

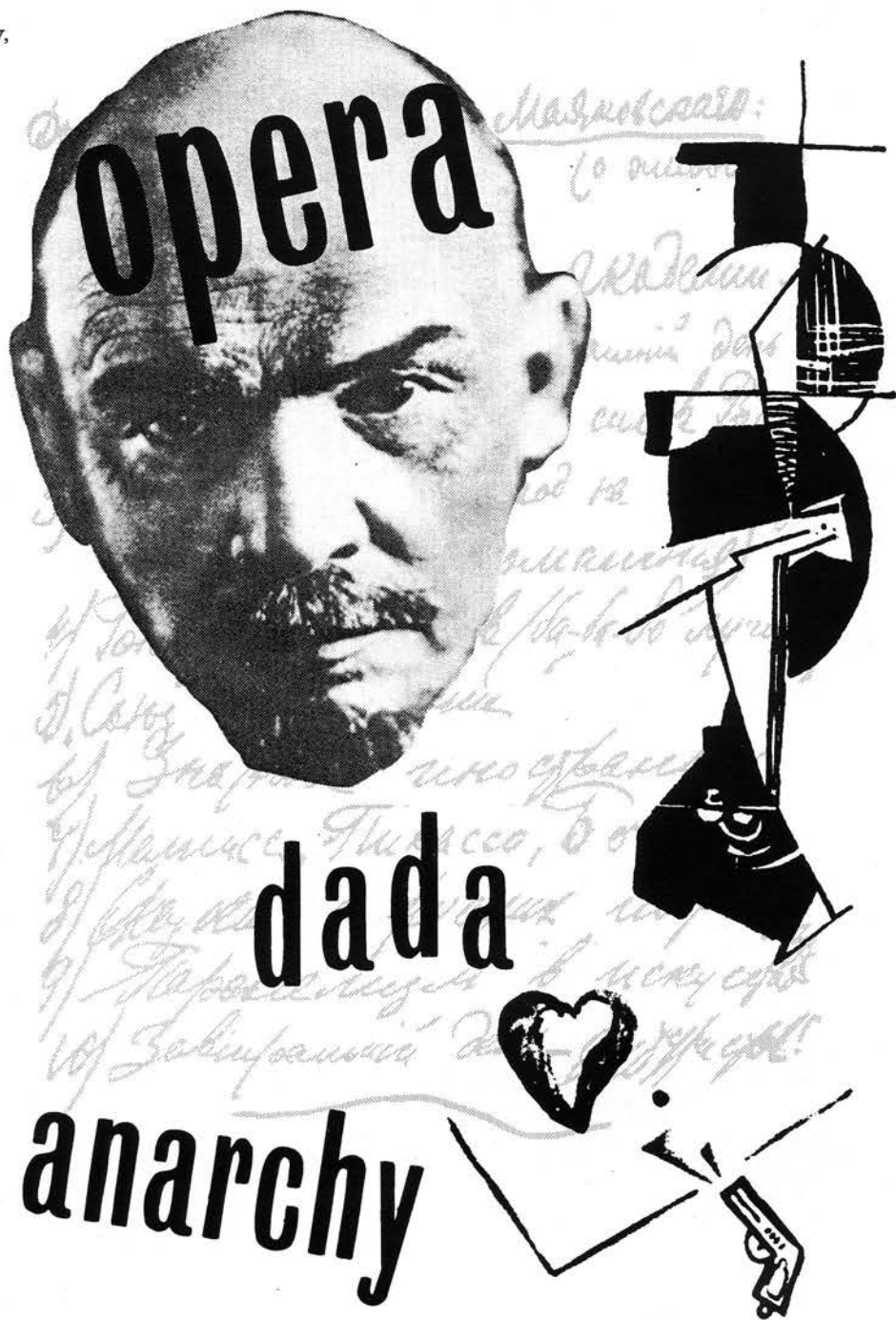
A MUSIC-DRAMA IN 13 SCENES

# ZÜRICH 1916

music by CHRISTOPHER BUTTERFIELD  
concept and libretto by JOHN BENTLEY MAYS

This music drama is not history, nor even about something that happened once. It is full of subterfuges and evasions, itching powder, stink bombs, periphrases, booby traps. It is music as literature, as painting, as architecture; music that takes the side of contamination and impurity, refusing to discriminate. It is music that has a hard time remembering when it is and where it is. Neither the music nor the play itself is about self-expression. It is about the coincidences of life, the discovery, through art, of what is happening now.

It is what is happening now, here—to the composer and librettist, the singers and dancers, choreographers and producers and beholders. It is what is happening to any soul who seeks to dwell creatively, in liberty and mercy, on the troubled ground of our century's ending.



PRODUCTION SUPPORT FROM:

DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT FROM:

MEDIA SPONSOR:



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THE CANADA COUNCIL  
FOR THE ARTS  
SINCE 1957

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS  
DU CANADA  
DEPUIS 1957



AUTUMN LEAF  
PERFORMANCE

avenue

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

Music Director	Owen Underhill
Stage Director	Keith Turnbull
Choreographer	Bill Coleman
Stage Designer	David Gaucher
Costume Designer	Mary Kerr
Lighting Designer	Stéphane Mongeau
Stage Manager	James Livingstone

### FLYING BY FOY

## THE PLAYERS

### THE DADA ARTISTS

The Chanteuse Emmy Hennings .....	Stacie Robinson
DRS. HARRY AND MARTHA COHEN SCHOLARSHIP	
The Artist Hugo Ball .....	Michael Colvin
STUART AND MARGARET JONES SCHOLARSHIP	
The Dandy Tristan Tzara .....	Darren Bonin
The Drummer Richard Huelsenbeck .....	Nicholas Coulter
Another singer and Dancer Alice More .....	Lori Klassen
MARNIE WARRACK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP	

### LA TROUPE FLAMINGO, STREET PERFORMERS IN ZURICH

Miss Ranovalla of Singapore the Negro Giantess .....	Shaunaid Amette
EILEEN HIGGIN MEMORIAL/ CALGARY THEATRE SINGERS SCHOLARSHIP	
Mrs. Koritsky the Tattooed Lady .....	Tracey Scher
NICKLE FAMILY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP	
The Demoiselle Marie On Her Ponies .....	Nanette Canfield
HOME OIL COMPANY LIMITED SCHOLARSHIP	
Stromboli the Human Torch .....	Eric Shaw
EILEEN HIGGIN MEMORIAL/ CALGARY THEATRE SINGERS SCHOLARSHIP	
The Amazing Onzali .....	Daniel May
MAXINE AND JACK WEBER SCHOLARSHIP	
Other members of la Troupe Flamingo ....	Kirsten Andersen, Jennifer Dahl, Laurence Lemieux, Robin Poitras, Ron Stewart

### IN RUSSIA

V.I. Lenin .....	Michael Maniaci
MICHAEL AND SONJA KOERNER SCHOLARSHIP	
The Artist Vladimir Mayakovsky .....	Michael Colvin
Tsar of all the Russias .....	Daniel May
Tsarina .....	Nanette Canfield
Tsarevitch .....	Eric Shaw
Joseph Stalin .....	Daniel May
Thomas Edison .....	Eric Shaw
The Russian People ....	Shaunaid Amette, Kirsten Andersen, Darren Bonin, Jennifer Dahl, Laurence Lemieux, Daniel May, Donald Osler, Robin Poitras, Tracey Scher, Eric Shaw, Ron Stewart

A majority of festival artists receive scholarship assistance from The Banff Centre Annual Fund. Where indicated, they have received funds from endowments or scholarships established through the Development Office to honour particular individuals or organizations.

As exiles tend to do, the astonishing people who settled briefly in 1916 on the Zurich street called Spiegelgasse—Mirror Lane, by a pleasant coincidence—moved on before long.

The players in La Troupe Flamingo, always obscure, passed wholly into historical obscurity.

Lenin, famously, soon thereafter made his secret way through Germany to Russia, bearing the violent and murderous gospel that was to destroy millions of lives and countless dreams, before the collapse and annulment of the state it brought into existence.

As for the Dada artists, they staged their dazzling, volatile performances at Cabaret Voltaire for a few months in 1916, then gradually dispersed to other places in Switzerland, Europe, the world. However brief, the Zürich experiment made evangelists of the leading artists, who went on to imprint the Dada hope of infinite, endless liberation on the cultural story of the twentieth century.

## THE ORCHESTRA

Owen Underhill (conductor), Maya de Forest (violin), Darryl Strain (violin), Ralitzia Tcholakova (violin), Antoine Tamestit (viola), Peter Pavlovsky (double bass; ANJULIN SCHOLARSHIP), Isabelle Lenoir (flute/piccolo), Peter Stoll (clarinet/bass clarinet), Marc Feldman (bassoon/contrabassoon), Peter Lutek (alto saxophone), Xavier Faure (French horn), Merrie Klazek (trumpet), David Zambon (tuba), Nicholas Coulter (percussion), Richard Sacks (percussion), John Gzowski (guitar, banjo, mandolin, steel guitar), Susan Ball (piano, harpsichord, harmonium), Estelle Lemire (ondes Martenot).

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Jim Quinn for lending an anvil for use in the orchestra; Holen Kahn, Craig McPherson and the Media and Visual Arts Department for video editing; Wendy Morrison and The Banff Centre Library; Catherine Crowston and The Edmonton Art Gallery; Newzones Gallery of Contemporary Art; Laura Spence.

## THE PUPPETEERS

Sadhana Ali, Elsa Lee Arbuckle, Sylvie Bonin, Jacqui H. Hartlin, Cindy Kelly

## CREATIVE SUPPORT

Richard Armstrong, extended voice/vocal interpretation; Leslie Dala, assistant music director; Marc Feldman, music assistant to the artistic director; Byron Knutson, assistant vocal coach/repetiteur; Mary Morrison, singing teacher; Steven Philcox, English diction coach; Xenia Buchmann, assistant set design\*; Hans Engel, assistant stage director\*; Tina Louise Jones, assistant lighting design and projection artist\* (BETTY MACAULAY SCHOLARSHIP); Shireen Meggitt, assistant stage manager\*; Julie Renton, assistant costume design\*; Shellie Sammons, assistant stage manager\*.

\*WORKSTUDY TRAINING PROGRAMS

## THE SCENES

**Overture and Scene 1)** Zurich. Just before dawn on the street called Spiegelgasse. Emmy Hennings comes home after the cabaret, now closed for the night, where she has been singing.

**Scene 2)** Emmy continues singing her song about the night streets, while Hugo reads a letter of the sort exiles often send home to parents and friends—reassuring, with the pain left out—then joins Emmy in her song to the night and its people.

**Scene 3)** La Troupe Flamingo joins Hugo and Emmy on the street. As though reading from a tourist phrase-book, they recite the everyday words and phrases strangers must learn when dwelling among a strange people. The recitation is interrupted again and again by Hugo's attempts of suicide.

**Scene 4)** A scene of pure movement and music in which the ominous, dark street is transfigured into the radiant and vivid interior of Cabaret Voltaire, at Number 1 Spiegelgasse.

**Scene 5)** V. I. Lenin, then living at Number 14 Spiegelgasse, complains about Cabaret Voltaire's spontaneous music and joy, which he correctly takes to be a vision of the unfolding twentieth century very different from his own.

**Scene 6)** Alice More and Emmy recite two letters by Lenin, objecting to the freedom and music of the avant-garde. One goes to Herr Ephraim, proprietor of the bar at Number 1 Spiegelgasse and landlord of the Dada poets and artists. The other is sent into the future, to the Soviet commissar of culture, reprimanding him for printing anarchist, politically incorrect poems by the experimental writer Vladimir Mayakovsky.

**Scene 7)** Lenin at Cabaret Voltaire. He stops the wildly spinning joy in the club, assumes the direction of the Dada poets and painters and La Troupe Flamingo, and prepares them to enact his version of the twentieth century, which he envisions as an opera in three acts.

**Scene 8)** *Lenin's Project for an opera of the twentieth century, Act One.* The February Revolution in Russia. Now deposed and powerless, the toppled Imperial Family exchange banal, bored words, that fall meaningless at their feet.

**Scene 9)** *Project for an opera of the twentieth century, Act Two.* The October Revolution in Russia is presented as the totalitarian reorganization of state power, which Lenin understands it to be. But Emmy and Hugo attempt to steal the script, and rewrite the Revolution as they long for it to be: a liberation of desire, erotic and social. Lenin repeatedly cries, 'Stop!' and is ignored.

**Scene 10)** *Project for an opera of the twentieth century, Act Three.* Lenin and Stalin recapture the script and consolidate the Revolution as a reign of death—of electric chairs to still the movement of artistic liberty; of terror to silence the music unleashed by the century's creative avant-gardes; of pompous kitsch to deaden the freshness of the century's dawn song. Thomas Edison, inventor of the electric chair, descends with his gift of terror to Stalin.

**Scene 11)** Two stories about Lenin; a postlude to his operatic vision of the century—devoid of the random and accidental, emptied of movement and music—leading to the suicide of the artist.

**Scene 12)** Vladimir Mayakovsky's long hymn to the radical beauty and resistance of the avant-garde—crushed or domesticated by twentieth century power, Communist and capitalist—its energies to subvert, depleted; its strategies of transcendence, reduced to harmless irony.

**Scene 13)** Hugo Ball, the most powerful visionary among the Dadaists—or Mayakovsky, or any other avant-gardist reduced to impotence by the powers of reaction—lies exhausted and dying. Miss Ranovalla, player in La Troupe Flamingo, listens and comforts.

*In 1998, we await the pentecost that will reawaken hope in transformation. We await a rekindling of art's joyful resistance. — John Bentley Mays*

## INTERMISSION

# SOME NOTES ON THE HISTORICAL CHARACTERS

## DADA ARTISTS IN ZURICH, SELF-EXILED FROM EUROPE AT WAR

**HUGO BALL**, radical director, playwright, spiritual visionary, creator of Cabaret Voltair. Born Feb. 22, 1886 in Pirmasens, Germany. Died Sept. 14, 1927 in San't Abbondio (Ticino), Switzerland.

**EMMY HENNINGS**, chanteuse, saxophonist and writer, ex-convict, jailed for helping war resisters, lover of Hugo Ball. Born Jan. 17, 1885 in Flensburg, Germany. Died Aug. 10, 1948 in Sorengo-Lugano, Italy.

**TRISTAN TZARA**, Romanian absurdist poet, sophisticate and dandy delight. Also associated with the Dada movement in Paris. Born Samuel Rosenstock. Born April 16, 1896 in Moinesti, Romania. Died Dec. 24, 1963 in Paris.



**RICHARD HUELSENBECK**, drummer, writer associated with the Dada movement in Zurich and Berlin. Born April 23, 1892 in Frankenau, Germany. Died April 30, 1974 in Muralto, Switzerland.

## BOLSHEVIKS, INSTIGATORS, ACCOMPLICES, VICTIMS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

**V. I. LENIN**, leader of the Bolsheviks, Soviet premier 1918-24. Born 1870. Died 1924

**JOSEF STALIN**, dictator and Russian statesman, secretary general of the Communist Party 1922-53; premier of the U.S.S.R. 1941-53. Born Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, 1879 in Gori, Republic of Georgia. Died 1953.

**VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY**, principal poet, playwright, propagandist and circus designer of the Soviet Union. Born 1893. Committed suicide 1930.

**THOMAS EDISON**, US inventor, whose development of a practical electric light bulb, electric generating sys-

tem, sound-recording device, motion picture projector and electric chair had profound effects on the shaping of modern society. Born Feb. 11, 1847 in Milan, Ohio. Died Oct. 18, 1931.

**NICHOLAS II**, Tsar of all the Russias, Emperor of Russia 1894-1917, executed along with the rest of the Imperial Family in 1918. Born 1868 in Tsarkoye Selo (now Pushkin), Russia. Died July 16, 1918.

## LA TROUPE FLAMINGO

La Troupe Flamingo was a troupe of circus performers in Zurich in 1916.

ZÜRICH 1916 is being recorded  
for later broadcast on Two New  
Hours, CBC Radio 2

CBC radio *Two*

Below, left to right: Hugo Ball,  
Emmy Hennings,  
V. I. Lenin,  
Nicholas II



## ZÜRICH 1916: SOME STORIES

by CHRISTOPHER BUTTERFIELD and JOHN BENTLEY MAYS

Generations after their deaths and banishments, memories of the artists who have fallen victim to the perverse political avant-gardisms of our century lurk in the shadows of the modern world. But the defeated spirits still dance furtively in our histories, brightening the grey solemnity that still hangs over the cities of the former Soviet realm. There is no way to speak to these ghosts, let alone allow them resurrection. But a writer can at least

recall and name these heroic souls—must do so—and conserve the traces of the good they created and endured. So began the writing of the text that was published in 1985 in Richard Rhodes' *C* magazine, where it was found by the composer, who set the words singing.

This festival play has never been, and is not, an attempt to replicate the pentecostal wonder of the avant-garde in Zurich's Cabaret

Voltaire, or the horror of the avant-garde's perversion, the Bolshevik revolution. Nor is it an enshrining of a remarkable moment, like a saint's bone, for nostalgic adoration. It is not a portrayal, in some "realistic" fashion, of the genesis or the later clashes and tragedies of the century's avant-gardes, spiritual and political.

This play is now, and here, and that is all.

There are no safe havens from worlds sliding into ruin. Zurich, like all other refuges from the violence engulfing the continent, soon became a prison of suffocating poverty and helplessness, discouragement and—for Hugo Ball, the most brilliant and passionate of the Germans—suicidal despair.

It was in this midnight of the soul that the young men and women, to be remembered in the cultural history of our time as the Zurich Dadaists, found each other. They joined creative forces with other creative itinerants—a band of flamboyant street performers called La Troupe Flamingo, anarchists from everywhere—and turned their arts of personal resistance into acts of social survival and celebration.

This communion climaxed in early 1916, when Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings and others persuaded the proprietor of a small Bierstube on the rough side of Zurich to allow them to redecorate his place, and rename it Cabaret Voltaire. On its tiny stage, in absurdist performance and dreamlike spectacle and theatricals of collaged delights, they kept vivid the will to create and the radical intelligence which was then perishing on Europe's battlefields.

A few doors up the street from Cabaret Voltaire, a revolutionary of a different sort also endured self-exile from his native land, and similarly keeping a dream of revolution alive, until the time came to attempt its historical realization. His name was V. I. Lenin.

Thus, on this shabby street in the same provincial Swiss city, the two great visions of transformation our century has brought forth were being

nursed and nurtured, their flames kept alight in the darkness: the revolution in the word and sound and spirit, by the artists of Cabaret Voltaire; and the violent utopianism of social revolt and terror, by V. I. Lenin.



Neither the revolution of radical spiritual freedom or that of radical political reconstruction were to spin on to the end of this century unchanged, intact and unclashing.

They met violently in Russia, as the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky and a wave of magnificently talented painters and playwrights were first flattered into collusion, then destroyed by the Communist state. Another Dada-inspired generation of avant-gardist artists, architects, musicians were either condemned outright, or first seduced and then annihilated or driven into exile by Hitler's murderous regime.

Nor does the story end there: for wherever the police range at large against singing, wherever the freedom of art threatens to distract the masses from dumb consumption of products and propaganda, the conflict continues, with the same grey men moving against the celebrants of the same joy that burned brightly in Zurich, 1916



As nineteenth-century Europe's dying empires prepared for the Great War that would destroy them all, the night sky was suddenly spangled by points and flares of artistic illumination,

detonating over the sad continent like fireworks—Cubism in France, Futurism in Italy and Russia, radical experiments in theatre, music, painting, dance throughout the German-speaking world.

Then came the War. And among the daring avant-gardes, none suffered more immediately, or with deeper disillusionment, than the radicals in Imperial Germany. The pre-war hopes of subverting and transfiguring the old, oppressive order with an art of freedom, happy disorder and joy vanished. The artists in wartime Germany faced the avant-garde's ever-returning, agonizing choices: to turn themselves into silent accomplices of regimes they could not believe in; to throw themselves on the pyre of martyrdom; or to seek refuge abroad, becoming strangers in strange lands. For many of the most remarkable young artists in Germany, the lot fell on exile.

And so it was that, in early years of the First World War, the director-playwright Hugo Ball and his lover Emmy Hennings, the poet Tristan Tzara and other creators fled to Zurich, in neutral Switzerland, far from the gunshots and sloganeering of Europe's self-slaughter.

Christopher Butterfield and John Bentley Mays will present a **PRE-SHOW CHAT**

before each performance in the west lobby of the Eric Harvie Theatre.  
7:10 pm  
No charge



Christopher Butterfield



John Bentley Mays

Photo: Peter Tym



The Tattooed Lady, costume design by Mary Kerr

## THE PLAYERS

BACK: Kirsten Andersen,  
Eric Shaw, Jennifer Dahl,  
Ron Stewart, Tracey Scher,  
Michael Maniaci,  
Lori Klassen,  
Michael Colvin, Elsa Lee

FRONT: Darren Bonin,  
Laurence Lemieux, Robin  
Poitras, Shaunaid Amette,  
Nanette Canfield, Daniel  
May, Stacie Robinson,  
Sylvie Bonin.



Photo: Don Lee

## THE ORCHESTRA

BACK: Peter Pavlovsky,  
Owen Underhill,  
Darryl Strain, Peter Lutek,  
Nicholas Coulter,  
David Zambon, Marc  
Feldman, Estelle Lemire,  
Ralitza Tcholakova,  
John Gzowski

FRONT: Maya de Forest,  
Antoine Tamestit, Richard  
Sacks, Merrie Klazek,  
Xavier Faure, Isabelle Lenoir,  
Peter Stoll, Susan Ball



Photo: Don Lee

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

BACK: Hans Engel,  
David Gaucher,  
Bill Coleman,  
Byron Knutson,  
John Bentley Mays,  
Richard Armstrong,  
Christopher Butterfield,  
Shellie Sammons,  
Stéphane Mongeau

MIDDLE: Owen Underhill,  
Xenia Buchmann,  
Keith Turnbull, Mary  
Morrison, Mary Kerr,  
Shireen Meggitt

FRONT: James Livingstone,  
Leslie Dala, Steven Philcox



Photo: Don Lee