

FOOLSFURY THEATER COMPANY PRESENTS THE SIXTH
FURY Factory Festival of Ensemble Theater

Main Stage shows by Hand2Mouth, Poor Dog Group, UMO, Green T Productions,
Bandelion, Deborah Slater Dance Theater, Sokeo Ros and The Independent Eye

Raw Materials program features works-in-progress by a dozen additional companies

June 14 – 26, 2016



Clockwise from top left: Green T Productions, photo by Dan Norman; Sokeo Ros, photo courtesy of the artist; The Independent Eye, photo by S.N. Jacobson; Hand2Mouth, photo by Anna Campbell; Poor Dog Group, photo courtesy of the artist; UMO Ensemble, photo by Jeff Dunicliff.

foolsFURY.org

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, March 25, 2016 – FoolsFURY, “one of the brightest stars of the San Francisco experimental theater scene” (*San Francisco Arts Monthly*), is pleased to announce the program for the sixth **FURY Factory Festival of Ensemble Theater**, June 14 – 26, 2016.

Since 2005, FURY Factory has presented a cross-section of the field of devised or collaboratively created theater with works by more than 80 companies from around the U.S. and beyond. Initiated by foolsFURY Founder and Co-Artistic Director **Ben Yalom**, the festival has evolved to encompass a series of Main Stage performances and a series of works-in-progress or “Raw Materials.” This year’s festival presents eight main stage shows – including three Bay Area premieres, two West Coast premieres and

two world premieres – and 14 works-in-progress. Packed into two weeks, the festival will occupy the Mission district’s Project Artaud arts complex comprising Z Below, the Joe Goode Annex and Theatre of Yugen’s NOHspace.

FoolsFURY is proud to present the following ensembles making their FURY Factory debut: **Green T Productions, Poor Dog Group, Sokeo Ros** and **UMO Ensemble**. Returning artists include **Bandelion, Deborah Slater Dance Theater, Hand2Mouth** and **The Independent Eye**.

These main stage groups represent the metropolitan areas of San Francisco, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Portland, Seattle and Providence, Rhode Island. Among the works on view will be plays drawing inspiration from literature (Shakespeare and Beckett, to name two); performance with hand-made puppets; experiments with clowning; technique informed by Grotowski, Viewpoints and LeCoq; performance interested in tackling complex social issues; and solo works created within an ensemble context. “Above all,” says Yalom, “the festival showcases the endless imagination of ensemble artists making devised theater today. There is no other festival in the U.S. that’s shaped quite like this.”

FURY Factory also brings a focus to the development of new works through its Raw Materials series. Because staged readings, one of the dominant development tools for mainstream theater, are often not useful in the making of devised works, FURY Factory “provides a rare opportunity for new work to gain critical feedback through performance and audience engagement,” says foolsFURY Co-Artistic Director **Debórah Eliezer**. “And it’s great for audiences which get to see multiple artists’ creations for a single ticket price.”

FURY Factory’s “Raw Materials” series features 12 ensembles from the metropolitan areas of Chicago, Minneapolis, New York, San Francisco, as well as Goshen, Indiana. Two of the groups are multinational with members in Canada, the Caribbean and East Africa. The ensembles are **13th Floor, Bird on a Wire, Critical Point, foolsFURY, Humdinger, Metzmecatli-Moon Rope, NAKA, Rapid Descent, Square Peg, Theater Novi Most, Uplift Physical Theater** and **Waypoints**. FoolsFURY will make three separate contributions within the series, with solo performances within an ensemble context by **Brian Livingston, Michelle Haner** and Eliezer.

In addition to the festival’s main stage and Raw Materials series, FURY Factory is delighted to offer a number of performance workshops open to professionals and the general public alike, as well as pre- and post-show conversations with the artists. Information about the festival’s workshops will be available later this spring at foolsFURY.org.

Tickets for FURY Factory are \$20 per show, with discounts for packages of three or more. Individuals may purchase tickets online at zspace.org, or by calling 866-811-4111.

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MAIN STAGE PERFORMANCES

BANDELION

Blessed Unrest (world premiere)

June 22-25

Under the direction of **Eric Kupers**, San Francisco-based Dandelion joins members of **Paufve Dance** and **Theater Grottesco** in the world premiere of *Blessed Unrest*. Structured like a live music show, with a set list that allows opportunities for improvised stories, *Blessed Unrest* asks “What is in ‘unrest’ in each of our lives, and is there a ‘blessedness’ or ‘wholeness’ that can be found right in the middle of the uncertainty?” Dandelion names a subset of interdisciplinary artists within Dandelion Dancetheater. For more than ten years, the group has experimented with dance, theater, music, community activism, healing and new performance forms to look at the world from an “outsider” perspective.

DEBORAH SLATER DANCE THEATER

The Line of Beauty and For the Time Being

June 15, 17, 19

The recent winner of two 2016 Isadora Duncan Dance Awards, including a Special Achievement Award marking the 25th anniversary of the company, Deborah Slater Dance Theater is a veteran member of the Bay Area’s arts community. At the last FURY Factory festival in 2014 the company presented a work-in-progress of *The Line of Beauty*; DSDT returns this year with “the fourth chapter” in the series, “Meditations on the Everyday.” Drawing inspiration from poems by Jane Hirshfield, performed by **Patricia Silver** of Word for Word, this excerpt organizes itself as a series of studies of small moments within the everyday. Original music by **Albert Mathias, Lori B.** and **Fred Frith**.

Following the presentation of *The Line of Beauty* will be a new work titled *For the Time Being*, a collaboration between Slater, award-winning lighting and scenic designer **Allen Willner**, and composer, horn player and bandleader **Darren Johnston**. *For the Time Being* addresses the subject of love over the long passage of time, asking: “How do we endure loss, and how are we transfigured?”

GREEN T PRODUCTIONS

Kaidan: Stories and Studies of the Strange (West Coast premiere)

June 21, 23, 25

Known for its use of Asian art forms such as kabuki, Balinese kecak and Vietnamese water puppetry, Green T Productions has been making theater in the Twin Cities since 1999. For FURY Factory the company presents *Kaidan*, a trio of Japanese ghost stories. In one tale a greedy priest is reborn as a hungry ghost, condemned to devour corpses. The second is the tale of a snow demoness. The third tells the story of a hunter haunted by the spirit of a bird he widowed. “Long-haired, faceless ghosts converge silently on a traveler. A corpse spins and writhes like a breakdancer possessed. A beautiful specter vaults her suitor with gymnastic grace. A massive, shapeless demon lumbers out of the shadows to feed.... The imagery is so indelible” (*Minnesota Playlist*).

HAND2MOUTH

Pep Talk (Bay Area premiere)

June 15, 17-18

Celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, Portland-based Hand2Mouth returns for the Bay Area premiere of *Pep Talk*, “an interactive theatrical celebration of coaches, teams, and everyday heroes,” performed by longtime company members **Julie Hammond, Liz Hayden, Erin Leddy** and **Maesie Speer**, under the direction of **Jonathan Walters**. “It’s a pep rally for people who hated pep rallies, a simultaneous goof on the trappings of team spirit and a sincere acknowledgement that teams can be

families, coaches can be life-changing, and motivational speeches get people going for a reason” (*Portland Mercury*).

THE INDEPENDENT EYE

King Lear

June 14, 16, 18

In this *King Lear*, two actors and 28 puppets bring to life Shakespeare’s text in 100 minutes with no intermission. The actors are **Conrad Bishop** as Lear and **Elizabeth Fuller** as the Fool. Together the husband-and-wife team has been making theater as The Independent Eye since 1974. Currently based in Sebastopol, CA, the company has toured widely in over 75 original shows set to original music by Fuller, and many making use of hand-made puppets and masks. *King Lear* is “utterly convincing, often heartbreakingly so . . . dazzlingly inventive . . . startlingly effective and haunting – more so than most that have a full cast of living actors” (*KQED Arts*).

POOR DOG GROUP

Five Small Fires (Bay Area premiere)

June 23, 25-26

Formed in 2008, Poor Dog Group is a Los Angeles-based theater ensemble working in the spirit of Jerzy Grotowski’s Theater Laboratory. *Five Small Fires* is the group’s flagship play, culminating a trilogy of works inspired by Greek antiquity and the mythic rites of Dionysus. The play dramatizes an episode in the life of a group of young cultists who have returned home to Glendale, California after a stay in Costa Rica, while offering “a commentary on individualism, power, greed, excess, violence, and death,” says Director **Jesse Bonnell**. “Disciplined, goofy, frenetic and provocative, Poor Dog Group is instantly the craziest show in town” (*Los Angeles Times*).

SOKEO ROS

From Refugee Camp to Project (West Coast premiere)

June 22, 24, 26

From Refugee Camp to Project is a work about a young man born in a Thai refugee camp in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge. He resettles with his family in America where he finds himself trapped in a low-income neighborhood filled with poverty and violence, courted by gangs, and living at the mercy of the explosive moods of his traumatized parents. This is an autobiographical tale, performed by Sokeo Ros, a member of **Everett Company** based in Providence, Rhode Island. “Through hip-hop dance, traditional Khmer dance, personal narrative, and video, Ros leads us on his journey from Asia to America, from housing projects to artistic projects, and an epic return to the Cambodian village his family was driven from in the 1970s,” writes Everett Executive Artistic Director Aaron Jungels.

UMO ENSEMBLE

Fail Better (Bay Area premiere)

June 16-18, 19

“*Ever tried, ever failed. No Matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail Better.*” – Samuel Beckett

In the past 24 years UMO Ensemble has created over 20 original works for the theater. In this “love letter” to Samuel Beckett, the Seattle-based company explores the thoughts, themes, characters and images inspired by the tragicomic Irish writer. *Fail Better* takes the performers into the air on aerial

ropes, balancing on a giant sculptural seesaw and reacting in a sonic world that is the imagined inside of Beckett's head. "A brilliantly performed and orchestrated show...an artistic postcard from the edge of reality well worth going to see, hear, feel and experience" (*Huffington Post*).

RAW MATERIALS

RAW MATERIALS PROGRAM A

June 14, 16

FOOLSFURY core member **Brian Livingston** is the lead artist in the first of three foolsFURY "Group:Solo" projects in this year's Festival. Group:Solo explores the creation of solo works in an ensemble context. Each piece is led by a single artist, but generated through a variety of collaborative techniques. While it is possible that some of these may eventually take a form which includes other performers, they have initially all been conceived as solo performances. Livingston's *Fragments from Artaud's Desk* presents "a whirlwind of a ride through Antonin Artaud's prescriptions for the theater. It is a highly physical event, teetering between madness and clarity, life and death." Most recently Livingston performed the role of Balthazar in the world premiere of *The Unheard of World* by French playwright Fabrice Melquiot.

NAKA was founded in 2001 by **José Navarrete** and **Debby Kajiyama**, two Bay Area interdisciplinary artists with a shared interest in social justice and environmental issues. For FURY Factory they are collaborating with three additional performers, as well as sound designer **David Molina** and videographer **Jason O'Hara**, in a performance about the social and human costs of the upcoming Summer Olympic Games in Brazil. Titled *RACE*, the project examines Rio de Janeiro's displacement of poor people to make way for costly stadiums, drawing analogies to current conversations about gentrification in San Francisco. NAKA will perform an excerpt from *RACE* titled "Listen to the Gun."

WAYFINDING PERFORMANCE GROUP is directed by **Joy Cosculluela** with collaborators **Jessica Brown**, **Tomoko Hiraoka** and **Bricine Mitchell**. This Bay Area-based group of women dance theater artists is "dedicated to excavating, shaping, and reshaping personal material into the performing arts." They will perform an excerpt from *All that Remains*, "a series of physical journeys...inspired by metaphors of light and darkness and the liminal states between," a work which addresses "themes of loss, impermanence and how we make marks in the world."

RAW MATERIALS PROGRAM B

June 15, 17

FOOLSFURY core member **Michelle Haner**, who translated and directed last fall's world premiere *The Unheard of World*, is the lead artist on the second of three foolsFURY Group:Solo projects in this year's Festival. Through the lens of three figures – herself with a career in the arts and education; Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg; and Shakespeare's tragic prince of Denmark – Haner explores what it means to be an ambitious woman in the 21st century. The piece is titled *Sheryl, Hamlet and Me*.

Ryan Hill is the founder and former artistic director of **SANDBOX THEATRE** in Minneapolis. In his first theatrical venture in the Bay Area he presents *The Siege*, featuring two large choruses, one calling out "bullhorn-fueled hymns," the other vaudevillian slapstick.

WAYPOINTS ENSEMBLE is a collective of U.S. and East African artists devoted to oral storytelling and ritual in contemporary theater practice. Since 2010 the ensemble has demonstrated a commitment to “interrupting received notions of ‘Africa’ and the ‘West’ to imagine models of global interdependence.” For FURY Factory, Waypoints will present *The Price of Salt* written by company member **Margaret Namulyanga** and **Emily Mendelsohn**, with an original film by San Francisco-based artist **Elizabeth Brooks**. *The Price of Salt* follows two middle class women, one in San Francisco and the other in Kampala, Uganda, as they search for a new definition of ‘home.’

RAW MATERIALS PROGRAM C

June 18, 19

Hailing from Minneapolis is **Lisa Channer**, director of **THEATRE NOVI MOST**, in a presentation of *RANT*, a multimedia performance based on R. Buckminster Fuller’s two-day lecture “Everything I know” and a popular Manhattan public access TV talk show called *Conversations with Harold Hudson Channer*. H.H. Channer is Lisa Channer’s father, and the play draws on both personal recordings and the public record to explore “the thin line between vision and madness.” Interactive media design by **Eric Larson**, original score by **Dan Dukich** and photography by Berkeley-based photographer **Jessica Rattner**.

HUMDINGER ENSEMBLE is a group of three artists based in Oakland. Drawing on their shared background from the Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre, they will present *Djilia*, an original fairy tale, inspired by traditional European Romani (Gypsy) tales. Talking animals, acrobatic monsters, singing heroes and magical objects are a few of the elements to expect in this family-friendly show.

RAPID DESCENT PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE COMPANY is the creative project of San Francisco-based artist **Megan Finlay**. For this Raw Materials program the company will perform an excerpt from *Feed the Kitchen*, the story of an aspiring restaurant chef who struggles with the challenge of marrying the creative and practical aspects of the job. Using dance, live music, puppetry – and a real three-course meal – the piece explores the same period of time from two different perspectives, the kitchen’s and the dinner guests’.

RAW MATERIALS PROGRAM D

June 21, 23

The third and final of **FOOLSFURY**’s Group:Solo shows belongs to **Debórah Eliezer**. In *(dis)Place[d]: the presence of absence*, Eliezer explores the history of the Jewish exodus from Baghdad during the 1950s, drawing on personal stories told by her father, an Iraqi-born Israeli American and a former member of the Zionist underground in Baghdad. With song, movement, video projection and character work, *(dis)Place[d]* plumbs the intersection of nationality and identity over several generations.

CRITICAL POINT THEATRE is an ensemble of ten young performers currently based in Manhattan. Now in its third year, the company will present a work titled *Phreaking*, “a psychological hacker melodrama in which the audience sits in the front seat of the mind of an adolescent in crisis.” Part of an ongoing theater development cycle exploring the intersection of gender, sexuality and the Internet, *Phreaking* follows the life of a young man who, dumped by his girlfriend, turns to the Internet for guidance about how to become the kind of man he wants to be.

Based in Woodacre, California, **METZMECATL-MOON ROPE THEATRE**, is directed by **Melusina Gomez**, who describes her company’s spirit as “imagistic, surrealist...and absurd.” Performance is conceived as “a communal ritual act,” with elements of Butoh dance. For this Raw Materials program the artists will present *When They Come Like Whispers*, an excerpt of an evening-length piece exploring what “the old winds,” emotional winds that we carry from our personal, karmic and ancestral past.

RAW MATERIALS PROGRAM E

June 24, 25

Under the direction of performer and educator **Michelle Milne**, **BIRD ON A WIRE** is a collective of artists based in Goshen, Indiana. Their showing at the 2011 FURY Factory, a work-in-progress titled *The Telling of the Bees*, was a fan favorite. For this year’s festival, they will present *For Those Who Cannot Fly*, exploring the idea of borders from the sphere of politics to psychology.

UPLIFT PHYSICAL THEATRE is an international ensemble of artists each based in a different city. Binding them together is a shared education at the Dell'Arte International School and an interest in “hand-balancing, tumbling, equilibrium...and image-based storytelling.” For FURY Factory, they will present *The Many (Illustrious, Remarkable, Hungry, Lonely) Children of Francis LeMoore* about one man's journey through grief.

13th FLOOR describes itself as “darkly comic theater that moves.” Under the direction of **Jenny McAllister**, the company has earned a reputation for its original scripted plays inspired by literature – Virginia Woolfe and the Bloomsbury Group, Raymond Chandler, James Joyce, classical mythology and graphic novels – reimagined and refigured with a mix of acrobatics, dance, fight choreography, martial arts and humor. For FURY Factory, 13th Floor presents *Next Time, I’ll Take the Stairs* about a cursed elevator with a mind of its own.

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ABOUT FOOLSFURY

FoolsFURY, founded in 1998 by Ben Yalom, is a physically oriented theater ensemble based in San Francisco. Under Yalom’s leadership, foolsFURY has been hailed as San Francisco’s “Best Theater Company” (*SF Weekly*), “one of the brightest stars of the San Francisco experimental theater scene” (*San Francisco Arts Monthly*) and awarded the GOLDIE award for theater by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*. FoolsFURY strives to innovate constantly, focusing on inspired uses of the body in creating narrative, and offering visceral experiences for audiences that cannot be replicated on film or television. In addition to creating and touring new works, foolsFURY produces FURY Factory, a festival of ensemble theater presenting diverse works from companies across the U.S.

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, JUNE 14

NOHspace

7 p.m.: The Independent Eye

Z Below

8 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program A

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15

Z Below

7 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program B

Joe Goode Annex

7 p.m.: Hand2Mouth

NOHspace

8:30 p.m.: Deborah Slater Dance Theater

THURSDAY, JUNE 16

Joe Goode Annex

6:30 p.m.: UMO Ensemble

Z Below

8 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program A

NOHspace

7:30 p.m.: The Independent Eye

FRIDAY, JUNE 17

Joe Goode Annex

7 p.m.: Hand2Mouth

9 p.m.: UMO Ensemble

NOHspace

7:30 p.m.: Deborah Slater Dance Theater

Z Below

8 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program B

SATURDAY, JUNE 18

NOHspace

8 p.m.: The Independent Eye

Joe Goode Annex

6:30 p.m.: UMO Ensemble

8:30 p.m.: Hand2Mouth

Z Below

9:30 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program C

SUNDAY, JUNE 19

Z Below

6 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program C

Joe Goode Annex

6:30 p.m.: UMO Ensemble

NOHspace

8 p.m.: Deborah Slater Dance Theater

TUESDAY, JUNE 21

Z Below

7 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program D

NOHspace

9 p.m.: Green T Productions

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22

Joe Goode Annex

7 p.m.: Bandelion

NOHspace

8:30p.m.: Sokeo Ros

THURSDAY, JUNE 23

Z Below

6:30 p.m.: Poor Dog Group

9 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program D

NOHspace

8:30 p.m.: Green T Productions

Joe Goode Annex

7 p.m.: Bandelion

FRIDAY, JUNE 24

Z Below

7 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program E

NOHspace
8 p.m.: Sokeo Ros

Joe Goode Annex
9 p.m.: Bandelion

SATURDAY, JUNE 25

Z Below
6 p.m.: Poor Dog Group
8:30 p.m.: Raw Materials, Program E

Joe Goode Annex

6:30 p.m.: Bandelion

NOHspace
8:30 p.m.: Green T Productions

SUNDAY, JUNE 26

NOHspace
5 p.m.: Sokeo Ros

Z Below
6:30 p.m.: Poor Dog Group

FACT SHEET

WHAT:

FoolsFURY Theater Company presents the sixth biennial **FURY Factory Festival of Ensemble Theater**.

WHEN:

June 14 - 26, 2016

WHERE:

Z Below
470 Florida Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

Joe Goode Annex
401 Alabama Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

NOHspace
2840 Mariposa Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

TICKETS:

General admission: **\$20**
3-performance package: **\$48**
5-performance package: **\$70**
To purchase tickets online visit zspace.org, or call **866-811-4111**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

foolsFURY.org
For all press requests, contact John Hill at johnhillpr@gmail.com.

