

Creative Team & Performers

Credits:

Conceived by Julia Miller

Based on original text by Brendan Hill

Designed and Directed by Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace, and Julia Miller

Original Sound Design by Kyle Vegter with Ben Kauffman

Original Score by Kyle Vegter and Ben Kauffman with Maren Celest, Michael Hilger, and Jacob Winchester

Original Cast:

Puppeteers Lizi Breit, Sarah Fornace (Lula del Ray), Evan Garrett and Julia Miller (Lula's Mother)

Music Performed by Maren Celest (Sounds, Vocals), Michael Hilger (Guitar, Percussion, Vocals), Kyle Vegter (Cello, Vocals), and Jacob Winchester (Guitar, Bass)

Additional cast of Lula del Ray includes:

Puppeteers Drew Dir, Sam Deutsch, Charlotte Long (Lula del Ray), Sara Sawicki (Lula's Mother), Myra Su

Music Performed by Izzy Olive (Sounds, Vocals), Eric Streichert (Guitar, Percussion, Vocals), Alex Ellsworth (Cello, Vocals), and Ben Kauffman (Guitar, Bass)

Company Bio

Manual Cinema

MANUAL CINEMA is a performance collective, design studio, and film/ video production company founded in 2010 by Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace, Ben Kauffman, Julia Miller, and Kyle Vegter. Manual Cinema combines handmade shadow puppetry, cinematic techniques, and innovative sound and music to create immersive visual stories for stage and screen. Using vintage overhead projectors, multiple screens, puppets, actors, live feed cameras, multi-channel sound design, and a live music ensemble, Manual Cinema transforms the experience of attending the cinema and imbues it with liveness, ingenuity, and theatricality.

To date Manual Cinema has created five original feature length live cinematic shadow puppet shows (*Lula Del Ray*, *ADA/ AVA*, *Mementos Mori*, *My Soul's Shadow*, *The Magic City*); a live cinematic contemporary dance show created for family audiences in collaboration with Hubbard Street Dance and the choreographer Robyn Mineko Williams (*Mariko's Magical Mix*); an original site-specific installations (*La Celestina*); an original adaptation of *Hansel & Gretel* created for the Belgian Royal Opera; music videos for Sony Masterworks, Gabriel Kahane, three time GRAMMY Award-winning eighth blackbird, and NYTimes Best Selling author Reif Larson; a live non-fiction piece for Pop-Up Magazine; a self-produced short film (*CHICAGOLAND*); a museum exhibit created in collaboration with the Chicago History Museum (*The Secret Lives of Objects*) a collection of cinematic shorts in collaboration with poet Zachary Schomburg and string quartet Chicago Q Ensemble (*FJORDS*); and live cinematic puppet adaptations of StoryCorps stories (*Show & Tell*).

"this Chicago troupe is conjuring phantasms to die for..."

-Ben Brantley, The New York Times

Manual Cinema has been presented by, worked in collaboration with, or brought its work to The Metropolitan Museum of Art (NYC), Under the Radar Festival (NYC), The Tehran International Puppet Festival (Iran), La Monnaie-De Munt (Brussels), BAM (NYC), Underbelly (UK), Adelaide Festival (AU), The Kennedy Center (DC), The Kimmel Center (Philadelphia), the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Noorderzon Festival (Netherlands), The O, Miami Poetry Festival, Davies Symphony Hall (SF), The Ace Hotel Theater (LA), Handmade Worlds Puppet Festival (Minneapolis), The Screenwriters' Colony in Nantucket, The Detroit Institute of Art, The Future of Storytelling Conference (NYC), the NYC Fringe Festival, The Poetry Foundation (Chicago), the Chicago International Music and Movies Festival, the Puppeteers of America: Puppet Festival (R)evolution, and elsewhere around the world.

Manual Cinema was ensemble-in-residence at the University of Chicago in the Theater and Performance Studies program in the fall of 2012, where they taught as adjunct faculty. In 2013 Manual Cinema held residencies and taught workshops at the School of the Art Institute (Chicago), The Future of Storytelling Conference (NYC), RCAH at Michigan State University, and Puppeteers of America: Puppet Festival (R)evolution (Swarthmore, PA), Southern Illinois University, and the Chicago Parks District. In Spring 2016 Manual Cinema held workshops at Yale University as visiting lecturers in the theater department.

Recently, Manual Cinema premiered *The Magic City*, a new show for children and their families, adapted from a novel by Edith Nesbit, at Chicago Children's Theatre. In Fall 2016, they contributed visuals, music, and sound design

for an immersive adaptation of Peter Pan with producer Randy Weiner (*Sleep No More*, *The Donkey Show*, *Queen of the Night*) which premiered in Beijing in December 2016. This spring they begin production on another feature length show, *The End of TV*, to premiere at the International Festival of Arts and Ideas in New Haven, June 19-22, 2017. They are also currently creating a new performance, *No Blue Memories*, about the life and work of poet Gwendolyn Brooks, commissioned by the Poetry Foundation and based on a screenplay by Eve Ewing and Nathaniel Marshall.

In 2017, the company will have debuts in Australia, France and Germany and will return to the Edinburgh Fringe with *Lula del Ray*.