



Check out our new feature with **Geoff Sobelle** on page 29.



PHOTO BY HILLARY JASON

**MARCH 19 & 20**

**7:30 PM THURSDAY**

**8 PM FRIDAY**

**MEMORIAL HALL  
BEASLEY-CURTIS AUDITORIUM**

**APPROXIMATELY 110 MINUTES,  
NO INTERMISSION**

# HOME CREATED BY **GEOFF SOBELLE**

## **ARTIST STATEMENT**

### **HELLO AND WELCOME BACK.**

Have you been here before?

Does it feel familiar?

I hope that you're making yourself comfortable and getting ready for this thing to begin. We are all very happy that you could make it—to come here, and make the time. That's great.

Just sit comfortably. It's a good seat, isn't it? Sure—there may be better ones—every seat has its pluses and minuses—but this place—your place—this is a good place! At any rate—it's all yours—so just make yourself at home.

Feel your feet on the floor, your back against the backrest, maybe take a few deep breaths... Feels good! To have YOUR seat. It's all yours! You have it all to yourself. You don't even have to share! It's just YOURS.

There was someone here the other night... another person that came here before you and sat here... but no matter. It's yours now. It used to be theirs—but not now. Now, it's your place. ALLLL yours. Can't even remember that other person! Oh—and tomorrow. Tomorrow it will be someone else's. So I guess in a way, you are kind of sharing it, if we're speaking frank. But don't worry about that right now. That doesn't concern you now—by the time they're sitting here, you won't even WANT this seat! Can you imagine? Hard to believe—but it's true! Trust me... You'll gladly give it away and be happy to sit somewhere else. Maybe in a nice restaurant. Or on a park bench. A train maybe. Or at home, wherever that might be. But right now this seat—this place—this space—it's all yours. Enjoy it.

But it IS funny, I suppose, this migration from one seat to

another... True story—there is a little crab, called a hermit crab, that makes use of other animals' shells when they outgrow their own. They just move from shell to shell as it suits them and their lifestyle. Once they've outgrown a shell, they just find another one. Sometimes they don't even use shells—they get super creative and use all kinds of things. Old camera lenses, bits of debris, whatever... Sound familiar? Just migratory animals looking for a place to eat and sleep and poop and call their own.

By the way, octopuses... (that is correct by the way—*octopi* is just a fancy latinization, it's not actually *bona fide*). Anyway, octopuses are the only animal other than humans who put decorative things in their apartment for no other purpose than aesthetics. Not hugely important, but I thought I'd mention it since we were talking about interesting sea creatures. Is that what we were talking about?

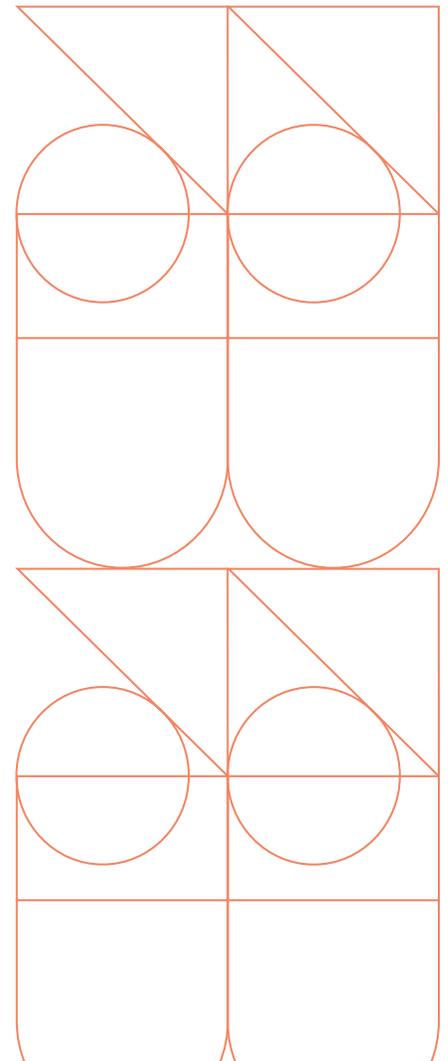
OH! Your seat... Yes—it's a good one. I can't remember—you've been here before? What were you seeing? It's a good space isn't it? They put on some great shows here. Can you remember any particular moments? It's funny, isn't it? When the show is really going, you kind of forget the space of the theater, don't you... You get so drawn into the action that it's kind of like the theater itself sort of vanishes. They call a theater a "house" by the way. Not to put too fine a point on it—but this is the HOUSE, and you are right now residing in this house for just a short while before

some other body takes this same space and they claim it as theirs for a little while and they have *their* experience of pretty much the same thing, though completely different of course, and they bring all of *their* own stuff with them to this same space and it informs *them* of what *they* see... Anyway—I'm just stating the obvious since we have this time to kill before the show starts—but it's great to have you here. Love talking about this stuff. Take a look around at all these people! Total strangers! For now—they're your neighbors, and they're having a similar experience to you. Reading this. Looking around... Thinking about hermit crabs...

It will be a great feeling, too, when all of this is done and you can just unwind and head on back home again. Love that feeling. Where are you staying by the way? Are you living near here? Long commute? Funny isn't it, how you can just head on home without really having to even think of it... Unless of course you're not from here and you're really working hard to navigate the area to make it back to a friend's place or a hotel or some place that—try as it might—won't ever really feel like home... But if you ARE heading home after this... well you barely even need think of how you'll get there. You can just think about all of the events that have transpired in your day and before you know it, you'll just be floating through your doorway and hanging your hat and haunting your haunt and flopping on your lily pad and whatever other adage comes to mind... Some internal compass will

just unconsciously follow that trail of breadcrumbs and before you know it you'll be snug up in your bed and dreaming once again... Dreaming of other homes you once made. Other spots, other places... Other seats where you once sat, other cities you once called yours, other shells where you once curled up, other gardens you once tended. Other rooms. Other dens. Other nests. Remember the feeling? The light. The smell. The unnameable thing that turns a simple set of coordinates into some psychic shelter rooted deep inside of you. How will you find your way home? How will you know it once you're there? •

—Geoff Sobelle



## CREDITS

**CREATED BY** Geoff Sobelle

**SCENIC DESIGN BY** Steven Difala

**DIRECTED BY** Lee Sunday Evans

**ORIGINAL SONGS BY** Elvis Perkins

**LIGHTING DESIGN BY** Christopher Kuhl

**SOUND DESIGN BY** Brandon Wolcott

**COSTUME DESIGN BY** Karen Young

**ILLUSION DESIGN/**

**TOUR DIRECTION BY** Steve Cuiffo

**PERFORMED BY** Geoff Sobelle, Sophie Bortolussi, Justin Rose, Jennifer Kidwell, Ching Valdes-Aran, and Elvis Perkins

**DRAMATURGY BY** Stefanie Sobelle

**CHOREOGRAPHY BY** David Neumann

**PROPS DESIGN BY** Victoria Ross

**STAGE MANAGEMENT BY** Lisa McGinn

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGEMENT BY** Kevin Hanley

**TECHNICAL DIRECTION/PRODUCTION**

**MANAGEMENT BY** Chris Swetcky

**WARDROBE SUPERVISION BY** Natalie Hratko

**DEVELOPED AND PRODUCED BY** Jecca Barry

**PRODUCED BY** Beth Morrison Projects

*HOME* was commissioned by Brooklyn Academy of Music, Arizona State University–Gammage, New Zealand Festival, Beth Morrison Projects, and the Edinburgh International Festival. *HOME* was funded, in part, by The Wyncote Foundation, Adam & Diane Max, Garth Patil, Wendy vanden Heuvel, and Jeanne Donovan Fisher and received developmental support from LUMBERYARD Contemporary Performing Arts (formerly ADI). Residency support has been provided by MANA Contemporary, BRIC, Pennsylvania State University, and ArtsEmerson. *HOME* received support from the New York Theatre Workshop annual Usual Suspects summer residency at Dartmouth College. *HOME* has been developed through developmental workshops and residencies at MANA Contemporary (Jersey City, NJ), BRIC Art House (Brooklyn, NY), Pennsylvania State University (State College, PA), and ArtsEmerson (Boston, MA). *HOME* premiered at the 2017 Fringe Festival, presented by FringeArts, Philadelphia.

## A LARGE-SCALE PERFORMANCE PROJECT

that revolves around the life-cycle of a house, *HOME* was created by actor, director, and maker of absurdist performance works Geoff Sobelle. It uses a mix of illusion, choreography, construction, and live documentary to illuminate the messiness of life that makes a house into a home. Before the audience's very eyes, the scene onstage is transformed from a few two-by-fours and some plastic tarps to the familiar frame of a house, and then what can only be described as a home, complete with cozy den, dirty dishes, morning light filtered through curtains, and generations of inhabitants all existing alongside—but not with—one another. Further captivating are the movements, choreographed by David Neumann (whose own work *I Understand Everything Better* appeared on CPA's 18/19 season).

In this highly visual work that bears no audible dialogue (although there is a mystical troubadour), *HOME* opens a window into the experiences that fill a home's history, from joy to grief to the utterly mundane. At the same time, it is a rumination on the current landscape of housing, pressing forward universal and timely themes of gentrification and migration, rendered in the choreography of ordinary people inhabiting and leaving a structure. The *New York Times* says, "In *HOME*, we are quietly being shown the "life" of a house, and how that life is some agglomeration of all the lives that have passed through it.... it earnestly asks us not to be embarrassed by our humanity, and to consider the joy and pleasure in the simplest of rituals, and the feeling of "home," whatever that may be." ■



been seen on many international stages including Lincoln Center in New York, the Royal Opera House in London, the Herodeon, Athens and is included in the repertoires of the Martha Graham Dance Company and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, among many others. She designed the costumes of Wendy Whelan's shows *Restless Creature* and *Some of a Thousand Words*.

**STEVE CUIFFO (ILLUSION DESIGNER)** is an actor and magician who makes solo and collaborative works with other artists and theater companies. His work incorporates aspects of sleight of hand, misdirection, imitation, and re-enactment. Theater credits include *Queen of the Night* (as Sarastro); *Elephant Room* (with Geoff Sobelle and Trey Lyford); and *Spirit Wife* (with Eleanor Hutchins). Steve is a two-time Princeton University Atelier recipient Artist.

**LISA MCGINN (PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER)** Selected recent credits: *The Object Lesson*; *Underground Railroad Game* (Jennifer Kidwell, Scott Sheppard + Ars Nova); *Chimera* and *The Wholehearted* (Stein | Holum Projects); *This is Reading* (Lynn Nottage, lead artist, Kate Whoriskey, director). Regional credits include Trinity Repertory Company, Two River Theatre Company, George Street Playhouse, and Passage Theatre.

**KEVIN J. P. HANLEY (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER)** is a Boston-based stage manager. Regional credits include: New Repertory Theatre (*We Will Not Be Silent*,

*1776, Still Standing*), Actors' Shakespeare Project (*A Midsummer Nights Dream*) and Actors Theatre of Louisville as a member of the Professional Training Company in the 2017-2018 season (*Angels in America Pt. 1 & 2, A Christmas Carol, 42nd Humana Festival of New American Plays*). Kevin is a graduate of Suffolk University.

**CHRIS SWETCKY (TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)** is the head of the Technical Direction program and Technical Director for the School of Theatre at Penn State University. In addition to his work at Penn State, Chris has worked at numerous venues across the country including most recently as Production Manager for Classical Theatre of Harlem's First Noel at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem. Chris worked on numerous productions including Broadway hits such as *Porgy and Bess*, *Pippin*, and, most recently, *Finding Neverland*.

**VICTORIA ROSS (PROPS DESIGNER)** Victoria is delighted to collaborate with this renowned team on *HOME* later in its development. Select credits include *Death of a Salesman*, *Plaid Tidings*, and *Gypsy*. She would like to thank her family and all patrons for continuously supporting the arts.

**DAVID NEUMANN'S (CHOREOGRAPHER)** Advanced Beginner Group's original work has been presented in New York at PS 122, New York Live Arts, and The Kitchen, among others. Neumann was a performer for many years working with, among others, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Big Dance Theater,

Doug Elkins, Doug Varone, and Sally Silvers. He is currently professor of theater at Sarah Lawrence College. Most recently, Neumann's work, *I Understand Everything Better*, received two NY Dance and Performance 'Bessie' Awards (Outstanding Production and Outstanding Sound Design/Music).

**STEFANIE SOBELLE (DRAMATURG)** writes about 20th- and 21st-century literature, art, and architecture and is the author of *The Architectural Novel*, forthcoming from Oxford University Press. Her work has been supported by The Huntington Library and California Institute of Technology, among other institutions. She is an Associate Professor of English at Gettysburg College. She shared a childhood home with Geoff.

**CHING VALDES-ARAN (PERFORMER)** has worked on Broadway, Off-Broadway, Off-Off Broadway, and in numerous regional theaters in the U.S. She has also performed in many international Festivals (Berlin; the Caribbean; and Edinburgh, Scotland, to name a few). Awards include: OBIE, Fox Foundation Fellow, and the U.S. Congressional Award in Arts and Culture among others. Ching is also a director and a visual artist.

**SOPHIE BORTOLUSSI (PERFORMER)** Recent credits include: *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* (National Theatre, London), *Sleep No More* (McKittrick Hotel, NYC), *Angel Reapers* (Signature Theatre, Joyce Theatre, Arts Emerson, national tour),

Martha Graham Dance Company. Recent awards include: 2017 Stage Raw Theatre Award for "Best Choreography," 2015 Ovation award nomination for "Best Choreography."

**JENNIFER KIDWELL**

**(PERFORMER)** is a performing artist. Select recent projects: *Underground Railroad Game*, *Demolishing Everything with Amazing Speed*, *I Understand Everything Better*, *Antigone*. She's a Pig Iron Theatre Company & Lightning Rod Special company member, Wilma Theater Associated Artist, & JACK co-founder. She's a 2013 TCG/Fox Resident Actor Fellowship (with PITC), 2015 Leeway Foundation Art & Change Grant, and 2016 Pew Fellow.

**JUSTIN ROSE (PERFORMER)** is a Philadelphia-based performer and director. Select recent acting credits include *Completeness* (Theatre Exile), *Let the Dog See the Rabbit* (Lightning Rod Special), *Always Coming Soon: The Future* (Brat Productions), *99 Breakups* (Pig Iron Theatre Company). He was a Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director of The Candidatos. He is a graduate of Pig Iron Theatre Company's Advanced Performance Training Program and the University of Iowa.

**BETH MORRISON PROJECTS**

**(PRODUCER)** Since 2006, Beth Morrison Projects (BMP) has been a tastemaker at the forefront of musical and theatrical innovation by supporting living composers

and their collaborators during the creation of groundbreaking new works in opera, opera-theatre, and vocal-theatre. BMP encourages risk-taking in all its artists, resulting in provocative works that represent a dynamic and lasting legacy for a new American canon. BMP is a National Sawdust Artist in Residence. •

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