

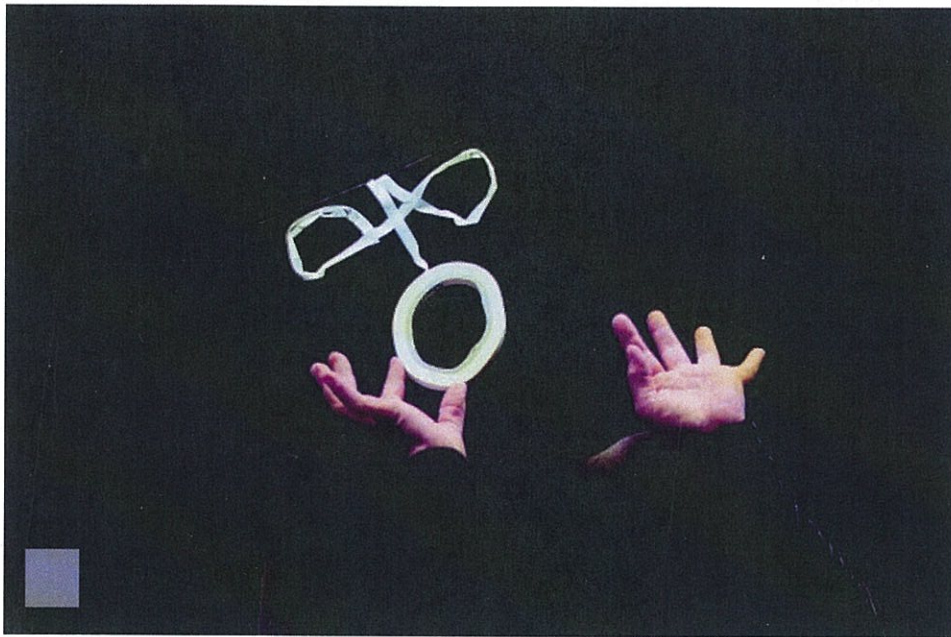


Arts

Review: Mummenschanz delights without making a sound

Vikram Patel | April 11, 2015

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Courtesy Mummenschanz

Mummenschanz is difficult to describe in words, in part because it doesn't use any. "I loved the show," said the woman seated next to me after the final curtain, "but I am not sure that having seen it helps me describe what we just watched."

A combination of mime, dance and silent movie comedy cloaked in costumes that bring to mind animated Pixar objects, [Mummenschanz](#) offered a collection of about 25 short, soundless scenes in Anchorage this week. This method of visual storytelling elicited audible reactions, ranging from laughter to gasps. During the opening bit, which featured an actor dressed as a large hand, a child called loudly from the audience, "Hi, hand!"

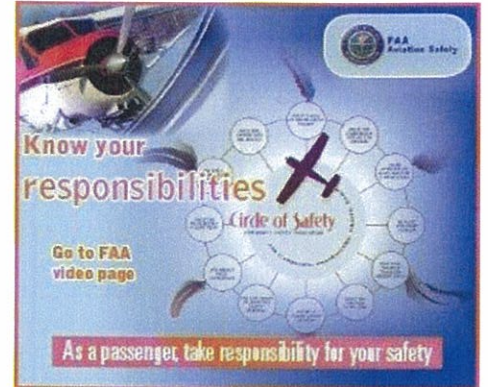

My scribbled attempt to list the remaining scenes reads like results of a Rorschach test: "orange blob on block," "briefcase head," "puzzle face," and so on. Each scene involved a creative use of materials, from a face mask comprised of several toilet paper rolls to a four-limbed "slinky man."

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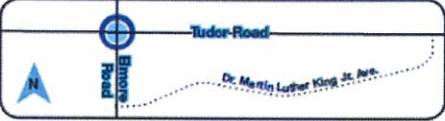
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But the magic of Mummenschanz is more than mere manipulation of materials. Rather, each scene told a story. Some narratives were clear: The giant golden puffy pair were initially in love, but ended up in a physical fight, while one of the clay mask characters was jealous of the other's superior face-shifting skills. (If you are confused at this point, you are not alone.)

Other stories were more obscure. For example, the trio of shape-shifting polygons were learning how to interact with each other, eventually stacking themselves vertically. It

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