

MCA Stage 2014–15

Theater
Dance
Music

at the
Edlis
Neeson
Theater

Winter/Spring

Manual Cinema

Mementos Mori

Jan 15–18, 2015

Stan's Cafe

The Cardinals

Jan 22–24, 2015

Sònia Sánchez

Le Ça (The Id)

Feb 13–15, 2015

Mariano Pensotti

Cineastas (Filmmakers)

Feb 26–Mar 1, 2015

Joffrey Academy of Dance

*Winning Works: Choreographers
of Color*

Mar 7–8, 2015

The Seldoms

Power Goes

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Ragamala Dance and Rudresh

Mahanthappa

Song of the Jasmine

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Carmen de LaVallade

As I Remember It

Apr 18–19, 2015

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE): Anna Thorvaldsdottir

In the Light of Air

Apr 26, 2015

Creative Music Summit

Nicole Mitchell

May 2, 2015

Renée Baker

May 3, 2015

Third Coast Percussion with

Glenn Kotche

Wild Sound

May 21–22, 2015



Manual Cinema

Mementos Mori

Jan 15–18, 2015

World Premiere
Presented as part of the Chicago
International Puppet Theater Festival

Written by Manual Cinema Artistic
Directors: Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace,
Julia Miller, Kyle Vegter, and Ben
Kauffman

Directed by Julia Miller

Drew Dir, *puppet design*
Lizi Breit, *associate puppet design*
Kyle Vegter, *music score and*
sound design
Michael Hilger, Deidre Huckabay,
Alex Ellsworth, *additional musical*
arrangement
Izzy Olive, Maren Celest, and
Jacob Winchester, *assistance with*
sound design
Marisa Chilberg, *costume design*
Livi Pasare, *video design*

Puppeteers:
Kasey Foster, Charlotte Long, Diane
Mair, Nicole Richwalsky, Mitch Salm,
and Myra Su

Musicians:
Deidre Huckabay, *flute, vocals*
Michael Hilger, *guitar, synthesizer,*
vocals
Alex Ellsworth, *cello, vocals*
Maren Celest, *vocals, folio*

Live SFX: Maren Celest
Live Video Editor: Sarah Fornace
Sound Engineer: Mike Usrey
Stage Manager: Kate Hardiman

Make Yourself Comfortable
Written by: Bob Merrill
Arranged and performed by: Maren
Celest, Michael Hilger, Alex Ellsworth,
and Deidre Huckabay
Produced by: Kyle Vegter

The Stars Will Lead Me to You
Written by: Ben Kauffman
Performed by: Ben Kauffman, Kyle
Vegter, Michael Hilger, Deidre
Huckabay, and Alex Ellsworth
Produced by: Kyle Vegter

Manual Cinema developed *Mementos Mori* in part through the MCA Stage New Works Initiative, which provided commissioning support and a production design residency. The New Works Initiative was established in 2014 and meaningfully expands MCA Stage's ongoing commitment to supporting artists and bringing important new performances to audiences.

Manual Cinema:
Mementos Mori was developed in part through the MCA Stage New Works Initiative, with lead support from Elizabeth A. Liebman. The MCA Stage presentation is generously supported by Lois and Steve Eisen and the Eisen Family Foundation.

Additional creation support for Manual Cinema: *Mementos Mori* was provided by The Henson Foundation and the generous donations of Kickstarter supporters. *Mementos Mori* was developed in part at the Almanack Arts Colony in Nantucket, MA, the Summer Inc. Residencies with Theater and Performance Studies at The University of Chicago, and the National Museum of Medical History Chicago.

Thanks to The Almanack Arts Colony, The Atlantic Foundation, The National Museum of Medical History Chicago, Caitlin Doughty, The University of Chicago, Laura Colby and the entire Elsie Management team, Mucca Pazza, and eighth blackbird.

Opposite:
Manual Cinema
Lula Del Ray
Photo: Katherine Greenleaf

Edlis Neeson
Theater

Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago

Chicago International
Puppet Theater
Festival



Stan's Cafe

The Cardinals

Jan 22–24



In this very funny and strangely touching play, three Catholic cardinals and their Muslim stage manager put on an evangelical puppet show—without the puppets.

**Presented as part of the Chicago
International Puppet Theater Festival**

Stan's Cafe
The Cardinals
Photo: Graeme Braidwood

**MCA Stage
2014–15**

Buy tickets online
at mcachicago.org

**Theater
Dance
Music**

**at the
Edlis
Neeson
Theater**

Artist Up Close

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

MCA Studio

Earlier this month, as part MCA's Family Day, the members of Manual Cinema ran a series of short hands-on workshops which introduced young people and their family members to the art of storytelling.

Earlier this week, as part of the Open Doors program, museum visitors were invited inside the theater to observe the artists working on the final stage of production.

MCA Talk:

Jan 15

First Night

Audience members are invited to stay at the end of the performance for a conversation with the Manual Cinema Co-Directors and cast. Moderated by Peter Taub, Director of Performance Programs.

Jan 24

**International Puppet Art, 10am-4pm
Free. Reservations strongly advised
at mcachicago.org/programs**

Copresented with the Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival and the Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry at the University of Chicago.

How do we attach identity to a face?
How do we perceive realness and fake-
ness? Where do we find meaning in
materiality? Artists from Manual

Cinema, Stan's Cafe, Blind Summit, and other groups talk about puppet art's vitality and the new paradigms that they are creating to engage with the world today. The daylong event brings them together with scholars from diverse fields.

Organized as an open dialogue for anybody with an interest in the value of the creative pursuit of inquiry and the tension between ideas and practice, the occasion is also inspired by Manual Cinema's recent tour to the Tehran-Mobarak International Puppet Festival, at which they became the first US company in seventeen years to perform in Iran. At once cutting to the heart of puppetry and seeking its broadest significance, participants provoke unexpected conversation in which art and scholarship disrupt each other's ways of knowing.

Session 1

10:30–11:50 am

Leslie Danzig, *moderator* (Curator, Richard and Mary L. Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry, University of Chicago; Director with Lucky Plush Productions and 500 Clown)

Mark Down (Blind Summit)

Timothy Harrison (Instructor, Department of English, University of Chicago)

Dan Hurlin (Puppeteer; Director of MFA Theatre Program, Sarah Lawrence College)

Jesse Soodalter, MD (Fellow in Hematology/Oncology; Director of The Living Mortal Project, University of Chicago)

Craig Stephens (Stan's Cafe)

Many practitioners within art, humanities, and medicine are exploring the

emergence and varying definitions and experiences of liveness in its proximity to death. The individuals in this session discuss text, puppets, and performance in relation to the spontaneity, impulsiveness, and presence of both liveness and death and the relationship between the two.

Session 2

Sarah Fornace, moderator (Manual Cinema)

Susan Goldin-Meadow (Beardsley Ruml Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Psychology, Committee on Human Development, University of Chicago)

Tom Gunning (Edwin A. and Betty L. Bergman Distinguished Service Professor, Departments of Art History, Cinema, and Media Studies, University of Chicago)

Claudia Hart (Artist: Associate Professor, Department of Film, Video, New Media, and Animation, School of the Art Institute of Chicago)

Todd Murphey (Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Northwestern University)

Scholars from the fields of media, psychology, and robotics delve into how realism and unrealism in puppetry are perceived both live and onscreen. Puppetry shares mechanisms and attributes with a wide array of twenty-first-century media: virtual reality, video gaming, CGI (Computer-Generated Imagery), and cinema. This interactive, interdisciplinary group explores and explodes the boundaries of puppetry as a model system for understanding the way in which we perceive gesture, liveness, and simulacra in media and in "real" life.



Session 3

2:30–3:50 pm

Jessica Thebus, moderator (Director of Graduate Directing Program, Northwestern University)

Clare Dolan, RN (The Museum of Everyday Life)

Eric Ehn (Playwright; Chair of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies, Brown University)

Blair Thomas (Puppeteer; Artistic Director, Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival, Blair Thomas & Co.)

John Wilkinson (Poet; Associate Chair for Committee on Creative Writing and Poetics in the Department of English, University of Chicago)

Manual Cinema
Lula Del Ray
Photo: Katherine
Greenleaf

Concluding the day, panelists pit poetry, typically celebrated as "high art," against puppetry, often thought of as a lowly art form, to glean both the parallel properties of and distinctions between these performative languages. As a contribution to forging a poetics for puppetry, this panel of poets, writers and puppeteers ponder the question of "how are poetry and puppetry twin art forms?" by examining issues of economy, distilment, image resonance, and negative and empty space.

From the Artists

This production of *Mementos Mori* was developed over a year and a half. From pitch sessions to movie watching binges to the writers' room to storyboarding . . . From puppet building and art direction/ "set" design to demo shoots to rehearsals to rewrites . . . Then back to puppet building to demo shoots to sound design and music composition. And finally culminating in the rehearsal room with the largest cast of artists with which Manual Cinema has ever worked.

The process of making a Manual Cinema show is similar to scripting, shooting, and scoring a feature-length silent animation film and then starting over and figuring out how to recreate that movie in real time with an obsolete, analog technology: the overhead projector. In modern life, we're surrounded by screens: movie screens, television screens, smartphone screens, billboard screens. We want to take this everyday experience and transform it into something magical and strange. In our work, we constantly seek to combine the lightness of film with the heaviness of theater. We think of time cinematically in our storytelling, and we attempt to run swiftly through shots and locations at the rate of films. However, activating each of the hundreds of frames of a show by hand and performing the music with the puppetry requires theatrical choreography. This takes place in real time and space and requires significant embodied effort. We hope that the real-time problem solving among the members of an ensemble of artists gives new weight to the moving images that are so ubiquitous in our visual landscape.

Everything that you see and hear in this show is being animated, cued, and played live. There is no pre-recorded video onstage, but rather a team of six puppeteers working in tandem not only to animate puppets and embody characters, but also to simulate camera movement and film editing. The puppeteers work with two different screens and sets of overhead projectors onstage, and the images are live-mixed via two live feed cameras into the final "movie" on the large center-stage screen. The original music for the show is performed by four musicians. Using various looping devices and electronics, they are able to create dense cinematic orchestrations using only a few instruments. There is a fine line between sound design and music; the two work in tandem, overlapping, and reinforcing each other throughout the piece. At times the music and sound design drives the action of a scene, at other times the puppeteers set the pace and the musicians respond accordingly. It takes all eleven people onstage working together as one organism to bring the show to life.

Each show that Manual Cinema creates begins with personal experience; whether it be growing up and leaving home (*Lula del Ray*, 2011), watching a loved one grieve (*ADA/AVA*, 2013), or trying to understand mortality in a newly digitized culture. We hope that each puppet lives and breathes with its audience, while leaving room among the shadows for each of us to see ourselves.

Synopsis

In Manual Cinema's most technically ambitious show to date, multiple storylines interweave to create an epic cinematic mosaic. When the character of Death takes an unexpected holiday, an elderly film projectionist finds a

new lease on life; a ghost explores the afterlife with her iPhone; and a seven-year-old girl discovers her own mortality. Using overhead projectors, paper puppets, actors in silhouette, video, and a live chamber ensemble, *Mementos Mori* is a lively, beguiling meditation on death and dying.

Manual Cinema
Lula Del Ray
Photo: Jerry Shulman



Mariano Pensotti
Cineastas (Filmmakers)
Feb 26–Mar 1



Drenched in dark humor, this deeply humanistic work by one of Latin America's brightest theater talents moves us to ponder how we construct the world through our fictions.

Mariano Pensotti
Cineastas
Photo: Carlos Furman

MCA Stage
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An interview with Manual Cinema

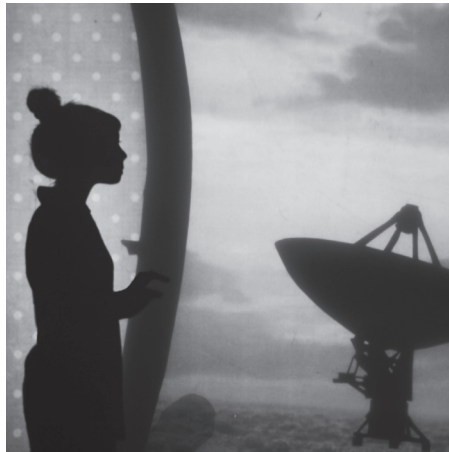
Co-artistic Directors: Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace, Julia Miller, and Kyle Vegter

MCA: How would you describe Manual Cinema?

Sarah Fornace: Manual Cinema is a shadow puppetry and live animation company. We use overhead projectors, humans in silhouette, and a band with a quadrophonic sound system to create an experience that feels like being at an animated movie. However, you're seeing everything being constructed frame by frame and note by note in front of you.

Drew Dir: We use the old-school overhead projectors you had in your elementary school, and we use hundreds of shadow puppets to create feature-length stories that are told entirely through sound and music and imagery. We can do pretty much anything a moving camera can do, but we do it all on an overhead projector.

MCA: What is it like to be part of Manual Cinema?



DD: It's a highly collaborative process. All of us come from very disparate backgrounds. Some of us come from theater, some of us come from movement and dance, from visual art, so we all sort of bring our own strengths to the process, but the stories that we tell, including the story of *Mementos Mori*, are all created collaboratively. We all enter a room together, and we sit down writer's room style and hash out the story, and we continue to do that.

What's most rewarding for me is that we're working in sort of an impossible medium. Creating, making stories with shadow puppets on overhead projectors is an incredibly demanding kind of medium to work in, and you're constantly failing, but that experience of constantly failing and discovering more things about the medium and pushing through and making new discoveries is what makes the work really rewarding. Four years on, we're still learning so much about cinematic shadow puppetry that it's exhilarating to work in a medium that gives back and teaches you so much constantly.

This page and
opposite:
Manual Cinema
Lula Del Ray
Photos: Katherine
Greenleaf

Julia Miller: We work in a way that combines classic staging of theater, and animation. We work from an outline of a script, but then we transfer that into a storyboard, and that storyboard then becomes our visual script, and then with the storyboard, we use that to build all the puppets. We shoot demos of the storyboard, so we'll film each frame of the storyboard in rehearsal, and then I'll edit together the demos of the story, so then we have a digital version of the show that exists. That is our ideal staging. Then we go back to the rehearsal room and try to figure out how to do that in real time and space on the projectors.

MCA: How does the sound in the show interact with the puppets on stage?

SF: Kyle composes for quadrophonic sound so that it is all around the audience and he likes to describe it as hyper-real, so if a door swings open it'll swing open across the audience rather than just the amount it would swing open.

Kyle Vegter: Being the sound designer for Manual Cinema is the most exciting thing and the most terrifying thing ever. My job is to take a 2D puppet and make it real and living and breathing and envelope the audience in this world that we're creating. So all of our sound design is mixed in surround. There are two speakers in front of the audience and two speakers behind. The way that sound design works in our shows is that it's a little bit augmented in comparison to film sound design. In film sound design, they don't do a lot of panning. Sounds don't move around a lot, but in ours I over-exaggerate gestures that happen in the world. So



when a door opens, it opens across the entire auditorium to sort of give you a sense of being inside of the world.

One of the characters is dead throughout the show, so we're still trying to figure out how that works. What kind of sound world can we create? What does it sound like when you're dead? We're trying out a bunch of different filters. Maybe you only hear from 500 hertz and above, so everything becomes high-pitched and you're only getting half the information. That's the way I think about character and development and how sound worlds work with puppets.

MCA: How are characters developed on stage?

SF: One way we give a lot of character information is through the types of shots we use. Melba has a lot of point-of-view shots because we're seeing the world, which is large and looming at her. She is seven years old and experiencing a lot of new things for the first time. We have these very stark point-of-view shots that we intercut with medium and far shots of her.

MCA: How does *Mementos Mori* compare with Manual Cinema's other productions?

JM: We're experimenting with a couple of new things. It's our first multiple protagonist show as opposed to a single character. We follow through a narrative arc.

SF: One of the most exciting parts about our MCA residency is the enormous stage space that we have access to here. This is actually the first time we have set up the set up for this show, because it's simply too big for our studio. Usually, a Manual Cinema show will have one screen and then a table of projectors with three to four projectors on it. Then we will have one camera that is live-feeding to a large screen above it, so you'll be able to see the actors and puppeteers creating the image on a single screen and then it's fed to a single screen.

But here at the MCA on this new show, we have two screens on the ground, so there's two sites of creation where the shots are being constructed and live-edited by the puppeteers together. Then there's also a video editor on stage who takes the feeds from the two



Manual Cinema
Lula Del Ray
Photo: Jerry Shulman

cameras trained on the two screens and then feeds it to a single screen above. Essentially we can now double the amount of information we want to put into the show. We can simply move faster; shadow puppets want to move really slow, and what we try to do is try to push them to move at the pace of film, and they don't want to do that. By doubling the number of projectors, the number of puppeteers we have, we can edit much faster during the show.

JM: There are so many layers to our work, and I'm constantly learning about them, especially with this show because it's the first time we're working with performers that aren't founding members of the company. There's been a huge step in trying to articulate what our process and technique are to fresh brains who don't have context for it yet. That has been really a great learning experience on our end.

About the Artists

Lizi Breit

is a puppeteer, designer, animator, and printmaker living in Chicago. Other theatrical credits include Blair Thomas & Co, The House Theatre of Chicago, The Neo-Futurists, and Dog & Pony Theatre Co. She has been working with Manual Cinema since 2011. More of her work can be seen at www.cargocollective.com/lizibreit.

Maren Celest

executes the live foley and sings for Manual Cinema, and is a multimedia artist living in Chicago. Originally from northern Michigan, she is a chronic storyteller, by way of music, photography, films, illustration, and writings. Her work can be experienced at www.marencelest.com.

Marisa Chillberg

is a fourth-year Theater and Performance Studies student at the University of Chicago. Her credits for costume design include *Grey Gardens*, *The Credeaux Canvas*, *Macbeth*, and *Cymbeline* in addition to numerous directing and dramaturgy credits. She plans to pursue a career in costume design following graduation.

Drew Dir

is a Co-artistic Director of Manual Cinema and holds an MA in Text and Performance Studies from King's College London and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. His design credits with Manual Cinema include *Lula del Ray* and *Ada/Ava* (which he also directed). His short play *The Lurker Radio Hour* was voted Best Production at *Collaboraction's Sketchbook 8* at the Steppenwolf Garage. From 2009 to

2013, Dir was Resident Dramaturg at Court Theatre. He teaches drama at the University of Chicago as Lecturer in Theater and Performance Studies.

Sarah Fornace

is a choreographer, performer, and narrative theorist. As a Co-artistic Director of Manual Cinema, she has created stage performances, site-specific spectacles, music videos, and gallery installations. She has choreographed for DePaul University, Court Theatre, Lifeline Theatre, Red Orchid Theatre, Steppenwolf's Garage Rep series, The New Colony, and Adventure Stage. She has performed with the Neo-Futurists, Redmoon, Lookingglass Theatre Company, and Babes with Blades. Fornace is a member of Blair Thomas & Company, The Order of the Good Death, and Cirque du Soleil's artist database. She teaches movement at Columbia College Chicago.

Alex Ellsworth

is active in a range of music genres, including contemporary and traditional classical, rock, free improvisation, and electronic. He has had engagements at Constellation, Stage 773, and Symphony Center. He is principal cellist in the DePaul Symphony Orchestra at DePaul University, where he is pursuing a Master's degree and studying with Chicago Symphony cellist Brant Taylor.

Kasey Foster

was most recently performed in the Lookingglass Theatre production *The Little Prince*. She directs the biannual *Dance Tribute* series, produces the talk show *The Monthly Visit with Kevin O'Donnell*, and sings for local bands *Grood*, *Old Timey*, and *This Must be the Band*. Foster has devised and

directed several original collaborative works over the years, and this past fall, directed *Romulus* for Oracle Theatre.

Kate Hardiman

is a freelance theater artist with recent director, dramaturg, stage manager, technician, and designer credits for, among others, The Neo-Futurists, Strange Tree Theatre, SideShow Theatre, Remy Bumpo Theater Company, Strawdog Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Raven Theatre, Timeline Theatre, and Next Theatre. She is a graduate of Columbia College Chicago and a company member with Mercy Street Theater Company and Cold Basement Dramatics.

Michael Hilger

is a musician, sound designer, and artist. Over the years, he has worked on a number of theatrical productions. He is working on a full-length album with experimental pop group, THIN HYMNS, with a release planned for early 2015, and he is creating a series of collaborative sound installations with Specimen Products.

Deidre Huckaby

is a flutist, performance artist, and concert producer. As a flutist in the Eastman BroadBand and the woodwind quintet Arabesque Winds, she has performed at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, as well as in Mexico, Italy, France, and Switzerland. She has recorded for the labels Urtext and Bridge. Huckaby produces eclectic events such as new music dance parties, fake job fairs, and MIDI tea ceremonies. Her 10-minute pantomime performance created with Mark Applebaum appeared in more than twelve public spaces recently. Huckaby

is co-principal at Parlour Tapes+, Chicago's only contemporary classical music cassette tape label.

Ben Kauffman

is a multi-disciplinary artist who creates installations, interactive media, video, and participatory environments. His recent work has been exhibited at CUNY's Baruch College and Freshkills Park, and he has lectured and led workshops at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York University, Baruch College, and Parsons The New School of Design. He is the co-creator of the interactive web-based zine, SMOG. He holds a Master's Degree from New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP) and is based in Brooklyn, NY.

Charlotte Long

graduated in 2012 from Sarah Lawrence College with a dual concentration in Literature and Theater. She has performed dance with the Right Brain Project, Tympanic Theatre, the Plagiarists, Oracle Theatre, Lifeline Theatre, and devised pieces with Whisky Rebellion and Mechanical Advantage.

Diane Mair

has performed in *H2O* with the Contemporary American Theatre Festival and *Sense and Sensibility* with the Repertory Theatre St. Louis, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and Chicago's Northlight Theatre. She has worked with The Long Wharf, Michigan Opera Theater, Victory Gardens, First Folio Shakespeare, The Gift, Remy Bumpo, Dog & Pony, Redmoon, The Actors' Gymnasium, Light Opera Works, and TASK Clown Theatre.

Julia Miller

is a Co-artistic Director of Manual Cinema and specializes in the tactile and movement arts. She is a prolific puppeteer, director, and graphic designer for various productions by Building Stage, Redmoon, and Collaboraction, and is a member of Blair Thomas & Company. Miller was a curator for *Nasty, Brutish & Short: A Puppet Cabaret* at Links Hall for over three years, and most recently co-produced “*It’s That Special Time*” *Special Holiday Hour, The Special!* with the artist of Parlour Tapes+.

Izzy Olive

is a musician and writer from Southern Illinois. She performs and records music as Tin Silos, curates the living room concert series Big Red Armchair, and writes the occasional poem. She is an audio engineer and works with cassette label Parlour Tapes+, and several ensembles including Ensemble Dal Niente, Tim Munro of eighth blackbird, and Spektral Quartet.

Liviu Pasare

is a video designer, cinematographer, editor, and animator, and has produced, directed, and performed for several live events. He is a regular collaborator with Luftwerk, Redmoon, Chicago Children’s Theatre, Collaboraction, Adventure Stage, among many other groups. He is pursuing an MFA in Art and Technology at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is advancing an academic approach to Video for Performance as a faculty member at DePaul University.

Nicole Richwalsky

is a performer, director, and occasional arm wrestler based in Chicago since 2007. She has worked with Redmoon,

Collaboraction, Sideshow Theatre, the Moving Dock Theatre Company and Organic Theater Company. She is a member of the committee for the Chicago League of Lady Arm Wrestlers (CLLAW).

Mitch Salm

has performed with the Annoyance Theatre, Collaboraction, and Curious Theatre Branch. His self-produced work has debuted as part of Jane Beachy’s *Salonathon*. He is a graduate of the University of Chicago and Paola Coletto’s The School for Theatre Creators.

Myra Su

has worked as puppeteer for two years. She designed puppetry for *The Medium* with Third Eye Theatre Ensemble and has created original work for *Nasty Brutish & Short: A Puppet Cabaret*. Her upcoming projects include a pop-up book and further installments of her shadow puppetry series, *The Cat Days of Christmas*.

Michael Usrey

has mixed sound at more than one hundred venues worldwide, including at outdoor festivals and concert halls. He toured internationally for three years with the Minneapolis-based band Dark Dark Dark as front-of-house engineer, and has also toured with Pillars and Tongues (Chicago), A Hawk and a Hacksaw (Albuquerque), Royal Canoe (Winnipeg, MB Canada), and Pattern is Movement (Philadelphia.)

Kyle Vegter

is a composer, producer, sound designer, and Managing Artistic Director of Manual Cinema. As a composer, he has been commissioned

by such groups as TIGUE, the Chicago Composer's Orchestra, and Homeroom Chicago. His production credits span genres and include recent releases by THIN HYMNS, Spektral Quartet, Tim Munro (of eighth blackbird), and Color Card. His past composer and sound designer credits with Manual Cinema include *Lula Del Ray*, *Ada | Ava*, *FJORDS*, and various other performance and video projects. He has been an artist-in-residence at High Concept Laboratories and co-founded Chicago's only contemporary classical music cassette label Parlour Tapes+.

Jacob Winchester

is a multi-instrumentalist, writer, graphic artist, and ceramist interested in conceptually-tinged functional ware. He is also a DJ under the name Kob Todson. He directed a short for Manual Cinema's collaboration with StoryCorps, composed the score/sound design for a second short, and co-curated the exhibition *Wastelands* at 313 Gallery in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Manual Cinema

combines handmade shadow puppetry, cinematic motifs, and live sound manipulation to create immersive theatrical stories. Using overhead projectors, multiple screens, paper puppets, actors, live-feed cameras, and a live band, Manual Cinema transforms the experience of attending the cinema and imbues it with liveness, ingenuity, and theatricality. They translate cinematic language into analogue shadow puppetry, emulating montage, camera movement, and depth-of-field using handmade visual effects. Inspired by early cinema, their stories are conveyed without dialogue, relying instead on rich, multi-channel

sound design and live music. Manual Cinema seeks to challenge and subvert the ubiquitous 2D screen of cinema, television, computers, and personal smartphones.

The group was founded in 2010 by five Chicago artists with diverse backgrounds in theater, visual arts, music, and sound art. They have created two previous feature-length cinematic shadow puppet shows: *Lula del Ray* and *Ada | Ava*. They have produced two collections of live shadow puppet cinematic shorts; one based on StoryCorps audio stories and the other on the poetry of Zachary Schomburg in collaboration with string quartet Chicago Q Ensemble. They have made music videos for Sony Masterworks, Gabriel Kahane, and eighth blackbird. They have also created site-specific installations, cinematic trailers, short spectacle performances, theatrical designs, and print designs.

Manual Cinema's work has been presented at The Tehran International Puppet Festival, X Fest at SIUE, Handmade Worlds Puppet Festival, The Almanack Arts Colony, Brainframe, The Detroit Institute of Art, The Future of Storytelling Conference NYC, The NYC Fringe Festival, The Poetry Foundation, The University of Chicago, Hideout Chicago, Chicago International Music and Movies Festival, the Puppeteers of America: Puppet Festival (R)evolution, and elsewhere.

Manual Cinema was ensemble-in-residence at the University of Chicago in the Theater and Performance Studies program in the fall of 2012, where members of the group taught as adjunct faculty. Next up, Manual



Cinema is collaborating with Opera Erratica (London) to create a video installation based on *La Celestina* designed for the windows in the Veléz Blanco Patio at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (March 2015). In March of 2015, they will also premiere a series of videos as part of Chicago History Museum's *The Secret Lives of Objects* exhibition. They are working on their first short film, funded by the Chicago Digital Media Production Fund, for release in May 2015. Later in 2015, they plan to premiere an immersive installation based on the poetry of Gabriel Garcia Lorca for the O, Miami Poetry Festival, begin work on their next self-produced, feature length work of cinematic shadow puppetry in residence at Three Legged Dog (Manhattan), and work with Hubbard Street Dance on an original, full-length show featuring dance, music, and shadow puppetry for premiere in Fall 2015 at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Manual Cinema
Photo: Maren Celest

Exclusive North, Central, and South American representation by:
Laura Colby,
Director, Elsie Management
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TEL: 718.797.4577
www.elsiemanager.org

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Keith Trice
Kim Vegter
Hannah Wasileski
Erica Weiss
Gretchen Wright

Third Coast Percussion with Glenn Kotche

Wild Sound

May 21–22



While touring with Wilco, drummer and composer Glenn Kotche made field recordings of cities around the world. Now Kotche has composed a new piece for the groundbreaking ensemble Third Coast Percussion, integrating those recordings in a new work that explodes the distinction between music and noise.

Third Coast Percussion
Photo: Barbara Johnston/
University Photographer

MCA Stage
2014–15

Buy tickets online
at mcachicago.org

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Thank you

Lead support for the 2014–15 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Additional generous support is provided by Caryn and King Harris, and Lois and Steve Eisen and the Eisen Family Foundation.

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

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Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago

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 US and around the world in MCA's three-hundred-seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

MCA Stage's groundbreaking performances are an integral part of MCA Chicago'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.

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Program notes compiled

by Yolanda Cesta Cursach

Courtesy guidelines and information

Parking

Validate your ticket at the coat check for \$11 parking in the MCA garage (220 East Chicago Avenue) or the Bernardin garage (747 North Wabash). Discounted 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 is prohibited.

General information

312.280.2660

Box office

312.397.4010

Volunteer for performances

312.397.4072

mcastage@mcachicago.org

Museum hours

Tuesday: 10 am–8 pm

Wednesday–Sunday: 10 am–5 pm

Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day

220 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
312.280.2660
mcachicago.org