

**CUTTING BALL THEATER CLOSES 15<sup>TH</sup> SEASON WITH  
“COMMUNIQUÉ N°10”  
April 25 – May 25, 2014  
*American Premiere***

SAN FRANCISCO (March 13, 2014) – **Cutting Ball Theater** closes its 15<sup>th</sup> season with the American Premiere of **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** by French playwright **Samuel Gallet**, in a translation by Cutting Ball Artistic director **Rob Melrose**, who also helms this new work. Featuring **Damien Seperi, Ponder Goddard, Maura Halloran, Wiley Naman Strasser, Paris Hunter Paul, Hugo Cabajal, and Aaron Malberg**, **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** plays **April 25 through May 25** (Press opening: May 1) at the Cutting Ball Theater in residence at EXIT on Taylor (277 Taylor Street) in San Francisco. For tickets (\$10-50) and more information, the public may visit [cuttingball.com](http://cuttingball.com) or call **415-525-1205**.

Exploring the tensions of the underclass in a city that is bursting at the seams, **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** was inspired by the 2005 Paris riots led by North African youth. Cutting Ball’s production examines the assumptions made about immigrants, and the consequences of growing income inequality. Melrose’s translation of **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** was commissioned and developed as a part of Playwrights Foundation’s 2012 Des Voix Festival, and is produced in association with Golden Thread Productions. The 2014 Des Voix Festival (May 8-11) will feature **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**, in partnership with Executive Producer Playwrights Foundation, Tides Theatre, and The Consul General of France in San Francisco.

In a city engulfed by riots a young immigrant is killed after a confrontation with a security guard. His brother vows vengeance and attempts to take control over his seemingly written destiny. Rebels, vagrants, and officers of the law all seek asylum. Their elders, who have difficulty making sense of society’s radical changes, are simultaneously dead and very much alive to bear witness to the resulting devastation. All hide in fear from unseen state forces as they contemplate the consequences of action and inaction.

“The idea for **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** came from the situation in France with its housing projects, and from the various riots that have erupted in France since the 1980s,” said playwright Samuel Gallet. “It is rooted in the evolution of French society over the past decade – development of space, segregation, and

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ghettos marked by deprivation of social services and housing shortages, the eruption of riots in ‘banlieues,’ and the questioning of the so-called French integration model. This play also came from the necessity to make tangible the vital energies and the voices of those seeking to find their place, to participate in the world and to exist with dignity. It is a play which also raises the question: In a system where money is the sole measure and competition of all against all is the last word, how can a human being reach beyond his or her circumstances and claim other dimensions for themselves and their lives?”

Continued Gallet, “It is a great pleasure that Rob Melrose and Cutting Ball are staging **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**. I am even more enthusiastic by Rob taking on my text as translator, as we both share a real love for August Strindberg’s work, whose naturalism is infused by symbolism. I believe that **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** is also about this tension between realism and poetry, how realism is always crossed by the imaginary and symbolic. It is important to me that contemporary theater explores the problems of its time and shows how those who are most affected by the way the world is going are coping. I hope that American audiences will feel this tension to make heard the stalemates, the angers, as well as the strengths, of a lost generation.”

“American billionaire Thomas Perkins recently said that the poor were like Nazis in the way they demonize the rich. There is probably no clearer signal that the world needs a play like **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** right now,” said Cutting Ball Artistic Director Rob Melrose. “In the United States, the gap between rich and poor has never been greater, nor has the need to put ourselves in other people’s shoes and to have empathy for the many people for whom the American dream is merely a pipedream. Samuel Gallet’s play was originally written in French as a response to the 2005 Paris riots of North African immigrants. Gallet imagines an unspecified city in a future in which the riots of the dispossessed have turned to a full revolt. As I translated the play for the Des Voix Festival in 2012, I realized that the play actually had a lot to say to an American audience. Gallet’s writing is poetic and lyrical. He has a way of penetrating deeply into the thoughts and feelings of his characters in much the same way that Albert Camus does in his novels. So many of the characters could be people that we pass on the street on the way to our theater in the Tenderloin. Cutting Ball has a long history of producing plays that resonate with our community and help build bridges of understanding and empathy; **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** is definitely one of those plays and we are proud to present its American Premiere.”

Born in 1981, playwright **Samuel Gallet** graduated from the Creative Writing Department of ENSATT (Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Techniques du Théâtre) in 2003, after studying literature and theater in Paris. He is a member of the Cooperative d'écriture, a group founded by 13 playwrights, under the direction of Fabrice Melquiot. In 2007, he joined the Third Bureau, an initiative bringing together authors,

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dramaturgs, and patrons around new theatrical writing. In 2008, he was in residency at the CEAD in Montreal, and in 2008-09 Gallet was the author in residency at the Lardenois theater company. His plays have been staged by Philippe Delaigue, Marie-Pierre Bésanger, William Delaveau, Laurence Such, Celine Dely, Frédéric Andrau, and Kheireddine Lardjam. Gallet’s rock poem, *Oswald by Night*, has become a concert animated by Baptiste Tanne and Melissa Acchiardi. In addition to **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**, Gallet’s plays include *Fissures* (2010), *Les enfants atomiques* (2012), *Autopsie du Gibier* (2006), and *Encore un jour sans* (2007), which was a finalist for the Grand Prix de Litterature Dramatique. Three of Gallet’s plays have been broadcast on the France Culture radio station.

**Rob Melrose** is the Artistic Director and co-founder of the Cutting Ball Theater and works nationally as a freelance director. He has directed at the Guthrie Theater (*Freud’s Last Session*, *Happy Days*, *Pen*, *Julius Caesar* - with the Acting Company); Oregon Shakespeare Festival (*Troilus and Cressida* – in association with the Public Theater); Magic Theatre (*An Accident*, World Premiere); PlayMakers Rep (*Happy Days*); California Shakespeare Theater (*Villains, Fools, and Lovers*); Black Box Theatre (*The Creature*, World Premiere); Actors’ Collective (*Hedda Gabler*); The Gamm Theatre (*Creditors*); and Crowded Fire Theater (*The Train Play*), among others. Directing credits at Cutting Ball include the World Premiere of *Krispy Kritters in the Scarlett Night*; *Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep*, *Pelleas & Melisande*, the Bay Area Premiere of Will Eno’s *Lady Grey (in ever lower light)*; *The Tempest*; *The Bald Soprano*; *Victims of Duty*; *Bone to Pick* and *Diadem* (World Premiere); *Endgame*; *Krapp’s Last Tape*; *The Taming of the Shrew*; *Macbeth*; *Hamletmachine*; *As You Like It*; *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*; *Mayakovsky: A Tragedy*; *My Head Was a Sledgehammer*; *Roberto Zucco*; *The Vomit Talk of Ghosts* (World Premiere); *The Sandalwood Box*; *Pickling*; *Ajax for Instance*; *Helen of Troy* (World Premiere); and *Drowning Room* (World Premiere). He is a recipient of the NEA / TCG Career Development Program award for directors. Melrose has a B.A. in English and Theater from Princeton University and an M.F.A. in directing from the Yale School of Drama. He has taught at Stanford University, UC Berkeley, USF, the University of Rhode Island, and Marin Academy. In addition to **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**, translations include *No Exit*, *Woyzeck*, *Pelléas and Mélisande*, and *The Bald Soprano*; he recently translated Eugène Ionesco’s *The Chairs* for Cutting Ball’s 2013 production and Alfred Jarry’s *Ubu Roi* for the company’s 2014 production.

Cutting Ball Theater has assembled a talented ensemble for **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**. **Damien Seperi** makes his Cutting Ball debut as Hassan in **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**. He received training for the stage at American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and Diablo Valley College. Credits include roles at TheatreFIRST, Marin Shakespeare Company, Masquers Playhouse, Town Hall, and Role Player’s Ensemble.

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Associate Artist **Ponder Goddard** returns to Cutting Ball as Anne in **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**; she last appeared in the company’s productions of *Ubu Roi* and *Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep.* Additional credits include Cutting Ball’s *Taming of the Shrew* and productions at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, The Cochrane Theatre (London), Grassroots Shakespeare London Company, 21 Limbs (London), and the Drama Centre. Also returning to Cutting Ball is **Maura Halloran** as Marlene; she appeared last season in the company’s production of *Krispy Kritters in the Scarlett Night*. Additional credits include productions at New Conservatory Theatre Center, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and Bay One Acts Festival, and appearances with California Shakespeare Theater, SF Theater Pub, All Terrain Theater, One Minute Play Festival, and Bay One Acts Festival.

Associate Artist **Wiley Namen Strasser** returns to Cutting Ball as Yag in **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**. He previously appeared in the company’s productions of *Krispy Kritters in the Scarlett Night*, *Tontlawald*, and the 2013, 2012 and 2011 editions of RISK IS THIS... The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival. Additional Bay Area credits include productions at Crowded Fire Theater (*The 100 Flowers Project*), Aurora Theatre Company (*Anatol*), Mugwumpin (*The Great Big Also*), Golden Thread Productions, Cabrillo Stage, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and Playwrights Foundation.

**Paris Hunter Paul** makes his Cutting Ball debut as Damien in **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10**. Credits include productions at San Francisco Playhouse, California Shakespeare Theater, Guthrie Theater, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Walking Shadow Theatre Company, and Tides Theatre w/Center for Investigative Reporting, among others. **Hugo Carbajal** makes his Cutting Ball debut as The Child. Credits include productions with Shotgun Players, TeatroVision, Stagebridge, Alter Theater Ensemble, Bay Area Children’s Theatre, and San Francisco Mime Troupe. He is the recipient of the 2013 Theatre Bay Area Titan Actor Award. **Aaron Malberg** makes his Cutting Ball debut as The Old Man. Other credits include productions at Thrillpeddlers, Marin Shakespeare Company, Ross Valley Players, Woodminster Summer Musicals, and Eureka Theatre.

Co-founded in 1999 by theater artists Rob Melrose and Paige Rogers, **Cutting Ball Theater** presents avant-garde works of the past, present, and future by re-envisioning classics, exploring seminal avant-garde texts, and developing new experimental plays. The company has commissioned, developed, and produced new experimental plays, and has partnered with Playwrights Foundation, and the Magic Theatre/Z Space New Plays Initiative to commission new experimental works. In addition to producing West Coast Premieres and re-imagining various classics, Cutting Ball Theater has produced nine World Premieres and seven World Premiere translations. Cutting Ball received the 2008 *San Francisco Bay*

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*Guardian* Goldie award for outstanding talent in the performing arts, and was voted “Best Theater Company” in the 2010 *San Francisco Bay Guardian* Best of the Bay issue. The company also earned the Best of SF award in 2006 and “Best Experimental Theater Company” in 2012 from *SF Weekly*, and was selected by *San Francisco* magazine as Best Classic Theater in 2007. Cutting Ball Theater was featured in the February 2010 and 2012 issues of *American Theatre Magazine*. In 2012, Cutting Ball was awarded a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to fund a three-year residency for resident playwright Andrew Saito. The American Theatre Wing, best known as the creator of the Antoinette Perry “Tony” Awards, awarded the company with a 2013 National Theatre Company grant.

**Des Voix...Found In Translation** is an international exchange project that supports the translation of vanguard French and American playwrights and promotes their work to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. The 2014 San Francisco festival features translations of provocative new plays by four of the most innovative playwrights working in France today. This year’s festival is an exciting collaboration between Cutting Ball Theater, Playwrights Foundation, Tides Theatre, and the Maison Antoine Vitez (MAV), the International Centre for Drama Translation in Paris. **desvoixfestival.com**

**Playwrights Foundation** is dedicated to discovering and supporting local and national American playwrights across a broad spectrum of artistic and career positions, in the inception and development of new plays that speak to and from an increasingly diverse society. Founded on a deeply held belief that the relevance and vitality of American theater depends upon a continual infusion of new work, Playwrights Foundation sustains a commitment to the playwright as the creative wellspring of theater. Award-winning alumni include Sam Shepard, Philip Kan Gotanda, Amy Freed, Anne Galjour, Octavio Solis, Anna Deaveare Smith, Paula Vogel, David Henry Hwang, Naomi Iizuka, Brian Thorstenson, Prince Gomolvilas, Liz Duffy Adams, Marcus Gardley, and Pulitzer Prize winner Nilo Cruz, among many others. **playwrightsfoundation.org**

**Golden Thread Productions** is dedicated to exploring Middle Eastern cultures and identities as expressed around the globe. They present alternative perspectives of the Middle East by developing and producing theatrical work that is aesthetically varied and politically and viscerally engaging. Their mission is to make the Middle East a potent presence on the American stage and a treasured cultural experience. **goldenthread.org**

The mission of **Tides Theatre** is to inspire, challenge, and heal our community by creating visceral experiences that are bold and truthful. **tidestheatre.org**

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**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**Cutting Ball Theater** closes its 15<sup>th</sup> season with the American Premiere of **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** by French playwright **Samuel Gallet**, directed by **Rob Melrose**. In a city engulfed by riots a young immigrant is killed after a confrontation with a security guard. His brother vows vengeance and attempts to take control over his seemingly written destiny. Rebels, vagrants, and officers of the law all seek asylum. Their elders, who have difficulty making sense of society’s radical changes, are simultaneously dead and very much alive to bear witness to the resulting devastation. All hide in fear from unseen state forces as they contemplate the consequences of action and inaction.

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**COMMUNIQUÉ N°10 special events – for more information visit [cuttingball.com](http://cuttingball.com)**

*Gala Opening Night – May 2, 8pm, \$50 tickets*

*May 8 - Soiree Francaise - 6:30-7:30pm - celebrating the end of WWII in France, and featuring wine, cheese, and an introduction to the performance in French*

*Sunday talk back series – post-performance talks following every Sunday performance*

*Saturday matinee Tenderloin tours - pre-show 30 minute tours of the Tenderloin with a focus on the history of immigrants in the neighborhood and those who currently live in and have helped to shape the community; led by Del Seymour of Tenderloin Walking Tours (\$15-\$19)*

**DATES:**        Previews: April 25, 26, 8pm; April 27, 5pm  
                  **Opens: May 1** (Press opening: May 1, 7:30pm; Gala opening: May 2, 8pm)  
                  Closes: May 25, 2014  
                  **All performances Thursday at 7:30pm, Friday-Saturday at 8pm, Saturday at 2pm, and Sunday at 5pm**

**WHERE:**        The Cutting Ball Theater in residence at EXIT on Taylor, 277 Taylor St., San Francisco

**TICKETS:**     For tickets (\$10-50), and more information, the public may visit **cuttingball.com** or call **415-525-1205**; group discounts available. Pay What You Can tickets are available to neighborhood residents for all productions. Free student walk-up tickets are available to students with valid student ID.

**PHOTOS:**     High-resolution photos for **COMMUNIQUÉ N°10** can be found at **cuttingball.com/press** or upon request by emailing [brightbutterfly\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:brightbutterfly[at]hotmail.com)

The Cutting Ball Theater’s 2013 - 14 season is made possible in part by The Compton Foundation, The Fleishhacker Foundation, The W.A. Gerbode Foundation, Grants for the Arts / San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Mental Insight Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Kenneth Rainin Foundation, The RHE Foundation, The San Francisco Arts Commission, The San Francisco Foundation, The Zellerbach Family Foundation, and by individual donors. *Communiq   n  10* is

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supported in part by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, and Associate Producers Mary Anne & Rob Cook and Marty & Pamela Krasney.