

**Legal Name**

California Institute of the Arts

**Project Title**

To support the National Interdisciplinary Initiative, to be held with an interdisciplinary edition of the RADAR LA Festival in the Fall of 2013

**Project Progress and Successes**

On behalf of REDCAT, The California Institute of the Arts, and a consortium of partner organizations involved with the planning and implementation of the National Interdisciplinary Initiative convening/symposium, and the Radar L.A. International Festival of Contemporary Theater, we are pleased to report on the success of the project.

The lively convening of local, national and international colleagues in the performing arts, was well integrated with the interdisciplinary-themed festival, which highlighted new theatrical forms merging music, dance, and visual elements. While the festival's eighteen different theatrical presentations were lighting up theaters and site-specific locations around the city, influential leaders in the performing arts field from throughout the U.S. and abroad were convened for the professional symposium September 25 to 28. A dynamic mix of artists, presenters, producers, funders and cultural organizers from a dozen states and 10 countries gathered to explore the theme of interdisciplinary approaches to the contemporary performing arts -- a theme that was strongly reinforced by the Festival's artistic selections. Professionals who specialize in mixing dance, theater, media, music, opera, puppetry, visual art and contemporary music came together to ensure a rich and boundary-blurring conversation.

The festival featured new premieres as well as touring productions, with a special emphasis on work from the Western U.S., Latin America, and the Pacific Rim, and a focus on interdisciplinary works. Visiting artists and ensembles from Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, New Zealand and Japan were highlighted in the festival's ambitious international program, and the local programming includes new and commissioned works by such adventurous Los Angeles-based artists as choreographer David Roussève, theater ensemble Los Angeles Poverty Department (working in collaboration with Dutch ensemble Wunderbaum), and writer and performer Luis Alfaro.

International projects included the first Los Angeles appearances by some of Latin America's most acclaimed theatrical innovators. Argentine director Lola Arias mixed music, film and theater in a special work of documentary theater developed in collaboration with an ensemble of Chileans born during Pinochet's 17-year regime, who reflect on that tumultuous era by revealing and recalling their family histories (September marks the 40th anniversary of the 1973 military coup in Chile). Mexican director Claudio Valdés Kuri and his company, Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes, staged the acclaimed music/theater/opera production *El Gallo* at the historic Los Angeles Theatre, inviting the audience to experience the grand building in unexpected ways. Mexico City-based company Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol was represented by incisive writer/performer Mariana Villegas, who recalled some unusual twists in her family history in *Se Rompen Las Olas* (Breaking the Waves). Famed Argentine ensemble Timbre 4 presented the critically praised production *Tercer Cuerpo* (Third Wing). Colombian director Manuel Orjuela led an audience between four different downtown locations to experience writer Rodrigo García's provocative *You Should Have Stayed Home, Morons*, translated into English for the first time. Argentine theater artist Mariano Pensotti collaborated with Los Angeles writers on a free installation/performance project designed for downtown pedestrian encounters at the popular Grand Central Market.

The Festival's international programming also highlighted innovative productions and collaborations by artists from Pacific Rim countries. Renowned New Zealand-based director and choreographer Lemi Ponifasio and his company, MAU, brought the historic Palace Theatre to life for the avant premiere of *Stones in Her Mouth*, developed collaboratively with an ensemble of ten Maori women, whose ancient and contemporary chanting, choral work and ritualized movement form the basis for a stunning blend of theater, dance and stagecraft. *Dogugaeshi*, a spellbinding work developed by acclaimed theater artist and puppeteer Basil Twist together with Japanese master musician Yumiko Tanaka, offered a highly visual theatrical experience at REDCAT. Theater company Complicite performed *Shun-kin*, its collaboration with Japan's Setagaya Public Theatre (presented as part of the season of performances presented by CAP UCLA).

Los Angeles artists unveiling new work in the festival included Skid Row-based theater ensemble Los Angeles Poverty Department, working in collaboration with Dutch theater ensemble Wunderbaum on the provocative new work *Hospital* at the historic Tower Theater; choreographer David Roussève artfully blended theater and dance in *Stardust* at REDCAT; and incisive writer and performer Luis Alfaro, whose new work *St. Jude* was presented at Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre as part of a three-event repertory program also featuring Los Angeles-based solo artists Roger Guenveur Smith and Trieu Tran. The local program also featured theater and puppetry artist Janie Geiser in a collaboration with writer Erik Ehn, physical theater ensemble Theatre Movement Bazaar, writer Dennis Cooper in a collaboration with French director Gisèle Vienne, and the CalArts Center for New Performance, which mixed contemporary jazz and brilliant stagecraft in a production of *Prometheus Bound* at the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Villa.

Downtown Los Angeles was a theatrical hot spot during Radar L.A., with events taking place at ten different neighborhood sites, from historic theaters on Broadway, to REDCAT in the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and multiple venues in the Los Angeles Theatre Center (LATC), with special events staged at the neighborhood's Spring Street Park and at Automata in Chinatown. The historic Broadway Street theaters brought to life for the festival include The Million Dollar Theater, The Palace Theatre and The Tower Theatre, which are rarely used for live performances. Programs in other parts of Los Angeles include three new solo works produced by Center Theatre Group at The Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City, as well as special co-presentations at the Getty Villa in Malibu and the Center for the Art of Performance (CAP) at UCLA.

The professional symposium on September 26 and 27 focused on interdisciplinary approaches to creating new performances -- but also exploring the impact that the performing arts can have on a neighborhood, an important aspect of the Radar L.A. Festival.

More than 140 professionals participated in the symposium, which included the two formal days of sessions September 26 and 27, and also a series of Saturday activities for "caucus -- sized" explorations of challenges facing the performing arts field. Among the groups participating in special Saturday sessions were the Network of Ensemble Theaters, the HowlRound Theater Commons, and an international delegation organized by the International Network for the Contemporary Performing Arts (previously known as the Informal European Theater Meeting or IETM).

The six symposium sessions included conversations and panels with local and international leaders in the performing arts, with such topics including Dramaturgy across Disciplines, Artist's Predictions and Manifestos, and Creating Theatrical Content for Our Urban Centers. Presenters and panelists included Puppeteer and theater artist Basil Twist, Dutch theater artist Marleen Scholten of the Wunderbaum Ensemble, Argentine director and writer Mariano

Pensotti, playwright Alice Tuan, Mexico theater and opera director Claudio Valdés Kuri of Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes, Nan van Houte for the International Network for Contemporary Performance (IETM), choreographer David Rousseve, Presenter/producer Angela Mattox (PICA), M.K. Wegman of the National Performance Network, Deborah Cullinan of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Olga Garay-English of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Jose Luis Valenzuela of the Latino Theater Company, director and choreographer Lemi Ponifasio of the MAU company, and several Los Angeles-based artists and cultural organizers.

The symposium's focus on interdisciplinary approaches was expanded to also include an exploration of "creative placemaking" with a hope to find a way for that conversation to be both local and universal. With many of the panelists and speakers coming from outside of Los Angeles (and the U.S.), the planning team worked to find a way to ensure that the conversation investigated local efforts in depth, yet also helped symposium attendees to think about ways that their work in other countries and regions affects the growth and development of their neighborhoods. Additional partners came on board to help with the planning for the symposium--representatives of the Network of Ensemble Theaters, the Los Angeles Stage Alliance and the Director's Lab West, the National Performance Network, Theatre Communications Group, CalArts and others met with staff from REDCAT and Center Theatre Group to discuss and refine the agenda for the symposium, and to expand the list of panelists and speakers.

The Symposium was webcast live via HowlRound, and in the months following the symposium, some of the discussion continued through a series of "Howl Round" posts. Further discussion of the topics also occurred at other convenings, including the National Performance Network Annual Meeting, and at the January conference of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters. Further stories and essays by symposium panelists are forthcoming in professional service organization newsletters and publications.

Additional partners joined the community-wide effort, and exciting new venues were added to the mix of festival locations including: MOCA Los Angeles, the Museum of Contemporary Art, to co-host performances of a contemporary puppetry and performance work by Dennis Cooper and Gisele Vienne; the Million Dollar Theater, one of the first movie palaces to be opened in Los Angeles (in 1918!) to be the site of opera-theater performances by Mexico City's Teatro De Ciertos Habitantes; the re-vitalized Grand Central Market to be a location for Mariano Pensotti's installation-based project "Sometimes I think, I Can See You."

In addition to the professional symposium and the vigorous schedule of performances, RADAR L.A. offered theater audiences a chance to engage further. All day and late into the night the Lounge at REDCAT served as an intimate space where audiences and artists could interact and exchange ideas. After 9pm each night, a line-up of DJs, musical sets and more highlighted experimental Los Angeles artists.

The Interdisciplinary Symposium and the Radar L.A. Festival were presented by REDCAT and CalArts in partnership with Center Theatre Group and a consortium of partners including the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Los Angeles, LA Stage Alliance, Los Angeles Theatre Center, Theatre Communications Group, The Public Theater in New York, and other partners.

In addition to the vital support from The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Radar L.A. was supported by major funding from ArtPlace America, the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional project support was provided by the New England Foundation for the Arts and the National Performance

Network, and a variety of California-based foundations and individuals.

On September 30, 2013 the Los Angeles Times published an article headlined "Radar L.A.'s Vibrant, Expansive Scope" which said "The festival of contemporary performance yields a cultural event of depth and audacity...The value of these works lies beyond their artistic refinement. One of the great joys of participating in Radar L.A. is the holiday it offers from the consumer mentality of theatergoing. Let's hope the festival finds a way to become an annual sport."

### **Challenges / Obstacles / Failures Encountered in the Project**

The greatest challenges faced while implementing the plan to develop and produce the Radar L.A. Festival and Symposium were related to timing.

-The campaign to raise the funds necessary to fully implement the project (and match the grant from DDCF) was successful, but a significant portion of the funding wasn't confirmed until four months prior to the event.

-The planning process was designed to include a larger number of in-person planning sessions with national collaborators than was possible, so those planning meetings had to occur within the framework of previously planned national convenings and meetings, because the busy schedules of colleagues limited their availability for additional travel.

-The implementation of a hiring plan to build REDCAT's infrastructure to adequately staff the project was delayed due to the slow confirmation of full funding, and was then slowed further by some mid-level staff turnover, which made it more difficult to recruit and train the added staff in a timely manner.

These challenges were not insurmountable, but the collective impact of these complications left little room for error and no spare time to make corrections or adjustments to plans. We knew that adding this project to a full schedule of year-round programming was going to be difficult, so plans were developed to address that issue -- but managing the shifting timetable made it more difficult to maintain the core infrastructure throughout the process. At the conclusion of the main festival and symposium there was a feeling of great satisfaction and relief throughout the staff -- but it took a great deal of determination to then launch our regular season two weeks later.

### **What was learned from these that might be of benefit to others?**

The thoughtful and comprehensive planning process included predictions of obstacles that might be encountered, as well as the development of a "Plan B" and a "Plan C" to deal with unexpected surprises or delays. A good plan is a useful road map, with alternate routes to prepare for changes beyond your control, but it isn't really possible to predict every possible detour.

### **Links to relevant website(s) and/or project publications, reports, etc.**

(Note: Some of these links may require that you cut and paste the url into your browser)

The Radar L.A. page(s) on the REDCAT web site:

<http://www.redcat.org/festival/radar-la-festival-2013>

The Symposium:

<http://www.redcat.org/festival/radar-la-festival-2013/symposium>

The Los Angeles Times Wrap-Up by Charles McNulty:

<http://edition2.latimes.com/Olive/ODE/LATimes/LandingPage/LandingPage.aspx?href=TEFULzIwMTMvMTAvMDE.&pageno=NDI.&entity=QXIwNDIwMA..&view=ZW50aXR5>

Press included:

LA Times Preview:

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/culture/la-et-cm-radar-redcat-20130922,0,7908004.story>

Notes On Looking (9/20/2013) Interviews with Gisèle Vienne, Janie Geiser, and Basil Twist, by Brian Getnick

<http://notesonlooking.com/2013/09/murder-tradition-and-a-nine-tailed-fox/>

Spanish Language:

Contacto Magazine (9/20/2013): Festival Preview by Jorge Luis Rodriguez, including interview with Diane Rodriguez

<http://www.contactomagazine.com/articulos/festivalteatral0913.htm#.Uj6GlrxgsfI>

Los Angeles Times (9/21/2013) Radar L.A. festival spotlights local artists with international troupes by Reed Johnson, including interviews with Diane Rodriguez, Mark Murphy, Olga Garay-English, Richard Alger & Tina Kronis / Theatre Movement Bazaar, and Claudio Valdés Kuri / Teatro de Cierto Habitantes

Curating LA (9/22/2013) Highlights Dogugaeshi, Prometheus Bound, You Should Have Stayed Home, Jerk and Stones In Her Mouth by Jim Gilbert

<http://curatingla.com/2013/09/22/radar-l-a-festival-2013/>

(9/22/2013) Live IMRU / KPFK 90.7-FM Radio show (Weekly LGBT radio show), STARDUST lead dancer Kevin Williamson will be live on air

LA Weekly (9/23/2013) A Theater Festival Resurrects Broadway Movie Palaces by Bill Raden - Highlights Wunderbaum, Stones In Her Mouth and El Gallo

[http://blogs.laweekly.com/arts/2013/09/radar\\_la\\_festival\\_broadway\\_mov.php](http://blogs.laweekly.com/arts/2013/09/radar_la_festival_broadway_mov.php)

Los Angeles Magazine (9/23/2013) Radar LA Highlight

<http://www.lamag.com/theguide/Details.aspx?ID=383438>

24700 CalArts Blog (9/23/2013) Radar L.A. Festival Brings Contemporary Theater to DTLA by Soleil David

[http://blog.calarts.edu/2013/09/23/radar-l-a-festival-brings-contemporary-theater-to-dtla/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+calartsblog+\(CalArts+Blog\)](http://blog.calarts.edu/2013/09/23/radar-l-a-festival-brings-contemporary-theater-to-dtla/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+calartsblog+(CalArts+Blog))

BroadwayWorld (9/23/2013) Photo Flash: Opening Night of Rodney King and Uncle Ho To Uncle Sam by BWW News Desk

<http://www.broadwayworld.com/los-angeles/article/Photo-Flash-Opening-Night-of-RODNEY-KING-and-UNCLE-HO-TO-UNCLE-SAM-20130923>

Neon Tommy (9/22/2013) Radar LA Review: Prometheus Bound by Catherine O'Sullivan

[http://www.neontommy.com/news/2013/09/radar-la-review-prometheus-bound?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+neontommy%2FhTJi+\(Neon+Tommy\)](http://www.neontommy.com/news/2013/09/radar-la-review-prometheus-bound?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+neontommy%2FhTJi+(Neon+Tommy))

[http://blogs.laweekly.com/arts/2013/09/radar\\_la\\_festival\\_broadway\\_mov.php](http://blogs.laweekly.com/arts/2013/09/radar_la_festival_broadway_mov.php)

**If someone wishes to speak with your organization further about your project, would there be a willing contact? Y/N**

If yes, please provide contact name and information for preferred method of contact (email, phone, etc).

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