

2013 | 14



PORTLAND OVATIONS



Bobby McFerrin

MUSIC OF THE WORLD

JULIE FOWLIS

Music of the Scottish Isles
November 2, 2013 • 8 pm

UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN

November 8, 2013 • 8 pm

MASTER OF PERSIAN MUSIC: KAYHAN KALHOR

November 23, 2013 • 8 pm

AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

March 2, 2014 • 4 pm

SŌ PERCUSSION:

"WHERE (WE) LIVE"
March 13, 2014 • 8 pm

DEPUE BROTHERS BAND

March 29, 2014 • 7:30 pm

BOBBY MCFERRIN:

"SPIRIT YOU ALL"
April 13, 2014 • 7 pm



Blue Man Group

"POTTED POTTER – THE UNAUTHORIZED HARRY EXPERIENCE – A PARODY BY DAN AND JEFF"

October 2, 2013 • 7 pm
October 3, 2013 • 7 pm

BLUE MAN GROUP

October 11, 2013 • 8 pm
October 12, 2013 • 2 pm & 8 pm



Joan Rivers

MANDY PATINKIN: DRESS CASUAL WITH PAUL FORD ON PIANO

October 18, 2013 • 8 pm

JOAN RIVERS LIVE

November 22, 2013 • 8 pm

BROADWAY NATIONAL TOUR GREEN DAY'S "AMERICAN IDIOT"

February 6, 2014 • 8 pm

BROADWAY NATIONAL TOUR "MAN OF LA MANCHA"

March 22, 2014 • 2 pm & 8 pm

BROADWAY & BEYOND

DAVID FINCKEL, WU HAN, AND PHILIP SETZER

October 26, 2013 • 3 pm

RICHARD STOLTZMAN, DAVID DEVEAU, AND SARAH SHAFER

December 7, 2013 • 3 pm

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR

February 7, 2014 • 8 pm

HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY

April 5, 2014 • 3 pm

"THE SUMMER KING"

May 8, 2014 • 7:30 pm



Handel & Haydn Society



Cirque Alfonse: "TIMBER!"

CLASSICAL MUSIC

THEATER & LITERATURE

AN EVENING WITH DAVID SEDARIS

November 21, 2013 • 7:30 pm

CIRQUE ALFONSE: "TIMBER!"

January 29, 2014 • 7 pm

"THE INTERGALACTIC NEMESIS"

February 27, 2014 • 7 pm

"WHO'S HUNGRY"

April 10, 2014 • 8 pm
April 11, 2014 • 8 pm
April 12, 2014 • 2 pm & 8 pm



"We're Going on a Bear Hunt"

FRED GARBO'S INFLATABLE THEATER CO.

November 16, 2013 • 1 pm

"WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT"

April 5, 2014 • 11 am

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY

November 6, 2013 • 7:30 pm

COMPAGNIE KÄFIG

February 11, 2014 • 7:30 pm

PILOBOLUS

April 25, 2014 • 8 pm

FAMILY SERIES



Pilobolus

DANCE

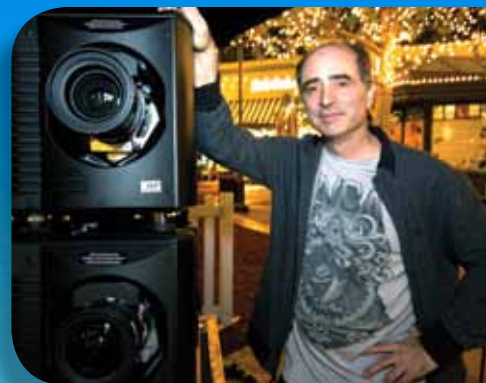
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INTERVIEW

A little. Light Music

Our urban reflections are **Philippe Bergeron's** projections.

INTERVIEW BY ROBERT WITKOWSKI



Philippe Bergeron, 52, projects an incendiary view of the world as he dazzles Portlanders with Paint-Scaping, his 3-D digital mapping company. The former actor, figuratively setting City Hall on fire at the Old Port Festival's 40th anniversary, is changing the way we see ourselves, one building at a time.

CHRISTOPHER RICCARDO; INSET: COURTESY PHILIPPE BERGERON © JEAN-LOUIS DARVILLE PHOTOGRAPHY



Do you consider your work to be Structuralist? Post-modern?
That's like asking someone in 1910 if their film is post-modern. It's a new art form—combining the virtual and the real, hopefully seamlessly.

What excited you about the project?
Portland City Hall was my choice. The Custom House is great, but why not go all the way? The great city halls are all back East. They're extraordinary. This was a celebration of Portland and City Hall itself, but not only Portland history, my personal history as well.

What do you mean?
We're one of the millions who invade you every summer. I'm from Montreal, so my family came to Old Orchard and Pine Point all my

life. We took day trips to the Old Port—I was probably two my first time to Portland.

So you guys have been a projection on this culture.
Ironically, I was vacationing here two years ago, walking around the Old Port. I said, "What a great city. I'd love to do a Paintscape here sometime."

The thing is, my parents came with me to see City Hall Paintscape. We'd just visited all the places like when I was 10 years old. And it struck me—I was part of the show. It's all part of who I am. Why do you think there's a lighthouse & lobster in the show?

How did the City Hall project come to your attention?
We did a Paintscape in Orlando for a conven-

tion of downtown managers. Jan Beitzer, executive director [since retired] of Portland Downtown District, saw it, fell in love with it, and invited us to do the Old Port Festival's 40th anniversary. After signing the contract, I jumped up and down. I was going to get my lobster roll! It's not easy to get a good lobster roll in L.A.

The subliminal lobster roll?
Lobster rolls are a religion. We have to go to The Lobster Shack in Cape Elizabeth, Rising Tide at Pine Point, and Ken's Place in Scarborough. All these are a must!

When I was doing tests for the Old Port Festival and my parents were leaving to go to Ken's, I asked, "Can you wait for me? I'll be finished in about an hour." They said, "No!" So I went with them. It was more important for me to have that lobster roll with them there.

And then you created a little light music, with a dash of shock and awe. Did it make the Portland PR people uneasy?
I wrote the structure of the presentation with PDD. They loved it. I gave it to Rob Ostir [Hollywood visual effects artist whose credits include *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*, *TRON: Legacy*, *Thor*, *X-Men: First Class*] to direct. He brought it to new levels.

It was your first City Hall. Have more come calling since?
There's been some interest, but the one I really want to do is Philadelphia's. Message to Mayor Michael Nutter: *I want to do your City*



In *Iron Man II*, Bergeron's Detective Lemieux investigates a madman using technology developed by Tony Stark (Robert Downey, Jr.).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHRISTOPHER RICCARDO; COURTESY PAINTSCAPING (2); COURTESY PHILIPPE BERGERON/PARAMOUNT PICTURES



THE MANY FACES OF PORTLAND CITY HALL— From left, moving shadows trick the eye; Maine postcards evolve to swinging lines; second floor windows incredibly rotate on the facade; a lighthouse illuminates a giant lobster scurrying up the building; fireworks explode out of windows signal the grand finale.

Hall! Or even Independence Hall. The paint-scape would be so great.

What's your biggest smash hit so far?

Something we did with Sony Pictures at the Ritz-Carlton in Cancun. It was a press junket for 17 films, and we blew them away with our *Green Hornet* PaintScape showing digital characters jumping from balcony to balcony. They told us, "Congratulations. You dazzled the biggest stars in the world."

Who's most fun to act with: Nicholas Cage, Matthew Broderick, Alan Rickman, Frank Langella, or Robert Downey, Jr.?

Jean Renault, actually. I played the assistant in *Godzilla*. He was so funny, much different than his characters [in *The Professional*, *La Femme Nikita*]. We laughed and swapped recipes. What was really funny was that Matthew Broderick was darker in person than his character.

Who's most impacted you the most, good or bad?

James Gandolfini. I think this text says it all: *I talked with James Gandolfini...I mentioned that I knew you and...the scene you were in with him. He said, "That was a good scene," and to say hello to you. Your reputation lives on.*

I got that the day before he died. I played Denis, a French-Canadian mafioso, on the ["Soprano Home Movies"] episode of *The Sopranos*. It was the most intense one day of acting I've ever experienced.

FLASHNIGHT

"It tricks you by creating virtual shadows for virtual reality. If they look like real shadows, then you have the audience."

Are Franco-American actors rising above stereotype today?

I'm always playing the annoying French guy, and I'm not even French! I think it's easier for French-Canadians to make fun of the French than they can of themselves. Who cares? There's plenty of clichés of Americans eating hot dogs. I couldn't care less. Every actor is a stereotype. DeNiro made a career out of playing mafiosi, Meryl Streep is known for her accents. My accent gave me a career. It's not bad, it's good. That's what you need to do in Hollywood—you have to have a niche..

What brought you back to digital media?

I first made waves in animation at a convention in 1985 by creating the first human developed by computer with emotions. But I was sick of computers in a couple years and started doing *horrible* stand-up comedy. I had audiences rolling on the floor—for all the wrong reasons. I went into acting for 15



Crowds gather in front of City Hall for the PaintScaping.

years and met a lot of great people but never became famous. Then one night, I painted a rock in my backyard with light.

It knocked me out. It became so clear to me that this was the future of lighting. With PaintScaping you light up only the tree, masking out everything else. You create effects [using projectors] that look real, and it becomes more than just a projection.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY PAINTSCAPING; CHRISTOPHER RICCARDO (2); COURTESY PAINTSCAPING

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INTERVIEW

Bergeron as Denis, a deceptively vicious French-Canadian mobster conferring with Tony Soprano (played by the late James Gandolfini) during "the most intense day of acting I've ever experienced."

Isn't that just a new kind of frame and just as limiting?

Once you accept that you can't change the structure of the building and work with it, the possibilities become endless.

It tricks you by creating virtual shadows for virtual reality, and if they look like real shadows, then you have the audience. You can change the look of the world in ways we can't imagine. We're just seeing the beginning of mapping.

Is it more important to be creative or technical?

It's much more important to be creative, but you have to have the technical foundation people don't see. Simply put: I have a master's in computer science and I starred on *The Sopranos*.

How did the Portland City Hall presentation rate in its scope and challenge against other projects around the world?

Technically, not too much. It's a pretty simple concept—light on a building. We did a 3-D Mapping festival at the Quebec Winter Carnival in February. It was -35° (F) degrees, so after that I feel I can go anywhere in the world.

What did you need to do to prepare for this project?

City Hall was a perfect mapping building—ledges, windows. The theme was "Resurgam," and our research about the fire that destroyed City Hall in 1908 was great. Fire is a great effect, but not everyone wants to use it—hotels *never* want to do it.

We set up across the street at Systems Engineering. It was extreme luxury for us. We were inside on the fourth floor with a perfect view. The company had a party that night, and all had great seats to watch.

Which Maine lighthouse would map best?

Portland Head Light. I've never done a lighthouse, so that would be fantastic! It's round, so point-of-view would be important on whether it was mapped 360° all the way around or just one side so people could see it. I guess we

BOSTON



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wouldn't need to worry as much about the side by the ocean.

How do you feel these big images reflect our inner projections?
Every good piece of art should reflect our subconscious. The world is black and white, fire and light.

The experience is so much more amazing live. Watching a PaintScape on YouTube is like watching an IMAX movie on your iPhone.

Do the illusion and reality touch on the events of 9/11?

That's what I'd like to do most, but it's so delicate. Rescuing people in a burning building with firefighters, helicopters with searchlights on the building, people jumping or falling but being rescued by firefighters—never dying. People will know it's not real intellectually, but emotionally it will feel so *friggin'* real! But the sensitivities of 9/11 make it difficult.

Please list your dream locations for a PaintScape show.

The White House, what else? It's the most famous building in the world. I could even use the fire effect, since historically it was burned in the War of 1812. It's the perfect color, it would get decent press coverage, and there's a built-in audience—everyone.

The pyramids and Taj Mahal would be a close second and third.

What would be the worst building to PaintScape?

The Hancock Tower [in Boston] is such a bad building for mapping—we would have to compensate with tons of projectors, and it would still not look good. Glass buildings are the worst. The only way to project on glass [windows] is to cover them with white fabric—that's the whole building! People think a flat white wall would be good, but that's about as bad as it gets.

But, if they wanted to pay to have it done *anyway*, who am I to say no? ■

➤ For more, visit portlandmonthly.com/portmag/2013/08/light-music.

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