



REDCAT

# NEW ORIGINAL WORKS FESTIVAL 2012

POOR DOG GROUP, OPERA POVERA AND  
SUSAN SIMPSON

JULY 26–28, 2012

8:30 PM

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CaLARTS

# NEW ORIGINAL WORKS FESTIVAL 2012

## **POOR DOG GROUP: *THE MURDER BALLAD***

**Created by** Poor Dog Group

**Music & lyrics by** Jelly Roll Morton

**Directed by** Jesse Bonnell

**Performed by** Jessica Emmanuel and Jesse Saler

**Produced by** Itamar Stern

**Scenic by** Efren Delgadillo Jr.

**Lighting by** Adam Haas Hunter

**Sound by** Andrew Gilbert

Special thanks to Kobe Bryant, Brittany Carriger, Ram Gibson, Martin Gimenez, Michael Seel, Jerimiah Thies, 24/7 Productions, Brand Library & Art Center, Boston Court Performing Arts Center, DVTel and REDCAT Staff.

*The Murder Ballad is supported in part by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.*

– B R I E F I N T E R M I S S I O N –

## **OPERA POVERA: *TO VALERIE SOLANAS AND MARILYN MONROE IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR DESPERATION***

**Composer:** Pauline Oliveros

**Creators:** Juliana Snapper and Sean Griffin

**Cast:**

Juliana Snapper

Cheryl Crane

Carolyn Shoemaker

Lana Turner, Pauline Oliveros, Physical Education Pariah #2

José Luis Blondet

Butch Cop Stompanato, Marylandy Monrohall

Alexia Lewis

Physical Education Pariah #1, Girly Chew Hassenkopf

Arlen Smith

Kir, Little Ineeda

Atticus Korman

Little Danny Lili Butchy Dunccecap

**Collaborators:** Stacy Ellen Rich, Paula Cronan and Julia Kunin

**Conductor:** Daniel Corral

**Musicians:** Erin Armstrong Breen, Clarinet; Matt Barbier, Trombone; Eric KM Clark, Violin; Chris Kallmyer, Trumpet; Christine Tavolacci, Flute; David Tranchina, Contrabass; Dana Reason and Hans Fjellestad

**Electronics:** Miller Pucket and Juliana Snapper

**Assistant Audio Engineer:** Allison Johnson

**Lighting Design:** Stephanette Smith

### **Program Note**

This production is inspired by a photograph from the *Los Angeles Times* with the caption that reads: Lana Turner fetches her thirteen-year-old daughter Cheryl Crane from a downtown police station after the girl was found wandering on Skid Row. A year later Cheryl interceded in a heated row between her mother and Johnny Stompanato, stabbing the mobster in the stomach with a kitchen knife. A coroner's jury ruled the death a justifiable homicide. April, 1957. (*Los Angeles Times*)

Cheryl Crane obliquely relates to Marilyn Monroe, as Crane's mother was Lana Turner. She also relates to the SCUM manifesto in a harshly literal way in that she stabbed Turner's abusive boyfriend the gangster Johnny Stompanato to death with a kitchen knife a year after this photo was taken. Although Oliveros wrote the piece with directions for a theater's lighting system and an instrumental/vocal approach, there are complex political subtexts. I feel as if the slow-shifting spectra of the infinite colors paired with the drifting instrumental timbre imply something meaningful and useful in the title. Monroe and Solanas are far apart on the brutal spectrum of how gender functioned for these women, and I feel encouraged by Pauline's monolithically multiplicitous structure to view gender in a similar infinite, spectral way with every kind of gradation. Staged in front of floating white sculptures by Paula Cronan, onto which the intense colored lights and a video by Julia Kunin are focused, a dual reality unfolds in time. — Sean Griffin, Director

Special thanks to Pauline Oliveros, Allison Johnson Samantha Starr, and Ethan Smith.

To Valerie Solanas And Marilyn Monroe In Recognition Of Their Desperation *is supported by the Center for Cultural Innovation Individual Artist grants and the Cheswaty Music Commissioning Fund.*

– B R I E F I N T E R M I S S I O N –

## **SUSAN SIMPSON: EXHIBIT A**

**Directed by** Susan Simpson

**Text Written and Assembled by** Susan Simpson

**Music by** Pitch Like Masses with vocal accompaniment of The Boyfriend

**Performed by** Mark Simon, Chris Kuhrt, Stephen O. Schilling, Moira MacDonald, Julianna (JP) Parr, and Baxley Andresen

**Lighting Designer:** JaNelle Weatherford

**Video Designer:** Gina Napolitan

**Costume Designer:** Kate Mallor

**Set Designer:** Susan Simpson

### **Note on the Texts**

Excerpted in the text are segments of the mission statement for the *International Bachelors Fraternal Order for Peace and Justice* written by Harry Hay in 1948; *Eutopia* by Poul Andersen; *The Female Man* by Joanna Russ; and the *Trouble with Japetus* by Blaire Desmond.

### **Program Note**

*Exhibit A* was originally inspired by the collection of Jim Kepner, housed at ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at USC. This collection contains mid-century science fiction fan-zines as well as ephemera related to pre-stonewall gay rights organizing in Los Angeles. The piece springs out of an interest in and attraction to the utopian rhetoric that pervaded both worlds. — Susan Simpson, Director

Special thanks to The One Archives, Automata Arts, Monica Oller and Tom Pejic, the topography designers on the first iteration of *Exhibit A*, Katie Shook who was co-director of that piece. Thanks to Mark Simon, Brent Johnson, Kristy Baltezare, Deborah Lowe, Karen and Jack Lowe, Marc Nimoy, Paula Peng, Janie Geiser, Jessica and Diana Simpson-Lowe. Thanks to Rio Hondo College, Santa Barbara Forum for Contemporary Art, and Banners and Cranks Festival in Chicago for earlier workshops of *Exhibit A*.

*Exhibit A is funded by The MAP Fund and The Jim Henson Foundation.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *New Original Works Festival* is funded in part by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



## ABOUT POOR DOG GROUP

**Poor Dog Group** [PDG] is a collective of artists committed to developing original performance through rigorous critiques of history that speak to the current state of America.

Poor Dog Group was founded in 2008 by graduates of CalArts. We celebrated the opening of our 6,100 sq.ft. performance warehouse in downtown Los Angeles in January 2009. That summer, we toured *The Internationalists* throughout Eastern Europe performing in over a dozen cities in Croatia, Poland, and Serbia. Funding for this tour was provided by TCG, The Foundation for Contemporary Arts, The Grotowski Institute, and The United States Embassy. In 2010, we co-presented the world premiere adaptation of Gertrude Stein's *Brewsie & Willie* with CalArts' Center for New Performance. This project received significant support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Last summer, *Brewsie & Willie* was re-mounted in Los Angeles as part of the inaugural International theater festival RADAR L.A. This past fall, PDG traveled to Europe for a three-week residency in Europe, funded, in part, by the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs. Our most recent work, *DIONYSIA DIONYSIA*, was co-commissioned between The Getty Villa in Malibu and the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center in New York. Most recently, we remounted *The Internationalists* at StudioSCR in Orange County. In the last year, Jesse Bonnell was awarded a MacDowell Fellowship, while Itamar Stern was invited to attend the TCG/ American Express Leadership Boot Camp. This coming fall Jesse will be in-residence at Yaddo in Saratoga Springs.

For videos and more information, including ways to support our work, please visit us at: [www.poordoggroup.com](http://www.poordoggroup.com)

## ABOUT OPERA POVERA

**Opera Povera** focuses on musical works that animate our interests in old-fashionism, receptivity, false memories, garbage, opera and the present. Much like our name sake the Italian art movement Arte Povera (Poor Art), our stage works speak through an assemblage of faded or dead people, vocal technologies, political and psychological pop fantasies.

**José Luis Blondet** is the Associate Curator for Special Initiatives at Los Angeles County Museum of Art LACMA since 2010. Since 2005, Blondet has performed in Joan Jonas's *The Shape, The Scent, The Feel of Things*, commissioned by Dia Art Foundation, subsequently touring on different venues: In Transit Performance Festival (Berlin, 2008), Staatstheater Stuttgart (2009), Sao Paulo Biennial (2009) and the University of Texas (Austin, 2012).

**Daniel Corral** is a composer and multi-instrumentalist born and raised in Eagle River, Alaska. His unique voice finds outlet in puppet operas, accordion orchestras, handmade music boxes, electronic collages, site-specific installations, chamber music, and interdisciplinary collaborations. His music has been commissioned and presented in Los Angeles by venues such as REDCAT, Pianospheres, The Hammer Museum, MOCA, USC, CSUN, and The Santa

Monica GLOW Festival. He received his MFA from Calarts, where he studied with James Tenney, Anne LeBaron, and Morton Subotnick.

**Paula Cronan** (b. 1964, Philadelphia) is an designer, artist, videographer, and drummer who lives and works in Los Angeles.

Musician/filmmaker **Hans Fjellestad** has presented his music and visuals throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. An "innovative musician" (*All About Jazz*) and "master of analogue synthesis" (*The Wire*), Hans' music has been described as "unbridled sonic freedom... raw, shamanic energy that embodies the true essence of unrestricted music" (*XLR8R*). Hans was artist-in-residence at the Steve Allen Theater in Hollywood 2008-2011, where he curated the monthly music series ResBox.

Los Angeles-based Composer and Director **Sean Griffin**'s multi-faceted works explore interdisciplinary incongruities positioned at the intersection of sound, action, performance and the archive. His creative output manifests as electronic music, large and small-scale staged operas, collaborative installations, complex numeric choreographies and uniquely tuned acoustic concert music.

**Allison Johnson** received degrees in music from Stanford University, CalArts, and UC San Diego, and studied gamelan in Surakarta, Java. Her works have been performed in Europe, Asia, and throughout the U.S. She has received grants and awards from American Composers Forum, American Music Center, Durfee Foundation, Irvine Foundation, Centrum Arts, and the Getty Foundation and has published and presented on such subjects as Asian American hip hop, women composers, and sign/gesture technology

**Atticus Korman** is 11 years old. He has studied piano and voice for 5 years, and he performs at coffeehouses and in theater productions in Los Angeles.

**Julia Kunin** lives in Brooklyn, New York. She works both in sculpture and video. Her recent ceramic sculptures are miniature otherworldly landscapes inspired by scholar's rocks and the garden grotto. Ms. Kunin received her B.A. in 1984 from Wellesley College, and her MFA in 1993 from Rutgers University. Selected one person exhibitions include: Stux Gallery, NY, NY. The Bellevue Saal, Wiesbaden, Germany. Selected Group exhibitions include: Sandra Gering Gallery, NY, Suite 106 Gallery, NY, Schroeder- Romero Gallery, NY, Artists Space, NY, The Museum of Art and Design, NY, and the Museum of Applied Art and Design, Frankfurt, Germany.

**Alexia Lewis** studied photography and animation, earning her B.A. in 2006 from the University of Southern California. In the years since, she has stayed involved with the visual arts while becoming more interested in performance art. She is currently studying acting and looking towards experimental film.

**Dana Reason** is a Canadian born pianist, improviser, composer and musicologist. Reason was part of *The Space Between Trio* with Pauline Oliveros in the 2000s. She has performed extensively throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe and can be heard on over 11 CD recordings.

**Stacy Ellen Rich** is a multi-media Costume Designer and Artist. Rich began her career in Chicago in 1993 and since then expanded to the genres of film, print, commercial, experimental and music video. Stacy Ellen Rich first met Sean Griffin in Lyon, France while

collaborating on *The Lyon Manifestation* for artist Catherine Sullivan in 2003. From there, the collaboration grew taking them through productions of *Ice Floes of Franz Josef Land*, *The Audimax/Völkshöhne Manifestations*, *The Chittendens* and *Cold Spring*. Rich is a member of the Costume Designers Guild, 892.

**Carolyn Shoemaker** began her career in Chicago at Trap Door Theatre performing in numerous shows and was named 2006 Top Female Performance by *Newcity* for her performance in *Request Programme*. Carolyn has worked with Catherine Sullivan and composer Sean Griffin and is featured in their films *Ice Floes of Franz Josef Land*, *The Chittendens*, and *The Triangle of Need*. She performed on stage in Sullivan/Griffin's *Ice Floes* (Chicago, NY) and *Audimax and Volksbühne Manifestations* (Aachen/Berlin), and Griffin's *Opened House* (Taipei) and *Cold Spring* (EMPAC, Troy, NY). Carolyn's most recent film *The Circle* which she both stars as Ina and co-wrote (with Michael Lansu) premiered in Chicago this spring. Carolyn is a member of the Drinking & Writing Theater.

**Arlen Smith**, a sophomore at Beverly Hills High School, sings with the Madrigal Choir under Joel Pressman. Past roles include: Children's Chorus in LA Opera's *Carmen*, Prince Edward in A Noise Within's *Richard III*, and Los Angeles Children's Chorus (2 years), including a Scandinavian tour in 2010. Arlen relocated to Los Angeles from Albuquerque, where he sang with the Cathedral Choir, and performed with PLAY Conservatory and Albuquerque Little Theatre. Arlen studies voice with Juliana Gondek.

**Juliana Snapper** is a concert soprano, voice researcher and interdisciplinary artist who pushes the technical and expressive limits of the operatic voice. Her performances range from large-scale site-specific spectacles to intimate, listener-specific works, and have been staged across Europe and the Americas through the support of festivals and institutions including The Metropolitan Opera Foundation, The Arts Council of Great Britain and The Rauschenberg Foundation (with Machine Project, LA). Snapper is excited to launch VSMMRD with Opera Povera and REDCAT as an articulation of opera centered in the voice that fires on all cylinders: as a body cultivated and lived, remembering and inventing, receiving and responding as each moment unfolds.

**The People's Microphony Camerata** (PMC) is a experimental choir based in Los Angeles exploring the emergent phenomena of the People's Microphone (Mic), a technology used in resistance movements worldwide including the Occupy Wall Street movement. The PMC was founded in the spring of 2012 by Elana Mann and Juliana Snapper who were investigating ideas of radical receptivity through sound, voice, and the body, and researching the groundbreaking deep listening techniques of Pauline Oliveros. The members of PMC Choir who are performing with Opera Povera choir are: Andrea Sáenz, Bobby J. Cruz, Cynthia Paige Aaron, Kimberly Kim, Rachel Finkelstein, Sascha Godhor, and Vivian Bang.

## **ABOUT EXHIBIT A**

**Pitch Like Masses** formed in 2009 after meeting at CalArts and have since performed extensively around the Los Angeles music scene, Austria and Germany. They have collaborated with boundary-pushing dance/performance groups such as In-SENSO (France) and The Mob (Sweden). They are excited to be joined by Guitarist Alexander Marshall Noice (Falsetto Teeth, Vinny Golia Sextet). [www.pitchlikemasses.com](http://www.pitchlikemasses.com). Kari Rae Seekins, MPD w/Ableton; Jonathan

Armstrong, MPC/ Wood winds; Andrew Lessman, Drums; Billy Mark, Maschine; Alexander Marshall Noice, Guitar/Electronics.

**The Boyfriend** is Chris Kuhrt, Stephen O. Schilling, and Mark Simon. On a Friday night in 2003 on top of, (or was it under?), the bar at Bricktop's Speakeasy, The Boyfriend sprang fully blown and singing from the hip of Vaginal Davis. They have performed at MOCA, Highways, The Village at Ed Gould Plaza, The Eagle Rock Performing Arts Center for Get Hubbied, and the late lamented Other Side Bar.

**Baxley Andresen** is a puppeteer, fabricator and painter based out of Los Angeles. Her puppeteering credits include: Janie Geiser's *Reptile Under the Flowers* and *Clouded Sulpher*; Kevin McTurk's puppet film *The Narrative of Victor Karloch* and *Erik's Basement*, a project pilot. Baxley currently works with various artists and fabrication shops in Los Angeles to build props for film, print and television, as well as amusements of the imagination and puppets.

**Moira MacDonald** is a puppeteer and multimedia artist. Moira credits include: *Margery & Me* (Writer/Performer/Puppeteer); *The Life of the Bee* (Director); *Letter from the Bees* (Director); *Sun* (Performer). Los Angeles: Susan Simpson's *Concrete Folk Variations* (Puppeteer); Janie Geiser's *The Reptile Under the Flowers* (Puppeteer). New York: Laura Heits's *Bureau of Small Requests* (Puppeteer). Moira is also one of the creators of Sparkleblob's Annual Holiday Shows. She earned an MFA in Puppetry and Integrated Media at CalArts.

**Kate Mallor** is a Los Angeles based costume designer working in film, television, and sometimes puppet shows! Kate received her MFA in costume design from CalArts. She lives in Silverlake with her amazing cat, Chicken.

**Gina Marie Napolitan** is an experimental filmmaker and animator from Brockton, Massachusetts. Her films, which frequently use historical research as a way to showcase found objects, have screened at LA FilmForum, Anthology Film Archives, and numerous festivals in the United States and abroad. She is a 2011 recipient of the Princess Grace Foundation Award for filmmaking, and recently completed her MFA in Experimental Animation from CalArts.

**Julianna (JP) Parr** is an artist, illustrator, fabricator, puppeteer and performer who lives in beautiful Echo Park, Los Angeles, California. She is the Los Angeles Craft Captain, holding weekly CraftNight at Akbar in Silverlake. She is director and producer of Gothtober.com an annual online time-released countdown to Halloween featuring the work of 31 artists and is part of the Sparkleblob collective, creators of annual holiday musical puppet shows. [www.juliannaparr.com](http://www.juliannaparr.com).

**Susan Simpson** is an experimental theater artist, visual artist and filmmaker who lives and works in Los Angeles. Simpson's work often involves intricate hand-made avatars and manipulated film and video projection. Her work has been presented at venues such as the HERE Art Center in New York, The Museum of Jurassic Technology, The Santa Monica Museum and Santa Barbara Forum for Contemporary Art. A solo exhibition of her visual art and video work was presented The Sheehan Gallery at Whitman College in 2009. Simpson teaches at California Institute of the Arts. She is the co-founder and co-director of Automata, a non-profit organization and art space based in Chinatown. Automata is devoted to the presentation of puppet theater, experimental film and other neglected art forms. Under its auspices she founded and directed The Manual Archives, a micro-performance space devoted to the newly discovered folklore of Los Angeles.



## **NOW FESTIVAL 2012 TECHNICAL STAFF**

Technical Director: Bill Ballou

Assistant Technical Director: Eric Nolfo

Assistant Technical Director Sound/Video: Ian Burch

NOW Festival Coordinator: JaNelle Weatherford

Stage Manager: Christian Johnson

Stage Crew: Kenny Valera, Eric Adams and Bryce Hall

Sound Crew: Pete Pace

Video Crew: Israel Mondaca

Load-in Crew: Matthew Stroud, Rolando Fernandez and Joe Wall

## **UPCOMING PERFORMANCES AT REDCAT**

### **August 2 - 4**

New Original Works 2012 | Program 2

Nick+James: *Lake*

Jinku Kim

Prumsodun Ok: *Of Land and Sky*

### **August 9 - 11**

New Original Works 2012 | Program 3

Emily Mast: *B!RDBRA!N*

Melanie Rios Glaser: *La Tribu*

Heather Woodbury: *As the Globe Warms*

**Follow the festival on Twitter via hashtag #NOW2012**

**PARTY WITH US DURING NEW ORIGINAL WORKS FESTIVAL 2012. EACH THURSDAY POST-PERFORMANCE THE LOUNGE FEATURES DJ SETS BY DUBLAB!**



## **WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR REDCAT EXPERIENCE!**

Post a comment on our wall @ [facebook.com/calartsredcat](https://www.facebook.com/calartsredcat)

... or send a tweet to us @ [twitter.com/calartsredcat](https://twitter.com/calartsredcat)

... or send an old-fashioned email to [info.redcat@calarts.edu](mailto:info.redcat@calarts.edu)