

LAWRENCE HELMAN *PUBLIC RELATIONS* – E MAIL - [helman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:helman@sbcglobal.net)

Tel. 415/ 661- 1260 / Cell. 415/ 336- 8220 (PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH THESE PHONE 's)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Sept 2, 2015**

*Press materials and hi-res color press photos:*

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

*Thrillpeddlers presents...*

**Shocktoberfest 16: CURSE OF THE COBRA**

**16<sup>th</sup> Annual Extravaganza of Terror & Titillation**

**Oct. 7 - Nov. 21, 2015** (Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

**Limited Engagement – Only 28 Performances!**

**Opening Night - Sat. Oct. 10, 2015 - 8:00 pm**

**(Previews Oct. 7, 8, 9 - Wed, Thurs. & Fri.)**

**at The Hypnodrome in San Francisco**

<http://www.hypnodrome.org>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/169965446674955/>

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Extravaganza of Terror & Titillation includes five new one-act performances:

**CRACKING THE VEIN**

*- A World-Premiere Black Comedy by Andy Wenger and Damien Chacona*

**DOWN AT THE DONNER PARTY DINER**

*- A Song in Bad Taste by Scrumbly Koldewyn*

**THE MODEL HOUSE - A World-Premiere Terror Play in Two Parts by Rob Keefe**

**THE REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN**

*- A New Musical Fantasy Adventure by Scrumbly Koldewyn*

**A LIGHTS-OUT SPOOKSHOW FINALE - created by Nicholas Torre**

Thrillpeddlers announces their 16<sup>h</sup> Annual Extravaganza of Terror & Titillation which includes five new one-act performances: - **CRACKING THE VEIN** - A World-Premiere Black Comedy by Andy Wenger and Damien Chacona; **DOWN AT THE DONNER PARTY DINER** - A Song in Bad Taste by Scrumbly Koldewyn; **THE MODEL HOUSE** - A World-Premiere Terror Play in Two Parts by Rob Keefe; **THE REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN** - A New Musical Fantasy Adventure by Scrumbly Koldewyn; and **A LIGHTS-OUT SPOOKSHOW FINALE** - created by Nicholas Torre.

This annual festival of Grand Guignol horror theatre and black comedies, plays as a Limited Engagement - only 28 performances - **Oct. 7- Nov. 21, 2015- Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat. at 8:00 pm. There are 3 Previews – Wed. 10/7, Thurs. 10/8, and Fri. 10/9. Opening Night (press night) -Sat., Oct. 10, 2015 - 8:00 pm.**

**The Hypnodrome** is located at 575 10th St., in SF. 94103. (Bryant & Division Sts.)  
Tix are \$25 (Wed. & Thur.) \$30 (Fri. & Sat.) gen. admission or \$35 for Front Row Seats,  
“Shock Boxes” and “Turkish Lounges”\*\*\* - available at <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=thril>  
or by calling 415/ 377- 4202.

## **2015 dates for - Shocktoberfest 16: CURSE OF THE COBRA:**

**Oct. 7 - Nov. 21, 2015**

Previews – Oct. 7, 8, 9 (Wed. Thurs. & Fri.)

Oct. 10, (Sat.) opening night), 8:00 pm

Oct. 14, 15, 16, 17 / 21, 22, 23, 24, (Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

Oct. 28, 29, 30, 31, (Halloween Weedkend) (Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

Nov. 4, 5, 6, 7 / 11, 12, 13, 14 / 18, 19, 20, 21 (Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

TIX: Tickets available at <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=thril>  
or by calling 415/ 377- 4202

**\$25 and \$30 general admission**

**\$35 for front row seats and “Shock Boxes” & “Turkish Lounges”**

*(premium tickets sold in pairs only.)*

VENUE: **The Hypnodrome - 575 10th St. in SF 94103** *(btwn. Bryant & Division Sts.)*

## **Play Synopses:**

### **CRACKING THE VEIN - by Andy Wenger and Damien Chacona**

The Gold Rush of 1849 spawned the rich and colorful history of San Francisco. In fact, when one ponders speculation, price gouging, dumb luck and greed in The City today, one may still feel a certain kinship for those desperate and dirty ‘49-ers. Playwrights **Andy Wenger** and **Damien Chacona**, appearing in their own piece, strike a rich vein of gold in the first moments of the play and with the help of “Big John” haul that payload by hand to the secluded bar and brothel of Madam Permilia. Prospectors and prostitutes play for wealth and power in a gold rush that will leave some dead and others locked in an uneasy alliance.

**Cast: John Flaw** (Big John); **Andy Wenger** (Jasper); **Damien Chacona** (Eustice);

**Bruna Palmiero** (Permilia); **Dee Nathaniel** (Ellie); **Katrina Kroetch** (Devka).

**Directed by Russell Blackwood**

### **DOWN AT THE DONNER PARTY DINER - A Song in Bad Taste by Scrumby Koldewyn**

The Donner Party, a tragic tale rife with bad decisions and worse weather -the necessity of eating human flesh *still* stands among the ultimate taboos. Composer and lyricist **Scrumby Koldewyn** couldn’t resist imagining a roadside diner springing up and thriving as a byproduct of a fatal journey to the west in the winter of 1846-47. This is a joke that may always be “TOO SOON!”

**Cast: John Flaw, J Iness, Katrina Kroetch, Carol Ann Walker, Birdie-Bob Watt,**

**Dee Nathaniel**

**Directed by Russell Blackwood**

### **THE MODEL HOUSE - by Rob Keefe**

In 1948, Roy Rathman fresh from combat, returns home to assume his birthright as patriarch of a clan with a promising future. The Marines who served under him in WW 2 revere him even

more now - his Model House has all the amenities that a mid-century suburban housing development could promise. When a blind vet from WW 1 reveals that The Rathman Family's model house is built on the site of a toxic landfill, father Roy silences him to control his own destiny and dominate his brood. A decade later, The Rathman's subterranean bomb shelter serves as a secret hideout for Roy's college-bound son Rusty and his wrestling buddy Vince. The boys further their forbidden knowledge of each others' bodies and minds. Meanwhile above ground Rusty's twin sister Heidi rebuffs father Roy's advances as best she can, all the while experimenting with her chemistry set - that is, until she can ensure the fall of the house of Rathman and redirect the hereditary line.

**Cast:** David Bicha (Roy); Noah Haydon (Bess); Birdie-Bob Watt (Heidi); Owen Asdell (Rusty); J Iness (Mel/Doc); Katrina Kroetch (Laverne); Earl A. Pas (Vince); Andy Wenger (Jim); Carole Ann Walker (Dixie); Tommy Salami (Shawn); Bruna Palmiero (Velma); Cameron Eng (Chico); Dee Nathaniel (Pepper); Michael DiMartini (Mr. Terry).  
**Directed by Russell Blackwood**

## **THE REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN**

*- A New Musical Fantasy Adventure by Scrumbly Koldewyn*

Jilted by his girl while he was fighting for Uncle Sam, Matt returns home seeking "devotion." He gets it, cheap. A vending machine spits out a boy/puppy who *idolizes* him. Just as they settle into domesticity two mysterious islanders pierce their flesh with blowgun darts, knocking them out. Awakening alone, Matt grieves for his purloined pup recalling the strange words Puppy had often mumbled in his sleep "Cobra, Cobra Island ... Thus begins a South Seas musical adventure that could only be sung and danced in The Hypnodrome! (...with homage to Maria Montez.)

**Cast:** Damien Chacona (Matt/Master); Earl A. Pas (Maile Tomatoa/Puppy), Bruna Palmiero (Maid/Priestess); John Flaw (Chief Priest); Noah Haydon (Cobra Woman); David Bicha (Prince Cobra); *Cobra Dancers & Chorus:* Cameron Eng, Dee Nathaniel, Katrina Kroetch, Carol Ann Walker; *Wolf Ritual Chorus:* Owen Asdell, Birdie-Bob Watt, Michael Dimartini, J Iness  
**Directed by Noah Haydon**

## **LIGHTS-OUT SPOOKSHOW FINALE - *created by Nicholas Torre***

**Cast:** Full Cast

**Tech Credits for Shocktoberfest 16** include: Tina Sogliuzzo, Glenn Krumbholz & Birdie-Bob Watt – Costumes, James Blackwood – Scenic Designer, Mister Wa - Video Projections Designer, Nicholas Torre - Lighting Designer / Special Effects / Spookshow.

## **Artist Statement by Director Russell Blackwood**

**Thrillpeddlers** presented the first Shocktoberfest in 1999 at The Exit Theatre with the intention of presenting an annual festival of Grand Guignol horror theatre and sex farces during the Halloween season. After several years of performances at The Exit, The Odeon, and the SF Performing Arts Library and Museum, Thrillpeddlers found a permanent home at the Hypnodrome in SF's SOMA district. Outfitted with a guillotine, thunder sheet, strobe lights, and secret doors, The Hyonodrome is a purpose-built horror theatre. **Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year Shocktoberfest is responsible for having revived more plays from the infamous Le Theatre du Grand Guignol than any other producing entity.** Most of these scripts were presented here for the first time ever in English adaptations.

Dubbed “Thrillpeddlers Pageant of Terror and Titillation,” Shocktoberfest has always looked to meld classic Grand Guignol one-act plays with revivals of other bloodcurdling and erotic entertainments as well as premiers of new works devised by Thrillpeddlers resident playwrights. As with the traditional Grand Guignol bill of dramas and comedies, one-acts and short sketches, the combination of fare on the Shocktoberfest bill gives the audience a “Scottish Shower” dousing them with a variety of “cold” terror plays and “hot” comedies.

The company’s approach to the material is not to slavishly recreate the Grand Guignol experience, but rather to interpret and enlarge this French theatrical genre and its allied American cousins: the spook-show, burlesque, and horror cinema-style theatrics - for contemporary audiences. This material is a chance for actors to reclaim elements of antique acting styles & stagecraft that make these plays alluring to Thrillpeddlers and their fans.

**Selected Bios** - full bios at <http://www.press-push.com/HYPNODROME/bio.html>

**Russell Blackwood** (Director - **CRACKING THE VEIN, DOWN AT THE DONNER PARTY DINER, THE MODEL HOUSE** / Producing Director - Thrillpeddlers) produced and directed his first Grand Guignol horror play 24 years ago with his own adaptation of Andre deLorde’s shocker THE LABORATORY OF HALLUCINATIONS. That production led him to found Thrillpeddlers with his boyhood friend, Daniel Zilber. He’s produced and directed for Thrillpeddlers ever since. In 1999, the duo produced the first SHOCKTOBERFEST, Thrillpeddlers annual Grand Guignol spectacular. Four years later, Thrillpeddlers launched the research web site <http://www.grandguignol.com/> In 2004 Russell and his husband, Jim Toczyl, opened The Hypnodrome to be Thrillpeddlers home. Producing and directing further forays into the Grand Guignol as well as championing the theatrical genre of Theatre of The Ridiculous with productions of Scrumbly Koldewyn’s four Cockettes musicals: PEARLS OVER SHANGHAI, HOT GREEKS, VICE PALACE and TINSEL TARTS IN A HOT COMA are other delightful milestones for Thrillpeddlers. Russell’s productions have played throughout the U.S. from New York City to Alaska, as well as England, Taiwan, and South Africa. Other directing credits include: OTELLO and CARMEN (Berkeley Opera); THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE (Lamplighters), EX-LOVERS, STRANGERS IN PARADOX, and WOMEN BEHIND BARS (Theatre Rhinoceros); CABARET and MEDEA (Shotgun Players); and productions for the S.F., L.A., and Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festivals. He earned his BFA in Acting from Boston University.

**Damien Chacona** (Performer /Writer - **CRACKING THE VEIN**) Besides co-writing and designing Ham Pants Productions, Damien is an actor and contributing writer for 915 Cayuga, an episodic, old-time, radio-style, comedic variety show and podcast that follows the fictional world of a group of San Franciscans who have worked on a radio variety show called “915 Cayuga” for the past seven years. It’s very meta. He co-wrote and performed in DEATHWRITE for SHOCKTOBERFEST 15: THE BLOODY DÉBUTANTE. Damien also makes art of various types. You can see his layout, design, and logos at <http://chicodemon.deviantart.com>. The other, odder, more confusing art stuff can be seen at <http://www.chacona.com>. Damien is not named after Damien from “The Omen.” Damien is named after Father Damien from “The Exorcist.”

**Noah Haydon** (Performer / Director- **THE REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN**) is very excited to be back on the Thrillpeddlers stage. Favorite shows/roles include CABARET (The Emcee), PEARLS OVER SHANGHAI (Petrushka), HOT GREEKS (Pandora),

CLUB INFERNO (Cleopatra, Marie Antoinette, and Durga) YOU'RE A GOOD MAN CHARLIE BROWN (Snoopy), RAGTIME (Harry Houdini), GYPSY (Tulsa), A CHORUS LINE (Mark), Pippin (Lewis), SHOCKTOBERFEST 14 (Salome, Chorine #1) and TINSEL TARTS IN A HOT COMA (Sally Snack). Noah has done commercials for MTV, Long's Drug Store and Jamba Juice, as well as voiceover work for Microsoft, Bagel Bites and Banana Republic.

**Rob Keefe** (Playwright - **THE MODEL HOUSE**) has been a Thrillpeddler since 2000. His plays for the Hypnodrome include THE EMPRESS OF COLMA, A SLIGHT TINGLING, THE WRONG RIPPER, BEARDED ASSETS, THE PHANTOM LIMB, and several others. Other full-length plays include ALL THAT IS SEEN AND UNSEEN, REUNION TOUR and TURN IT INTO SMOKE. His play, THE CORTEZ METHOD received its world premiere at the Orlando Shakespeare Theatre and was a finalist for the ACTA- Steinberg award.

**Scrumby Koldewyn** (Composer/Music Director - **DOWN AT THE DONNER PARTY DINER, and THE REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN**) was a founding member of The Cockettes and composed the songs for PEARLS OVER SHANGHAI, HOT GREEKS, VICE PALACE and TINSEL TARTS IN A HOT COMA. In the 1980s he performed and composed for The Distractions, and then for 25 years with The Jesters Vocal Trio, touring extensively in Europe. He composed for approximately 40 original theatrical productions, and has been an accompanist/musical director and performer in theater and cabaret since the mid 1970s. Shows he created include THE UNTAMED STAGE (1920s Berlin Cabaret) in 1999 and WILDE BOYS at NCTC in 2007 (BATCC awards for musical direction and best production--musical). Awards include the BATCC for original music (1981), two SF Bay Area Cabaret Gold Awards with the Jesters ('91 & '92), and the Dean Goodman Choice Award 2000 for Cabaret performance (Goldfield & Koldewyn). Currently, he is also music director at Stagebridge in Oakland, and NCTC in SF. Thrillpeddlers' revival of Mr. Koldewyn and Martin Worman's musical VICE PALACE received eight BATCC Award nominations and performed at NYC's HOWL Festival. Besides the above-mentioned musicals revived by Thrillpeddlers, he wrote the Cockettes-style JEWELS OF PARIS (2015) especially for the Thrillpeddlers' company.

**Andy Wenger** (Performer / Writer - **CRACKING THE VEIN**) is a director/writer/performer and co-founder of Hampants Productions for which he invented the popular series NAKED DUDES READ H.P. LOVECRAFT and wrote and directed 3 original shows (THE WRONG DICK, R.I.F, THE SAFE WAY). He co-wrote and performed in DEATHWRITE for SHOCKTOBERFEST 15: THE BLOODY DÉBUTANTE and performed and contributed to Thrillpeddlers' JEWELS OF PARIS. He lives in SF' Mission District with an obnoxious cat named Frankenstein.

**Thrillpeddlers** ([www.thrillpeddlers.com](http://www.thrillpeddlers.com)) have performed their unique brand of horror and fetish theatre in San Francisco since 1991. Under the direction of Russell Blackwood, Thrillpeddlers are 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 year they performed 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 San Francisco in 2009 and ran for 22 months. In the summer of 2011 they revived another of Koldewyn's works, VICE PALACE. The hit show garnered 6 SF Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards and the group's second trip to NYC to perform at the HOWL Festival which included a special performance at NYC's Lincoln Center to celebrate the life and works

of long time Koldewyn collaborator, Martin Worman. Thrillpeddlers have since produced two more Cockettes musicals: HOT GREEKS and TINSEL TARTS IN A HOT COMA.

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 continued to produce wildly popular Grand Guignol bills including: BLOOD BUCKET BALLYHOO, FLAMING SIN, AUDACIOUS ARTEFACTS, KISS OF BLOOD, FEAR OVER FRISCO and the recent hit THE BLOODY DÉBUTANTE.

SHOCKTOBERFEST! Thrillpeddlers' annual pageant of terror & titillation, now in its 16th year 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 (selected Best of the 1997 S.F. Fringe Festival), and a double-bill of THE MEDIUM and A CRIME IN THE MADHOUSE (in Pretoria, South Africa). Thrillpeddlers have won the SF Bay Guardian's "Best of the Bay" and four "Best of San Francisco" awards from SF Weekly. Thrillpeddlers Theatre Company received a coveted 2009 GOLDIE AWARD (Outstanding Local Discovery Award) from the SF Bay Guardian In 2010, 7 X 7 Magazine named Thrillpeddlers "BEST UNDERGROUND THEATRE COMPANY IN SF." They are also the purveyors of [www.GrandGuignol.com](http://www.GrandGuignol.com), the most complete source of Grand Guignol information on the Net.

### **About Seating**

Pairs of patrons will surely enjoy Hypnodrome's famed **Shock Box seats for two**, which garnered S.F. Weekly's "Best of SF 2008" for "Best Bonus Theater Experience." These individually themed seats include sumptuous "Turkish Lounges", and "private boxes" including "Heaven and Hell," "The Pharaoh's Tomb," and "The Padded Cell," which offer the same opportunity for illicit trysting that was once a feature of the Parisian Théâtre du Grand-Guignol - with added special effects as a nod to the 50s horror movie gimmicks of William Castle.

### **Grand Guignol**

For 65 years an old Jansenist monastery down a back alley in Montmartre was home to one of Paris' great stage attractions, Le Théâtre du Grand-Guignol. Born in 1897 out of the Naturalist theatre movement, the theatre company soon developed its own distinct repertoire of short horror plays, dramas, comedies and sex farces. As many as 6 of these one-acts played on a single bill, a "laughter and tears" line-up that alternated effortlessly between gasps and guffaws. This "hot and cold shower" format seemed to intensify an audience's delight and unease as they collectively realized that anything could happen on the Grand Guignol stage – no topic was taboo, and no symbol was sacred. Particularly during the decades that book-ended the world wars, live entertainment flourished in Montmartre. The artists there played a vital role in the development of new performance genres for the 20<sup>th</sup> century. What is thought of today as "modern drama" and popular entertainment owes much to Montmartre's melodramas, cabarets, music halls, repertory theatres, and on-stage experiments that ranged from the avant-garde to the overtly sexual.



## Calendar Editors:

### WHAT:

Thrillpeddlers presents...

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Extravaganza of Terror & Titillation includes five new one-act performances:

#### **CRACKING THE VEIN**

- *A World-Premiere Black Comedy by Andy Wenger and Damien Chacona*

#### **DOWN AT THE DONNER PARTY DINER**

- *A Song in Bad Taste by Scrumbly Koldewyn*

**THE MODEL HOUSE** - *A World-Premiere Terror Play in Two Parts by Rob Keefe*

#### **THE REVENGE OF THE SON OF THE COBRA WOMAN**

- *A New Musical Fantasy Adventure by Scrumbly Koldewyn*

**A LIGHTS-OUT SPOOKSHOW FINALE** - *created by Nicholas Torre*

### WHEN:

Oct. 7 - Nov. 21, 2015 (Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

Limited Engagement – Only 28 Performances!

Opening Night - Sat. Oct. 10, 2015 - 8:00 pm

(Previews Oct. 7, 8, 9 - Wed, Thurs. & Fri.)

### 2015 dates for - Shocktoberfest 16: CURSE OF THE COBRA:

#### **Oct. 7 - Nov. 21, 2015**

Previews – Oct. 7, 8, 9

(Wed. Thurs. & Fri.)

Oct. 10, (Sat.) opening night, 8:00 pm

Oct. 14, 15, 16, 17 / 21, 22, 23, 24,

(Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

Oct. 28, 29, 30, 31, (Halloween Weedkend)

(Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

Nov. 4, 5, 6, 7 / 11, 12, 13, 14 / 18, 19, 20, 21

(Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. - 8:00 pm)

### TIX:

Tickets available at <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=thrill>  
or by calling 415/ 377- 4202 (*premium tickets sold in pairs only.*)

**\$25 and \$30 general admission**

**\$35 for front row seats and “Shock Boxes” & “Turkish Lounges”**

### VENUE:

The Hypnodrome - 575 10th St. in SF 94103 (*btwn. Bryant & Division Sts.*)

### WEB SITE:

<http://www.hypnodrome.org>

### FACEBOOK PAGE:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/169965446674955/>

### PRESS INFO:

Press materials and hi-res color press photos:

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

###