



DEATH CLOWNS IN GUANTANAMO BAY

MARCH 21 - 24, 2013

Thu - Sat 8pm - \$10 | Sun 2pm - pwyc | Studio Theatre
4 Glen Morris St. | 416.978.7986 | graddrama.utoronto.ca

**DRAMA
CENTRE**

Centre for Drama, Theatre
and Performance Studies
University of Toronto

Death Clowns in Guantanamo Bay

a collective creation

March 21-24, 2013

Tickets \$10. BOX OFFICE: 416.978.7986 | graddrama.utoronto.ca

blacklistcommittee.wordpress.com

Death Clowns in Guantanamo Bay is a collaborative creation by various cells of the Blacklist Committee for Unsafe Theatre:

Dictator (Artistic Director): Matt Jones

Puppet Master (Director): Ashley Williamson

Politburo (Dramaturgs): Matt Jones, Natalia Esling, Myrto Koumarianos, Allison Leadley

Ubermarionette Cell:

Leslie Robertson.....Karol

Christine Mazumdar.....Olek

Audrey Amar.....Detainee, Guard, Doctor

Alan Belerique.....Detainee, Guard, Extreme Pain Squad

Rob Bril.....Detainee, Guard, Extreme Pain Squad

Alex Contreras.....Detainee, Guard, Extreme Pain Squad, Doctor

Kaitlin Heller.....Detainee, Guard, Head Doctor, Military Censor

Ula Jurecki.....Detainee, Guard, Doctor

Myrto Koumarianos.....Detainee, Guard, Chanteuse

Grace Poltrack.....Detainee, Guard, Sleep Fairy, Doctor, Psychiatrist

Anna-Marija Stojic.....Detainee, Guard

Peter van Wart....Detainee, Guard, Extreme Pain Squad, Doctor, Interrogator

Matt Jones.....The Director

Puppeteer (Movement Dramaturge): Natalia Esling

Ventriloquist (Vocal Coach): Lauren Shepherd

Readymades Cell (Set Building): Jenn Cole (Set Designer), Laura Lucci (Master Builder), Annie Crowley, Gina Brintnell, Paul Stoesser (Technical Director)

Uniformity Cell (Costumes): Martine Plourde (Costume Designer), Lisa Aikman, Milica Zugik (Makeup), Cassandra Witteman (Hat Maker)

Hacker Cell (Enhanced Environment): Ashley Williamson, Ghassan Knayzeh, Ergin Babani, Sam Cole

Clown Minstrel Cell (Musicians): David Jones, Robin Jones

Propaganda Cell (Marketing): Cameron Crookston, Louis Duarte (Poster design), Luella Massey (Publicist)

Lighting: Alain Richer

Violence: Dorian Foley

Surveillance: Isabel Stowell-Kaplan (Pre-show Cast Photography), Montgomery Martin (Video Archiving), Nika Jaksic (Dress Rehearsal Cast Photography)

Manipulators (Operators): Allison Leadley, Nathaniel Bryan

Central Committee: Johanna Lawrie (Production Manager), Catie Thompson (Stage Manager), Isabel Stowell-Kaplan (Assistant Stage Manager), Lauren Shepherd (Assistant Stage Manager), Matt Jones

Artistic Director's Note

We stayed up all night, my friends and I, reading, watching, listening to reports about Guantanamo Bay until the prison camp infected our dreams. When our dreams became nightmares, we felt we could say something about it that wasn't just another report. We looked at the camp as foolish witnesses, as clowns who cannot tell you what goes on there, only what it's like to be outside it, to wonder, to need to know. Guantanamo Bay is so close to the sea. The detainees hear it at night, they write about it in poems etched onto Styrofoam cups, but they are never permitted to see it. Reading the words of the detainees in translation we try to reconstruct their world in our minds like they reconstruct the sea.

Mani al-Utaybi, Yasser al-Zahrani, and Ali Abdullah were the first prisoners to die at Guantanamo in 2006. They were former hunger strikers who had been force fed during their detention. A government report concluded that they had hanged themselves in their cells in a suicide pact. They had made mannequins of themselves using clothes to distract the guards and made nooses from their bedsheets. A later independent investigation wondered how they had managed to tie their hands and feet together, stuff rags down their throats, climb up on the sinks in their cells, jump off and hang dead for two hours, unnoticed by guards.

In this play, we do not reveal the truth about these men's deaths. Rather, we are telling you our story, a story about looking into Guantanamo Bay and not being able to see. In the spirit of secrecy and revelation, we divided into cells to create the piece. The cells worked autonomously from each other. Information was passed strategically between them. As images passed between the cells, they lost literal meaning and began to gain the kind of significance that images have in dreams. The effect is something like a collage made from poems by the detainees, from songs taken from the Guantanamo Torture Playlist used to humiliate the detainees and keep them awake, and from the euphemistic language of the GITMO authorities. The connection we have with Guantanamo Bay is political, especially because of our government's uncritical attitude towards it, but it is also a part of the world that our psyches must adapt to. As long as it remains open we cannot dream in peace.

Matt Jones, Dictator/Artistic Director