

LAWRENCE HELMAN *PUBLIC RELATIONS* – E MAIL - lhelman@sbcglobal.net

Tel. 415 /661- 1260 / Cell. 415/ 336- 8220 (DO NOT PUBLISH THIS #)

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<http://www.press-push.com/HYPNODROME/index.html>

Thrillpeddlers Need To Vacate Hypnodrome Theatre After Sale of Building by End of Feb. 2017. Future of Company in Flux. Final Performances Announced.

The Hypnodrome - 575 10th St. SF 94103

Tickets: <http://www.hypnodrome.org>

Thrillpeddlers, the award-winning, quirky, scrappy, hidden and BELOVED, little theatre-that-could, and artistic director **Russell Blackwood** are saddened to announce that due to a sudden sale of the building that has been their home since 2004, they must vacate the premises by the end of Feb. 2017. (*Another Bay Area Arts Organization Homeless?*) The company who performs an annual Shocktoberfest offering each year (17 years running), and of late has had major successes with revivals of many 1970s Cockettes musicals (working with maestro composer and original Cockette **Scrumby Koldewyn**), has announced the final shows at the theatre, while they regroup and see what opportunities present themselves.

This sudden change in their plans directly affect two upcoming offerings that have been cast and one of which just begun rehearsals. **Amazon Apocalypse** a new musical with Book and Lyrics by Scrumby Koldewyn and Cab Covay and Music by Scrumby Koldewyn was slated to run Feb. 23 - April 15, 2017, and revival of **Cyberotica** - Peter Fogel and Kelly Kittel's Y2K rock musical was scheduled for May 4 - June 10, 2017. With the sudden news of the theatre's closure, *Amazon Apocalypse* will be presented as a semi-staged concert for **7 nights Feb. 8, 9, 10, 11- (Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat.), Feb. 15, 16, 17 2017 - 8:00 pm (Wed., Thurs., Fri.)** Tickets: <http://www.hypnodrome.org>

All Shows are at **The Hypnodrome - 575 10th St. (at Division St.) SF 94103**

The following performances and events have been scheduled with tickets to all shows available at <http://www.hypnodrome.org>

(note: very limited press comps *may* be available. Tix sales expected to be brisk.)

*In addition to performances of **Naked Dudes Reading Lovecraft**, and A Semi-Staged Concert of a New Musical **Fantasia - Amazon Apocalypse - or How The Devil Came To Save The Planet**, on **Tues. Feb. 14, 2017 (7:00 & 9:00 pm)**, there will be two **Valentine's Day Benefit performances of *Farewell to The Hypnodrome*** – a chance to Bid adieu to our beloved theatre with custom made variety acts and songs. In addition in a final burst of glory there will be a two day rummage sale with all proceedings help Thrillpeddlers to move and relocate. **Rummage Sale** - Set pieces, costumes, props, books, odds and ends all priced to move.*

Feb. 25 & 26, 2017 / Noon - 5:00 pm (Sat. & Sun.) The Hypnodrome - 575 10th St. SF 94103 - FREE.

Ham Pants Productions & The Hypnodrome present

Naked Dudes Reading Lovecraft

H.P. Lovecraft's cosmic horror - read by Stark Naked Performers

Sat., Jan. 28, 2017 - 8:00 pm (SOLD OUT)

Just Added! **Sun., Jan. 29, 2017 - 2:00 pm & 7:00 pm**

\$25 - Gen. Admission, Shock Boxes and Turkish Lounge / \$30 - Front Row Seats

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Amazon Apocalypse - or How The Devil Came To Save The Planet

A Semi-Staged Concert of a New Musical Fantasia.

Book and Lyrics by Scrumbly Koldewyn & Cab Covay

Music by Scrumbly Koldewyn

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Farewell to The Hypnodrome

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Valentine's Day Benefit

Tues. Feb. 14, 2017 - 7:00 pm & 9:00 pm (2 shows only)

\$50 – Gen. Admission, Shock Boxes & Turkish Lounge / \$75 - Front Row Seats

\$150 – Ringside Cocktail Tables (tables of 4 / \$150 per seat)

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To arrange an interview with Thrillpeddlers artistic director Russell Blackwood or for additional info, contact publicist Lawrence Helman 415- 661-1260, or e mail

lhelman@sbcglobal.net

A statement from Thrillpeddlers Artistic Director Russell Balckwood – Jan. 6, 2017:

In October 2016 I celebrated the 25th anniversary of directing my first Grand Guignol horror one-act play, *The Laboratory of Hallucinations* upstairs at 30 Rose St. across from Zuni Café. Right off the bat I knew that San Francisco would provide a singularly ideal home for this theatrical genre.

After several years of sporadic producing, including the American Premiere of Clive Barker's *Frankenstein in Love* at the Bindlestiff on Howard St. in SF, Thrillpeddlers co-founder Daniel Zilber and I produced the first of 17 *Shocktoberfests*, a full-length bill of one-act Grand Guignol plays, sex farces and fetish variety acts. After those first three annual *Shocktoberfest!!* productions at The EXIT Theatre and one at The Odeon Bar, the future of our cash-strapped itinerant company was unclear. Launching the research website www.grandguignol.com was a low-cost alternate offering.

One afternoon in the spring of 2004, my husband Jim Toczyl, was working the first day of his new mail route in Los Gatos on the peninsula. Walking up the drive of a sprawling Spanish Mission style estate, he met one of the homeowners. The gentleman asked about the "Sissies Stay Home" T-shirt Jim was wearing under his open USPS shirt and the two struck up a conversation about our theatre and the daunting prospect, even then, of renting a theatre space in The City. Right on the spot, he volunteered "We have building in San Francisco where you could do a show." As it turned out, the space did make a perfect theatre. By Oct. 2004 we opened *Shocktoberfest 2004: Welcome To The Hypnodrome*. What's more, we landed the cover story of the *SF Chronicle's* Pink Section. The show was a hit and we happily built on that success with everything from Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* to many successful revivals of the psychedelic drag musicals of the fabulous Cockettes. (Including a 22 month run of *Pearls Over Shanghai*.)

In 2004, the space was originally offered to us for only two years, at which point there were plans to sell the building. Our benefactor quipped a year in to our tenancy, "With my luck, you'll be here 10 years." The talented volunteers and resources that showed up truly grew our theatre beyond what we'd originally envisioned. Maybe that's what happens when the stage and dressing rooms are both three times the size of the audience seating.

The sale of the building never materialized during our 13 year tenure as potential buyers came and went. It helped make my choice to produce show by show, rather than offering a season subscription. Now it seems, that in 2017 a buyer for the building has arrived.

Thrillpeddlers plans beyond the announced benefits and performances during the next six weeks – thru the end of Feb. 2017 are at this juncture - unclear. We've commissioned a new musical, *Amazon Apocalypse*, (from composer and original Cockette) Scrumby Koldewyn, which debuts in a semi-staged concert version at The Hypnodrome Feb. 9, 10 & 11, 2017. The other production that we've already cast and work shopped for our 11th annual Theatre of the Ridiculous Revival, is Peter Fogel and Kelly Kittel's Y2K rock musical *Cyberotica!*. I've asked the companies of both shows to hang tight for a week or so in hopes that some miraculous opportunity to produce them becomes available once this news goes public.

Selected Bios

Russell Blackwood (Artistic Director of Thrillpeddlers) adapted, produced and directed his first Grand Guignol horror play 25 years ago, THE LABORATORY OF HALLUCINATIONS. That led directly to founding Thrillpeddlers. In 1999 the company produced the first annual SHOCKTOBERFEST and five years later moved into The Hypnodrome, now their year-round home and Russell's full-time job. He won the TBA Award for Outstanding Direction for PEARLS OVER SHANGHAI. He's also directed for Shotgun Players, Theatre Rhinoceros, SF Conservatory of Music, Berkeley Opera, Pocket Opera, The Lamplighters, and for the San Francisco, L.A. and Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festivals. His productions have been seen throughout the U.S. from New York City to Alaska, as well as England, Brazil, Taiwan, and South Africa. He earned his BFA in Acting from Boston University.

Scrumby Koldewyn (Composer/Musical Director of DEMON TRAIN TO SODOM) co-founded the Cockettes in 1970 and composed the songs for PEARLS OVER SHANGHAI, HOT GREEKS, VICE PALACE and TINSEL TARTS IN A HOT COMA (and others), which have since been revived by Thrillpeddlers. In the 1980s he composed for and performed with The Distractions, and then for 25 years with the Jesters Vocal Trio, touring extensively in Europe. Among the 40 original shows he's created are JEWELS OF PARIS and THE UNTAMED STAGE (written in the Cockettes' style especially for Thrillpeddlers 2015 & 2016) and WILDE BOYS (NCTC 2007), which won BATCC awards for "musical direction" and "best production of a musical". The recipient of numerous awards (BATCC, SF Bay Area Cabaret, Dean Goodman Choice awards - twice), he is currently musical director at Stagebridge in Oakland. Thrillpeddlers' revival of Mr. Koldewyn and Martin Worman's musical VICE PALACE received seven BATCC Awards and performed at NYC's HOWL Festival. DEMON TRAIN TO SODOM is his 4th special piece for SHOCKTOBERFEST, after previous years' SALOME, THE BLOODY DEBUTANTE and REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN.

Thrillpeddlers (www.hypnodrome.org) began performing their unique brand of horror and fetish theatre in San Francisco in 1991. Under the direction of Russell Blackwood, Thrillpeddlers is continuously engaged in translating, adapting, and producing classic plays from the infamous repertoire of Le Théâtre du Grand Guignol and producing other works inspired by the Grand Guignol tradition. In 2008, Thrillpeddlers embraced another niche theatrical genre with the company's annual Theatre of the Ridiculous Revival. That same year they were invited to perform for NYC's HOWL Festival with their productions of Charles Busch's THEODORA, SHE-BITCH OF BYZANTIUM; Charles Ludlam's JACK IN THE BEANSTALK; and Link Martin and Scrumby Koldewyn's PEARLS OVER SHANGHAI. Following this, a full production of PEARLS was mounted in SF in 2009 and ran for 22 months! In 2011 they revived another of Koldewyn's works, VICE PALACE. The hit show garnered seven Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards (BATCC) and the group's second trip to NYC to perform at the HOWL Festival as well as a special performance at Lincoln Center to celebrate the life and works of long-time Koldewyn collaborator, Martin Worman.

The company's SOMA performance venue, The Hypnodrome, is tailor-made for the specific needs of horror theatre, musical extravaganzas, and "lights-out" spook show spectacle. Inaugurating The Hypnodrome with WELCOME TO THE HYPNODROME in 2004, Thrillpeddlers have gone on to produce wildly popular Grand Guignol bills and a canon of Cockettes musical revivals. They are also the purveyors of www.GrandGuignol.com - the most complete source of Grand Guignol information on the Net. SHOCKTOBERFEST, Thrillpeddlers' annual extravaganza of terror and titillation, is now in its 17th year and has become a SF Halloween favorite. Prior to that, the company's production history includes the American premiere of Clive Barker's FRANKENSTEIN IN LOVE; MONDO ANDRONICUS (Best of the 1997 S.F. Fringe Festival); a double-bill of THE MEDIUM and A CRIME IN THE MADHOUSE in Pretoria, South Africa and, with their Brazilian sister-company Vigor Mortis, a tour to Rio De Janeiro. Thrillpeddlers has won the Bay Guardian's "Best of the Bay" and GOLDIE AWARD, four SF Weekly "Best of San Francisco" awards and 7 X 7 Magazine's "BEST UNDERGROUND THEATRE COMPANY IN SF."

Calendar Editors:

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