

theaterdancemusic

Fall 2013

MCA STAGE

**at the
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Theater**

Body/Head
featuring Kim Gordon
and Bill Nace
Sep 24

Taylor Mac
An Abridged Concert of
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Popular Music
Sep 27–28

Timbre 4
Tercer Cuerpo (Third Wing)
Oct 3, 5 and 6

ICE (International
Contemporary Ensemble)
John Zorn Retrospective
Oct 26

Rainpan 43
Elephant Room
Nov 2, 3, 7–10

Nassim Soleimanpour
White Rabbit, Red Rabbit
Nov 3–5 and 9

Chicago Dancemakers Forum
Break Out! Celebrating ten years
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Nov 16

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Rainpan 43
Elephant Room
November 2, 3, 7–10, 2013
Copresented with the
Chicago Humanities Festival

Starring Magicians
Daryl Hannah
Dennis Diamond
Louis Magic

Created by
Steve Cuiffo, Trey Lyford,
and Geoff Sobelle

Directed by
Paul Lazar

Mimi Lien, *Set Designer*
Christal Weatherly, *Costume Designer*
Christopher Kuhl, *Lighting Designer*
Nick Kourtides, *Sound Designer*
David Neumann,
Choreographer

Jay Dunn, *Associate Effects Manager*
The Puppet Kitchen,
Loxodontics
Gene Nelms, *Photography and Web Design*
Melissa Blanks, *Stage Manager*
Thomas Snyder,
Production Manager
Ian Guzzone, *Technical Director*
Joseph Silovsky, *Set Construction and Engineering*
Amy Rubin, *Assistant Set Designer*
Adam Blumenthal,
Assistant Lighting Designer

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago

Edlis Neeson Theater

Chicago Humanities Festival

Touring support for Rainpan 43: *Elephant Room* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

As part of the Chicago Humanities Festival, generous underwriting for *Elephant Room* is provided by Elaine and Roger Haydock.

Elephant Room was commissioned by Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, California, and copremiered by Arena Stage, Washington DC (Molly Smith, Artistic Director, and

Edgar Dobie, Executive Producer), and the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival. *Elephant Room* is funded in part by the Creative Capital Foundation, the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage through the Philadelphia Theatre Initiative, and the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Pilot, with lead funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Additional support was provided by Hunter College Department of Theatre and the Live Arts Brewery (LAB) programs, which are supported by the Kresge Foundation, the Independence Foundation, and the PNC Foundation through PNC Arts Alive.

Special thanks: Kristin Marting, HERE Arts Center, David Dower, Nick Stuccio, Michelle Blair, Suli Holum, Bob and Binnie Holum, Jay Dunn, Kelley Kirkpatrick, James Sugg, Pier Carlo Talenti, Teller, Chuck Helm, John Engman, Sophie Hunter, Stefanie Sobelle, Liz and Dick Sobelle, Sarah Chandler, Pig Iron Theatre Company, Philadelphia Live Arts Festival, Joseph Silovsky, Nathan Lemoine, Kimitha Cashin, Eleanor Hutchins, Conjuring Arts Research Center, John Gaughan, Joe Silovsky, Rachel Jablin, and Brendan Spieth.

Welcome

It is our tremendous pleasure to present a high-light of the fall season for both MCA Stage and the Chicago Humanities Festival.

Each year, we strive to highlight distinctive artists whose visions reflect and refract the annual theme of the Festival. In recent years, MCA Stage and the Chicago Humanities Festival have collaborated to bring forward memorable performances by Big Dance Theater, Liz Lerman/Dance Exchange, and Mike Daisey, just to name a few.

The current theme of *Animal: What Makes Us Human* has been especially stimulating, and so this year we are expanding by copresenting two intriguing projects. First, *Elephant Room* is a feat of misdirection. What seems to be an off-the-wall magic show turns out to be experimental theater fueled by our imaginations and our unwitting suspension of disbelief. Along the way, we are drawn into a secret society located at a point in the space-time continuum somewhere between baroque nostalgia and Paterson, New Jersey.

White Rabbit, Red Rabbit is an entirely different animal. Iranian playwright Nassim Soleimanpour refused his country's mandatory military service as a conscientious objector and was therefore refused a passport for international travel. His experience is that of many in his generation—computer literate and well informed, but living within parameters circumscribed by the Islamic Republic. Created to travel the world when he can't, his play requires no director or set, and each performance features a different actor who

receives the script for the first time he or she takes the stage.

Dramatically distinct, these two works prompt us to explore what distinguishes the human animal from others. Both *Elephant Room* and *White Rabbit, Red Rabbit* explore creativity and self-awareness.

Peter Taub
Director of Performance Programs
MCA Chicago

Mary Kate Barley-Jenkins
Managing Director, Programming and Production
Chicago Humanities Festival

From the creators

Hello, audience member.

Hey. You came to the show! Good for you! You took the time, you figured it out, you had a meal, and walked right through that door to get your mind waxed. Phew! Now you can really just take a breath and sink deep into this slightly awkward, well-loved, plushy red chair. You’re here. And look—other people are here, too. Look around at those people. Who are they? Maybe your eyes light on someone. Maybe you know them, maybe not. And now—just stare at them. Keep doing it—it’s good—do it for longer than would be comfortable in a regular “staring situation.” Look intensely at them until they notice you, and then, why not—just keep staring. Wink if you wish. Maybe they’ll laugh and point to the program, thinking that you read this little mes-sage—no matter the case, just slowly shake your head darkly and narrow your eyes. Then, from the corners of your mouth, creep into a shady smile and cock your head to one side. Now, in a low, sure tone, say simply: “You don’t know who I am, do you?” No matter what they say, just continue, “It’s a secret . . .”

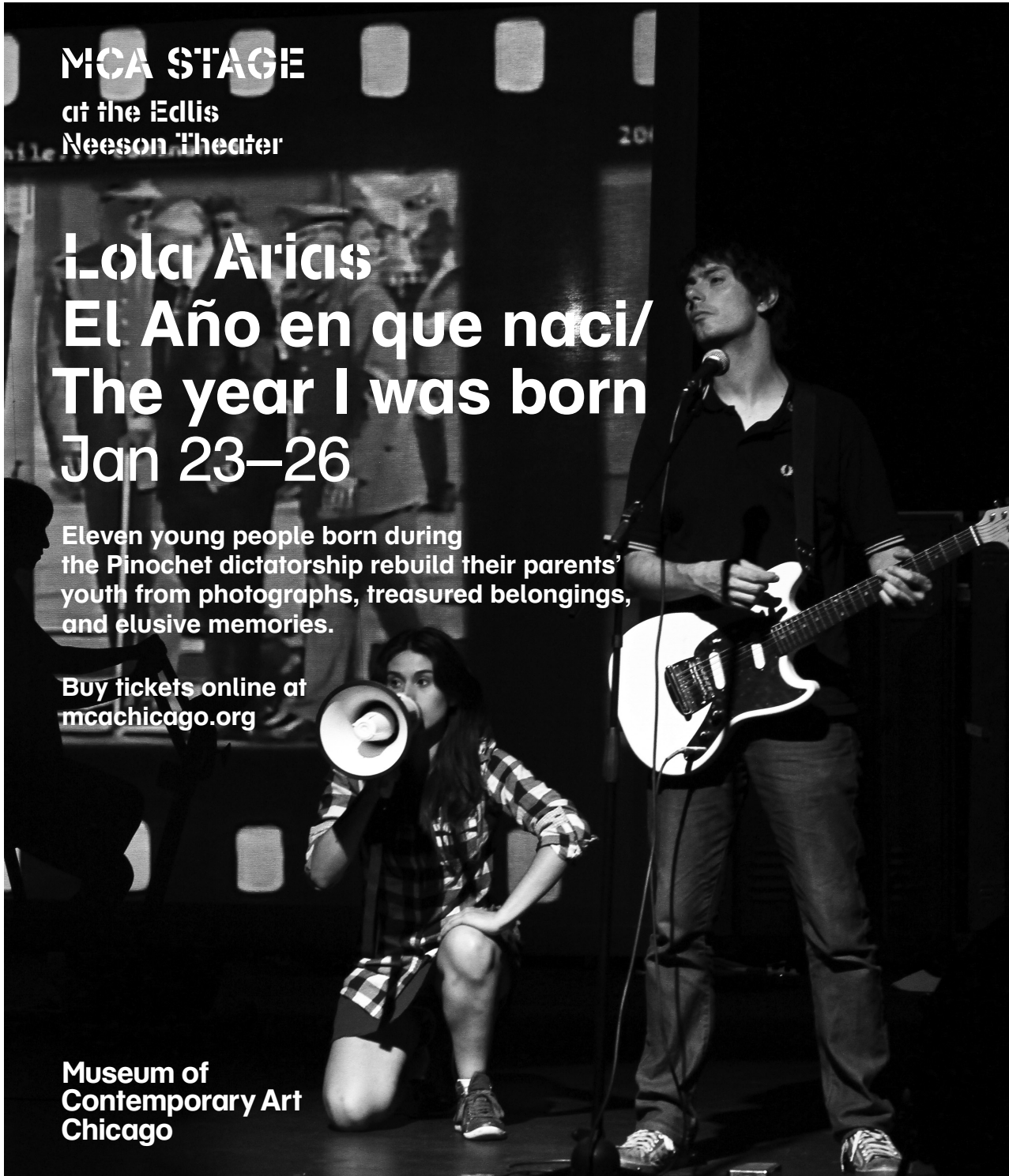
Welcome to the elephant room . . .

Artists Up Close

Gain insight into the creative process through these intimate opportunities to engage with the artists.

**Theater Thursdays
Nov 7**
The public is invited to stay following the performance and mingle in the lobby with the cast of *Elephant Room*—Louie Magic, Dennis Diamond, and Daryl Hannah. Cash bar and snacks are available. Theater Thursdays is a citywide promotion organized by the League of Chicago Theatres.

*American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation
Nov 3 and 10, 3 pm performance*



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**Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago**

An Interview with the Magicians

Earlier this summer, Peter Taub, Director of Performance Programs at MCA Chicago, visited Daryl Hannah and Louie Magic in New York. The following is excerpted from their conversation.

Peter Taub: Tell us how you got into magic.

Louie Magic: I got started in magic when I was a little kid, about ten years old. It became at first a hobby and then it became my passion and now I'm a resident magician at Dazzles out in Paterson, New Jersey.

Daryl Hannah: He's great. If you're ever on vacation visiting Paterson, New Jersey, you gotta go to Dazzles.

LM: I do stand-up comedy magic generally. Daryl does a lot of bird magic. Dennis does mentalism magic and we've gotten to know each other over the years through the magic circuit. You know, there's a lot of magic conventions. Society of American Magicians, International Brotherhood of Magicians. Fédération Internationale Sociétés Magiques. That's the European one.

DH: Yeah, I'm not a member of that one. That one's more expensive.

LM: Over the years, we saw each other's work and we realized we'd have something unique if we teamed up. There are no trio magician troupes.

DH: They don't exist. Think about it. You got Siegfried and Roy, duo. You've got Penn and Teller. I was going to say Daryl Hall and John Oates, but they're not magicians.

LM: So, we thought, here's the time.

DH: Unless—does Chicago have any trio magicians?

LM: No. But Chicago has a rich history of magic. A lot of people don't know it. Ed Marlo, one of the greatest sleight-of-hand guys.

PT: What types of magic will you do in the show?

LM: Magic tricks are a tricky thing where you don't want to reveal too much, but let me say this: You'll come to our show, Elephant Room. You will walk in. You will see the world that we've created—you see our set. Then the mystery begins. We start with some small illusions, small things with our hands to draw the audience in. That's you. Next thing you know, you're on the edge of your seat, your breath starts to get quicker, and you have this sudden feeling of, what's going to happen next? And that's the place we want to get you. And that's the place we bring you.

DH: Yeah, totally. Totally. And there's also good dancing. We also have card tricks. But, you know what? There's also good fun.

LM: It's good fun. Because we just want to share the world with you guys. Magic has been very good to us over the years. People ask us all the time, what is magic? Is it a trick?

DH: It's an ancient art of seduction and manipulation.

LM: Right. In the laws of magic, anything is possible and that's what you, too, can learn at *Elephant Room*.

About the artists

Dennis Diamond

has devoted his life to perfecting the art of mystery since he was a tender youngling. Years of research, collaboration, and invention have won him the accolades of fans and peers. Dennis served as conjuror on Carnival Cruise Lines and Celebrity Cruises, touring almost all over the world, and performed extensively in Atlantic City and Las Vegas. He's appeared on NBC's *World's Greatest Magic*, *Late Show with David Letterman*, and hosted his own special on *Animal Planet*. Dennis was lucky enough to work closely with previous National President John Zweers and John Engman at Society of American Magicians Hall of Fame and Magic Museum, before it was flooded. His book, *Dennis Diamond: The Black Canary*, is available by private order, and he is available for bookings at modernwarlock@gmail.com.

Louie Magic

has been performing magic since he was ten years old, when he got his first magic kit from a local toy store. For the past fifteen years, Louie has been the resident magician at Dazzles, Paterson's (NJ) *only* magic nightclub and bar. He is an expert in sleight-of-hand and close-up illusions. As a master of the art of astonishment, Louie has crossed the country, "dazzling" the likes of such celebrities as Ellen DeGeneres and Tom Brady (football star). Louie created the number-one selling item at Magic Trick Shoppe Online: The Louie Magic Magic Deck. For only five bucks, anyone can look like a sleight-of-hand expert! All inquiries can be sent to louiemagic69@gmail.com.

Daryl Hannah

has been doing magic for over six-and-a-half years at venues across the country and internationally (such as Rosarito's Casa del Magiko Grande). While touring with a premier salsa

band, Daryl was exposed to Native American medicine men. Previously known as Daryl Hannah: Master of Birds, he has developed a unique blend of Native medicine rituals and contemporary illusion. Daryl is ambassador for the Chahawe outreach program and educates children in poetry and judo (he is a third-degree brown belt.) Based in Tucson, Arizona, he's received two Desert Sand Conjuror citations and an honorary degree from Westlake Community College. For bookings, visit www.elephantroom.biz. He is available as rock band opening act, corporate/spiritual trainer/guide, and magic consultant. He would like to thank, as always, Dawn and Montana.

Steve Cuiffo

creates performance, art, theater, and magic. His solo and collaborative magician work incorporates aspects of sleight-of-hand, misdirection, imitation and reenactment. Theater credits include *Spirit Wife* (with Eleanor Hutchins), *Steve Cuiffo is Lenny Bruce* (*Lenny Bruce at "Carnegie Hall"* (St. Ann's Warehouse), *North Atlantic* (Wooster Group), *Next Stop: Amazingland* (Center Theatre Group), *Digital Effects* (Off The Grid), *Hell Meets Henry Halfway* (Pig Iron Theatre), *Fluke* (Radiohole), *Major Bang* (Foundry Theater), *Steve Cuiffo is Lenny Bruce* (Joe's Pub), *Rinne Groff's Orange, Lemon, Egg, Canary* (P.S. 122), Lypinska's *The Passion of the Crawford, Patriot Act—A Public Meditation* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Ghostlight—work in progress* (NYTW Dartmouth Residency), *The Amazing Russello Magic Hour* (Joe's Pub/ Public Theater), *The Roaring Grlr* (Foundry Theatre), *Brace Up!* (Wooster Group), Donald Byrd's *Byrdesque* (New Victory Theater, Broadway), *The Filament Cycle* (Tea Alagic/ Stateless), *Fever* (New York International Fringe Festival), *The Man with the Flower*

in *His Mouth* (Lo-Fi-Co), and *The Marriage Of Bette and Boo* and *Street Scene* (New York University). Film credits include *The Unloveables*, *On-line*, *Company K*, and *Every Dog's Day*. Cuiffo is a two-time Princeton University Atelier recipient artist. He is on the Board of Directors for the Conjuring Arts Research Center in New York.

Trey Lyford

[illegible]

Geoff Sobelle

is Co-Artistic director of Rainpan 43 performance group. Projects include: *all wear bowlers* (Innovative Theatre Award, Drama Desk nomination), *Amnesia Curiosa*, *machines*

machines machines machines machines (OBIE Award for design), and *Elephant Room* (commissioned by Center Theatre Group). His independent work includes *Flesh and Blood & Fish and Fowl* and *The Object Lesson* (commissioned by Lincoln Center 3). He has been a company member of Philadelphia's Pig Iron Theatre Company since 2001. Sobelle has led workshops around the world in devised theater creation, physical approach to character, clown and *jeu*. He is a core teacher at the Pig Iron school in Philadelphia (APT) and is on faculty at Bard College. His work has been supported by the Independence Foundation, the Philadelphia Theatre Initiative, the Wyncote Foundation, US Arts International, the Princeton Atelier, and the New England Foundation for the Arts. He is a 2006 Pew Fellow and 2009 Creative Capital grantee. He is a graduate of Stanford University, and trained in physical theater at École Jacques Lecoq in Paris.

Paul Lazar

cofounded the Bessie and Obie Award-winning Big Dance Theater in 1991 with Annie-B Parson and Molly Hickok. His work with Big Dance includes conceiving, directing, and/or performing in works such as *Supernatural Wife* (BAM, 2011); *Comme Toujours Here I Stand* (The Kitchen, 2010, as well as MCA Stage); *Plan B* (Japan Society, 2009); and Mac Wellman's *Antigone* (Classic Stage Company, 2004, and also at MCA Stage). Lazar is director of Young Jean Lee's *We're Gonna Die*. He is director for Hartford Stage of Baryshnikov Productions' *Man in a Case*, which will appear at MCA Stage in May 2014. He and Annie-B Parson are creating *Alan Smithee Directed This Play*, which opens in Lyon, France, in the spring of 2014 and at the BAM Harvey in fall 2014. He has performed in The Wooster Group's *North Atlantic*, *Brace*

Up!, *Emperor Jones*, and *The Hairy Ape*. Other stage credits include *Three Sisters at Classic Stage*, Young Jean Lee's *Lear*, Marie Irene Fornes's *Mud*, and Richard Maxwell's *Cowboys and Indians*. Film roles include *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Philadelphia*, *The Host*, and the forthcoming *Snow Piercer*, as well as *A Meaning Full Life* with Wallace Shawn and Kate Valk. He teaches at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Mimi Lien

is a designer of sets and environments for theater, dance, and opera. Having arrived at set design from a background in architecture, her work often focuses on the interaction between audience/environment and object/performer. She is an artistic associate with Pig Iron Theatre Company and the Civilians, and cofounder of JACK, a new art/performance space in Brooklyn. Recent work includes *Natasha, Pierre, & The Great Comet of 1812*; *A Public Reading . . . About the Death of Walt Disney* (Soho Rep); *The Dance and the Railroad* (Signature); *Luck of the Irish* (Lincoln Center); and *Zero Cost House* (Pig Iron). Her work has been seen at Berkeley Rep, A.R.T., Wilma Theater, Long Wharf Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Alliance Theater, and Portland Center Stage, among others. Her designs have been presented at the Prague Quadrennial, and her sculpture has been exhibited at the Storefront for Art and Architecture. Lien is a past MacDowell Colony fellow, alumnus of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program, and a recipient of the American Theatre Wing Hewes Design Award and the Barrymore Award. She is a four-time Barrymore nominee, and has received a Bay Area Critics Circle nomination. In 2012, she received an OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence.

Christal Weatherly

designs costumes for theater, dance, and visual artists nationwide. Her New York

collaborations include Signature Theatre Company, Playwrights Horizons, The Acting Company, and Human Company. Regionally she has designed for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Old Globe, California Shakespeare Theater, Center Theatre Group (Mark Taper, Douglas), the Arden Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Denver Center, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Children's Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Long Wharf Theatre, Stage One Dance Company, Deaf West Theatre, and for Eleanor Antin. She is recipient of the Bay Area Critics Circle Award, the Connecticut Critics Circle Award, and an alumnus of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program. Weatherly is originally from Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Christopher Kuhl

is the resident lighting designer at REDCAT in Los Angeles and also designs lighting for Hartford Stage, Dallas Theater Center, Portland Center Stage, Kirk Douglas Theatre, and Geffen Playhouse. Recent credits include: *C'Opera* (Horton Award nom); *My Beowulf* (Collage Dance Theatre); *Monster of Happiness* (Theatre Movement Bazaar); *Drums of the Waves of Horikawa* (Theatre of a Two-Headed Calf); *Caddy! Caddy! Caddy!* (REDCAT); *Moonlight* (Lost Studio); *Because They Have No Words* (Lounge Theatre); *Trace* (Hand 2 Mouth Theatre); *Termen Vox Machina* (Filament); *The Cherry Orchard* (evidence Room); associate design for *Mycenaean* at BAM Next Wave; and lighting director for the Actors' Gang national tour of *The Exonerated*. A graduate of CalArts, Kuhl is originally from New Mexico.

Nick Kourtides

designs sound for musical theater and creates sound environments for collaborative ensemble works. In New York, he has worked on *Elephant Room* (St. Ann's), *Our Aeneid* (Red Bull), *Carson McCullers Talks About Love* (Rattlestick), *Jomama Jones: RADIATE* (Soho Rep), and *Chekhov Lizardbrain* (Under

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The Radar, Soho Think Tank). Internationally, his sound design has been heard in Lublin's Konfrontacje Teatralne, Paris's Quartier d'Été, London's Barbican, and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Regionally, he has worked at Wilma Theater, Center Theatre Group, Arena Stage, Folger Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Flat Rock Playhouse, PTC, Walnut Street Theatre, Prince Music Theater, Arden Theatre, 1812, Azuka Theatre, Inis Nua, Passage Theater, and many others. He has worked with Pig Iron Theatre Company on *Cankerblossom*, *Isabella*, *Chekhov Lizardbrain*, and *Mission to Mercury*. He has collaborated with Rainpan 43 on *The Object Lesson* and *Flesh and Blood & Fish and Fowl*. He was a visiting instructor in Sound Design at Swarthmore College in 2010, and the winner of a 2006 Barrymore Award.

David Neumann

is Artistic Director/Choreographer of Advanced Beginner Group, with work presented in New York at The Kitchen, P.S. 122, Dance Theater Workshop, Central Park Summer Stage (where he collaborated with John Giorno), and Symphony Space (where he collaborated with Laurie Anderson). Advanced Beginner Group has toured to the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the Maggie Allessee National Center for Choreography and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, among others. Neumann has been a featured dancer in the works of Susan Marshall, Big Dance Theater, Doug Varone, Doug Elkins, and the late club legend, Willi Ninja. He has collaborated with Jodi Melnick and created two duets for himself and Mikhail Baryshnikov. Most recently he was choreographer on Robert Woodruff's adaptation of Fassbinder's *In a Year with 13 Moons* at Yale Rep and directed Geoff Sobelle in *The Object Lesson* for the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. He is on the faculty at the Theater Department at Sarah Lawrence College.

Jay Dunn

is an actor, director, and writer. New York projects include *Serious Money* (PTP/NYC at Atlantic Stage 2), and *L'arbre enchanté* (Fire Island Opera Festival). Dunn was cocreator of *Handshake Uppercute* (The Tank, Dixon Place, The Brick, Triskelion), cocreator of *Chicken* (Philadelphia LiveArts 2010), and cocreator-director of *The Pinks* (Gold No Trade Company at Dixon Place). Regionally, he has been involved with *Conference of the Birds*, *Game of Love and Chance* (Folger Theater), *Hell Meets Henry Halfway* (Pig Iron at Woolly Mammoth), *A Man's a Man* (Arena Stage), *Arcadia*, *Plenty*, *Piaf*, *Somewhere in the Pacific*, *Lovesong of the Electric Bear* (PTP/NYC), *Venus* (Olney Theater Center), *Headsman's Holiday* (Theater Alliance), *In the Boom Boom Room*, *Savage/Love* (Project Y), *Metamorphosis* (Catalyst Theater), *The Blue Room* (Phoenix Theater), and *The Scarlet Letter* (Rorschach Theatre). He has worked internationally on *Flesh and Blood & Fish and Fowl* (Edinburgh Fringe/ Travers Theater, London Mime Festival/The Barbican, Maison des Metallos/Paris, Festival des 7 Collines/St. Etienne, France). Recently he adapted and directed *The Imaginary Invalid* at Middlebury College. Dunn is a graduate of Middlebury College and L'École Jacques Lecoq, and is based in New York.

Amy Rubin

designed the set for *L'elisir d'amore* for Curtis Opera Theatre (Philadelphia). This summer, she worked in Salzburg, Austria, alongside directors Brian Mertes and Julian Crouch on a new production of *Jedermann* for the Salzburg Festival. She has collaborated with Julian Crouch on Paola Prestini's *Aging Magician*, as part of HERE Arts Center's Prototype Festival. Recent credits include: Penn Dixie Productions' *Animal Animal Mammal Mine* for the Philadelphia International Theatre Festival, *Festenmacher* (directed by Robert Woodruff), *Glamdromeda* (Ugly Rhino), *Dr. C (Or How I Learned to Act in Eight Steps)* (Theater Mitu),

and the *Night of Too Many Stars* Post Event at the American Museum of Natural History. She is a frequent designer for Viacom Special Events, including events for MTV, Comedy Central, and Spike TV. Her design work has been at Cherry Lane Theatre, Baryshnikov Arts Center, HERE, 3LD, and New York University. She has an MFA from New York University, and is originally from Philadelphia.

Thomas Snyder

serves as Manager of Operations/Production Supervisor for Lang Performing Arts Center at Swarthmore College. Tom has worked at such prestigious theaters as Second Stage Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Roundabout Theatre Company, and New World Stages. Technical direction, production management, and stage supervisor credits include Simpatico Theater Project, Dicapo Opera Theatre, Greenwich Music Festival, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Theatre Outlet. Tom has also had the privilege to build for a variety of scene shops, including Hudson Scenic, Brian Coleman Scenic, and Brooklyn Guild.



Elephant Room
Photo: Scott Suchman

Chicago Humanities Festival

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Thank You

Lead support for the 2013–14 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman. Additional generous support is provided by Graff, David Herro and Jay Franke, Caryn and King Harris, Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation, and Mary Ittelson. MCA Chicago is a proud member of Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

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As of October 2013

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago

As one of the nation's largest multidisciplinary museums devoted to the art of our time, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago offers exhibitions of the most thought-provoking art of today. The museum's performing arts program, MCA Stage, is the most active presenter of theater, dance, and music in Chicago, featuring leading performers from around the globe in the 300-seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

MCA Stage is committed to presenting groundbreaking performances that focus on collaboration; working closely with artists; converging with the larger programming of the museum; and offering a contemporary view of the traditional roots of performance.

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Program notes compiled by
Yolanda Cesta Cursach

Courtesy Guidelines and Information

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

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Chicago

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