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Fine Arts Center

MUMMENSCHANZ: 50 Years

Randolph W. Bromery Center for the Arts

Frederick C. Tillis Performance Hall



Saturday, October 15, 3 p.m.

Sponsored by Florence Bank, The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Daily Hampshire Gazette, UMass Auxiliary Enterprises, and Hotel UMass

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Land acknowledgement

In a year-long consultative and deeply collaborative process with respected advisors from local Tribal Nations, the UMass Native Advisory Council co-developed this campus Land Acknowledgement. This Acknowledgement affirms our campus connection and relationship to the land the campus is built upon and our continued connection to the Nations who were the original inhabitants and caretakers of this land. The University of Massachusetts Amherst acknowledges that it was founded and built on the unceded homelands of the Pocumtuc Nation on the land of the Norrwutuck community.

We begin with gratitude for nearby waters and lands, including the Kwinitekw -- the southern portion of what's now called the Connecticut River. We recognize these lands and waters as important Relations with which we are all interconnected and depend on to sustain life and wellbeing.

The Norrwutuck community was one of many Pocumtuc Indian towns, including the Tribal seat at Pocumtuc (in present day Deerfield), Agawam (Springfield), and Woronoco (Westfield) to name just a few. The Pocumtuc, who had connections with these lands for millennia, are part of a vast expanse of Algonquian relations. Over 400 years of colonization, Pocumtuc Peoples were displaced. Many joined their Algonquian relatives to the east, south, west and north— extant communities of Wampanoag, including Aquinnah, Herring Pond, and Mashpee, Massachusetts; the Nipmuc with a reservation at Grafton/Hassanamisco, Massachusetts; the Narragansett in Kingstown, Rhode Island; Schaghticoke, Mohegan and Pequot Peoples in Connecticut; the Abenaki and other Nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy extending northward into Canada; and the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican of New York and Massachusetts, who were removed to Wisconsin in the 19th century. Over hundreds of years of removal, members of Southern New England Tribes would make the journey home to tend important places and renew their connections to their ancestral lands. Such care and connection to land and waters continues to the present day.

Today, Indigenous Nations in southern New England continue to employ diverse strategies to resist ongoing colonization, genocide, and erasure begun by the English, French, Dutch, Portuguese and other European Nations, and that continued when Tribal homelands became part of the United States. Native Americans from Tribal Nations across the U.S. and Indigenous peoples from around the world also travel into these Pocumtuc homelands to live and work. This land has always been and always will be, Native Land.

We also acknowledge that the University of Massachusetts Amherst is a Land Grant University. As part of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, Tribal lands from 84 Native Nations west of the Mississippi were sold to provide the resources to found and build this university.

This Land Acknowledgement is the first step in the university's commitment to practice intellectual humility whilst working with Tribal Nations toward a better shared future on Turtle Island. We aim to foster understanding, deep respect, and honor for sovereign Tribal Nations; to develop relationships of reciprocity; and to be inclusive of Native perspectives and thriving Native Nations far into the future. Members of Massachusetts-based Tribal Nations who are kin to the historic Pocumtuc contributed their insights in composing this acknowledgement -- namely Tribal representatives from Mashpee, Aquinnah, and Stockbridge Munsee. As an active first step toward decolonization, we encourage you to learn more about the Indigenous peoples on whose homelands UMass Amherst now resides on and the Indigenous homelands on which you live and work.

About the company

Floriana Frassetto

Floriana Frassetto (Swiss), studied at Academia Alessandro Fersen in Rome from 1967 to 1969. She completed her training as an actress while attending a school for mime and acrobatics at Roy Bosier's Teatro Studio. She then worked with the company of Roy Bosier in several school productions that toured Italy. The idea of founding MUMMENSCHANZ resulted from meeting, in late 1970, Andres Bossard and Bernie Schürch – two young Swiss clowns called "Before and Lost" that performed a partially spoken show. Floriana became the third member of the new company in 1972 and together they co-created the repertoire of MUMMENSCHANZ, converting the spoken numbers to masked visuals. Floriana has performed on tour worldwide for the last forty-seven years. She feels herself an artisan of fantasy and has always been motivated to construct new shapes along with Bernie. Since Bernie's departure in 2012 she has been tormented by the challenge of creating a new show, which she has now done with plenty of new ideas. That has been possible thanks to the collaboration with Tina Kronis and Richard Alger. Other notable experiences include the choreography and the costumes for Giancarlo Sbragia's *Faust* and André Heller's musical *Body and Soul*, and an artistic collaboration with Isabelle Baudet for the children musical *Oliver Twist* in Lausanne (Switzerland). She is the artistic director of MUMMENSCHANZ.

Tess Burla

Tess Burla was born in 1981 and grew up in Murten, Switzerland. After completing her studies in psychomotor therapy, she trained as a dancer in Barcelona and Berlin. In 2009, she completed a master's in dance education at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). She has been a member of Cie Chapeau (and formerly Paula fliegt) since 2015. She gained experience working with Marcel Leemann, and as part of Brigitta Schrepfer's Somafon, human kinetics movements arts, and Collectif de Marchepied. Burla works as a freelance dancer and is a founding member of cie deux plus. In addition to dance performances in collaboration with live musicians (Simone Abplanalp and Ursula Hofmann), she also made an appearance as part of the clown duo Nasva and Ravu in 2018. Her journey with MUMMENSCHANZ began in 2019.

Sarah Lerch

Sarah Lerch was born in 1983 and grew up in Bern, Switzerland. She studied acting at the Accademia Teatro Dimitri before going on to create her own dance and theater productions. From 2009 to 2011, she toured throughout Europe with the Czech company Continuo Theatre. She then returned to Switzerland and completed a master's degree in Physical Theatre at the ATD. She is a two-time winner of the Migros Kulturprozent competition and a member of the Swiss Study Foundation. In 2014, she co-founded the international company Wakouwa Teatro and gave birth to a baby boy. She is a versatile performer and choreographer working on a variety of major stage projects, with collaborators such as Volker Hesse, and regularly teaches acrobatics and aerial silks. From 2019 to 2020, she was co-director of the Theaterzirkus Wunderplunder with Kevin Blaser. Sarah joined MUMMENSCHANZ in 2021 for its 50th anniversary production.

Kevin Blaser

Kevin Blaser (Swiss), born in 1990, is a young artist from Ticino. In his early age he showed a strong interest in movement and art. He stood out in gymnastics and in skateboarding in which he found a companion with whom he travels the world. Passionate for music, he perfected his skills in percussion and drums, with which he continues to play in various bands. Through theatre he discovered the means for full expression of himself and entered the school for physical theatre Accademia Teatro Dimitri, where he obtained his Bachelor in 2015. He played in different theatre and cinema productions as "Gilgamesh" (from Patrizia Barbuiani), "Gotthard 2016" (from Volker Hesse), "Tutti Giù" (from Niccolò Castelli). In July 2016 he started his journey with the MUMMENSCHANZ company.

Manuel Schunter

Manuel Schunter was born in Munich (Germany) in 1985 and has lived primarily in Switzerland since 2007. He completed a bachelor's degree in Physical Theatre at the Accademia Teatro Dimitri and a master's degree in Expanded Theatre at the Bern University of the Arts. He has since given numerous performances and toured as a clown in the world of circus and vaudeville (with Circus Monti, Circus Roncalli, Das Zelt, Circus Sarrasani and at Circus Knie's centenary celebrations, among others). He was a permanent ensemble member with the Theater Madame Bissegger and the Origen Festival. Manuel's theater engagements have included performances with the Stadttheater Freiburg, LAC Lugano, and Espace Nuithonie. Besides his activities as a performer, he also directs various stage productions and lectures at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. Manuel has been a member of MUMMENSCHANZ since the summer of 2022.

Eric Sauge

Eric Sauge (Swiss) is the technical director of the company. With more than ten years of experience in the entertainment business, he now specializes in lighting and machinery effects. Employment by large organizations provided him with world-wide travel. Through his experience and many trips abroad he acquired solid knowledge in technical and team management. Back in Switzerland he continued to train in the field of lighting for events such as theater and television, in which he mainly occupied the roles of console operator and project manager. In 2014 he met MUMMENSCHANZ in Lausanne, and wishing to return to the theatre scene, he joined them as their technical director.

Upcoming Events



[The Peking Acrobats](#)

Thursday, April 6, 7:30 p.m.

Frederick C. Tillis Performance Hall



[STOMP](#)

Friday, April 28, 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 29, 2 and 8 p.m.

Frederick C. Tillis Performance Hall

For more information on all Fine Arts Center
events and for tickets please visit:

fineartscenter.com