action.
A child’s wish to a Guatemalan folk saint for her dying grandmother to have a “happy sleep” results in a bawdy, Japanese shadow-dream. Two bird-headed spinsters suddenly find themselves custodians of a large, glowing egg. A lonely toy carriage embarks upon a jaunty odyssey in search of buried dreams. Employing handcrafted tabletop and shadow puppets, original music, and stop-motion film, Mariposa Nocturna explores loss, longing, and rebirth in this gently humorous, darkly beautiful, and emotionally resonant new work.
This international symposium brings together artists from Manual Cinema, Blind Summit, Stan’s Cafe, and others with invited scholars from diverse fields to investigate the meaning, vitality, and relevance of contemporary puppetry. At once cutting to the heart of puppetry and seeking its broadest significance, participants will address questions such as: How do we attach identity to a face? How do we perceive realness and fakeness? Where do we find meaning in materiality?

Conceived and organized by Blair Thomas (Artistic Director, Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival), Leslie Danzig (Curator, Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry), and Sarah Fornace (Co-Artistic Director, Manual Cinema), this day-long event will be of interest to artists and thinkers from any discipline with an interest in the creative pursuit of inquiry and the tension between ideas and practice.

Presented by the Richard and Mary L. Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry at the University of Chicago in partnership with the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CHICAGO
220 E Chicago Ave.
Free and open to the public
RSVP recommended
graycenter.uchicago.edu
10 a.m - 4 p.m.

ELLEN VAN VOLKENBURG
Before 1912, the term “Puppeteer” did not exist in the English language. Ellen van Volkenburg, a director with the Chicago Little Theatre, needed a program credit for the actors she had trained to manipulate marionettes while speaking the text of “A Midsummer’s Nights Dream”. Van Volkenburg coined this word at the dawn of the movement in puppetry that has brought us to the rich art form that is practiced today.
Blair Thomas founded his company in 2002. Since that time, the company has created and toured more than a dozen original puppet theater productions drawing from literary and musical sources such as Federico Garcia Lorca, Arnold Schoenberg, Wallace Stevens, and Modest Mussorgsky. In the winter of 2016, they will premiere their new adaptation of *Moby Dick*.

Blair Thomas & Company acknowledges support from: Alphawood Foundation, Arts Work Fund, Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events of the City of Chicago, Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelly Foundation, Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, Jentes Family Foundation, Illinois Arts Council—a state agency, Henson Foundation, and MacArthur Foundation

The Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival is a project conceived by Blair Thomas & Company. This is the inaugural Festival.

**Coming Up Next for the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival**

**WORLD PUPPETRY DAY CELEBRATIONS—SATURDAY, MARCH 21**

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Puppet Making Workshop at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive & Outsider Art

7:30 p.m. Puppet Performances at Links Hall

**FESTIVAL STAFF**

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Founder and Artistic Director

**CLAIRE GEALL SUTTON**
Managing Director

**JAY KELLY**
Public Relations Manager

**DEIDRE HUCKABAY**
Development Associate

**LAURA MIRACLE TAMARKIN**
Education Coordinator

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**SARAH BEST**
Social Media Director

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