Deceased Cyclops Sprouts New Life in New London

Lakes Area Review Newsroom
New London, MN – Little Theatre Auditorium welcomes their first artist in residency project: a 16 foot deceased purple cyclops making its public debut “onstage” September 3rd, 4th and 5th. Locals have been trading whispers on the origin and fate of this mysterious new beast.

Created by puppet artist Steve Ackerman (Heart of the Beast, Minneapolis), this awe-inspiring cyclops is the main set piece and performance space of puppet play "An Autopsy of a Cyclops." This original production blends music, magical realism and puppetry with narratives of New London the artist collected while living onsite.

This exclusive, site-specific performance follows a group of scientists as they examine the cyclops' body, uncovering clues to its life and mysterious death, and exploring the plight of the tiny inhabitants residing upon it.

Slightly altered to fit what Ackman dubs “the mythological realm,” the various geological environments making up the body of the cyclops, as well as the stories within, are directly influenced by the place and people of New London with the goal of "exploring contrasting themes of private and public land, science and legend, and colonization and environmentalism."

Selected as Little Theatre’s inaugural resident artist for their program "Small Stages," Ackerman is residing in New London for the entire month of August. After earning his BFA in acting from East Carolina University and MFA in playwriting from Southern Illinois University, Ackerman lives in Minneapolis as site director and artist for In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre.

Community members of all ages and artistic abilities are invited to contribute to “An Autopsy of a Cyclops” by constructing puppets at workshops scheduled on Aug. 20th & 21st from 1-4 p.m.
Open studio days, where people can view the construction of the set and share their New London stories with Steve, will be held Aug. 27-28 from 1-4 p.m.

Showtimes for the final performances are scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Sept. 3rd & 4th from 7-9 p.m. and Sunday, Sept 5th at 2:30 p.m.
Seating is limited. Tickets are available on Eventbrite. Audiences are encouraged to acquire theirs early to secure a spot. Masks are required for all events. Visit newlondonlittletheatre.org for more information.

Little Theatre Auditorium is an independent art space led by artists guided by the principals equality, inclusivity and equity, and dedicated to offering a platform for cultural exchange through the creation and presentation of artistic works. Small Stages Artist Residency is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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Attached photos: 1) Steve Ackerman in costume for a previous puppet production. 2) Cyclops in progress. 3) Little Theatre Auditorium is located at 24 Central Ave E, New London, MN 56273