

Saturday, March 2, 2024

Screen Test: A Wild Project Benefit Screening Celebrating the 15th Anniversary of the Award Winning Production

Company: Vangelina Theater/ New York Butoh Institute
Venue: Wild Project
Location: New York, NY

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Vangelina Theater/New York Butoh Institute is excited to announce Screen Test, a benefit screening celebrating the 15th anniversary of the award winning production, part of Wild Project's March 2024 programming. Screen Test, conceived and directed by Rob Roth and the band Theo and the Skyscrapers, will be shown at Wild Project, 195 E 3rd St, New York, NY, on Saturday, March 2, 2024 at 7pm. The screening will be followed by special post screening discussion hosted by Obie award winning multi-hyphenate Jared Mezzocchi with Rob Roth and choreographer Vangelina. Pay-what-you-can tickets start at \$15 and are available here <https://ci.ovationtix.com/621/production/1190943?performanceld=11422207>. All proceeds go to support Wild Project's artist programs.

Screen Test is the award winning devastatingly beautiful collision of video installation and rock show, conceived and directed by Rob Roth with the band Theo and the Skyscrapers. It began in 2004 at PS122 and developed through several incarnations to its final version in 2008 at Abrons Art Center where it was captured on film. The film version premiered at The Museum of Art and Design in 2010.

Influenced by mythology, Hollywood of the 1950s, and the modern "War on Terror", the entire performance investigates feelings of confusion and longing that drive the subject to a transformation; showing how in order to escape the social and political constructs of the outside world, one must be able to transcend physical and mental states to become something sublime.

The custom soundtrack performed by Theo and the Skyscrapers hinges the piece together as it flows from melodic to assaulting while lyrically echoing themes of loneliness and paranoia, playing out on a 1950s Hollywood soundstage. The film also features costumes by Todd Thomas, lighting by Ben Kato, set design by Ready Set, and choreography by Vangelina. With anger and humor, the performance raises questions of what is artificial, what is real and what role fantasy plays in survival.

Screen Test won the "Live Design Excellence Award for Theater" and was chosen for the 2011 Prague Quadrennial Exhibition representing American Theater.

About the Artists

For nearly three decades, New York City-born multidisciplinary artist and performer Rob Roth has been a subversive force in the city's culture, drawing from the worlds of theater, art, music, film and dance to create commanding work that transcends categories or classification. First educated as a painter, Roth's expansive medium focus is the result of valuable training in technology while working in the commercial creative sector. Today Roth's work is inspired by that duality of art and technology: a poetic lyricism, the luminous palette of a fine artist and an unstinting eye for well-considered detail along with virtuosic technological skills, along with an irreverent wit and a dark sensibility that embraces the futuristic, the metaphysical and eroticism. Roth's work has been showcased at such venues as the New Museum for Contemporary Art, Performance Space122, Abrons Art Center, Here Arts, and Deitch Projects as well as the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others.

Rob Roth has collaborated with a vast range of artists and performers over his career and views the integration of multiple disciplines as fundamental to his creative drive and vision. Roth regards theatre as ritual and uses a cinematic vocabulary along with riveting live performance, video and installation to create singular deconstructed narratives. His influences include renaissance painting, classic Hollywood films and queer history. Often proclaimed a visionary within the worlds of art and theater, and a pioneering media artist worldwide, Roth is one of a few fine artists who has the ability to translate his distinctive aesthetic and masterful technical skills into viable commercial projects. Over the years, Roth has worked as a creative consultant for The Mill (NY, London, LA), leading projects with clients including Coach, Lady Gaga, Rihanna for Samsung, AT&T, Showtime, HBO and David Bowie.

Theo and the Skyscrapers are an experimental electronic band from New York City consist of a trio of renowned New York City musicians: Theo Kogan, former lead singer of the legendary all-female band Lunachicks; Sean Pierce, from the Toilet Boys; and drummer, Chris Kling.

The band unofficially began when Theo and Toilet Boys co-front-man, Sean Pierce, began collaborating on songs. No strangers to the full on rock-'n-roll lifestyle, Theo and Sean have played shows and toured around the world with bands like Marilyn Manson, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Rancid, NOFX, The Donnas, Blondie and No Doubt (to name a few).

In March 2006, Theo and the Skyscrapers' self titled debut album was released. Their new wave metal pop songs created an infectious beat that brought new enthusiasts to live shows and stirred an overwhelming outpouring of support in the online community. Following their debut, the band hit the road for a full U.S. tour traveling to Chicago, L.A., and other major cities, with an East Coast tour with Rancid. Theo and the Skyscrapers has also played with The Hives, Mindless Self Indulgence, The Offspring and numerous other bands. The band released their second album in 2007, entitled 'So Many Ways To Die,' which was self-released on the band's own label, Dark Daddy Records.

Jared Mezzocchi is an Obie award winning director and multimedia designer, playwright, and actor. Mezzocchi's work has spanned all throughout the United States at notable theaters such as: The Kennedy Center, The Geffen Playhouse, Arena Stage, Woolly Mammoth (company member), and many more. In 2016, he received The Lucille Lortel and Henry Hewes Award for his work in Qui Nguyen's Vietgone at the Manhattan Theatre Club. In 2021, The New York Times highlighted his multimedia work in a spotlight article on his impact during the pandemic. His work was also celebrated as a New York Times Critic Pick on Sarah Gancher's Russian Troll Farm (Co-Director & Multimedia Designer) where it was praised for being one of the first digitally native successes for virtual theater. Currently, Jared is creating a new work through his mini-commission at The Vineyard Theatre in New York City entitled On the Beauty of Loss. He is a two-time Macdowell Artist Fellow, a 2012 Princess Grace Award winner, and spends his summers as Producing Artistic Director of Andy's Summer Playhouse.

Outside of his artmaking, Jared is an associate professor at the University of Maryland, where he teaches in the M.F.A. design program in projection and multimedia design, and is associate director of the School for Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies, as well as the co-director of the newly announced Brin Institute for New Performance. Over the pandemic, Jared founded Virtual Design Collective (ViDCo), which has aided in the development of over 50 new digital works over the last 18 months.

Vangelina is a teacher, dancer, and choreographer specializing in Japanese Butoh. She is the artistic director of the VangelinaTheater/New York Butoh Institute (New York), a dance company firmly rooted in the tradition of Japanese butoh while carrying it into the twenty-first century.

The Vangelina Theater/New York Butoh Institute is dedicated to advancing Butoh in the 21st century, with a particular emphasis on education, social justice, research, and archiving.

The Vangelina Theater/New York Butoh Institute reaches out to the New York and international community by offering public Butoh classes, workshops, and performances through collaborations with international and national Butoh artists. Our socially conscious performances tie together butoh and activism; our work addresses issues of gender inequality and social justice. Our yearly New York Butoh Institute Festival elevates the visibility of women in butoh, and our festival Queer Butoh gives a voice to LGBTQIA+ butoh artists.

Our award-winning, 18-year running program, The Dream a Dream Project, brings Butoh dance to incarcerated men and women at correctional facilities across New York State. "The Dream a Dream Project" contributes to the rehabilitation of New York's incarcerated population. Our programs promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in the field of Butoh.

Vangelina firmly believes that Butoh can be an instrument of personal and collective transformation in the 21st century.

Vangelina's choreographed works have been performed in Chile, Hong Kong, Germany, Denmark, France, the UK, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. She is a 2022/2023 Gibney Dance in Process residency and the winner of a 2022 National Endowment for the Arts Dance Award. She is also a 2018 NYFA/NYSCA Artist Fellow in Choreography for Elsewhere, the winner of the 2015 Gibney Dance Social Action Award and the 2019 Janet Arnold Award from the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Her work has been heralded in publications such as the New York Times ("captivating") and Los Angeles Times("moves with the clockwork deliberation of a practiced Japanese Butoh artist") to name a few. Film projects include a starring role alongside actors James Franco and Winona Ryder in the feature film by director Jay Anania, "The Letter" (2012-Lionsgate).

In recent years, she has been commissioned by triple Grammy Award-winning artists Esperanza Spalding, Skrillex, and David J. (Bauhaus). She is the author of the critically-acclaimed book: Butoh: Cradling Empty Space, which explores the intersection of Butoh and neuroscience.

She pioneered the first neuroscientific study of Butoh ("The Slowest Wave"). She is also featured on BBC's podcast Deeply Human with host Dessa (episode 2 of 12: Why We Dance).

<https://www.vangelina.com>

Recent work by Vangelina: <https://vimeo.com/861860785?share=copy>.

About Vangelina Theater/New York Butoh Institute

Vangelina Theater/New York Butoh Institute aims to preserve the legacy and integrity of Japanese Butoh while carrying the art form into the future, with a special emphasis on education, social justice, research, and archiving. For more info, visit: www.vangelina.com

Vangelina Theater programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Vangelina Theater/ New York Butoh Institute
195 E 3rd St New York, NY 10009
New York, NY, 10009
6467654773
[https://ci.ovationtix.com/621/production/1190943?
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Schedule
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