Counting Sheep:
A Guerrilla Folk Opera

Lemon Bucket Orkestra

When:
Wednesday, February 7 - Saturday, February 10, 2018
8:00 PM

Venue:
BING CONCERT HALL STUDIO

Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Bard Summerscape, L’Opéra de Montréal, Minnesota Opera, the Wexford Festival (Ireland), San Francisco Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Portland Opera, and Glimmerglass Opera. New York theater work includes the GLAAD-award winning play Candy & Dorothy. His two short films, Monsura is Waiting and Stag, have screened at 40 film festivals collectively, winning several awards.

The Lemon Bucket Orkestra is Canada’s only Balkan-klezmer-gypsy-punk-super-band. Born on the streets of Toronto as a busking band in 2010, the original quartet of guerrilla-folk troubadours quickly amassed a battalion of troops armed with brass and bows and started touring the world. LBO has been nominated for several awards, heralded as ground-breaking by international media, and performed at international festivals across the globe, but the group’s greatest achievement is its ability to embody the dynamic space between “home” and “exotic” and to welcome audiences into the celebration of that space. LBO’s members have even gone as far as the eastern front of the war in Ukraine, using their music as catharsis, support, and even a platform for storytelling and information sharing in a political arena obfuscated by propaganda and misinformation. For more information, please visit lemonbucket.com.

Selfconscious Productions is a Canadian-based production company dedicated to the development of new Canadian projects for national and international presentations. Executive artistic director Michael Rubenfeld has been working with Counting Sheep since its initial workshop production, and he has developed and toured the work with the creators since 2015. Selfconscious is also the production company behind CanadaHub at the Edinburgh Fringe—a stand-alone venue that features several Canadian performance projects from across the country. The company is touring the productions of Mouthpiece and Foreign Radical (CanadaHub 2017) in the UK and United States, and We Keep Coming Back in Canada, and will once again produce CanadaHub for the 2018 Edinburgh Fringe. In 2018 Selfconscious welcomed Clayton Lee as its first managing producer. For more information, please visit the website at selfconsciousproductions.com.

Hot Feat USA Ltd is a theatrical production company dedicated to supporting and producing live theatrical work in the United States, Canada, and throughout the world. The company supports and develops unique and relevant productions, with the goal of assisting them in reaching their full potential. In addition to Counting Sheep, Hot Feat has also produced The Color Purple (the Tony Award-winning Broadway revival and the US tour), Something Rotten (Broadway and US tour), and Hand to God (Broadway and London West End). Currently, the company is producing Ride the Cyclone, a new musical that will open next month in Seattle (a co-production with ACT and Seattle 5th Avenue).
Mark and Marichka Marczyk (creators and directors) met and fell in love on Independence Square in Kyiv at the height of the Revolution of Dignity. They have traveled across Ukraine volunteering, performing for soldiers and DPs, and writing about their experiences (Brick Literary Magazine, Humber Literary Review, NOW Magazine, Carte Blanche, CBC).

Together, they created Counting Sheep and perform in Lemon Bucket Orkestra, Toronto’s infamous balkan-klezmer-gypsy-party-punk-super-band. They are currently working on a new guerrilla-pop project called Balaklava Blues, which is based on traditional music from the Donbas region, as well as a screenplay about the 242-day battle for the Donetsk Airport. In May 2015, at their wedding at Dufferin Grove Park, they raised $20,000 in wedding gifts for Patriot Defence, an organization that provides NATO-grade medical kits to combat and civilian medics alike, and teaches them how to use them in extreme situations. (The organization’s founder was recently appointed the new minister of health of Ukraine and has implemented sweeping reforms that combat corruption and strive for universal coverage).

Kevin Newbury (codirector) is a theater, opera, and film director with more than 60 original productions to his credit. Recent highlights include the world premieres of Fellow Travelers (Cincinnati Opera, New York Times Best Opera of 2016, Prototype Festival NYC), Bel Canto (Lyric Opera of Chicago and PBS Great Performances), and Kansas City Choir Boy (with Courtney Love, NYC and national tour). His work has also been seen at the Park Avenue Armory, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Barcelona Liceu, San Francisco Opera, the Young Vic, and at the National Theatre in London. He is the recipient of the Peter O’Toole Award, and a Guggenheim and Fulbright fellowship recipient. He is co-founder of the now-defunct off-Broadway company, The Foundry Group.

Counting Sheep is an immersive ‘guerrilla folk opera’ that retells the story of the 2014 Maidan Revolution in Ukraine that ousted the sitting government. It is performed using Ukrainian polyphony choral music, with exuberant musical performances and vibrant visuals offering a view into the lived experiences of those who were involved in the Maidan, and, to an extent, any modern day political revolution.

The production was first workshoped at the St. Vladimir Institute in February 2015, following by a development period and a sold-out run at the SummerWorks Performance Festival in August 2015. The production then received a second sold-out and Dora Award-winning run in Toronto (May/June 2016) and was the sold-out smash success of the 2016 Edinburgh Festival Fringe, winning several awards, including the Scotsman Fringe First and Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award. Counting Sheep has toured to the Ruhr Festival in Germany, the Kilkenny Arts Festival in Ireland, the Freedom Festival in England, and recently completed a run in New York City at 3LD. For more information, please visit countingsheeprevolution.com.

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