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PHOTO BY TAT LUDAL PICTURED: RICHARD NEWMAN, NICOLA LIPMAN, TRACY FOWLES

ELECTRIC COMPANY THEATRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER . JANUARY 2008 . VOL 11 . ISSUE 1



Scene from *The One That Got Away*, photo by Itai Erdal; pictured: Richard Newman, Nicola Lipman, Courtenay Dobbie, Eric Rhys Miller, Ryan Beil, and Tracey Power

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Power Surge!

Electric Company harnesses the power of two



Pictured: Jennifer Swan, outgoing Producing Manager Cindy Reid, Kim Collier, Jonathon Young, Artistic Associates David Huggins and Kevin Kerr, and Nathan Medd

Electric Company Theatre is doubly pleased to welcome two new members to the company to form an exciting new management team. Nathan Medd and Jen Swan will join the Electrics as Producing Managers and while new to Vancouver, they are well-versed on the local theatre community and have both come with exceptional personal and professional recommendations.

"Nathan Medd and Jen Swan are truly a dynamic duo with a wide range of experience in producing live theatre in British Columbia - from the inner workings of the independent theatre scene to the management of a commercial mainstage with a full season of shows," says Artistic Director Jonathon Young. Artistic Producer Kim Collier adds, "We're very excited to have them join our team. Their skills are extremely complementary and the timing of their arrivals works well with the programming in place for the current season."

Nathan and Jen met in 1996 though the University of Victoria's theatre department and worked together on staff over four seasons at the Belfry Theatre. Each leaves a pair of jobs behind on the Island: Jen was the Belfry's Resident Stage Manager and the General Manager of Theatre SKAM; Nathan was the Theatre Program Coordinator at the BC Arts Council, and the Operations Manager at Intrepid Theatre. They're just friends.

Cindy Reid graduates to the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, where she becomes that organization's Managing Director. Cindy has been a tremendous asset to Electric Company, and it is a credit to her strength and dedication that she has been succeeded by two people instead of one. Congratulations Cindy - we'll miss you!

PALACE

Re-envisioned 2008 production

Caught somewhere between Beckett and Chaplin and taking the mythic Klondike gold rush as its setting, *Palace Grand* - a delirious snowbound fantasy - reminds us of our frightening ever-present quest for self. The play won three Jessie Awards for Performance, Set Design and Lighting in 2004, and this PuSh-commissioned presentation re-imagines the critically acclaimed original production. If you caught *Palace Grand* play the first time round, you will notice significant revisions with the script, video, props, and other bits of theatrical sleight-of-hand.

The set for *Palace Grand* will be built and assembled at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts in Burnaby, stored for a week while writer / performer Jonathon Young heads to the Singapore Fringe for *The Invisible Life of Joseph Finch*, and then reassembled with haste ahead of opening night at the Waterfront Theatre on Granville Island, January 30 2008.

The platform at PuSh will bring a new local audience to *Palace Grand*, and we're close to confirming a month-long run at a major Canadian regional theatre for Autumn 2008. You'll know when we know!



GRAND

ready for touring

This performance is presented in partnership with the Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad

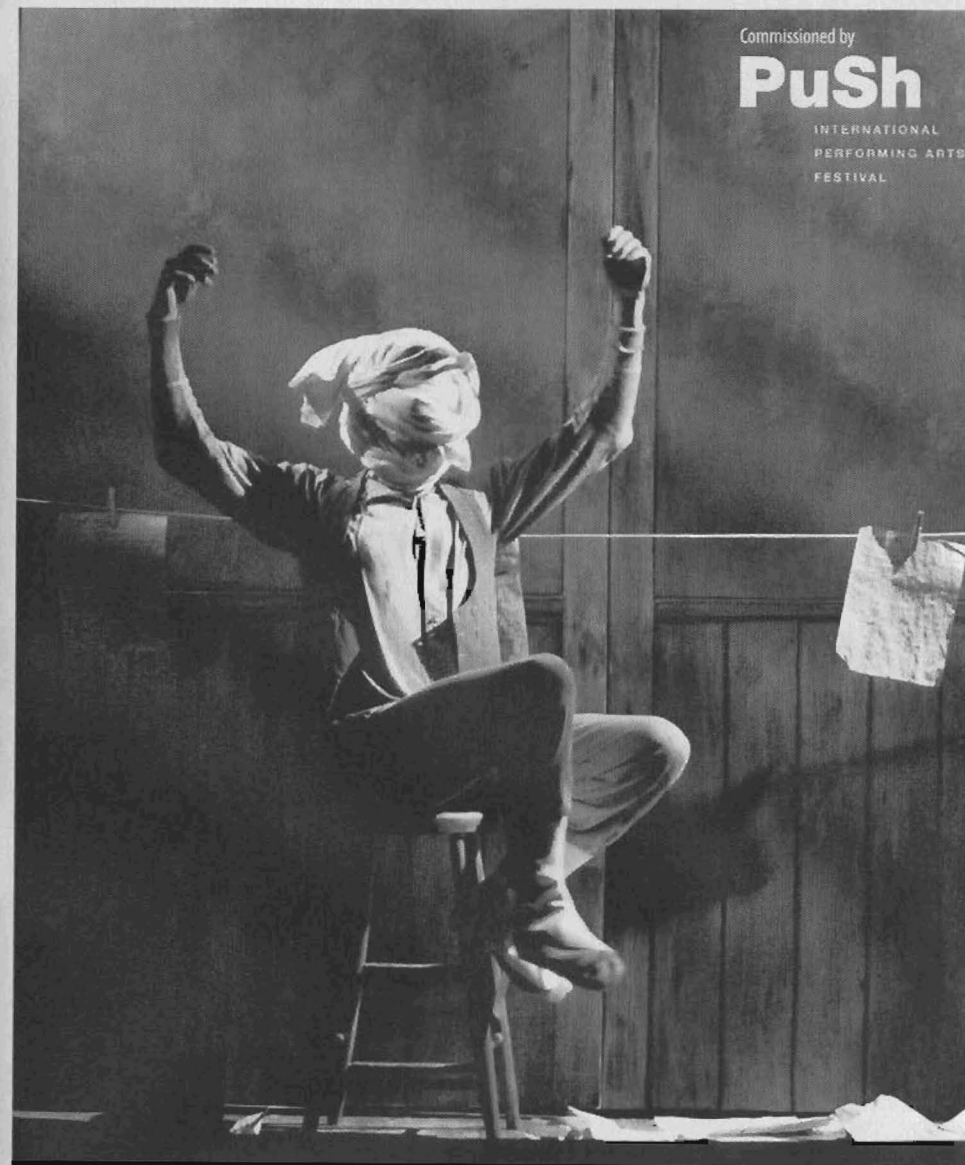
Supported by the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation

At PuSh 2008: Jan 30 - Feb 3
Waterfront Theatre
Granville Island
7pm Jan 30-Feb 2 4pm Feb 2-3
Tickets \$28 / 22
ticketstonight.ca / 604.231.7535

Commissioned by

PuSh

INTERNATIONAL
PERFORMING ARTS
FESTIVAL



NO EXIT

A LIVE-CINEMATIC
INTERPRETATION
FROM DIRECTOR
KIM COLLIER

STARRING LUCIA FRANGIONE LAARA SADIQ
ANDY THOMPSON JONATHON YOUNG

BY JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

PRODUCED WITH THE FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE OF THE PROVINCE
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE
HAMBER FOUNDATION.

THEVIRTUALSTAGE.ORG
ELECTRICCOMPANYTHEATRE.COM

MAY
2008
THE HANGAR
AT THE CENTRE
FOR DIGITAL MEDIA
577
GREAT
NORTHERN
AVENUE

PRODUCED BY

the virtual stage

ELECTRIC
COMPANY

In May 2008 Electric Company will join forces with the Virtual Stage in a production of Jean Paul Sarte's modern classic *No Exit*. Virtual Stage Artistic Director Andy Thompson approached Kim Collier to direct the play and Kim quickly began to envision a concept that will ultimately result in the presentation of *No Exit* as both a live performance and a film. This project is in some ways a departure for Electric Company, but it represents a natural continuation of our investigations into the intersections of live and mediated performance.

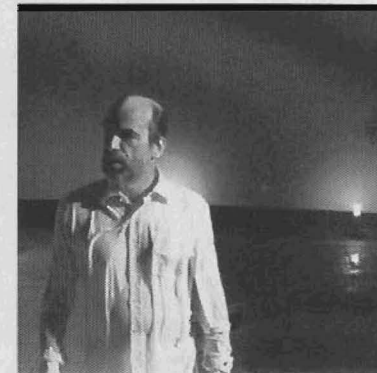
In the Hangar at the digital Media Centre we will build our own hotel room as the site where Sartre's three characters must endure each other's company for eternity. In our production this sense of entrapment will be intensified as the actors will be literally confined within the four walls of the tiny room. Only through the wonders of modern projection technology will audiences be able to watch with cinematic intimacy, a meticulously staged live film of what goes on inside the box.

But that's not all... Inhabiting the space between audience, hotel room and giant movie screen are the play's minor characters: The Valet and his Uncle who runs the hotel. Just what they get up to out there beyond the confines of the script can only be seen to be believed. By creating a theatrical space around the walls that traditionally define the perimeter of *No Exit*, we are 'widening the frame' and possibly finding an exit to a famous play about eternal damnation.

CREATION RESIDENCY AT U of A

In December 2007 Electric Company enjoyed a creation residency at the University of Alberta to continue development of its upcoming production of *Palace Grand* by Jonathon Young. For ten days, while basking in luxurious working conditions, Jonathon and Kevin Kerr hacked and slashed at the script, made several low-fi recordings, incorporated found objects and generally made a mess. Jonathon returned to Vancouver with a production draft, and Kevin promptly emailed all design departments reams of detailed notes on all the new ideas.

Photos by Itai Erdal from *The One That Got Away*



The first production in our 2007/08 season was *The One That Got Away*, re-envisioned and produced in association with The Only Animal. Magnetic North Theatre Festival invited us to bring this large-scale piece to Ottawa in June '07, where it was staged in and around a community centre pool. The invitation afforded us an opportunity to collaborate on a new production script with playwright Kendra Fanconi, and also to bring the show back to local audiences at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver.

A satisfying and successful creative endeavour, both the Vancouver and Ottawa runs were completely sold out, with many calling the appearance at Magnetic North "the hit of the festival".

HIVE 2:

A "theatrical smorgasbord" of marketing lines

In the spirit of the June event, we sample the latest advertising

Electric Company will once again take part in the Progress Lab's HIVE this coming June, following up our acclaimed, multimedia chamber piece *At Home With Dick and Jane* from 2006. And just as you can mix and match live theatre offerings at HIVE, here is a sample of how participating producers are describing the big event:

Magnetic North, the organization behind the festival, gives us the barebones:

"Hive 2 / Progress Lab / Vancouver, BC / Commissioned by Magnetic North Theatre Festival: Eleven companies, nine days, one site. Eleven of Vancouver/Victoria's hottest independent theatre companies reinvent their 2006 sold-out hit."

Our friends over at Neworld Theatre appeal to your appetites:

"Commissioned by the Magnetic North Theatre Festival, BC's best known independent theatre companies reconvene for a theatrical smorgasbord like none other. Pick and choose. Drink. Cross-pollinate. You're the Queen Bee."

Rumble Productions sends a special shout-out to the bar:

"Eleven performance cells clustered around a central bar. Each participating company creates an intimate, short theatre piece, performing it for no more than twenty people at a time, at repeated intervals over the course of the evening. Audience members grab a drink and select from a menu of performances, according to their own tastes and inclinations. They can see all 11, pick and choose, or just hang at the bar, and cross-pollinate. At HIVE, everyone's the Queen Bee."

At the time this newsletter went to press, the venue for HIVE was still being confirmed - check www.magneticnorthfestival.ca for the latest



Electric Company Theatre's contribution to Vancouver's first Hive

The Commish:

Development continues on as-yet untitled "Stanley Project" for Arts Club

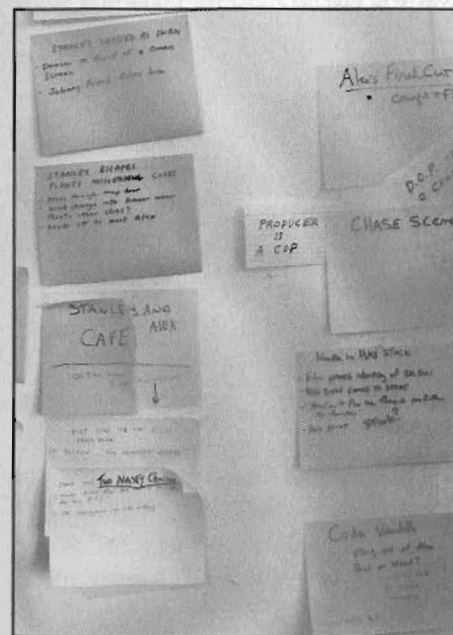
Give it a better working title to win a full set of Muybridge flip books!

Last year the Arts Club of Vancouver commissioned Electric Company to create a new ensemble script for production in a future season (2009-10?) at the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage. Following an initial creation period in summer 2007, company founders Kim Collier, David Hudgins, Kevin Kerr and Jonathon Young will come together again for three months this summer to move the creative process toward a production draft.

Sticky notes now cover every wall of our laboratory, as the story of "The Stanley Project" is concocted. Below right are

close-ups of two of those sticky notes. It's early days for this project so we may or may not be giving the plot away.

Give this play a snappy title based on these two notes, and email to info@electriccompanytheatre.com by April 1 2008 with "The Stanley Project: AKA..." in the subject line. The funniest entries will earn a full set of Eadweard Muybridge flip books, and two tickets to the eventual opening night and reception of "The Stanley Project"! Later, if we wind up actually using your title, we will shrug it off as a mere coincidence.



Johnny's Disastrous Scene

- Gets mixed up: wrong character, wrong scene. Wrong signal sent.
- It triggers a massacre in Tokyo Fish Market.
- Johnny loses his acting career
- Stanley protects him from Mob, puts him in charge of pyro

On Set

Alex learns:

- there are infinite variations to this show
- script is in the head of the cast
- Stanley died as the Swan
- The show has been running for years



Our New Look

Electric Company is currently in the salon (Vancouver graphic design house Studio Blackwell) for a makeover ahead of a busy new year. On the go are new logos, marketing materials, a new and improved website, business cards, letterhead - the works. Watch for our display at the Water front Theatre during our appearance at the 2008 PuSh Festival in January and February.

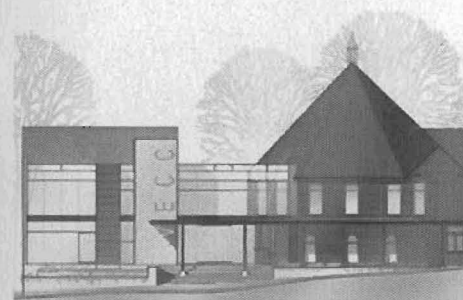


Workshop on New Dramaturgy

In December 2007, Kim was invited to participate in an intimate workshop between German and Canadian theatre artists in Berlin. This incredibly dense experience was a remarkable opportunity to see progressive theatre work from around Europe, have provocative and nourishing conversations about theatre, and meet some wonderful artists. Beautifully hosted by The Canadian Embassy in Berlin and the International Theatre Institute Germany, Kim has returned both inspired and excited to discover that her vision for *No Exit* is not unlike similar artistic impulses resulting in New Forms abroad.

SCENE Change

Continued growth and impenetrable moat prompt EC to ponder new digs in 2008



In a powerful show of its fundraising might, the VECC has taken a turn for the feudal as construction continues on Phase 1 of highly anticipated facility upgrades. Giant moats, intimidating signage, and muscular excavators have surrounded Electric Company's office, which we have enjoyed as a VECC resident company for as long as we can remember. We are deeply indebted to the Cultch for these years of support, and to our other neighbours at Green Thumb Theatre.

These exciting renovations, along with our company's expanded activities and need for year-round production space, have us weighing our options for a possible move in 2008. The need for affordable, dedicated production and rehearsal space is being felt across the performing arts in Vancouver, and Electric Company is in a position to play a leading role among smaller theatre organizations. Kim Collier was one of several arts professionals featured in the *Globe and Mail* Jan 1, in a wide-ranging discussion of Vancouver's space crunch.

Arts Now, a provincial Olympic legacy fund, is supporting our efforts through a \$4000 grant to create a business plan for a shared production facility in a leased space, one we hope would include multiple rehearsal rooms and office infrastructure for four resident theatre companies.

Expected to be completed in February '08, the proposal-in-progress is currently being shopped around town to potential partners and sponsors. Location scouting is also underway.

With so many organizations in search of new production space, every effort is being made to cooperate and communicate with our friends in the arts community toward the best possible solutions to this issue. To learn more or to offer your support, contact Electric Company through the usual channels. The theatre remains open during construction, and we built a crude draw-bridge at our VECC office to let you in.

DONATION & MEMBERSHIP FORM

also accessible online at www.electriccompanytheatre.com/membership

I have my reasons. Yes, I would like to become a:

☐ Member of Electric Company

(& enclosed is my \$5 membership fee)

☐ Donor to Electric Company

I am enclosing the following amount : \$ _____

Donations over \$20 will receive an Official Receipt for Income Tax Purposes; donations over \$50 will also receive an opening night invitation to our next self-presented show, and a lifetime membership.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

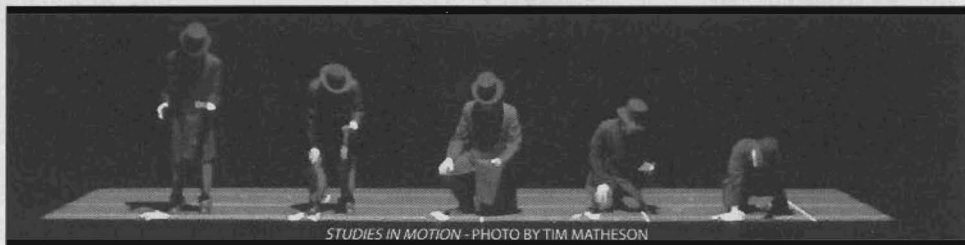
Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Electric Company is generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council, the City of Vancouver, Arts Now, the Melusine Foundation, the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation, the Vancouver Foundation, the Hamber Foundation, and by friends like you.

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STUDIES IN MOTION - PHOTO BY TIM MATHESON