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***THE COPPELIA PROJECT: A Clown Ballet in Three Acts***  
**(with video installation by Susan White)**

**+ New Original Work Performance**

**CREATED AND DIRECTED BY HEIDI VAN**

**February 6-23, 2009 at LA ESQUINA, 1000 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City MO 64108**



Urban Culture Project is thrilled to present *The Coppelia Project* at la Esquina, February 6-23, 2009. This original production, created and directed by Heidi Van, was originally presented at the Kansas City Fringe Festival, where it debuted to rave reviews in the summer of 2008. It returns, in a new incarnation adapted specifically for la Esquina, including a site-specific video installation by Kansas City visual artist Susan White. In addition, this run features the premiere of a “New Original Work Performance,” also conceived and directed by Heidi Van.

The production kicks off with a **FREE First Friday event on February 6, 7-10pm**, featuring performance previews and a live performance by BOOM, an experimental music/performance/comedy ensemble.

Featuring a revolving cast, including new cast members Dan Hillaker and creator/ director Heidi Van, **THE COPPELIA PROJECT** will be performed as follows:

- **Saturdays, February 7 & 14 8PM - \$10; door open at 7:15pm**
- **Sundays, February 8 & 15 8PM - \$10; doors open at 7:15pm**  
Above performances feature Vanessa Severo, Ric Averill, Doogin Brown, Kalen Compernelle & Marissa MacKay
- **Mondays, February 9, 16 & 23 8PM - \$10; doors open at 7:15**  
Featuring Vanessa Severo, Ric Averill, Dan Hillaker, Kalen Compernelle & Heidi Van

In addition, a **NEW ORIGINAL WORK PERFORMANCE**, conceived by Heidi Van and related to *the Coppelia Project*, will be performed on the following dates:

**Friday, February 13 & 20, 8pm - FREE; doors open at 7:15**

**Saturday, February 21, 8pm – FREE; doors open at 7:15**

**Sunday, February 22 8pm – FREE; doors open at 7:15**

*The Coppelia Project* was created by Heidi Van in collaboration with ensemble members Vanessa Severo, Ric Averill, Doogin Brown, Kalen Compornolle and Marissa MacKay. This non verbal “clown ballet” is based (loosely) on the ballet *Coppelia*, which is (even more loosely) based on a story by German Romantic writer ETA Hoffman called “The Sandman” (“Der Sandman.”) *The Coppelia Project* is a physical theatre piece, driven by the architectural rhythm of the space in which it is performed and the relationships among performers, space, and audience.

*The Coppelia Project* follows the quest of Dr. Coppelius-Coppola, an inventor on the verge of creating the world’s first automaton. He creates three spritely and mischievous dolls, remarkable in their own fashion yet still unsatisfactory to the determined inventor. In his pursuit of perfection, Coppelius-Coppola casts aside his greatest achievement, and only sees what he wants to see...not necessarily what is. Presented in red nose and full of foibles and folly, the piece grapples with the question of beauty and where it lies; if the eye of the beholder cannot find it... does it exist?



This production of *The Coppelia Project* features a site-specific video installation by Susan White, lending a complementary new component to the show. White’s *Mindgames* gives form and sound to the haunting interior chatter that follows each of us around –“thoughts that chase us into unknown territories propelled by fear, that dog us until we finally take an action that we’ve dreaded...try as we might to evade it.” In this context, White’s shadowy videos, rear-projected onto scrimms around the perimeter of the performance area, along with an audio component of whispering voices, suggest the private thoughts and doubts of the inventor – glimpses inside his frenetic mind. The production also incorporates White’s *Oculus*, an ambient video of moving clouds.

*The Coppelia Project* is made possible with support from Accessible Arts and the Arts KC Fund. For more about the Coppelia Project, visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Coppelia-Project/64299390706>.

**Heidi Van** has created and performed in five original productions as well as created and directed *Once Upon a Treasure Trunk: Foolish but Fortunate Events* for the Coterie Theatre. She has performed at the Coterie Theatre, The Unicorn Theatre, The Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Actor’s Theatre of Kansas City, American Heartland Theatre, and The New Theatre Restaurant, and has toured nationally with the Lawrence based company Seem-to-Be Players. Heidi is a Charlotte Street Foundation Outstanding Generative Performing Artist nominee, and was featured as an “Emerging Artist” by the *Kansas City Star* for her work with Arts in Prison, where she works with adult and juvenile inmates to write and perform original shows. Heidi Van is a KCK native with a BA from Saint Mary College in Theatre and History and is a graduate of the Dell’ Arte International School of Physical Theatre in Blue Lake, CA.

**Susan White** earned her BFA from Kansas City Art Institute and has done post-graduate work at Rhode Island School of Design. She was the recipient of an Avenue of the Arts Foundation Grant and a Salina Arts Center Artist's Grant. She has exhibited widely in the region, including at Greenlease Gallery at Rockhurst University, Joseph Nease Gallery, Salina Art Center, Byron Cohen Gallery, Paragraph Gallery, and recently at the Bemis Underground/Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Omaha. Visit [www.susanwhite1010.com](http://www.susanwhite1010.com) for more information.

**An initiative of the Charlotte Street Foundation, Urban Culture Project creates new opportunities for artists of all disciplines and contributes to urban revitalization by transforming spaces in downtown Kansas City into new venues for multi-disciplinary contemporary arts programming. For more information, visit [www.charlottestreet.org](http://www.charlottestreet.org) or email [info@charlottestreet.org](mailto:info@charlottestreet.org).**