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Tickets On Sale Now for Puppet Festival (r)Evolution

*Regional audiences can experience national breadth of puppetry
on the easily accessible campus of Swarthmore College.*

SWARTHMORE, PA — Single tickets are now on sale to the general public for performances taking place during Puppet Festival (r)Evolution, the 2013 National Festival of the **Puppeteers of America, August 5 – 10 at Swarthmore College** in Swarthmore, PA. The six-day festival showcases hundreds of award-winning puppeteers presenting original works for diverse audiences. The Festival is an opportunity for area audiences to enjoy the best of modern puppetry with artists from across the country. Performances range from delightful family-friendly fare to thought-provoking explorations of the human condition.

Led by Philadelphia puppeteer and **Mum Puppettheatre** founder **Robert Smythe**, the Festival includes over two dozen performances during the week that are open to the public, along with talks and workshops. Festival highlights include a live Q&A and documentary screening of ***Beauty Is Embarrassing*** with **Wayne White**, award-winning Los Angeles puppeteer and best known as one of the creators of *Pee-wee's Playhouse*; the family-friendly re-creation of Dick Myers' ***Cinderella*** by University of Connecticut's **Seth Nehemiah Shaffer**, in tribute to the puppeteer proclaimed by Jim Henson and Frank Oz as "the genius of American Puppetry"; and a shadow puppet double feature with ***Ada/Ava*** by Chicago's **Manual Cinema** and ***The Silent Shadow Cinema*** by New York artist **Tom McDonagh**. On **Saturday, August 10**, the Festival will close with a parade, performances and events for the whole family through the Swarthmore Borough Town Center. Sponsored in part by the Swarthmore Co-op, all Saturday events will be free and open to the public.

"Puppet Festival (r)Evolution marks the first time the national Festival of the Puppeteers of America has made all events, including performances and workshops, open to the public," says Smythe. "Puppeteers are directors and actors – sometimes playing multiple roles – and often dancers and writers and musicians as well as sculptors, set designer and craft artists all in one. Our national Festival showcases the best of new technologies and revived traditional techniques – but most of all it is a celebration of storytelling, magic and experimentation in contemporary performance. We think this will be a very special opportunity for audiences that are familiar with puppets through film and television to experience in person the artistry and variety of modern puppetry."

TICKETS

All Puppet Festival (r)Evolution tickets are now available for purchase online at www.puppetfestivalrevolution.org through Brown Paper Tickets. Tickets and passes can also be purchased by calling (267) 240-3679. Puppet Festival (r)Evolution show prices vary and are listed with each show description on the Festival website.

GENERAL AUDIENCES, FAMILY-FRIENDLY, RATED G

Many (although not all) performances during Puppet Festival (r)Evolution will be enjoyable for family audiences. Family-friendly shows include the pirate escapades of **Mum Puppettheatre's *The Adventures of a Boy and His Dog on the High Seas***, ***The Reluctant Dragon*** by **All Hands Productions**, **Joshua Holden's** delightful ***The Joshua Show***, the Yiddish folk tales of ***The Magic Soup and Other Stories*** by Puppet Showplace Theater's Artist-in-residence Brad Shur , and the zany, high-energy ***Billy the Liar*** by **Toybox Theatre and Cripps Puppets**.

Jim Henson and Frank Oz considered Dick Myers "the genius of American Puppetry" for his world-touring show in the 1960s. ***The Dick Myers Project*** is homage to the artist presented by the **University of Connecticut**, using Myers' lovingly restored original puppets and reviving his one-man puppet performances of classic tales. Puppet Festival (r)Evolution will present Myers' ***Cinderella***, which has not been performed for over thirty years.

Puppetkabob celebrates art and science with ***The Snowflake Man***, the true story of W.A. "Snowflake" Bentley, pioneer of snowflake photography, featuring beautifully designed Czech-style marionettes and striking watercolor scenery.

Puppets take to the skies in ***Bird Machine*** by **Concrete Temple Theatre** and ***Celebration of Flight***, a masterful environmental spectacle by **Heather Henson's IbeX Puppetry**. ***Celebration of Flight*** takes place outdoors in the Scott Outdoor Amphitheater and features rod puppets, kites and flags designed by independent artists as well as the Jim Henson Creature Shop and Guildworks in an environmental spectacle. The performance is free to the public and audiences are invited to participate.

PERFORMANCES RATED PG AND PG-13

Performances for more mature audiences explore the dark side as well as the humor of the human condition, making innovative use of video projections, film, movement, music and repurposed household objects to create wholly original and wholly engaging worlds.

Contemporary shadow puppetry in ***Ada/Ava*** by **Manual Cinema** illuminates issues of death, dying and the world beyond, while **Sandglass Theater** presents wrenching, beautiful and sometimes funny stories written through a collaborative exercise with real people with late-stage dementia and their caregivers in ***D-Generation: An Exaltation of Larks***.

Called "a nightmare in all the right ways," **Izumi Ashizawa's *Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady***, brings to life the ghostly Japanese legend of the seductive Jyorogumo spirit in a surreal fusion of puppetry and Japanese physical theater.

Humor fuels the antic alternative reality of **Hilary Chaplain's** award-winning ***A Life In Her Day***, the comic original songs of **The Dolly Wagglers' *The Woodchoppers Opera*** and Deborah Kaufman's frightfully

funny and deeply disturbing ***Buried ALIVE! A Matchbox Theater***. Kyle Loven's ***my dear Lewis*** looks back over one man's life in a journey described as "a little bit Edward Gorey, a little bit Samuel Beckett."

Technical wizardry is a hallmark of many of the performances. A dozen intricately engineered large-scale marionettes, including an amazingly realistic African elephant, perform elegant and moving vignettes set to music in the **Cashore Marionette's *Life in Motion***. Tom McDonagh's ***The Silent Shadow Cinema*** channels the magical spirit of Buster Keaton and early silent movies and creates breathtaking optical illusions with innovative 3-D shadow technology.

A special screening of the film ***Beauty Is Embarrassing***, the irreverent and inspiring biography of **Wayne White**, tells the story of the life and times of the three-time Emmy winner, artist and groundbreaking puppet designer best known for his work on *Pee-wee's Playhouse*. A live Q&A and DVD signing with Wayne White will follow the documentary.

RESTRICTED AUDIENCES, RATED R

Two performances are for mature audiences (over 17) only. James Godwin's virtuoso performance art piece ***Lunatic Cunning*** is a semi-autobiographical "mockumentary" that explores the dark roots of the art form from a puppetry pioneer who has worked with both Julie Taymor and Jim Henson's Muppets. **Red String Wayang Theater** adapts traditional Indonesian wayang kulit shadow puppet theater to tell the poignant story of an African American man's journey to overcome discrimination and violence in the Jim Crow South in ***The Struggle for Justice***.

SCHEDULE OF PERFORMANCES BY DATE

Tuesday, August 6

Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady – Izumi Ashizawa (PG)

D-Generation: An Exaltation of Larks – Sandglass Theatre (PG-13)

my dear Lewis – Kyle Loven (PG-13)

The Woodchopper Opera – The Dolly Wagglers (PG)

Ada/Ava – Manual Cinema & *The Silent Shadow Cinema* – Tom McDonagh (PG)

Wednesday, August 7

Dreams in the Arms of the Binding Lady – Izumi Ashizawa (PG)

D-Generation: An Exaltation of Larks – Sandglass Theatre (PG-13)

my dear Lewis – Kyle Loven (PG-13)

The Woodchopper Opera – The Dolly Wagglers (PG)

Bird Machine – Concrete Temple Theatre (G)

Thursday, August 8

Billy the Liar – Toybox Theatre & Cripps Puppets (G)

Life in Motion – The Cashore Marionettes (PG-13)

Lunatic Cunning – James Godwin (R)

The Struggle for Justice – Red String Wayang Theatre (R)

Beauty Is Embarrassing – Wayne White (PG-13)

Friday, August 9

Billy the Liar – Toybox Theatre & Cripps Puppets (G)

Life in Motion – The Cashore Marionettes (PG-13)
Lunatic Cunning – James Godwin (R)
The Struggle for Justice – Red String Wayang Theatre (R)
The Dick Myers Project – University of Connecticut Puppet Arts (G)

Saturday, August 10

A Life in Her Day – Hilary Chaplain (PG-13)
The Adventures of a Boy and His Dog on the High Seas – Mum Puppettheatre (G)
Buried ALIVE! A Matchbox Theater – Deborah Kaufman (PG-13)
Celebration of Flight – Heather Henson's IbeX Puppetry (G)
The Joshua Show – Joshua Holden (G)
The Magic Soup and Other Stories – Brad Shur, Puppet Showplace Theater (G)
The Reluctant Dragon – All Hands Productions (G)
The Snowflake Man – Puppetkabob (G)

PUPPETEER TALKS

Tuesday, August 6: Joseph Jonah Therrien and The People's Puppets of Occupy Wall Street
Wednesday, August 7: Folkmanis Puppets: The Fun of Folkmanis
Thursday, August 8: Rick Lyon and The Lyon Puppets

ABOUT THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA

The Puppeteers of America, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the art of puppetry, was founded in 1937 and provides information, encourages performances and builds a community of people who love puppets and puppet theater.

The Puppeteers of America's membership consists of over one thousand puppeteers and friends of puppetry from across the United States. It publishes the quarterly *Puppetry Journal*; oversees an audiovisual library documenting the history of puppetry; provides project grants, scholarships and awards for contributions to the field; supports regional and local networks of puppeteers; and produces national and regional festivals that present the best work being done by American puppeteers. The PofA also provides access to resources and venues to share knowledge and best practices and create opportunities to connect with other puppeteers, the American public and international puppet artists.

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To request interviews, photos and more information, please contact:

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