

600 HIGHWAYMEN *THE FEVER*

Program
Notes

MCA STAGE
Fall 2017

Thu-Sun
Sep 7-10, 2017

Edlis Neeson
Theater

Eyes
Wide

Lights
Low

at MCA
Stage

The Fever total running
time is seventy-five minutes
with no intermission.

The Fever was commissioned by The Public Theater and made possible with funding by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Jerome Foundation, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's New York Theater Program. *The Fever* was supported by residency partnerships with the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs; Arizona State University's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts with ASU Gammage; the 2015 Sundance Institute Theater Lab at MASS MoCA; Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Process Space program; a Watershed Lab residency at Mount Tremper Arts, with lead support by the National Endowment for the Arts; New York University's Experimental Theater Wing; The Wexner Center for the Arts; Park Avenue Armory; On the Boards; and St. Ann & the Holy Trinity Church.

Special thanks to the wonderful team at the MCA, as well as to ArkType, Chuck Helm, Michael Lonergan, Mark Russell, Quita Sullivan, Peter Taub, Meiyin Wang, and Mark Yeoman.

Written and directed by Abigail Browde
and Michael Silverstone

Created in collaboration with
Brandon Wolcott, Emil Abramyan, and
Eric Southern

ENSEMBLE

Tommer Peterson
Marchánt Davis
Jax Jackson

PRODUCTION

ORIGINAL MUSIC
Brandon Wolcott and Emil Abramyan

PRODUCTION DESIGN
Eric Southern

SOUND DESIGN
Brandon Wolcott

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Will Delorm

EXCLUSIVE TOUR REPRESENTATION
ArkType/Thomas O. Kriegsmann

arktype.org

FROM THE CURATORS

I first encountered 600 HIGHWAYMEN's rigorous and unconventional way of making theater as a dancer myself, auditioning for their work before I had experienced it live. Abigail Browde and Michael Silverstone led us through activities that made our gestures, speech, and arrangements of our bodies in the space suddenly take on unpredictable social meanings. It seemed to me a feat of directorial magic. As the museum celebrates its 50th anniversary and unveils its newly designed gathering spaces, I am thrilled that this MCA Stage season opens with a work that asks us to attend to how we participate in communities and common spaces. This subtle, remarkable performance experience by Abigail and Michael leaves audience members with insistent, open-ended questions about their participation as individuals in the room and, by extension, in society and the world.

—Tara Aisha Willis

The Fever is cocurated by Yolanda Cesta Cursach, Curator,
and Tara Aisha Willis, Associate Curator.

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Touring support for *The Fever* is provided by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Accessible programming for *The Fever* is supported by artist/scholar Carrie Sandahl, director of Bodies of Work: A Network of Disability Art and Culture and faculty in the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois-Chicago.



**National
Endowment
for the Arts**
arts.gov



ABOUT THE WORK

The Fever, the latest work by the writer/director team 600 HIGHWAYMEN, is performed in intimate collaboration with the audience. Abigail Browde and Michael Silverstone take the bare essentials of theater—performers, an open stage, a seated audience, speech, sound, and bodily action—and remind us that these elements are all that are needed to transform our perceptions and self-awareness.

Browde and Silverstone have consistently made stripped-down works that blur the expectations of what a performer ought to be or do. Like the set design of *The Fever*, their work can be deceptively simple: an unremarkable, repeated gesture comes to hold indescribable significance; a performer's direct gaze takes on unexpected layers of emotion.

600 HIGHWAYMEN's past works have included *This Great Country*, which dismantled Arthur Miller's iconic play *Death of a Salesman*; *This Time Tomorrow*, which was created and shown in a church basement; and *The Record*, devised for a cast of forty-five individuals who had never met before the performance. In *Empire City*, actors wearing headphones recite along with a recording of an ordinary family conversation, shifting between roles nightly. In the award-winning *Employee of the Year*, the story of one woman's journey through life, from beginning to end, is taken on by five performers—all young girls.

Rather than replicating the same experience for each audience, or placing actors into fixed roles, Browde and Silverstone treat each performance as a unique situation arising among people, instigated by their directorial hand but shaped in the moment. The attentiveness that each performer must bring to the unfolding dynamic in the room is exposed and palpable—actors and audience alike are active witnesses to each other.

In *The Fever*, Browde and Silverstone guide the audience with generosity, even as the work tests the limits of our capacity to support and respond to one another. The performance throws into relief each individual's experience of the group, offering everyone the chance to practice navigating a community together.



600 HIGHWAYMEN, *The Fever*
Photo: Maria Baranova



RELATED PROGRAMS

MCA Stage's series of artist-centered talks, workshops, and open studios engages the public with the artists in intimate settings and provides a closer look at the creative process.

MCA TALK

Fri, Sep 8, following the performance

The audience is invited to join the artists for a conversation moderated by Ira Murfin, Interdisciplinary PhD in Theater and Drama at Northwestern University, directly following the performance.

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Program notes
compiled by
Tara Aisha Willis

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Select MCA Stage performances include open-captioning, sign-interpretation, listening devices, or are relaxed-sensory.

Please call 312-397-4010 in advance to reserve seats and inclusive services.

OC



BUY TICKETS

ONLINE
mcachicago.org/stage

BY PHONE
312-397-4010

AT THE MCA
BOX OFFICE

220 E Chicago Ave
Chicago, IL 60611

Single performance tickets starting at \$30; \$10 for students, limited availability

Groups of ten or more save 20% on full-price tickets; call 312-397-4010

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Present your MCA Stage ticket stub to receive free admission* and 10% off your purchase at the MCA Store.** Or become an MCA Member and save 15%.

Ticket stub is valid during regular hours up to seven days after the performance date.

* Not accepted for special ticketed exhibitions

** Regular price, in-stock merchandise only; no other discounts apply

ACCESSIBLE EVENTS

RELAXED PERFORMANCE WITH ASL INTERPRETATION Sept 10, 2 PM

Relaxed performances are for people, with or without disabilities, who prefer some flexibility in terms of noise and movement in the theater. Stage lighting and sound have been adapted by the artists to be less intense.

Patrons are free to leave and reenter the theater as necessary, and the theater lights are kept at a glow to facilitate movement. Sensory rest areas are available outside the theater for patrons to take a break before returning to the show. Trained volunteers are present to assist.

Amy Kisner and Suzanne Salerno are the ASL interpreters for this performance.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

600 HIGHWAYMEN is the moniker for theater artists Abigail Browde and Michael Silverstone. The duo has created eight original works since 2009, with presentations at many national and international venues, including Under The Radar (The Public Theater), Crossing the Line (French Institute Alliance Française), River to River (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council), Abrons Arts Center (New York), Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus), On The Boards (Seattle), Centre Pompidou and Parc de la Villette (France), Festival Theaterformen (Germany), Noorderzon Festival (The Netherlands), Zürcher Theater Spektakel (Switzerland), Onassis Cultural Centre (Greece), In Between Time International Festival (United Kingdom), OzAsia Festival (Australia), and many others. The group received an Obie Award in 2014 and Zurich's ZKB Patronage Prize in 2015. In 2016, Browde and Silverstone were named artist fellows by the New York Foundation for the Arts. Their adaptation of *Kasimir and Karoline* premiered at the 2017 Salzburg Festival. For more information, visit

600HIGHWAYMEN.org

DATE NIGHT



Marisol. Photo: Herman Hiller

Join us for dinner or drinks before or after the theater at Marisol, the new restaurant and bar at the MCA. When purchasing tickets through the MCA Box Office, ask about a special Date Night promotion. Call 312-397-4010 for more information.

MARISOL

RESTAURANT AND BAR
AT THE MCA

205 E PEARSON ST
CHICAGO, IL 60611

SEASON CALENDAR

2017

Sep 7-10

600 HIGHWAYMEN
The Fever

Oct 5-8

Marc Bamuthi Joseph/
The Living Word Project
*/peh-LO-tah/-a futbol
framed freedom suite . . .*

Nov 9-12

Faye Driscoll
*Thank You For
Coming: Play*

Dec 7-10

Twyla Tharp
Minimalism and Me

2018

Jan 25-28

Federico León
Las ideas

Feb 8-11

Claire Cunningham
and Jess Curtis
*The Way You Look
(at me) Tonight*

Apr 6-7

Mind Over Mirrors
Bellowing Sun

Apr 12-15

Okwui Okpokwasilli
Poor People's TV Room

ON VIEW
AT THE MCA

Through Sep 24, 2017
Takashi Murakami:
*The Octopus
Eats Its Own Leg*

Through Oct 1, 2017
little lower layer

Through Dec 10, 2017
To the Racy Brink

Through Dec 31, 2017
Chicago Works:
Amanda Williams

Through Jan 14, 2018
Woman with a Camera

Through Apr 1, 2018
We Are Here

Sep 16, 2017-Mar 4,
2018
Michael Rakowitz:
Backstroke of the West

Oct 14, 2017-Apr 8,
2018
Felix

Dec 23, 2017-May 20,
2018
MCA Screen:
Paul Pfeiffer

Jan 16-Jul 1, 2018
Chicago Works:
Paul Heyer

Feb 24-May 20, 2018
Howardena Pindell:
What Remains to Be Seen

Mar 31-Sep 9, 2018
Otobong Nkanga

MCA
CHIC
AGO

The MCA's newest affinity group, Enact, is a group of MCA donors dedicated to supporting the renowned programs of MCA Stage. Join today for opportunities to meet artists, gain behind-the-scenes access, and discuss groundbreaking directions with leading curators—all while providing vital support.

BENEFITS OF ENACT MEMBERSHIP INCLUDE:

- Members-only programming throughout the MCA Stage season, such as intimate gatherings with MCA performance leadership, pre- and post-performance discussions with artists, and behind-the-scenes access to select rehearsals
- Invitation to Season Reveal, an annual preview of the upcoming season
- Opportunities for complimentary drinks and tickets

Circle Donor membership is required to join Enact. Enact dues are an additional \$1,000 annually. For more information, contact us at enact@mcachicago.org.

ENACT MEMBERS

Dr. Bruce and Sally Bauer
Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and
Dr. Christopher M. Kelly
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The Eisen Family Foundation
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Cheryl and John Seder

Ellen Stone Belic

Linda and Michael Welsh

Anonymous

*Enact Chair
As of August 2017

MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART
CHICAGO

SUPPORT FOR MCA STAGE

Lead support for the 2017-18 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support is provided by Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation, David Herro and Jay Franke, Ginger Farley and Bob Shapiro, the Martha Struthers Farley and Donald C. Farley Jr. Family Foundation, Sharon and Lee Oberlander, Maya Polsky, Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund, Susan Manning and Doug Doetsch, D. Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies, and Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly.

Additional generous support for MCA Stage is provided by Enact, the MCA's performance affinity group.

The MCA is a proud member of the Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

FOUNDATION SEASON SPONSOR



HOTEL SPONSOR



ABOUT MCA STAGE

As an internationally renowned institution devoted to contemporary culture, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago presents the most thought-provoking visual art and performing arts of our time. MCA Stage is a vibrant series presenting theater, dance, and music by leading artists from the United States and around the world in the MCA's three-hundred seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

MCA Stage's groundbreaking performances are an integral part of the MCA's artist-activated, audience-engaged programming. Along with the museum's exhibitions and educational initiatives, they encourage a broad and diverse community to experience and discuss the work and ideas of living artists.

PARKING

Validate your ticket at coat check for \$12 parking in the MCA garage (220 E Chicago Ave) and the Bernardin garage (747 North Wabash). The \$12 parking is limited to six hours on the date of performance.

LOST AND FOUND

To inquire about a lost item, call the museum at 312-280-2660. Unclaimed articles are held for thirty days.

SEATING

Please switch off all noise-making devices while you are in the theater.

Patrons are seated at the management's discretion. Food and open beverage containers are not allowed in the seating area.

REPRODUCTION

Unauthorized recording and reproduction of a performance are prohibited.

GENERAL INFORMATION

312-280-2660

BOX OFFICE

312-397-4010

VOLUNTEER FOR PERFORMANCES

312-397-4072

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