

FESTIVAL OF FOOLS

August 7-9, 2009

GENERAL INFORMATION

802.865.7166

www.VermontFestivalOfFools.com

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149 Church Street
Burlington, Vermont

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, August 7 – 6pm Kickoff: Church Street, Across from April Cornell

Saturday, August 8 – 10am - 8pm: Continuous performances in four locations on Church Street and in City Hall Park.

Sunday, August 9 – Noon - 4pm: Continuous performances in four locations on Church Street and in City Hall Park culminating with the crowning of the “King/Queen of the Fools” - The Best Performer of The Festival!

2009 PERFORMERS

Amanda Crockett (New Mexico)

www.amandacrockett.net

Whether cavorting on a high trapeze or twisting like a pretzel while rolling a derby, end over end, this straw-haired scarecrow is a one of a kind who and does it all!

Amanda Crockett started clowning alongside her father at age 9. Since then, her pursuit of the perfect blend of circus and physical theatre has taken her around the world. She is a graduate of the Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre and has trained with some of the best circus and physical comedy teachers from across the globe, including: Helene Turcotte, Avner Eisenberg and Mr. Lu Yi. She is a gifted comedian and internationally recognized artist, having taken the stage at venues including La Bauta in Venice, Italy, Shanghai's Oriental Arts Center, the Moscow International Circus, Cirque Voila, the Edinburgh Festival and the Tasmanian National Circus Festival. Amanda is incredibly inspired by the clowns brilliance and creating work that combines physical comedy with high-level acrobatic, object manipulation and aerial skills. She brings comedic performance to a new level, making movement into poetry and pulling laughter out of thin air.

Press Contact:

Amanda Crockett

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(505) 577-3499

Mr. Spin (Australia)

www.bamboozledproductions.com/

The charming eight ball juggler from Australia makes a charismatic return to Burlington!

Nigel D. Martin (AKA Mr. Spin) emerged onto the streets in 1994 performing his own unique style of mime show. The Mr. Spin Show has since developed into an impressive, high-energy street show and has been a favorite of audiences in festivals and public arenas around Australia and Europe. Expect to see a mesmerizing manipulation and juggling routine, which culminates in a 7-ball juggle while balancing another on his forehead. A five-star act jam packed with wild and funny stuff!

Mr. Spin was inspired by Vaudeville greats Francis Brunn and Bobby May, and with a background in dance, Mr. Spin focuses on his high level circus skills, fluid movement and his own quirky style of comedy. Mr. Spin has performed internationally as a dancer, musician, comedian and clown. He has also toured Europe with physical theater group Slack Taxi and worked in contemporary circus with Cirfunkus and Circus Monoxide.

Mr. Spin has appeared at festivals all over the world such as the Glastonbury Festival, Melbourne Fringe Festival, Edinburgh Festival and WOMAD in Singapore.

"The legendary "Mr. Spin" draws us in to his show, where in 20 minutes of high octane silliness, we can lose sight of the pure skill and hard work behind say, the 2 full-metal Baseball bats, spinning like propeller devil sticks on one hand stick each."

Reg Bolton – Kaskade Magazine

Press Contact:

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**Modern Times Theater (Vermont)
Rose Friedman & Justin Lander**

Puppet theater for the streets! Bread and Puppet Alums Rose Friedman and Justin Lander are guaranteed to make you laugh as they shun modern convenience in favor of a return to good, old - fashioned difficulty!

Modern Times Theater makes puppet shows for the street, the school, the barn, the pasture and the subway. The shows convey a general dissatisfaction with post-modern convenience and promote a return to old-fashioned difficulty. Modern Times Theater is Rose Friedman and Justin Lander, a husband and wife duo who trained together for five years in the prestigious halls of the Bread and Puppet Hands-in-the-Dirt Academy. Modern Times Theater's first tour was in 2006 to several town meetings held throughout the state by the Vermont Agricultural Agency. The theater presented a low-tech power point presentation against the national animal identification system. The theater has also performed at the Green Mountain Cranky Festival in Montpelier; the Puppet fusion festival in Raleigh, N.C.; Great Small Works' spaghetti dinners in New York City; and in numerous bars, clubs, and basements with The Boxcutter Cabaret. The theater's corporate offices are on a small farm in East Hardwick.

Press Contact:
Rose Friedman
Justin Lander
moderntimestheater@riseup.net

Aloft Aerial Dance (Chicago) **Shayna Swanson**

Earth-bound aerial artists who have chosen to express themselves through vertical space.

As they flip, fly and twirl high above the audience, Aloft's aerial acts may be the best you'll ever see. Eleven years of intensive study and practice in the US and Europe have culminated in thrilling release moves and passionate, intricate choreography. Aloft's performers are focused and engaging with strength and daring that puts them at the top of their field.

Artistic Director Shayna Swanson:

Whether she's being praised for her "magnificent muscles" (Chicago Reader), "refreshing style" (Time Out) or as "ultra-hip" (Moxie.com), Shayna Swanson is an aerialist who "straddles the line between danger and comfort" (Chicago Sun-Times). Receiving critical acclaim and lavish applause, Shayna's aerial artistry steps far outside the ordinary. Lush, original choreography, passionate performances and a never-ending professionalism make Shayna a standout artist. Her work has been seen with The Chicago Lyric Opera, Cirque Voila, The Zoppe Family Circus, Circus Maniacs, Circus Smirkus, The Midnight Circus, Sea World/Cirque de la Mer and her own, critically acclaimed company, Aloft Aerial Dance. Gala clients have included Seneca Niagara Casino, Harrah's, Absolut

Vodka, Maxim Magazine, Crobar, Crunch Fitness, Ford Motors, Air France, The City of Chicago and many more.

Press Contact:
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Elec Simon from the hit show “STOMP” (New York)

The virtuoso bucket drummer and tapper takes a break from the stage to honor the origins of the art form in the streets of Burlington.

Elec Simon is a multi-talented percussionist, vocalist, self-taught tap dancer and performer. Elec is a full time cast member of the New York Broadway show “STOMP”. He co-wrote the show “HeartBeat Afrika,” which is a percussion movement of traditional African rhythms, a drum and dance ensemble that blends street and body percussion with traditional African drum, tap dance, and African dance. Heartbeat Afrika has performed all over North-eastern Ohio in places such as the Tribute to Gerald Levert in Canton, Ohio, Hiram College, Ohio State and Akron and Kent State Universities, Lorain & Grafton Correctional Facilities & numerous elementary, junior & senior high schools. Heartbeat is not only a percussion show but is also dedicated to teaching and mentoring youth. Heartbeat Afrika even though co-written by Elec, has taught him the real meaning of African drum and helped him learn where his roots of rhythm and percussion began. His other performances include; the play, The Wiz, played role of the Wizard (Weathervane Playhouse, Akron, OH.) a teacher and participant of the show Crew which had a drug-free theme for youth, written by Chris Rubio (San Diego, CA.), one-man show called Rhythm Method written by Ace Boogie performed at all Canton City Schools, Camp Jukebox which he taught MRDD children percussion movement and dance (Canton OH.), also taught master tap classes at A Time to Dance studio (North Canton, OH.), drum teacher at YEPAW-Youth Excellence Performing Arts Workshops, an 18 year running workshop where kids from all over the world come to learn how to strive for excellence (Akron OH.) put on by the Arlington Church of God, performed at the Tap Extravaganza with Rod Ferrone, other special guests included Savion Glover and Jimmie Slyde (New York City, NY.). Elec is very dedicated to mentoring youth and wants to tie in a non-violent message to Heartbeat Afrika when teaching and doing workshops. Elec has watched Heartbeat grow from a dream to what it is today and is very proud and happy for all their successes and the successes to come.

Press Contact:

Elec Simon

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(330) 475-5507

Unicycle Lady (Washington D.C.)

www.unicyclelady.com

A one-woman wheelie, witty, wacky, silly suitcase circus

Is a fast paced one woman circus in which the Unicycle Lady transforms herself into a broad array of circus performers by the change of a hat and tune including a mime, magician, clown, animal tamer, dancer, unicyclist, bicyclist, acrobat, juggler and more. Whether balancing atop a 6 ft. unicycle while juggling and spinning a plate in her mouth or dancing elegantly on one wheel with the grace of a ballerina, it's the audience participation routines that make this one hilarious and breath taking performance.

For 35 years, Lisa, who prefers to go by "Unicycle Lady" rode her unicycle as her only mode of transportation. When she was 17 she had a dream of dancing on a unicycle. She would listen to music and envision movements to those like a figure skater. After countless hours of practice, she attended her first unicycle convention where she gained recognition for her unique style and grace. It was then the Unicycle Lady realized that dreams do come true and hence the "Unicycle Lady" was born. Since then, the Unicycle Lady has continued to amaze and amuse audiences of all ages combining her artistry and zany comedy routines, performing for theaters, corporate event, schools, fairs and festivals throughout the United States, Canada and Europe.

Press Contact:

Unicycle Lady

unicyclelady@mac.com

(202) 338-4160

Gazzo (United Kingdom)

Gary Osborne

www.gazzoshow.com

Gazzo brings his world-renowned magic show to Burlington with an effortless style that will leave everyone asking, "How DID he do that?" – if they can stop laughing that is.

Gazzo is one of the most sought after professional entertainers in the world. Presently located in Bath UK, he performs street magic all over England and the USA. For over 30 years, Gazzo has been mixing comedy, magic and British charm to provide a must see show. Gazzo's show consists of audience participation; sit down comedy, mind-reading and his world-famous cups-and-balls routine. Once seen, his performance is never forgotten. Find out why people are raving about this Legendary Unique Performer.

Press Contact:

Gary Osborne

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(305) 600-2760

Hokum Bros (Vermont)

Rare and original, The Hokum Bros. sing and patter their way into inspired silliness and offer enough sly satire and social commentary to insure you'll be wearing your happy face long after the show is over.

Their songs are catchy and integrated with humor, while their style of play is multifarious. Their lyrics speak of true-life experiences with a thread of the earliest cultural fabric we call Americana. Rare and original, The Hokum Bros. sing and patter their way into inspired silliness and offer enough sly satire and social commentary to insure you'll be wearing your happy face long after the show is over. The players are: Stick "Woody" Hokum (aka "Woodhead") on guitar, ukulele & boomba, Cedar Hokum (aka Billy Bratcher of The Starline Rhythm Boy) playing guitar and upright bass and Gus Hokum (aka Gus Ziesing of Mango Jam) on accordion, sax and clarinet.

Press Contact:

Woody Kepple

woody@mrwoodhead.com

(802) 318-5521

Brent McCoy (Vermont)

www.brentmccoy.com

Whether welding five safety cones together or balancing precariously atop his Rolling Globe-Olla, this "Clown at Work" will leave you spellbound for the entire show.

Meet Brent McCoy, a truly original and hardworking variety entertainer. In street and theater performance, private functions and school shows, his work has been called fabulous, funny, and amazing by audiences everywhere.

Brent McCoy grew up in Vermont on a small dairy farm. He learned to juggle at the age of 15 hasn't stopped since. Since 2003, McCoy has performed and taught all over the world. Highlights include AEMI Clown Festivals in China, numerous International Buskers' and Vaudeville Festivals across North America, and well over 50 schools, colleges and summer camp programs around New England. When he's not performing, he enjoys gardening, cooking, and farming in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont

Press Contact:

Brent McCoy

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(802) 533-2589

The Blue Hit (Texas)

www.myspace.com/bluehit

With precocious lyrics, haunting, vocals and delicate instrumental arrangements, this trubadoring trio is sure to leave you mesmerize.

The Blue Hit was born in Austin, TX in the spring of 2007. They've since been performing all over the United States and are currently recording their first full-length album. SoundCheck Magazine calls their songs "infused with a twinge of otherworldliness".

Grace Rowland has been playing music her whole life and studying Music Education for the last four years at Texas State University in San Marcos, TX. Her angelic voice is the driving force behind The Blue Hit. Her influences include Portishead, Sufjan Stevens and Townes Van Zandt.

David Moss has been playing cello since the age of nine. He graduated from University of Illinois with his degree in Cello Studies. While at U of I, he studied under some of the greatest minds in the nation and performed with the orchestra for four years. His influences include Charlie Parker, Django Reinhardt and Bootsie Collins.

John McGee began writing and performing gospel songs on the piano at the age of seven. He has now been playing guitar for over ten years. When he is not performing with The Blue Hit, he is scoring films for Richard Linklater's film company, Detour Films. His influences include Maynard Keenan, Michael Hedges and David Gilmore.

Press Contact:

John Mcgee
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Lady Circus (New York)

www.ladycircus.com

Lady Circus - Born in the Brooklyn underground, Lady Circus have burst out of the gritty, grimy, glossy cocoon that birthed them to display a devastating combination of skill and spectacle for the new millennium.

The next generation of circus has taken hold in this troupe of femmes fatales, who are taking circus arts to *new heights*. Born in the Brooklyn underground, Lady Circus have burst out of the gritty, grimy, glossy cocoon that birthed them to display a devastating combination of skill and spectacle for the new millennium.

Mixing culturally relevant narrative with blindingly gorgeous costuming and interactive improvisation, Lady Circus both pierces and transports. Although sometimes, they just like to rock out.

Press Contact:

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