

# Lucky Plush Productions

# *The Queue*

Thursday-Friday, September 17-18, 2015  
Space Place Theater  
Hancher  
University of Iowa



**HANCHER**

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

# THE QUEUE

Co-created & Co-directed by  
LESLIE BUXBAUM DANZIG & JULIA RHOADS

Choreography  
JULIA RHOADS

Devised in collaboration with the Ensemble:

MICHEL RODRIGUEZ CINTRA Mr. Shark  
DANIEL GIBSON John  
ELIZABETH LUSE Jean  
MARC MACARANAS Lambert  
CASSANDRA PORTER Marie  
BENJAMIN WARDELL Sam  
MEGHANN WILKINSON Rose

Original music composed by  
THE CLAUDETTES (JOHNNY IGUANA, MICHAEL CASKEY)

Lighting Design  
CAT WILSON

Stage Management  
SCOTT NELSON

Costume Design  
JEFF HANCOCK

Sound Design  
MICHAEL CASKEY

Recontextualized play script & film references (in order of appearance):

*Dames*, Busby Berkeley and Ray Enright (1934)  
*If the Shoe Pinches*, Babette Hughes (1937)  
*A Will and No Will*, Charles Macklin (1746)  
*The Strangest Feeling*, John Kirkpatrick (1942)  
*City Lights*, Charlie Chaplin (1931)

Recontextualized music samples/references (in order of appearance):

*Let it Be*, Lennon/McCartney (1970)  
*We Belong*, Dan Navarro for Pat Benatar (1984)

# PROGRAM NOTES

*The Queue* began in 2013 through devising workshops with the Dance and Physical Theatre Trust of New Zealand. Our initial research centered on questions about how bodies generate and defy comedy, with classic physical comedy routines (Chaplin, Keaton, Lloyd) as our source material. We were drawn to the structure, comic timing, and character-based movement of these routines, and explored bringing them into dialogue with contemporary dance and present-day narratives.

Our travels to New Zealand triggered the idea of locating *The Queue* in an airport. We were intrigued by the blurry lines between people's private and public lives within communal spaces, and by varying perceptions of appropriateness when it comes to exposing oneself, or witnessing and even participating in another person's drama. To anchor our explorations, we found inspiration in a 1746 play called *A Will and No Will*, in which a man's imminent death propels seemingly unrelated characters into a chaotic negotiation of their stakes in his life (and potential inheritances).

And so *The Queue* grew out of these combined interests and our growing fascination with how the illogical shifts between multiple "forms" (pedestrian and theatrical, contemporary and classic) seem to capture and unlock the emotional rhythms of everyday occurrences. Ultimately, we hope that these carefully considered formal collisions enhance the audience's investment in our characters and story.

We are grateful to our amazing collaborators: the ensemble, The Claudettes, the designers, and production personnel. And we are honored that you are here tonight.

-Julia Rhoads and Leslie Danzig

## SUPPORT FOR THE QUEUE

*The Queue* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts. *The Queue* is also supported through a production residency funded by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and additional support from the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts.

*The Queue* is a National Performance Network Creation Fund Project, co-commissioned by Links Hall Chicago in partnership with Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (VT) and NPN. The Creation Fund is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). *The Queue* is also the recipient of a National Performance Network Forth Fund Award for a technical residency at Links Hall Chicago, with additional support from Links Hall.

Additional support for *The Queue* is provided by an Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, an Artstour & Live Music grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, and a project grant from the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation. Early research and development for *The Queue* was made possible through a MacArthur International Connections Fund Award, in collaboration with the Dance and Physical Theatre Trust of New Zealand.

# ABOUT THE COMPANY

LUCKY PLUSH PRODUCTIONS (LPP) is a Chicago-based dance theater company led by founding Artistic Director Julia Rhoads. LPP is committed to provoking and supporting an immediacy of presence—a palpable liveness—shared by performers in real-time with audiences. LPP is equally dedicated to creating work that is richly complex while also being broadly accessible. Critics and audiences alike recognize LPP for its complex choreography, moving content, surprising humor, and incisive commentary on contemporary culture.

Since founding, LPP has premiered over 30 original works. Recent appearances include ODC (CA), The Yard (Martha's Vineyard), Hancher Auditorium (IA), Portland Ovation (ME), Maui Arts and Cultural Center (HI), Contemporary Dance Theatre (OH), North Carolina State University (NC), Connecticut College (CT), Juniata College (PA), Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (VT), Spoleto Festival/USA (SC), Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (MA), Skirball Center (NYC), Cleveland Playhouse (OH), Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center (MD), Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (IL), and the Dance & Physical Theatre Trust of New Zealand, among others. Upcoming performances include Hope College (MI), and Diana Wortham Theatre (NC), and Harris Theater (IL), among others.

LPP is the recipient of creation, residency, and touring support including National Performance Network Creation Fund awards, NEFA National Dance Project Production Awards and Residency Awards, NEA Art Works grants, an Illinois Arts Council Artstour Award, and a Metlife New Stages in Dance Award. Commissioning partners include Harris Theater (IL), Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (IL), Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center (MD), Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (VT), and Links Hall Chicago. Press features include *The Boston Globe's* "10 Best Dance Performances of 2013," Chicago Public Radio's "Best of 2011," *The Chicago Reader's* "Best of Chicago 2010," and *Time Out Chicago's* "The Decade's 10 Best Original Dance Works," among others.

Additionally, LPP spearheaded Creative Partners, a collaborative financial model that provides professional fundraising for three Chicago arts organizations: Lucky Plush Productions, Blair Thomas & Co., and eighth blackbird. Exclusive touring representation by David Lieberman/Artists Representatives.



Photo: William Frederking

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

JULIA RHOADS (Co-creator/co-director/choreographer) is the founding Artistic Director of Lucky Plush Productions. She has created over 25 works with the company, several of which have toured extensively throughout the US. Other choreography credits include Lookingglass Theatre's *The Great Fire*, Walkabout Theater's *Mama: A Play for Voices*, Redmoon's *Project Y*, and River North Chicago Dance Company's *Oasis* and *Between Three*, among others. She is a former member of the San Francisco Ballet and ensemble member of XSIGHT! Performance Group. Julia is the recipient of the 2013 Alpert Award in Dance, a fellowship from the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, a Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist Award, a Cliff Dwellers Choreography Award, two Illinois Arts Council Fellowships for Choreography, a Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, and a 2014 Fractured Atlas Arts Entrepreneurship Award for her work with Creative Partners. She received her BA in History from Northwestern University, her MFA in Performance from the School of the Art Institute Chicago, and she has taught in the dance and theater programs of several Chicago-area colleges and universities. She is currently a Lecturer and Dance Advisor at University of Chicago's department of Theater and Performance Studies.

LESLIE BUXBAUM DANZIG (Co-creator/co-director) also co-created/co-directed Lucky Plush's *The Better Half*. She is co-founder of the physical theater company 500 Clown, and co-created/directed 500 *Clown Macbeth*, *Frankenstein*, *Elephant Deal*, and *Christmas*. Her work with 500 Clown has played at Chicago venues including Steppenwolf and Lookingglass, and toured extensively throughout the US. Other projects include *Wild Sounds* with Third Coast Percussion (director); Redmoon's *Hunchback* at NYC's New Victory Theater (director); Pat Kane's *Float* with About Face Theatre (director); Redmoon's *The Elephant and the Whale* with Chicago Children's Theater (co-director with Frank Maugeri); touring with NYC's Elevator Repair Service (actor); playing Masha in *The Seagull* in Lake Lucille, NY (dir. Brian Mertes); and teaching and directing at numerous Chicago-area colleges and universities. Leslie received her BA from Brown University and PhD from Northwestern University in Performance Studies. She trained in physical theater and clown with Jacques Lecoq and Philippe Gaulier and is currently the curator of The University of Chicago's Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry, where artists and scholars experiment with forms of collaboration.

MICHEL RODRIGUEZ CINTRA (Ensemble) was born in Havana, and is a former member of Danza Contemporanea de Cuba and Hedwig Dances. Choreography credits include three works for Hedwig, one of which was a finalist in the A.W.A.R.D. Show 2010. Michel was named one of "The Men of 2010" by *Time Out Chicago*, and he is the recipient of the 2013 3Arts Award in Dance. In addition to being an ensemble member of Lucky Plush Productions, Michel is a member of The Cambrians, through which he has co-created two evening works including *The Nexus Project*, which was named one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" in 2014. Michel is currently an adjunct faculty member at Columbia College Chicago.

DANIEL GIBSON (Ensemble) is a native of Atlanta, Georgia, where he formally trained in African, hip hop, jazz, modern, tap, ballet, and breakdance. Daniel earned a BFA in dance from the University of Georgia, and upon graduating, he joined a national tour with 13th Floor Performing Arts as a featured performer and choreographer. Shortly after, Daniel moved to Chicago where he has performed for Culture Shock Chicago, Chicago Dance Crash, the Seldoms, 5 Star Boogie, Elephant Filmworks, the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, a national campaign for UPS, Johnny Dangerous, and Kid Sister with Kanye West. He was also a featured dancer in the short film *Wonderland or Humans who talk and dance*.

ELIZABETH LUSE (Ensemble) started dancing at The School of Performing Arts in Orlando, Florida, and continued her dance education at Indiana University where she studied with Violette Verdy, Guoping Wang, and Leslie Peck. Professionally, Elizabeth has danced with Winifred Haun and Dancers, Nomi Dance Company, Dance in the Parks, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Her guest appearances include Ballet Quad Cities, Madison Ballet, and Ron de Jesus Dance, and she currently works as a guest artist with Emily Stein. Elizabeth has taught for Visceral Dance Center and is on faculty at the Joffrey Academy of Chicago.

MARC MACARANAS (Ensemble) graduated cum laude from the University of California, Irvine. Since 2006, he has performed across the US and abroad with Lucky Plush Productions, Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre, The Seldoms, DanceWorks Chicago, RUBBERBANDance Group, and Luna Negra Dance Theater. He presents his solo work as *The Visitor(s)* and is resident choreographer with Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre. His choreography has been presented at Harvest Chicago Contemporary Dance Festival, Poonie's Cabaret, THAW, Dance Chance Redux, Dance Chicago, and Duets for My Valentine. In addition to being in his fifth season as an ensemble member, Marc is the social media manager for Lucky Plush.

CASSANDRA PORTER (Ensemble) trained with Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago's Giordano II, and is a former company member of River North Dance Chicago. Other professional credits include Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, where she performed the choreography of Harrison McElDowney, Jeremy Plummer, and Sherry Zunker, and was also a featured aerialist in the first grand scale illusion show at sea. Since 2003, she has danced in Chicago Symphony Orchestra's annual Christmas show, *Welcome Yule!* In the summer of 2007, Cassandra was one of twelve girls to appear on the CW network TV show *The Pussycat Dolls Presents: Girlicious*.

BENJAMIN WARDELL (Ensemble) is a former company member of the Cincinnati Ballet, where he achieved the rank of soloist, Alonzo King's LINES Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and Azure Barton and Artists. In addition to being in his fourth season as an ensemble member with Lucky Plush Productions, Ben freelances as a teacher, photographer, videographer, performer, and dancemaker. Most recently, Ben founded The Cambrians, a dance company that produced *The Nexus Project*—one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" in 2014—and *Clover*, a collaborative work with Lucky Plush ensemble members Michel Rodriguez Cintra and Melinda Jean Myers.

MEGHANN WILKINSON (Ensemble) is in her eleventh season with Lucky Plush Productions. She is a former company member of Mordine and Company, and has performed with Smith/Wymore Disappearing Acts, Cie Felix Ruckert, Raizel Performances, and Peter Carpenter Performance Project. Meghann has been a guest teacher and choreographer for Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, Cecchetti Council of America, and Evanston Dance Ensemble. She was Assistant Choreographer for Lookingglass Theatre's *The Great Fire* and movement director for Walkabout Theater's *Crow*. Meghann has organized for the Chicago Seminar on Dance and Performance and the Society of Dance History Scholars. She has taught at Northwestern University, Dance Center Evanston, and Visceral Dance Chicago, and is currently on faculty in the theater and dance programs at Columbia College Chicago.

# COLLABORATING ARTISTS & DESIGNERS

MICHAEL CASKEY, aka Bunny Patootie, (Drummer/The Claudettes, Sound Design) hails from rural southwestern Michigan. He has performed with artists as diverse as Chuck Mangione, Koko Taylor, Toni Tenille, Danilo Perez, Marvin Hamlisch, John Sinclair, Grazyna Auguscik, oh my god, Goran Ivanovic, the Grammy-nominated Heritage Blues Orchestra, Hood Smoke, Leslie Hunt, Ron Perillo, and Striding Lion Performance Group. As a member of Eastern Blok, a pan-cultural Chicago-based ensemble, Michael has presented concerts and master classes at numerous educational institutions such as Princeton, Cornell, Carnegie Mellon, and University of Michigan, among others. A *DownBeat* jazz magazine award winner and five-time Detroit Music Award recipient, Michael has performed for audiences throughout North America and Europe. He has also created original music and sound design for dance companies Hedwig Dances, Zephyr Dance, Same Planet Different World, Peter Carpenter, and members of Mad Shak.

JEFF HANCOCK (Costume Design) is a teacher, choreographer, and costume designer. He was a founding member of River North Dance Chicago, and danced for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Jan Erkert & Dancers, Dance Kaleidoscope, and Same Planet Different World Dance Theater, where he was a Co-Artistic Director. Recent choreography includes *Miss Saigon* at the Paramount Theatre and the ACDFA National Gala at the Kennedy Center. Jeff has been designing and constructing costumes for over twenty years. He has created costumes for River North Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Inside/Out, Gus Giordano Dance Chicago, Danceworks Chicago, Mad Shak, and Lucky Plush Productions, among others. He has been nominated for Ruth Page Awards for his dancing and choreography, is a McCormick Distinguished Lecturer Award nominee at Northwestern University, and is an Illinois Arts Council grant recipient. He is currently a lecturer at Northwestern University and adjunct faculty at Columbia College Chicago.

JOHNNY IGUANA (Original Music, Piano/The Claudettes) has toured internationally and recorded six albums with his cult-favorite rock band oh my god. He has played live or recorded with Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, Otis Rush, Koko Taylor, James Cotton, Lil' Ed, Carey Bell, Billy Boy Arnold, Lurrie Bell, Matthew Skoller, John Primer, Billy Branch, Carlos Johnson, Sugar Blue, Dave Myers, Eddie Shaw, and more. He has played on Grammy-nominated albums with Junior Wells and Chicago Blues: A Living History, has performed everywhere from Beirut to Buenos Aires to the Montreux Jazz Festival, and has had strange musical encounters with Van Morrison and Jeff Healey that he'd love to tell you about.

SCOTT NELSON (Stage Management) is a lighting designer, production manager, and stage manager based in NYC. Most recently, Scott toured internationally with carolyndorfmandance. His work has been seen across the US, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand with the Warhol Museum's *13 Most Beautiful: Songs for Andy Warhol*, including performances at Sydney Opera House, Barbican Centre London, Teatro Versace, and Spoleto Festival USA, among many others. During the summers, Scott is the production manager at The Yard on Martha's Vineyard, producing with over thirty contemporary dance and movement theater companies each season. Scott is a member of the Actors' Equity Association and a graduate of Point Park University.

CAT WILSON (Lighting Designer/Production Stage Manager) is a Chicago-based lighting and projection designer for dance, theatre, opera, and live events. She has recently worked with Chicago Dance Crash, Innervation Dance Cooperative, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Li Chiao-Ping Dance Company, Chicago Children's Theatre, Opera Theatre Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre, Hiawatha Project, and the Hanger Theatre. She is also the technical manager and



resident lighting designer for The Den Theatre. She received her MFA in lighting design from Carnegie Mellon. [www.catwilsondesigns.com](http://www.catwilsondesigns.com).

## SPECIAL THANKS

We'd like to extend our deepest gratitude to Chuck Swanson, Jacob Yarrow, Brian Anstedt, Rob Cline, and the rest of the fabulous team at Hancher Auditorium and the University of Iowa for their generosity and support of this presentation of *The Queue*; Links Hall for their commissioning and residency support; the Flynn Center of the Performing Arts for their commissioning and residency support; Adam Hayward and the Dance & Physical Theatre Trust of New Zealand, Southern Lights Dance Company, and New Zealand Dance Company for their participation and support in early creation workshops; our individual, project, and season supporters who believe in our mission and make all of our work possible; and to the Lucky Plush Productions ensemble for their generosity, thoughtfulness, and insanely diverse talents. *The Queue* is the sum of so many invaluable parts.

## LUCKY PLUSH SUPPORTERS

### PROJECT SUPPORT FOR *THE QUEUE*

The Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation  
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## LUCKY PLUSH STAFF

Julia Rhoads, Producing Artistic Director  
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# DRAWING CLOSER

## CELEBRATING HANCHER'S UPCOMING OPENING AUGUST 22, 2015

On August 22, more than 1000 people gathered for *Drawing Closer: Celebrating Hancher's Upcoming Opening*. The event featured chalk artists who drew portraits of performers they'd like to see on the new Hancher stage. Squonk Opera was on hand to perform *Pneumatica*, a concert employing air to create amazing visual effects. Food vendors, face painters, balloon artists, and games were also part of the family-friendly event, which gave the community an opportunity to see the Hancher construction site up close. The new Hancher Auditorium is scheduled to open in the fall of 2016.

Photos by Miriam Alarcón Avila







# 2015

# 2016

## **Las Cafeteras**

September 25 | Club Hancher at The Mill

## **Brentano String Quartet**

October 17 | Riverside Recital Hall

## **Lynne Arriale, Carla Cook, and Grace Kelly**

*You Know How I Feel*

*A Tribute to Nina Simone, Abbey Lincoln, and Joni Mitchell*

October 30 | Club Hancher at The Mill

## **Chris Thile**

November 4 | The Englert Theatre

## **Taylor Mac**

*A 24-Decade History of Popular Music: The 1850s*

*Whitman vs Foster: Songs Popular Near the Breaking Point*

December 5 | E. C. Mabie Theatre, Theatre Building, UI Campus

## **The Ellis Marsalis Quartet**

December 11 | The Englert Theatre

## **Vocalosity**

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January 30 | The Englert Theatre

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