

THOM SOKOLOSKI

(multi-disciplinary artist/director & creative producer)

Since his training at LaMama Theatre in New York City and L'Ecole Jacques Lecoq and the Polish Laboratory Theatre in Paris in the early seventies, Thom Sokoloski has produced, directed and created over one-hundred theatrical, operatic and multi-disciplinary works in New York City, Paris, Edinburgh, Brussels, Liege, Toronto, Buffalo, Avignon, Strasbourg, Lyon, Munich, Nancy, Montreal, Vancouver and Glasgow's Barlinnie Prison. Returning to Canada, he became one of the founding members of Toronto's The Theatre Centre in 1981 which continues to provide opportunities for young adventurous avant-garde talent. He then served as the director of the Native Theatre School and then became artistic director and founder of Autumn Leaf Performance.

"The Death of Virgil" (Pt. 1 - The Arrival), workshop development with the Theatre Centre, Toronto 1999.



His renowned staging theories and practices within architectural spaces and natural environments have been extensively written about and include five operatic works of R. Murray Schafer, such as the award-winning RA inside the Ontario Science Centre and then for the 1985 Holland Festival through the canals, Viking fortress and cathedrals of Leyden. For Belgium's Ars Musica he staged HERMES TRISMEGISTOS inside an abandoned cirque d'hiver and then in 1992 for the World Stage Festival inside Toronto's Union Station at midnight. The GREATEST SHOW, a carnival-opera was designed and staged in a public park with over 50 acts and 150 performers in Peterborough, Ontario.



R.Murray Schafer's 'Hermes Trismegistos' inside Toronto's Union Station

His own creations are immersive multi-media performance experiences that rest at the cutting edge of what is considered opera, theatre and dance. THE ANXIETY OF IMMORTALITY, part installation part performance, inspired by Borges and the Ukrainian Holocaust, was staged throughout the lower floors and theatre of the Royal Ontario Museum and THE DEATH OF VIRGIL was an immersive opera inspired by Hermann Broch with surround sound and video imagery. This was followed by the world premiere of his electro-acoustic chambre opera ELECTRIC FLESH with music by Wende Bartley at the Opéra de Lyon for the Musique-en-scène Festival 2000 that explored the use of sonic spatialization. For the 2003 World Stage Festival, he created KAFKA IN LOVE a multi-media work staged inside the Hart House swimming pool with synchronized swimmers, video projections and water puppets.

"All art has as its fundamental power the possibility of the new, the potential we grant to every work of art to do or say something never before said or done. It is an awesome power, seldom fully realized, but something of its form was present in Kafka In Love." Robert Harris, Globe & Mail (April 29, 2003)



Thom has also made a name as a producer. He produced Michael Nyman and Band, composer for Jane Campion's 'Piano' and Ahmed Hassan's dance requiem 14 REMEMBERED, based on the tragic slaying of 14 young women at Montreal's L'École Polytechnique, at Massey Hall and the famed Master Musicians of Jajouka at UofT's Convocation Hall. These works were part of an annual series, Sonic Boom, that commissioned and presented cutting-edge music performance from across Canada, including work from the Banff Centre, Montreal's Chants Libres and Vancouver's New Music Society, as well as works by John Oswald, Atom Egoyan, Peter Mettler and Nexus.



In 2000, he produced an international tour of Claude Vivier's KOPERNIKUS, a co-production between the Banff Centre, Autumn Leaf Performance and Opéra de Montréal. The tour included the 2000 Banff Summer Festival, the Musica Festival in Strasbourg, the Huddersfield Festival in England, the Opéra de Montréal and finally Toronto's MacMillan Theatre.

"...a reminder of everything that is brilliant." *The London Times*, November 2000 / "A stunning production." *La Press*, April 28, 2001

His film experience includes location management with directors Peter Mettler, Patricia Rozema and Yves Simoneau. His first short-film was a tribute to Tomson Highway for the 1991 Toronto Arts Awards, followed by a short opera-film DOWN HERE ON EARTH for Moving Pictures Festival and more recently KAFKA IN LOVE adapted from the performance for BravoFACT!

Thom consulted for International Society for the Performing Arts annual international conferences in Toronto and Vancouver, designed and produced The 21st Century Music-Theatre & Opera Symposium in 1993 at Harbourfront Centre and NEW-OP (The 4th International Meeting of Contemporary Music Theatre and Opera) in 1995 at the Metro Hall in partnership with The Music Gallery & the Canadian Opera Company.

"Electric Flesh" Presented by Opéra de Lyon for the Musique-en-scène Festival 2000



In 2004, Thom worked with Executive Director Bill Marshall, founder of the Toronto International Film Festival, as Creative Programming Director to launch Marshall McLuhan Way (street naming event) in August 04 and the McLuhan International Festival of the Future in October 04. He then designed a experience for a Desert Music Festival outside of Dubai for 2008. He recently founded and was creative director for INTERACTIVE 2005, a celebration of interactive culture, in partnership with the Toronto International Art Fair 2005 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre this past November 05.



Taken by David Rokeby at I-05

"Interactive 2005 is the brainchild of Thom Sokoloski , a master at blending theatre, architecture and multimedia into a singular experience. Installed in the Convention Centre with the help of an impressive array of galleries and organizations, it features contemporary interactive art and sensory interventions." Kevin Temple, NOW Magazine, (November 3, 2005)

Thom is acting executive producer for a new modern dance production of Montreal's Coleman & Lemieux Cie., featuring the choreography of James Kudelka, recent Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Canada, and the renowned counter tenor Daniel Taylor for a world premiere at Danse Danse 05-06 in Montreal and the 2006 Canada Dance Festival in Ottawa. He is also developing "The Babel Symphony" in collaboration with composer Jean-Jacques Lemetre, of France's celebrated Théâtre du Soleil; a multi-media event incorporating the 100 plus spoken languages with music, video and dance. He serves on the board of "Friends of the George Eastman House."

Spoken languages: English and French

Contact information:

15a-17 Pembroke Street, Toronto ON M5A 2N6 / 416-831-9675

EMAIL: info@smartculture.ca

www.autumnleaf.com & www.smartculture.ca