



Frankenstein
Ben Haggarty &
Sianed Jones
publicenergy.ca

Direct from the U.K.
North American premiere
All Saints' Parish Hall
235 Rubidge St.
Friday November 19 at 8pm

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Site Photography, All Saints' Parish Hall, Esther Vincent

Welcome

U.K. performance storyteller Ben Haggarty and musician Sianed Jones bring to life *Frankenstein*, a steam punk interpretation of Mary Shelley's modern myth. Originally commissioned by The Guardian Hay Festival in 2003, it has been performed regularly at literature and storytelling festivals and theatres in Great Britain, Denmark and Belgium. This Public Energy presentation is *Frankenstein's* North American premiere, prior to going to the Ottawa Storytelling Festival.

Drawing on the original story, Hollywood's cinematic retellings, Greek and Jewish legends, and pop culture, this contemporary performance combines spoken narrative, vocals, bass and electric violin to lure audiences into the imagined world of Dr Frankenstein and the monster he created. Through music and voice, two masters of improvisation explore the nature of the consciousness of a man made by man and the responsibility of the creator towards the created. Truly a story for our time, *Frankenstein* speaks of power unleashed and our fear of the unknown.



Romantic interest in the scientific discoveries of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century produced *Frankenstein*, the first myth of the modern age. In the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein* Mary Shelley's introduction explains how she, "then a young girl, came to think of and to dilate upon so very hideous an idea." On a rainy evening in June 1816, in the company of famed poets Percy Shelly and Lord Byron, and Dr. Polidori, they gathered at the fireside to read aloud German ghost stories. At Byron's suggestion, they each agreed to write a horror story. The next day Byron read the beginning of his tale, Shelley "commenced one founded on the experiences of his early life," and Polidori had "a terrible idea

about a skull-headed lady who was so punished for peeping through a key-hole." Mary wanted to think of a story "which would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awake thrilling horror--one to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart." The others dropped their stories, but kept asking Mary: "Have you thought of a story?" to which she had to reply with "a mortifying negative." Finally, one night, after a discussion concerning galvanism and Erasmus Darwin's success in causing a piece of a vermicello to move voluntarily, she fell into a reverie of waking dream where she saw "the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together." She felt the terror for the artist who endeavored "to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world" by giving the "spark of life" to a "hideous corpse." Next morning, after the poets went off sailing, she started work on what was to become *Frankenstein*, which begins, "It was on a dreary night of November..."

Ben Haggarty

A master of improvisation and renowned for his playful and energetic performances, Ben Haggarty is a world-class performance storyteller, whose work charms, delights and subverts audiences across the English-speaking world. Having been trained in mime and theatre direction, and apprenticed as an image-maker with Welfare State, Ben became a central figure in the re-visioning of storytelling as a contemporary performing art in the UK. He co-founded the Company of Storytellers, with fellow members Hugh Lupton and Sally Pomme Clayton; created the Crick Crack Club; co-founded Beyond the Border International Storytelling Festival, and is a promoter, programmer, and a much sought after director and trainer. Ben has performed in venues ranging from caves to the Carnegie hall. He works in theatres, art centres, festivals, museums and galleries across the UK, the USA, Canada and Northern Europe, and has featured as guest storyteller representing Britain, in over 45 international storytelling festivals in 23 countries. Performances, including 'Gilgamesh', 'Frankenstein', 'Mr Sandmann' 'Midir and Etain', 'Beauty and the Beast', and his programmes of 'Fairytale for Grown-ups' have earned him international acclaim. Ben is the official storyteller with Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble and Honorary Professor of Storytelling at the Berlin University of the Arts (UDK). His extraordinary graphic novel, *MeZolith*, was published in April 2010, by David Fickling Books.

Sianed Jones

is a composer / performer / improviser / teacher specialising in Extended Vocal Techniques, working in cross art form projects collaborating cross culturally with choreographers, writers, film makers and performance artists in site specific performances. She has been variously described as having a voice like that of a 'wailing Welsh banshee', a 'soft seducer', and a 'passionate revolutionary'.

Sianed holds a B.A. (Hon) in Music from Dartington College of Arts (1980) and an M.Music in Electro-acoustic Composition from University of East Anglia (1997). Her vocal research has taken her to Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar, (1987) Mongolia (1994) Kazakhstan, and Kyrgistan(1999). She is currently a composer, singer, musician with the RSC's Royal Shakespeare's History Company.

Ben Haggarty's appearance in Peterborough is made possible with the valuable assistance of **2 Women Productions**. www.2wp.ca

Based in Lanark, Ontario, founded in 2009, 2 Women Productions is dedicated to advancing and nurturing the art of storytelling for adults. The companies focuses on bringing fine storytellers into recognized performance venues in Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec but 2WP certainly welcomes invitations for house concerts, performances and workshops in venues across the land.

The 2 Women are Jan Andrews and Jennifer Cayley, veteran storytellers in their own right, who together have created an acclaimed evening for two storytellers called *The Book of Spells*.

Upcoming events planned for Peterborough include:

Dan Yashinsky *Talking You In* at the Market Hall. Music: Brian Katz May 12, 2011

Marta Singh: *Landscapes of Silence* at the Market Hall. April 15, 2011

PUBLIC ENERGY

is an animator of contemporary dance, theatre, performance and interdisciplinary work. Formerly known as Peterborough New Dance, since 1994 we have presented a mainstage series of dance companies and independent choreographers drawn from across Canada, commissioned new work in concert with other Canadian presenters on the CanDance Network, and supported the development of the local dance, theatre and performance community by presenting area artists and arranging specialized classes and workshops. Public Energy is incorporated in Ontario as Peterborough New Dance and Performance, and is a registered charity. Tax deductible donations can be made to PUBLIC ENERGY or go on line at www.canadahelps.org.

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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 29, 2010

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pick-up at The Cannery Art Centre 168 Hunter St. & Artspace 378 Aymer St.

EMERGENCY is an annual festival of new performance
by artists based in the Peterborough area
April 7-10, 2011 at the Market Hall