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MANUAL CINEMA'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

Saturday, December 12 @ 3^{PM}

Saturday, December 12 @ 7^{PM}

Please join us for a post-performance discussion following the 7^{PM} performance.

[Click here to join at 8^{PM}](#)

MANUAL CINEMA'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

CREDITS

A Manual Cinema Production

Adapted from the novel by Charles Dickens

Written by the Manual Cinema Artistic Directors:

Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace, Ben Kauffman, Julia Miller and Kyle Vegter

Storyboards: Drew Dir

Original Music and Sound Design: Ben Kauffman and Kyle Vegter

Puppet Design: Drew Dir with Lizi Breit

Puppet Build Assistants: Sarah Fornace and Julia Miller

Outside Eye: Sarah Fornace with Julia Miller

Additional Video Puppetry: Drew Dir

Costume Design: Maddy Low

Set Design: Julia Miller and Kyle Vegter

Aunt Trudy Lighting Design: Andrew Morgan

Violin Performance: Amanda Bailey

Technical Director and Sound Engineer: Mike Usrey

Stage Manager, Video Mixing and Live Sound Effects: Shelby Sparkle

Streaming and UX: Ben Kauffman

Production Manager: Julia Miller

Creative Producer: Laura Colby, Elsie Management

CAST

Lizi Breit (Puppeteer)

Sarah Fornace (Puppeteer)

Ben Kauffman (Keys, Piano, Lead Vocals)

N. LaQuis Harkin (Aunt Trudy/Puppeteer)

Julia Miller (Puppeteer, Live DP, News Anchor)

Kyle Vegter (Cello, Keys, Bass, Vocals)

Manual Cinema's Christmas Carol Company Bios

LIZI BREIT (Puppeteer, Puppet Design) Lizi Breit is a Chicago-based artist working primarily across illustration, animation, sculpture, and performance. She has been working with Manual Cinema since 2011, and is currently serving as associate designer. She is an artistic associate with The Neo-Futurists and a former member of Blair Thomas & Co. Her internet self lives at www.lizibreit.com.

DREW DIR (Co-Artistic Director) is a writer, director, and puppet designer. Previously, he served as the Resident Dramaturg of Court Theatre and a lecturer in theater and performance studies at the University of Chicago. He holds a master's degree in Text and Performance Studies from King's College London and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

SARAH FORNACE (Co-Artistic Director) is a director, puppeteer, choreographer, and narrative designer based in Chicago. She is a co-Artistic Director of Manual Cinema. Outside of Manual Cinema, Sarah has worked as a performer or choreographer with Redmoon Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Court Theatre, Steppenwolf Garage, and Blair Thomas and Co. Most recently, Sarah wrote the story mode for the video game *Rivals of Aether*. In 2017, she directed and edited the first episode of the web series, *The Doula is IN*. In 2016, she directed and devised an "animotion" production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with Rokoko Studios for *HamletScen* at Kromborg Castle in Elsinore, Denmark.

N. LAQUIS HARKINS (Aunt Trudy) is a graduate of Howard University. LaQuis was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Since her initial work with the Hip Hop Theatre Junction (*Rhyme Deferred*), LaQuis has performed in various productions including *Repairing a Nation* , *How We Got On* (understudy) and *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (double-understudy) and in Manual Cinema's own *No Blue Memories* , as well as commercials and independent films. She recently produced her first short film, *Kayla's Light* , about a family in Chicago dealing with tragic loss. She is grateful and honored to return to work with the magical Manual Cinema in such a delightful and modern twist on a classic.

BEN KAUFFMAN (Co-Artistic Director) is a Chicago-based composer, director, interactive media artist and co-Artistic Director of Manual Cinema. His film and interactive work has been shown at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion (Chicago), the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum (Chicago), the University of Wisconsin and CUNY's Baruch College (NYC). He has lectured at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's MediaLab, New York University and Parsons the New School of Design. His past composer credits with Manual Cinema include *Ada/Ava* , *The End of TV* and the New York Times documentary *The Forger*. He holds a Master's degree from New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP).

MADDY LOWE (Costume Designer) is a costume designer, puppeteer and performer from Illinois. Past costume work includes Manual Cinema's *Frankenstein*, Rough House Theater's *Cicada Summer*, *The Skin of Our Teeth* and *Bloomsday* at Remy Bumppo, *The Secretaries* with About Face, and several productions at Lookingglass Theatre. When not sewing and gluing things together, Maddy co-curates *Nasty, Brutish & Short*, the quarterly puppet slam at Links Hall, and her original performance work has been seen around Chicago in living rooms, bars, DIY spaces, and even some theaters. Maddy is a graduate of Northwestern University and the School at Steppenwolf.

JULIA MILLER (Co-Artistic Director) is a director, puppeteer, and puppet designer. With Manual Cinema she has directed *Mementos Mori* and *The End of TV* as well as created original roles in *Frankenstein* (The Creature/Elizabeth), *Ada/Ava* (Ada), *Lula del Ray* (Lula's Mother), *The Magic City* (Helen), and *Hansel und Gretel* (Hansel). In Chicago, she has worked as a performer and puppeteer with Redmoon Theatre and Blair Thomas and Co. She spent several years training in devised theatre, clown and mask with Double Edge Theatre, Carlos García Estevez and at the Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy. She is a co-producer and director of several episodes of the web series *The Doula is IN*.

ANDREW MORGAN (Aunt Trudy Lighting Design) has been working professionally as a Director, Cinematographer, and Editor since graduating from Columbia College Chicago in 2008. In 2009, started Little Cabin Films with friend and business partner, Nick Nummerdor. As Co-Director and Producer of "Vannin" (2013), Morgan saw his first feature film go from conception to successful distribution via streaming services such as Amazon Prime. Morgan has also acted as a producer, director, and cinematographer on two short documentaries, "North Branch" (2018) and "Hill Climb" (2017), that both focus on unique aspects of Americana. His new documentary "Sleeze Lake: Vanlife at its Lowest & Best" will screen at CUFF & SFDOCS 2020. Most recently, he found himself as director of photography for Manual Cinema's shadow puppetry material to be included in the 2020 release of Monkey Paw Productions' "Candyman" directed by Nia DaCosta.

SHELBY SPARKLE (Stage Manager) Shelby is oh so grateful to have the opportunity to work on this gorgeous production with these amazing humans during these uncertain times. Shelby has been with Manual Cinema for 4 years, stage managing several touring productions that have taken her across the United States and around the world, while also overseeing these touring operations as the company manager. Before joining MC, Shelby stage managed plays all over Chicago with companies like Sideshow Theatre Company, Lifeline Theatre, and The Strange Tree Group. She then went on to stage manage all over the country, including various experimental theatre projects with grad students at the A.R.T. Institute, school touring productions with ArtsPower, and even an opera with Dell'Arte Opera Ensemble. But nothing has brought her as much joy as working and traveling with the incredibly talented artists, puppeteers, and musicians of Manual Cinema.

MIKE USREY (Technical Director and Sound Engineer) “ That may be the most important thing to understand about humans. It is the unknown that defines our existence. We are constantly searching, not just for answers to our questions, but for new questions. We are explorers. We explore our lives day by day, and we explore the galaxy trying to expand the boundaries of our knowledge. And that is why I am here: not to conquer you with weapons or ideas, but to coexist and learn.” – Benjamin Lafayette Sisko

KYLE VEGTER (Co-Artistic Director) is a composer, producer, sound designer, and Managing Artistic Director of Manual Cinema. As a composer of concert music he’s been commissioned by such groups as The Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s MusicNOW series, The Pacific Northwest Ballet, and TIGUE. His music and sound design for theater and film has been performed worldwide and commissioned by the New York Times, NPR’s Invisibilia, Topic (First Look Media), the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, StoryCorps, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Poetry Foundation, Hubbard Street Dance, the O, Miami Poetry Festival, and others. His past Composer/ Sound Designer credits with Manual Cinema include *Lula Del Ray*, *Ada/ Ava*, *FJORDS*, *Mementos Mori*, *The End of TV* and various other performance and video projects. He has been an artist in residence at High Concept Laboratories, and co-founded Chicago’s only contemporary classical music cassette label Parlour Tapes+.

Join us for a post-performance discussion with Manual Cinema!

The Fine Arts Series invites you to a post-performance discussion with Manual Cinema following the 7PM performance. Hear more about their approach to creating their innovative work, adventures in creating A Christmas Carol during a pandemic, inspiration, special effects and more!

[Click here to join at 8PM!](#)



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