

FUTURISTIC THEATER AND PUPPET MAYHEM COMING TO WEX

Early November brings two theater productions to the Wexner Center: the interactive digital video production *Spectropia* and the hilarious *Famous Puppet Death Scenes*. Tickets for both performances are available now at the Wexner Center Ticket Office (614 292-3535) or at Ticketmaster.com. For an informative **podcast** featuring Charles Helm, director of performing arts, go to www.wexarts.org/wexcasting and click on "Part Two."

Toni Dove: *Spectropia*

Thursday, November 1–Saturday, November 3 | 8 pm

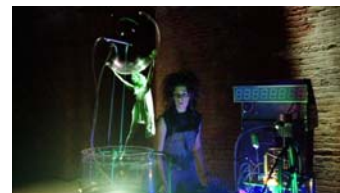
Wexner Center Performance Space

Tickets: \$16 for the public, \$13 for Wexner Center members, \$10 for students

Digital video innovator Toni Dove brings her *Spectropia*, a futuristic interactive digital video spectacle, to our Performance Space. Two live performers use pioneering technology to control on-screen characters like virtual marionettes, who spontaneously interject movement and conversation—sometimes directed at the audience—into the full-length feature film's fixed narrative; as a result, every show is unique. The sci-fi storyline involves the young protagonist Spectropia from the near future, who is accidentally transported to a noirish version of 1931 New York, where she finds herself in the body of a female sleuth. This time-travel drama uses the metaphor of supernatural possession to investigate such themes as desire, consumer culture, dislocation, and identity. Wrote *ArtByte* magazine, *Spectropia* "not only sets a new mark for interactive works, but opens the door to a new form of aesthetic experience...that changes forever our conceptions of narrative and fiction."

Wexner Center visitors may recall Toni Dove's *Artificial Changelings* project from the Wexner Center's 1998 exhibition *Body Mécanique*, which explored the interface of new media and art. Her work has been presented in the United States, Europe, and Canada, as well as in print and on radio and television. Dove is based in New York; for more information, visit www.tonidove.com.

While at the Wexner Center, Dove and her team of collaborators will offer two workshops for high school students working with our education department's Pages program (a writing course). At these sessions, students will hear how Dove uses interactive digital video technology to create her new forms of theater and gallery-based installations.



Toni Dove's *Spectropia* (at top, Dove is shown performing at "laser harp," which manipulates the digital action; above, a scene from the film itself)
Photos courtesy KiWi Productions

The production is made possible in part by a grant from the **National Performance Network's Performance Residency Program**.

Major contributors to the National Performance Network include the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**, **Ford Foundation**, the **National Endowment for the Arts** (a federal agency), **Altria**, and the **Nathan Cummings Foundation**.

The **Wexner Center** is a Partner in the National Performance Network (NPN). NPN is a group of cultural organizers and artists facilitating the practice and public experience of the performing arts in the United States. NPN serves artists, arts organizers, and a broad range of audiences and communities across the country through commissions, residencies, culture-centered community projects, and other artistic activities. For more information: www.npnweb.org.

Preferred accommodations: **The Blackwell Inn**.

**The Old Trout Puppet Workshop: *Famous Puppet Death Scenes*
Wednesday, November 7–Saturday, November 10 | 8 pm
Wexner Center Performance Space**

Tickets: \$16 for the public, \$13 for Wexner Center members, \$10 for students

With their hit production *Famous Puppet Death Scenes*, Canada's Old Trout Puppet Workshop offers a panorama of puppet murder, mayhem, and most unfortunate misadventure. In approximately 80 minutes the audience is treated to over 24 scenes of puppet demise ranging from a German game show to a 19th-century opera house, selected from the greatest shows in puppet history. The colorful characters range from comic gobs of goo, to an egg-shaped puppet named Nordo Frot threatened by the arm of Fate (see inset), to four aliens with Johnny Depp faces. The clever, mechanical staging, poignant soundtrack, costumes, and light design combine to bring the puppets and their stories vividly to life. Called "weird and wonderful...by turns comic, macabre and sublimely surreal" by the *Globe and Mail* (Canada), the show is a scintillating and satisfying fest of irony. The Old Trout Puppet Workshop was founded on a ranch in Alberta in 1999 and is now based in Calgary; for more information, visit www.theoldtrouts.org.



***Famous Puppet
Death Scenes***
Photo courtesy of the artists

While in town, the members of The Old Trout Puppet Workshop will meet with students from Ohio State's Department of Theatre to discuss their approach to contemporary puppetry, as well as the challenges of working in rural Canada and making connections with a broader public.

PERFORMING ARTS SEASON SUPPORT

Major support for the Wexner Center's 2007–08 performing arts season is generously provided by **Huntington Bank**, **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** and **The Columbus Foundation**. Significant contributions are also made by **Morgan Stanley** and **Nationwide Foundation**. Additional funding is provided by the **Ohio Arts Council**, the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation**, and **Wexner Center members**. Preferred accommodations: **The Blackwell Inn**.

Media contacts: Erik Pepple, epepple@wexarts.org or 614 688-3261; or Karen Simonian, ksimonian@wexarts.org or 614 292-9923.