

CHICAGO PUPPET LAB SHOWCASE

June 1-11, 2024



The Chicago Puppet Lab is a developmental lab for Chicago artists creating new, original puppet theater work. This cohort of artists from a variety of creative backgrounds and with a range of puppetry experience has been meeting weekly with Co-directors Tom Lee and Grace Needlman since October. Thank you for joining us to celebrate their growth and discoveries at this showing of works-in-progress.

Program A, featuring works by Rachel Singer, Gretchen Hasse, Jacqueline Nann Wade, Chio Cabrera-Coz

Friday, June 2 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, June 3 at 2 p.m.; Sunday, June 4 at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, June 8 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, June 10 at 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, June 11 at 2 p.m.

Program B, featuring works by August Boyne and Jacky Kelsey, Claude Fethiere, Sion Silva, Collective SUMM (Kevin Michael Wesson and Jaerin Son)

Thursday, June 1 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, June 3 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, June 4 at 2 p.m.; Friday, June 9 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, June 10 at 2 p.m.; and Sunday, June 11 at 7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM A

Juana and the Missing Mayan Book

Chio Cabrera-Coz

Performance: Jacob Cabrera-Coz, Lindsey Ball, Alexander Ferguson, Daniela Kreidler, Ceasar

Fabrication: Chio Cabrera-Coz, Kerry Ozima, Alejandro Cabrera, Rocio Isabel Cabrera

Writing: Chio Cabrera-Coz and Jacob Cabrera-Coz

Special thanks to Gina Pacheco-Gamboa for her incredible library full of indigenous culture and modern chicano resistance.

Conceived, written, and directed by Chio Cabrera-Coz

In the midst of the Spanish invasion of what is now Yucatan, México, the Mayan people battled for peace, independence, and cultural preservation. Follow Juana, a 9 year old girl, as she sets out on a journey to save the few lasting remnants of the ancient Mayan society. Poetry, hope, and nature are explored through a budding child in this child-friendly historical fiction piece. Juana and the Missing Mayan Book will transport you to another world where mythology and hope clash against oppression.

The Thing With Wings

Gretchen Hasse

Performance: Alonso Galué, Wendy Madrigal

In a story of hope for the deep future, told with giant cardboard puppets, an expectant mother dreams of her children's future. The future has different plans.

Tryptic in MOVE

Jacqueline Nann Wade

Performance: *Tracey Christmas, *Amandatron5000, Claude Fethiere, Rachel Hartmann, Abby Palen, *Efren Paderes, *Shaylynn Scales, *James Williams

Fabrication assistance: Amy Gorelow, Abby Palen, Felix Mayes, Rachel Hartmann, Lauren Elision, Alexis Willis, Claude Fethiere

Illustration: Lauren Elision

Artistic Consultation and Set Design: Torry Bend

Media Advisor: Sarah Forance

Special thanks: Blair Thomas, Sam Lewis, Noah Lewis, Jerrell Henderson

Tryptic in MOVE, conceived, written, and directed by Jacqueline Wade, is a moving piece about an African American woman's journey through MOVE, a back-to-nature activist group from Philadelphia and the system.

*These performers are members of Red Line Service, a unique art organization led by people experiencing homelessness and extreme housing insecurity. redlineservice.org

Eve of a Great Remembering

Practice of Imagination (Rachel Singer)

Performance: Rachel Singer, Dorian Taylor, Sojourner Zenobia, Mak Scheel, Callum Grant

Puppet and Set Design and Construction: Rachel Singer

Sound Design: Dorian Taylor and Rachel Singer

Multiplane Construction: Richie Schiraldi and Rachel Singer

Access and Disability Consultation: Genevieve Ramos

Special Thanks: Valerie and Howard Singer, Eve Ilsen, and Rabbi Charna Rosenholtz

On the Eve of a Great Remembering you are invited to sit inside of the place where memory meets imagination. Living with chronic fatigue from neuroinvasive West Nile virus for almost a decade, Rachel travels in place as she reaches into imaginal worlds and reveals hidden stories of ancestors and hope in the past, present and future. Through dance, shadow and tabletop puppetry, concealed worlds begin to take form to wash away the illusion of separation.

Eve of a Great Remembering was produced during the artist-in-residency program at Access Living, an independent living center for people with disabilities.

PROGRAM B

Fidget

August Boyne and Jacky Kelsey

Music: Jordan Paine

Featuring large-scale puppets and original music, “Fidget” tells the story of two hands born into a world of colorful objects and endless possibilities. The hands discover that they are opposing halves of an unseen being. Together they learn to play, create, and destroy.

Joe Joe’s First Flight

Claude Fethiere

Fabrication assistance: Karin Hannemann

Music: Rodney Gibson

An adaptation of a children’s book written by Natasha Tarpley’s, the artist’s wife, Joe-Joe’s First Flight is about a seven-year-old African-American kid who, like his father, dreams of flying an airplane. In the segregated 1920’s, his father and his friends who call themselves “The All Original Flying Men”, repair, maintain, and clean airplanes at a local airport even though segregation laws and false promises from their boss prevent them from flying any of the planes. One night, Joe-Joe decides to fly a plane by himself to fulfill his, and his father’s, lifetime dream.

The Graveyard of Eden: Transfiguration

SION

Puppet fabrication and performance: SION, Emilie Helene Wingate, Nathaniel Harrington, Monty Hart

Music: Jeremy Stefun

Sound Design: Nate Voisan, Amman Sandhu, Christian Demolay

“Transfiguration” is a retelling of the origin of life from the perspective of a celestial fetus named Eden. It is one chapter of The Graveyard of Eden, an expansive mythology hand-crafted as both a means of praising and critiquing humanity’s relationship with the power of myth.

All is Blue & Yellow

Collective SUMM: Kevin Michael Wesson and Jaerin Son

Performance: Kevin Michael Wesson, Lindsey Ball, Kelly Nesheim, Michele Stine, Richard Whitehead

Assistant set fabrication: Lindsey Ball, Lucy Wirtz

Inspired by the visible light spectrum for dogs of blues and yellows, All is Blue & Yellow is a marionette puppet show for dogs and their families. Designed to maintain dogs’ attention, the story follows “Orbit”, an otherwise normal dog who one day discovers the story of “Laika”, the russian cosmonaut pup. This performance is a puppet show where dogs and humans can enjoy together, reflecting on the deep love between humans and dogs, singing and longing their love of their animal friends who became stars.

PRODUCTION

Production Management: Anastar Alvarez

Lighting design: Quinn Chisenhall

Sound design: Matt Reich

Puppet Festival Staff

Artistic Director and Festival Founder Blair Thomas, Executive Director Sandy Smith Gerding, with Tom Lee, Co-Director, Chicago Puppet Lab and Studio; Grace Needlman, Co-Director, Chicago Puppet Lab; Cameron Heinze, Business Manager; Taylor Bibat, Festival and Education Coordinator; Zachary Sun, Chicago Puppet Studio Coordinator; Averly Sheltraw, Chicago Puppet Studio Assistant; and Lucy Wirtz, Administrative Support.

This program was made possible by special funding from the following and we thank them for their leadership:

Kristy & Brandon Moran



PAUL M. ANGELL
FAMILY FOUNDATION

...and all of the donors who support The Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival.

SAVE THE DATES!

The 6th edition of The Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival is

January 17-28, 2024