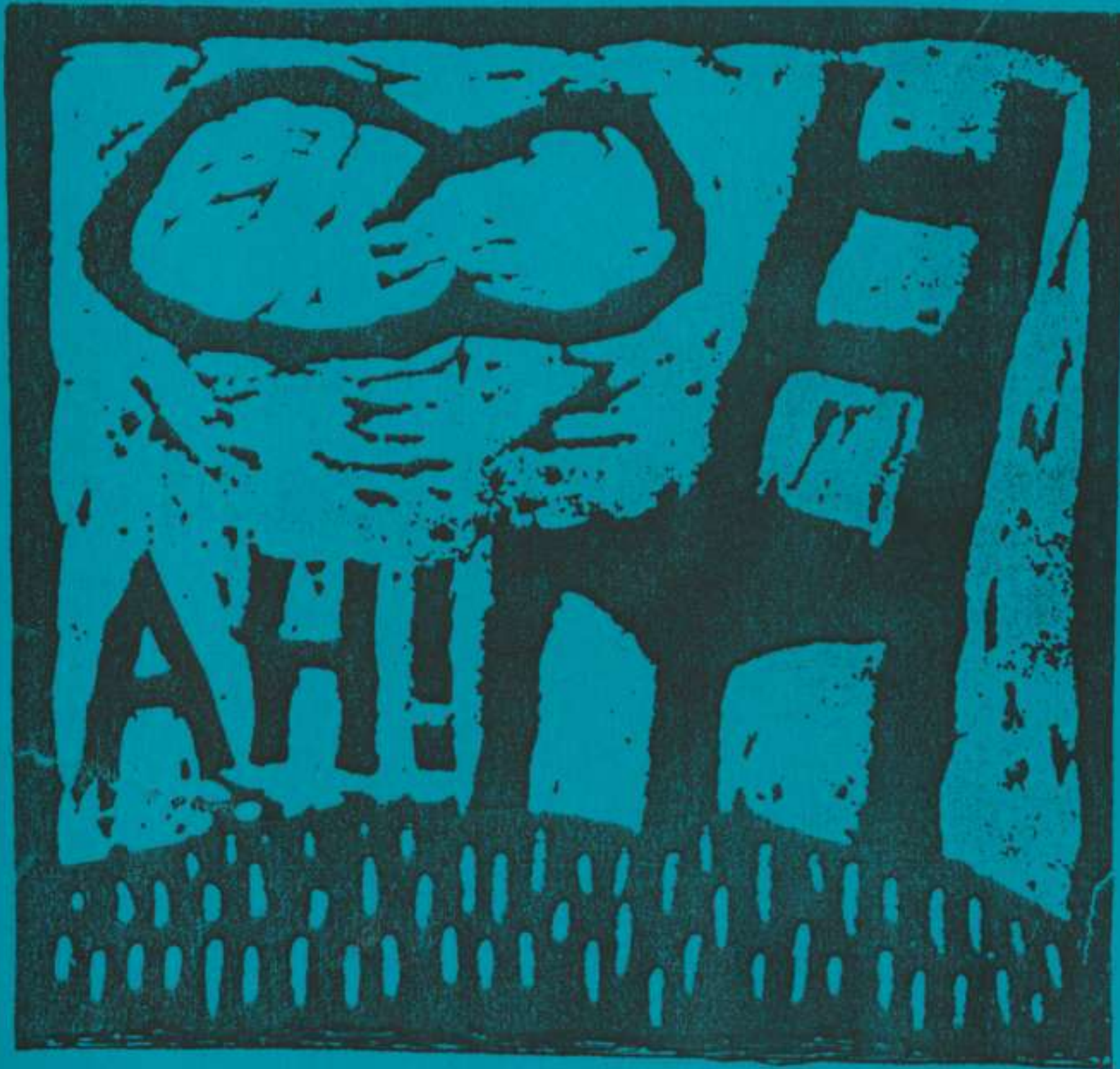


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THE HOPEFUL PAGEANTRY
OF
BREAD & PUPPET

a film by

DeeDee Halleck
&
Tamar Schumann

AH! The Hopeful Pageantry of Bread and Puppet

a film by DeeDee Halleck and Tamar Schumann

Oh! Ah! The gorgeousness the solemn size the humorous disparities...To have been useful to the important movements of our times...to have spoken out for the poor, the oppressed and humiliated...

Grace Paley
Just As I Thought

....one of the important theaters of our century, artistically on a level with Brecht, Genet and O'Neill.

George Dennison
Author, **Lives of Children**

The company's sheer magnitude in both size and vision inspires awe (if not a march on Washington.)

Margot Ebling
Village Voice

Ah! The Hopeful Pageantry of Bread and Puppet will be a lyrical and angry film about one of the most important theater groups in the world. It will be fun and irreverent, sad and mournful, but most of all, inspiring of that most elusive of human qualities: hope. It will be a film in the style and spirit of the theater itself: an epic movie and an epic theater piece, in the Brechtian sense of the word, epic.

The Bread and Puppet Theater has been a source of hope and vision for people all over the world. They have performed in theaters, on college campuses, in churches, nursing homes, nursery schools, community centers and parks, but above all in the streets. The billowing wings of the Bread and Puppet birds have lead antiwar parades, marches against the death penalty, and in support of the Chiapas peasants and the New York City Gardens. The huge puppet birds have been for many the materialization of hope for social change in the face of the brutal forces of war and greed, exemplified by another Bread and Puppet figure, the fat fisted Uncle Fatso, the ugly Uncle Sam who has abused puppets portraying everyone from Vietnamese peasants to Bosnian women. The archive of the theater's productions is a chronicle of the events of the last third of the twentieth century. From Haiti to El Salvador, from Giuliani to the G7, the characters and places of our world have been recreated in paper mache and paint. As Peter Schumann, founder and director of the theater, has said, "Some of our shows are big and some are little, but all of our shows are for good and against evil."

The End of an Era

Bread and Puppet has meant as much to the thousands who have made the theater as to those who have viewed it in the audience. It has taught generations of activists to construct large puppets, to paint iconographic banners and to print mobilizing posters. Each summer the theater has been host to a huge event, the Domestic Resurrection Circus. In 1998 the last of such events occurred. 60,000 people came to the 1998 circus, overwhelming the tiny rural Vermont setting of the theater. So Bread and Puppet is closing a chapter in its history. Although the theater will keep creating shows and hosting international theater groups at their Vermont farm, the era of massive summer events is over. At such a juncture, it is time to assess its achievement. By concentrating our effort on the last decade of summers at the farm in Glover, Vermont, we hope to prepare the way for the next phase of Bread and Puppet and for the political theater of the future. It is time to look back at the seminal summer events in the Northeast Kingdom. For those who were there it is an evocative memory. For those who never made it up to the remote North East Kingdom, the film will be a powerful record and a way to decentralize this work: to encourage others around the country and the world to make their own political theater.

Background

As far back as the Vietnam War and beyond, Bread and Puppet has given a voice to issues (popular or unpopular) in a manner that people can digest easily...educating, while seeming to be just entertaining.

Ramona Africa, Minister of Communication
MOVE Organization, Philadelphia

Although the theater began in New York City, in the early seventies their home became the rolling green hills of Vermont. There they began a summer tradition: the Bread and Puppet Domestic Resurrection Circus. Held for over 25 years, it became a Mecca for activists of all stripes to come together each year in the tall spruce woods and green meadows of the Northeast Kingdom in northern Vermont. It has been an event that harkens back to the original Woodstock, only this time the "flower children" of artists and radicals were joined by Vermont dairy farmers, maple sugar gathers and lumbermen. Several hundred of the audience members would become participants, donning burlap costumes, carrying painted cardboard props and singing in the Sacred Harp choruses that accompany the huge pageants. Just as the whole-grain bread which is baked and served at all their performances nourishes the spectators and puppeteers, the theater itself has nourished several generations of activists and artists, farmers and city folk. As word spread about the yearly festivals, more and more came trekking north each year. The event was so satisfying, so necessary, that most people who found their way there would return the next year and bring friends. Last summer over 600 volunteers joined the resident puppeteers and musicians and dancers who had come from as far away as Korea, Brazil, Australia and Argentina and as close as Wheelock and Barton, Vermont.

Evolution of This Project

DeeDee Halleck's first film on Bread and Puppet, **Meadows Green** (made in 1974 with animator George Griffin) has been shown in venues around the world. It was taken by the theater on tour to thirty five countries where it was shown on the streets and in cafes, at universities and rallies. It has been on TV in Algeria, Greece, France, UK, Sweden, Russia, Poland and Taiwan. It has been used in theater classes and film classes and shown in libraries. It was used in the March Against Disarmament in the United Nations' Peace Cafe. It won first prize at the Vermont Peace Film Festival in 1976.

Since 1990, DeeDee Halleck has documented the circus each summer on video tape. The archive amounts to over two hundred hours of material. She is now working with Tamar Schumann, who as the daughter of Peter Schumann, has literally grown up with the theater and who has become a formidable theater director in her own right, having produced projects in San Francisco, Vermont and New York's Theater for the New City and La Mama. They are working to log and organize this vast collection so that it will be more accessible for research and study, and beyond that to create a film which will be an expression of the Bread and Puppet vision.

The filmmakers are working closely with Peter Schumann and members of the company to make a film which is authentic to the style and spirit of the theater. DeeDee Halleck has been making media for almost forty years. Her film **Haiti: Bitter Cane** won first prize at the Montreal Film Festival. Her recent **Gringo in Mananaland** was shown in the London, Venice and Trieste festivals. She was co-founder of both Paper Tiger Television and Deep Dish satellite network. Halleck has been close to the theater since the 1960's together with the Schumann family on the Lower East Side.

Distribution

Anything that can be done to preserve and share the work of Bread and Puppet Theater is of fundamental importance for the history of theater...Bread and Puppet presents a project which is coherent with Latin American reality: it works with organic materials, it develops theater through sharing life experiences, it has a strong sense of community.

Rosa Luisa Marquez, Professor,
University of Puerto Rico

The film will be shown in theaters, festivals, community centers, schools and will be used around the world as a tool to inspire creative visualization of progressive movements. It will be taken on tour with the theater and shown in tour venues and on local television and copies will be sold at performances and "Cheap Art Stores" along with posters and prints at the Bread and Puppet Cheap Art Stores. It will be shown on educational television and uplinked on the Deep Dish Television Satellite Network and down-linked to hundreds of local cable channels, and maybe even PBS.

The Art of Bread and Puppet

Bread and Puppet Theater is a way of life/art, where baking bread for the communal noon meal or repairing the roof are as integral to the "performance" as making music, participating in a local parade, or ritually building and immolating a giant paper puppet in front of tens of thousands of people...Our Domestic Resurrection Circus has become a counter-culture institution.

Scott Stroot

Art New England

Halleck's film **Meadows Green** although still the favorite of all the media projects of B & P, is woefully out of date. What has been especially exciting in recent years has been the energy and imagination of many young post-post-modern performers who have participated in the summer events, making uniquely political art in the era of often heartless and/or tabloid-type sensational museum and gallery art.

AH! will show the huge miraculous pageants and the small side shows. The cast includes many veterans as well as young people: Paul Zaloom (of Beakman's World), Matty Boy, Michael Romanyshyn, John Bell, Chuck Meese, Howie and Steph Cantor, Genevieve Yeuvillez, Marianne Ross, Linda Elbow, Peter Hamburger, Suzie Dennison, Margo Sherman, Marie-celie Roumer, Graciela Monteagudo. Patti Hernandez, Clare Dolan, Cate Peck, Steve Kaplan, Jenny Romaine, Pedro Adorno, Mark Sussman and Steve Caplan. Musicians include Ron Kelly, Ralph Denzer, Mark Estrin, Burt Porter, Bert Franke, Dave Douglas, Larry Gordon and Trudi Cohen. The film will also celebrate the community life of the theater: the collective work and play, the preparing of food, the painting of posters and printing of banners.

Neither a straight documentary nor an "educational" rendition of theater history, **AH!** will be more like a Bread and Puppet movie than a film ABOUT Bread and Puppet, similar to the way **Meadows Green** was really a film version of the theater. The film will include scenes from performances, B & P graphics, puppeteers working and building puppets and props, weeding the garden, peeling the garlic and kneading the bread, strung together with the unique B & P musical combination of marching band, rumba and sacred harp singing. The film will survey the various current themes over the nine years of documentation, showing how various issues such as the Gulf War, the plight of Haitian refugees and the impending execution of Mumia Abu Jamal were rendered in masks, props and banners. Included are rehearsal scenes, as the troupe refines the various acts. Excerpts from community meetings show the collective work process.

Keeping the Spirit of Hope Alive

...Bread and Puppet Theater was pre-eminently theater of the anti-war movement, and this was so from the earliest days, when the movement was still small...The emotions generated by the puppets as soldiers and (the God of) War were not the foregone outrage and foregone anger of political agit-prop art--which doesn't generate or create feeling or thought so much as it releases already existing attitudes, feelings which themselves are often past emotions-- these figures did create emotion and thought; they were grave and deeply compassionate. They said that war was terrible not because it was the inevitable action, result or work of imperialism, but because it destroyed persons and destroyed the great human inventions of their customs, and wiped out all the small and great works of faith, charity, patience and courage, destroyed artifacts and crops and the earth itself. ..

George Dennison
Author, **Lives of Children**

As we ponder the rubble of the Balkan War, as the IMF and the WTO force peasants off their land and into sweatshops, as the climate reacts to the devastating ecocide of industrial life, it is hard to imagine a way out. Now more than ever the world needs creative work and most of all HOPE. That is what the B & P has meant to many of us: hope in a world of lost battles and ever rising problems. As the century comes to a close, it is more important than ever to keep a spirit of hope alive. Nothing can match the magic of this dynamic theater to mobilize the revolutionary potential that lies in the hearts of our population. Bread and Puppet has shown that we can create new worlds, starting with very humble and accessible tools such as cardboard and cloth. Their collective spirit and the magnitude of their vision makes their work an important model for the future.

.For all of its visual and intellectual power, the real impact of Bread and Puppet ...was something more ineffable, more personal, more alive....I found that a deep, contemplative silence is the only meaningful response. The museum and the beehive of activities that constitute this "theater" offer an experience of art making that is so alive, so courageous, so meaningful and so beautiful...that it defies verbal description.

Scott Stroot
Art New England

Tamar Schumann
989 Heights Road
Glover, VT 05839
802 525-8853
email: tamarst@together.net

Education

1983 B.A., Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Bryn Mawr College.

Theater Productions

Tamar Schumann is cofounder and director of the Expanding Secret Company, a political dance/theater group.

Here is a list of shows she created, and directed:

- 1997 Seven Deadly Sins, a dance to the music by Kurt Weill; performed at the Bread and Puppet Domestic Resurrection Circus, Glover, Vermont.
Puritans With Their Dogs, outdoor dance performed at the community May Day Festival in Montpelier, VT.
- 1996 Seven Last Words, about abuse of power and prison, the piece is composed to Joseph Haydn's "The Seven Last Words of Christ"; Theater for the New City, New York.
- 1995 Seven Last Words, Domestic Resurrection Circus, Glover VT.
Persephone Rules, part of the May Day festival in Montpelier, also performed at Club Toast and the Metronome in Burlington, VT.
- 1994 Estamos Aqui—We Are Here, about life in an intentional community; toured Vermont, and Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua.
Zapatistas—The Calling of the Beasts, May Day festival Montpelier, VT.
- 1993 Song for Daina, about a group of revolutionary fugitives on the run; Glover, VT.
Bluebeard, a show about depression and defiance set to the music of Doris Day and Violeta Paro; Theater for the New City, New York.
- 1992 Bloodbath, scenes of Dystopia; Cafe des Cheap Artistes, San Francisco.
BlueBeard, a solo dance; New Performance Gallery, San Francisco.
- 1991 Shed, about cowgirls working and fighting, performed in installments at the Cafe des Cheap Artistes, Ampit Gallery, and 1800 Square Feet, San Francisco.
Street and subway actions against the Gulf War; San Francisco.
- 1990 Utopia and Psychotherapy, considered male rites of passage in Vietnam war films.
Coproduced by 1800 Square Feet, San Francisco.
Watching Juliette in Horror, a horror dance; Footwork, San Francisco.
- 1989-88 Remembrance of Our Rural Roots, examined the depiction of rural America; Antioche College, OH; St. Annes Church, Brooklyn; WOW Cafe, NYC; anti-George Bush street show version, NYC.
- 1989 Utopia and Psychotherapy, set in the future, recounts the discovery of group therapy; a show for teens in Glover, VT.
- 1988 A Dreadful Affair, set after a party, a group of young people discover they have little in common and that one of them is a vampire; for teens in Glover, VT.
- 1987 Alexander Nevsky, about the poet Marina Tsvetaeva with Meyerhold inspired dances choreographed to Prokofiev's score; toured Vermont and Maine.

DeeDee Halleck
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1986 to present: Professor, Department of Communication, University of California, San Diego
1991 Co-coordinator of Gulf Crisis TV Project
1990-1991 Project Development, Satellite University Network, Center for Puerto Rican Studies, CUNY
1979-present Founder/Member Paper Tiger Television
1986-present Co-founder, Consulting Producer, Board of Directors, Deep Dish Satellite Network
1985-1986 Media Director, Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University

Selected Programs

Critical Resistance: Visions of Freedom, April, 1999, Development/co-production
Cybercast of Critical Resistance, Sept., 1998 Conference on Prison Issues, Exe. Prod.
Bars and Stripes, 1998, 12 Part Series on Prisons, co-producer
The Last Graduation, 1997, 56:00, (Co-Producer)
Lock Down USA, 1996 (Co-Producer/Director)
The Gringo in Mañanaland, 1995, 61:00, compilation archival film (Producer/Director)
Stones' Throw: TV from Cuba: Island in Goliath's Sea, 1992, Four hour compilations of Cuban TV, (Curator)
Gulf Crisis TV Project, 1991 10 Half Hour Programs, (Co-Producer/Director)
Paper Tiger Television, 187 half-hour programs on the media (Founder/Co-Producer)
Barco de la Paz, 1984, made with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, (Producer/Director)
Haiti: Bitter Cane, 1983, feature film (Co-director/Producer) made with Haiti films
Haiti: Reasons to Flee, 1983, PBS special on Haitian Refugees, (Co-Producer/Director)
Bronx Baptism, 1980, documentary on Pentacostal Church in Bronx (Producer/Director)
Meadows Green, 1976, 28:00, documentary on Bread and Puppet (Co-Producer/Director)
Mural on Our Street, 1965, produced for Henry Street Settlement (Producer/Director)
Children Make Movies, 1961, Lillian Wald Settlement (Producer/Director)

Partial List of Grants:

National Endowment on the Arts, 1975, 1989
New York State Council on the Arts, 1972, 1973, 1976, 1978-1989
Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 1982
New York Council on the Humanities, 1984, 1986
Rockefeller Media Arts Fellowship, 1987, 1990
Guggenheim Fellowship, 1989

Partial List of Awards and Festivals:

Mural on Our Street Nomination for Academy Award, 1965; Cine Golden Eagle, 1965
The Meadows Green First Prize, Vermont Film Festival, 1977
Bronx Baptism Margaret Mead Festival, Global Village Festival, 1979
Bitter Cane Cannes Film Festival, 2nd Prize, Journee Documentaire, Montreal Film Festival, First Prize,
Waiting for the Invasion Global Viallage Festival, First Prize, 1984
AIVF Indie Award, 1985
George Stoney Award, Alliance for Community Media, 1993
Gulf Crisis TV Project Berlin Film Festival, Medienoperatif, 1991, Rotterdam International Festival, 1991,
Whitney Biennial, Margaret Mead Festival, 1997.
The Gringo in Mañanaland Whitney Biennial, Venice Film Festival, London Film Festival, Trieste Festival of
Latin American Film, Jury Prize, Mesilla Valley Film and Video Festival, First Prize; Director's Award,
Black Maria Film Festival; Pamplona Video Festival; Barcelona Video Mostra; Bogota Video Festival
The Last Graduation, Opening Presentation at Jefferson Rotunda, University of Virginia, Virginia Festival of
American Film, Charlottesville, 1997, First Prize, Philadelphia International Film Festival

Community Service

Board Member, Videazimut, International Coalition for Audiovisuals for Development and Democracy, 1993-199
President of Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, 1977-82; Trustee of American Film Institute,
1979-1981; Board Member, Deep Dish Television, 1986-present; Representative at UNESCO Conference on
Youth and Film, Paris, 1976; Member MacBride Roundtable for Democratic Communications

BREAD
AND
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TEL.802-525-3031



November 12, 1998

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

DeeDee Halleck has documented Bread & Puppet Theater's Domestic Resurrection Circuses over a span of 25 years and has accumulated vast quantities of material about every stage and aspect of this spectacular but little-known annual event. Tamar Thorne has worked for decades very closely with Bread & Puppet as performer, choreographer and director of sections of several of these Circus extravaganzas, since their beginnings in Vermont in 1970. Both of them, together, make the most qualified team possible to organize the existing huge amount of video ^{into} material/comprehensible sequences which reflect the artistic creativity and communal effort that go into this work.

We are delighted that Tamar and Deedee are interested in this project and recommend their artistry and ability very highly.

Signed,
Peter Schumann
Peter Schumann, Director

Bread & Puppet Theater



Rio Piedras

Universidad de Puerto Rico



November 22, 1998

To Whom it May Concern

Anything, anything that can be done to preserve and share the work of the Bread and Puppet Theatre is of fundamental importance for the history of theatre. If one reads the last chapter on any serious book on Contemporary Theatre practice, there is always reference to this unique theatre enterprise. A vital project that not only deals with the multidisciplinary nature of Bread and Puppet but also with the essential connections between art and life, community, politics and spirit.

The connection of Bread and Puppet with Latin America has been nurtured throughout decades of collaboration. Many Latin Americans have for years joined the Summer Circus in Vermont. Bread and Puppet has traveled often to Venezuela, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico and Costa Rica to offer workshops and present relevant performances. Latin America has been present as a theme in many of the plays developed by the Company. But more than those years of sharing, Bread and Puppet presents a project which is coherent with Latin American reality: it works with organic materials, it develops theatre through sharing life experiences, it has a strong sense of community with which to create theatre and for whom to present it.

It will be beneficial for all of us who create as well as teach theatre in Latin America, to have audiovisual materials on this unique all encompassing theatre project, to share with our students and future performers. Bread and Puppet deserves to be presented to the widest audience possible. It is one of the truly outstanding theatre models of the Century.

Rosa Luisa MM-arquez, Ph.D.
Professor

Theatre Department

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Board Member of EITALC

International School of Theatre of Latin America and the Caribbean

