

CUTTING BALL THEATER PRESENTS
“RISK IS THIS...THE CUTTING BALL NEW EXPERIMENTAL PLAYS FESTIVAL”
May 17 – June 15, 2015

Cutting Ball Theater continues its 16th season with the adventurous **RISK IS THIS...THE CUTTING BALL NEW EXPERIMENTAL PLAYS FESTIVAL**, one of the only play festivals in America solely dedicated to experimental works for the stage. Pushing the boundaries of what theater can be, this year’s festival features five new works in staged readings, including two new plays from Cutting Ball resident playwright Andrew Saito. **RISK IS THIS...** offers a unique opportunity for audiences to see plays in development, alongside the artists creating them, as the works find their theatrical voice.

The schedule for the 2015 **RISK IS THIS...THE CUTTING BALL NEW EXPERIMENTAL PLAYS FESTIVAL** is as follows:

WHO IS HEINER MÜLLER OR THE END OF HISTORY

Written and directed by Mark Jackson

May 17 – May 18, 2015

An Author is interrogated by a childhood friend, whose work and name the Author ran off with in the post-World War II chaos of Germany. After 50 years of living in the margins, the old friend kidnaps the now famous Author to exact his revenge by particularly theatrical means. What begins as a puzzling interrogation with questions of death and childhood quickly evolves into a debate between conflicting values of political awareness and personal desire before taking a sharp turn when the interrogator unleashes a play dramatizing the Author’s “true” origins. Neither a biography of Heiner Müller nor an attempt to represent his work, **WHO IS HEINER MÜLLER OR THE END OF HISTORY** is a psycho-mystery-thriller-comedy about death, identity, amnesia, cynicism, world politics, and revenge.

A special Hidden Classics reading of *Hamletmachine* by Heiner Müller will be held before the May 17 reading of **WHO IS HEINER MÜLLER**.

CAUGHT

By Christopher Chen

Directed by Rem Myers

May 24 – May 25, 2015

An art gallery hosts a retrospective of the work of legendary Chinese dissident and artist Lin Bo, who was imprisoned in a Chinese detention center for a single work of art. Recently profiled in *The New Yorker*, the artist himself is present and he shares with patrons the details of a personal ordeal that defies belief. What follows his talk are a series of surreal scenes that question the very assumption of truth in art, performance, and journalism. This new play from Christopher Chen (*The Hundred Flowers Project*) takes a profound look at reality and what role it plays in art.

nightcap

By Katharine Sherman

Directed by Rob Melrose

May 31 – June 1, 2015

nightcap is a dream play built around two juxtaposing structures: the medieval dream vision - a sleeping seeker, an ethereal guide, a dreamscape backdrop - and the form of one night's sleep - hypnagogic imagery giving way to the stages of light sleep, to deeper sleep, to dreams. This ode to August Strindberg's surreal masterpiece *A Dream Play* was commissioned by Cutting Ball Theater. Sherman's play *Ondine* was featured in the 2014 RISK IS THIS festival.

TBA: New Play by Resident Playwright

By Andrew Saito

Directed by Paige Rogers

June 7 – 8, 2015

MOBY DICK

By Andrew Saito

Directed by Rob Melrose

June 14 – 15, 2015

Cutting Ball's resident playwright Andrew Saito returns to **RISK IS THIS** with an adaptation of Herman Melville's classic novel about obsession, vengeance, and humanity. This revision of Melville's famous and expansive sea epic focuses on the often-neglected narratives of its people of color. Saito explores Melville's formal innovations in literature and translates them for the stage in this ambitious new play.

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-imaging various classics, Cutting Ball Theater has produced nine World Premieres and seven World Premiere translations. Cutting Ball received the 2008 *San Francisco Bay 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, 2012, and December 2014 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. Cutting Ball was also featured in the February 2015 issue of *American Theatre Magazine*.

WHEN: All performances Sunday at 1pm, Monday at 7pm

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

TICKETS: General seating. Free and open to the public. \$20 donation for reserved seating; \$50 donation for 5-play reserved seating festival pass. For more information, the public may

visit **cuttingball.com** or call **415-525-1205**

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