



DEMOSTAGE IS A TEMPORARY SPACE FOR NEW IDEAS.

The event brings together art makers for collaboration, sharing, and critical discourse. Presenters show what they've been working on. Audiences ask questions and give feedback. Inspiration was taken from software developers who meet in social settings to 'demo' the programs they are working on. Everyone is always encouraged to stick around and interact further. The first DEMOSTAGE was held in the spring of 2009.

Established in 2003 as a vehicle for the interdisciplinary projects of Halifax-based actor/writer/tinkerer Dustin Harvey, Secret Theatre has grown to encompass a myriad of people and places come, gone and soon to be. Through the exploration of site and exploitation of media art, Secret Theatre creates meaningful moments that offer new ways of being together while shedding crooked light on how it is we've grown apart. Each production is existentially meddlesome, resulting in the provocation of both thought and intimacy.

secrettheatre.org



All photography by Mel Hattie



THE POTATO CIRCUS

Presenter: Brian Riley

I am Brian Riley: puppeteer, builder, social experimenter. For demo stage I brought some bits of a new piece called "The Potato Circus—featuring acts of Obsolete Spontaneity." It is a collaboration with-in our art collective P.I.P. (Performance in Progress). This piece acts as an opening and closing puppet-like show, bringing celebration to our pop-up yurt restaurant 'House of Dosai.' We serve ultra-healthy dosa's in between shows, designed by local foodies Conscious Catering and our immaculate portable infrastructure was created by Little Foot Yurts. A dosa could be described as south Indian crepe, filled with delicious potato, lentil and chickpea with a variety of spices. I'm interested in the question of audience digestion. As theatre makers and performance artists, do we puree and spoon-feed our messages? Can discovery stay alive on stage? I would like to see us begin to use community-friendly structures like circus' to come together and make art.

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CITY IN STEREO

Presenter: Dustin Harvey

As I begin to tour more, I am taking the opportunity to experiment more with relocation, creating projects that are city-specific, and offering citizens new ways of engaging with the place they call home. Out of this desire came the idea for CITY IN STEREO, a video installation that playfully explores a city's past, not through the space itself, but through carefully constructed oscillations of sculpted time. CITY IN STEREO was created by me (Dustin Harvey) and Nick Bottomley, with music composed by Graeme Campbell. For the demo, I showed a series of antique stereoscopic photographs we animated into jittering 3D images. Custom software seamlessly conjoins the left and right sides of the artifacts at slightly different angles transforming the 2D image into a 3D one. Nick and I were curious about combining the images with live narration, an imagined counterpoint to the actual photographs.

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DEMO STAGE





JOY SYMPOSIUM

Presenters: Alex McLean and Ben Stone

We (Ben Stone and Alex McLean, of Zuppa Theatre Co.) did a little taste experiment with caramel popcorn shooters. We wanted to know if the drinks would conjure nostalgia for people or elicit memories of particular places or times in their lives. This was our first experiment towards the creation of our new show, currently titled *Joy Symposium*, that we are making with Chef Daniel Burns. Daniel is an old friend who has worked in many of the world's best restaurants and now runs a place called Luksus in New York. We want our show to get at the head and the heart through all five senses. After handing out our shooters we asked everyone to drink simultaneously. Then we asked people to let us know a.) if they enjoyed the experience, b.) what it brought to mind. It was interesting that the flavor generally evoked a sense of nostalgia, even for those who couldn't pinpoint it.

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CADIMUS PROTOCOL

Presenter: Michael McPhee

Getting to present the *Cadimus Protocol* was a welcome opportunity, as the basis of the project is its proliferation. The *Cadimus Protocol* is a trans-media project centred around my new sci-fi play 'The Contribution', a love story set in a world of population control and eugenics. Trans-media is the art form of telling a story across multiple platforms. By writing 'The Contribution', I not only created a story, but a whole world for artists to play in. This means that any artist (be it comic book creators, movie makers, short story writers etc.) can create whatever content the world inspires them to make. All the content is kept on a website which acts not only as archive of the work, but as a living breathing art entity that people from all over the world can help create. It is collaborative art in the modern age on a potentially grand scale.

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WHEN FISH FLY

Presenter: Lora Campbell

Organic Water Productions is an artistic production company comprised of Lisa Rose Snow and myself, Lora Campbell. We focus on making films and art with an emphasis on women in central roles. We want to explore classic tales with the ideas and interests of female protagonists and key crew members. Our next film, *When Fish Fly* is the story of a little girl who, in trying to send her goldfish to heaven, risks her beliefs and very life. This story explores themes of grief and innocence. We feel passionately about, and we are constantly looking for, people's ideas and opinions on how to tell interesting, dynamic, female driven tales. For our demo, we showed a trailer we shot in the summer. The experience was a great way to start a conversation about female driven stories, what that means, and exploring unconventional roles for women.

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CACTUS FLOWER

Presenter: Jessica Lewis

I, Jess, am Cactus Flower, a Halifax based singer-songwriter of country-folk music. For my demo, I chose to perform some bits and pieces of a couple of songs I had been working on. Songs that were not finished, and which I did not have a clear vision of how they may end up. With just a few chord progressions and a vocal melody in mind, I was looking for ideas to shape the lyrics and layout. I played what I had, and asked the audience what they thought. What feeling or thoughts came to mind? Did the music suggest some lyrical content? Did the song need any more musical elements? Did it feel complete? At first I was hesitant to demo my music, as I normally do not play my songs for anyone until they are completed. The experience proved quite useful. With audience suggestions, the song was completed.

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