presents
Bread and Puppet Theater and Boxcutter Collective’s
The Divinity Supply Company
The Downstairs
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
June 30 - July 2, 2022
The Divinity Supply Company

Created by
Boxcutter Collective and Peter Schumann

Text by
Peter Schumann and Boxcutter Collective

Directed by
Peter Schumann
Trudi Cohen
Boxcutter Collective

Performed by
Sam Wilson, Joe Therrien,
Tom Cunningham,
Ali Dineen, Jason Hicks,
Amelia Castillo

Lighting Designer: Izzy Olgaard
Lighting Board Op: Jimmy Dewhurst

Music:
Masterpiece #3 (Tarantella) by Ali Dineen
Hungarian Rhapsody by Franz Lizst
Peacherine Rag by Scott Joplin
Ticklish Reuben by Cal Stewart c.1900
Marche from The Nutcracker Suite, Op 71a by Tchaikovsky
Masterpiece #2 by Lindsay McCaw
Bird’s Lament by Moondog
Outline by Peter Schumann

Part 1: The History of Laughter

An ancient god’s laughter creates the world of Darkness, but then Darkness adds the Suffering Valley to the creation.

Part 2: Dilemma Divinities at work in 3 stages

a) The Good Life Dilemma and the Use-It-Up-Wear-It-Out Goddess
b) The Better Life Dilemma with Fritz, the Skeleton God
c) The Naked Life Dilemma with the All-The-News-That’s-Fit-To-Print God

Also featuring the Ethical Cleaning Co. and the There-Is-No-End-In-Sight Conclusion

The Bread and Puppet Theater was founded in 1963 by Peter Schumann on New York City’s Lower East Side. The concerns of the first productions were rents, rats, police, and other problems of the neighborhood. Many performances were done in the street. During the Vietnam War, Bread and Puppet Theater staged block-long processions and pageants involving hundreds of people. In 1974 Bread and Puppet moved to a farm in Glover, Vermont. Our Domestic Resurrection Circus, a two day outdoor festival of puppetry shows, was presented annually through 1998. Today the shows range from tightly composed theater pieces presented by members of the company to extensive outdoor pageants which require the participation of many volunteers. Bread and Puppet continues to be one of the oldest, nonprofit, political theater companies in the world.

Boxcutter Collective is a Brooklyn based puppet theater collective made up of 5 core members: Sam Wilson, Jason Hicks, Ali Dineen, Tom Cunningham and Joseph Therrien. It was established in 2016 by members who had met and worked together for years at the Bread and Puppet Theater. Since then the Boxcutters have been hell-bent on making all kinds of shows to confront the humanity threatening dilemma of the status quo. Collective members have worked closely with Great Small Works, The People’s Puppets of Occupy Wall Street, The Rude Mechanical Orchestra, Chinese Theater Works, Papel Machete, Redwing Blackbird Theater and Bread and Puppet Theater. Boxcutter Collective performs regularly in Brooklyn at the fabulous Jalopy Theater and beyond. They invite you to join their open conspiracy to underthrow the empire one puppet show at a time.
Joseph Therrien has a BFA in Acting and an MFA in the Puppet Arts from the University of Connecticut. He has taught theater, music, puppetry and performance both full time and as a teaching artist in New York City for the last 12 years. In addition to teaching, Joe works and performs with other theater groups in and around New York City. In 2011, he founded a puppetry collective called “The People’s Puppets of Occupy Wall Street” which offers training and support for grassroots community organizations on how to incorporate art and performance into their work. He also works and tours extensively with The Bread and Puppet Theater, performing large scale political puppet shows around the country and the world. Joe is also part of an ongoing collaboration with the Puerto Rico-based political puppet group, Papel Machete in the creation of a new Afro-Caribbean futurist multimedia puppet project about prison abolition premiering in 2023 called “On the Eve.” Joseph also creates puppet shows of his own and with many collaborators as part of The BoxCutter Collective and performs often in and around New York City including at La Mama Experimental Theater Club, Coney Island USA, The Henson Carriage House, and the Jalopy Theater!

Sam Wilson is a puppeteer, painter, and bartender. She moved from Buffalo, New York, to New York City 25 years ago to attend school at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn where she earned her B.F.A. Following Pratt she was part of the World War III Arts in Action collective that participated with street art in protesting the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. She co-founded and designed art for Milk Not Jails, an organization that fought to change the rural urban relationship in New York State by both advocating for criminal justice reform and building support for local agriculture. She has performed and toured internationally with Bread and Puppet Theater and Great Small Works and designed and built puppets for various groups including Circus Amok! and the Funhouse Philosophers. She has also worked with Amy Trompetter and the Redwing Blackbird Theater Company in Rosendale, New York and helped with the design and installation of their museum.

Jason Hicks, (Trashville), a self-taught puppeteer, trombone player, print maker, & agitator. With fellow conspirators, for the last 20 years, he has been building & writing undocumented puppet shows for all spaces and situations with the purpose of undermining the machines of destruction put on us by modern life. Hicks co-founded the RPM Puppet conspiracy (2001-present), The Flying Donkey Theater (2009-present) the Semi-Upright Puppet Collective (2005-2015), the Boxcutter Collective
(2016-Present) and has worked for the Bread & Puppet Theater as a puppeteer and the band leader for the past 15 years, writing, building & touring puppet shows around the US and overseas. He began working with Papel Machete in 2012 in NYC and Puerto Rico, collaborating on community street theater shows and the collective’s annual puppetry festival in San Juan, PR. With the Flying Donkey Theater co-founder, Federica Colina, Hicks has run large scale art builds for marches, puppet pageants, and demonstrations in NYC (Climate March 2015), Taiwan (w/ Open Theater 2011-2015), Copenhagen (COP15 2010), Rome (Green Faith & 350.org 2015) and worked in numerous schools, universities and institutions around the Eastcoast, building puppet shows of all sizes with various communities. Jason recently relocated to Detroit, MI & splits time in Brooklyn, Vermont and the open road with the Boxcutter Collective.

**Tom Cunningham** is a writer, performer and puppeteer. Born and raised in St. Louis, MO, he discovered his love of performing at the age of 6 when he was dragged offstage at the St. Martin of Tours school talent show for his offensive portrayal of Uncle Sam. He performed at some of St. Louis’s finest art galleries and dive bars, including Cranky Yellow, The Mad Art Gallery and Spooty’s. In 2010 he moved to Brooklyn, NY to pursue his love of poverty. He has written and performed sketch comedy, short plays and puppet shows. With Rosie Whalen and Truen Kirk he wrote and performed “God Woke Up Screaming” and “Good News” at the Magnet Theater. With Joe Therrien he wrote and performed “Everything is Fine! A Children’s Show for Scared Adults Living in a Scary World,” a monthly episodic show at The Fabulous Jalopy Theatre and Starr Bar. In 2013 he joined the Bread and Puppet Theater and has been a member of the Boxcutter Collective since 2016. He is grateful to be alive.

**Ali Dineen** is the musical director of the Boxcutter Collective. She is a multidisciplinary artist born and raised in Queens. Her lyrics are poetic and deeply personal, and highlight the intersections between personal experience, larger histories, and systems of power. Ali has performed at the Museum of Art and Design, the Caramoor American Roots Music Festival, the American Folk Art Museum, and the Brooklyn Folk Festival. She was awarded the Helene Wurlitzer Foundations Residency in Taos New Mexico in winter of 2020. She also works with local puppet troupe extrodrinaire The Boxcutter Collective, and is part of a duet with the inimitable Feral Foster. Ali released her third album, Hold On, in 2020, and is currently working on a song cycle about Joan of Arc.
Amelia Castillo is a puppeteer and musician from Santiago, Chile. She studied Hispanic Language and Literature at the University of Chile and Theater Performance at Concordia University in Montreal. In 2016 she joined the Bread & Puppet resident company and has worked and toured with them extensively, performing in parks, libraries, fields, streets, schools and parking lots. Amelia has presented her solo work at The Museum of Everyday Life, Cafe Contret, the Great Small Works Toy Theater Festival and under the barn at Bread & Puppet. She left the B&P resident company in 2022 and now splits her time between Vermont, Brooklyn and Santiago.

Peter Schumann is a German-born American puppeteer, founder and director of Bread and Puppet Theater. Peter Schumann was introduced to puppetry and avant-garde theater from a young age; his family experienced the dislocation and trauma of refugees during World War II. In 1961, Peter and his American-born wife Elka Schumann came to the United States. Schumann’s skills and interest in dance and sculpture were combined in puppetry, and his bread baking and distribution articulated a utilitarian function of art practice synthesized with daily life. He had come to the United States informed in part by the European avant-garde, and in New York was exposed to the Dada-influenced work of John Cage and Merce Cunningham; the early happenings of Claes Oldenburg, Allan Kaprow, Red Grooms, Fluxus; and the Judson Dance Theater. But unlike many of his contemporaries, Schumann's experimental sensibility was combined with much older forms and traditions: medieval passion plays, the Bible, fairy tales and other folkloric traditions of storytelling. Bread and Puppet was also set apart by its economic independence. Guided by a philosophy of living and working within the means available, the Bread and Puppet aesthetic was inextricable from the papier-mâché, burlap, twine, and staples that made up and literally held the puppets and the shows together.

In 1970, Peter and Elka Schumann and their family relocated Bread and Puppet to Vermont. Inspired by the countryside, Schumann began to create giant outdoor spectacles of pageantry, sideshows, and circus acts, which he called Our Domestic Resurrection Circus and it was performed annually until 1998. With the puppeteers of his Glover company, Schumann also created dozens of significant works performed in the Americas, Europe, North Africa, and Asia.
Trudi Cohen is a founding member of Great Small Works, a 6-person theater collective founded in 1995. She was a full-time member of Bread and Puppet Theater's resident company for 10 years, and has performed as puppeteer in productions directed by Peter Schumann, Janie Geiser, Amy Trompetter and David Neumann. She was Director of Great Small Works’ 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2020 (online) International Toy Theater Festivals and has curated dozens of the company’s Spaghetti Dinner events. She plays bass drum with the Boston-based Second Line Social Aid and Pleasure Society Brass Band, and is a founder and organizer of the HONK! Festival of activist street bands. Together with John Bell she received Puppet Showplace Theater’s 2014 Paul Vincent Davis Award, and the 2017 Rebecca Blunk Fund Award from New England Foundation for the Arts.

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A full program with information on this production can be found on the
The Divinity Supply Company
page of the La MaMa website.

In addition you can scan the
QR code Poster located in the theatre
lobby for access to the digital program.
La MaMa’s historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street is undergoing an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

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