

# HOPE SALAS & SMASHWORKS DANCE CO.

Devised by The Company  
Directed by Justin Cimino  
Stage Manager Bryan Russell

## CAST

Sarah Dodd, Manon Hallay, Ashley McQueen, Hope Salas, Sarah Starkweather

## THE PROCESS

We began from a simple place: five female clowns of the silent film era. The company did extensive research on these women and their world, and shared that research with each other. From there we worked in three devising processes: clowning, improvisation, and The Tectonic Theater Project's "Moment Work," which stresses using of theatrical elements before performer, text, and narrative to tell a story. And we attempted to fuse the natural dance and physical comedy skills of the company, to create a new kind of kinetic performance experience.



## THE SOURCE MATERIAL

We all immediately recognize names like Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, but we don't recognize names like Alice Howell, Marion Davies, Mabel Normand, Colleen Moore, and Louise Fazenda. These female clowns of the silent film era go unheard of, and shockingly, they were the bedrock of the industry: they were the first to make movies, they mentored Chaplin and Keaton, and they were writing, directing, and producing their own films at a greater rate than women do now. But their time at the top was short lived. Women were not supposed to lead; women were not supposed to be funny. The men came along and stole the spotlight, "talkies" replaced silent film, and the women were forced into retirement. Silently, these women went on to richly successful careers in other fields, invested their money, and were millionaires in their old age. Our piece traces their timeline: from building the business, to demonstrating their incredible physical comedy prowess, to testing the boundaries of what was acceptable for a female body, to disappearing into obscurity. We attempt to bring them back into the limelight.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Bryan Russell, Orietta Crispino, Jolene Noelle, and everyone at Theaterlab, Smashworks Dance, Melissa Costidis

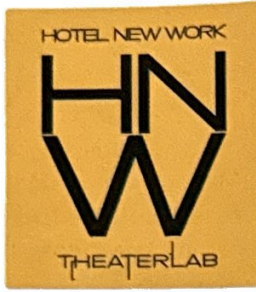
## COMING UP NEXT AT THEATERLAB:

TLAB SHARES hosts  
**This is Not a Theatre Company**  
presenting TWO shows playing in rep  
in our Theater.  
**PLAY!**  
*Theatre in the Dark: Carpe Diem*  
September 6 - October 6, 2019



"I had no precedent. Nothing to imitate. I created my own standard of fun." -Mabel Normand

**Hotel New Work** is a curated series providing artists and audiences with time and space to take a detailed look at the theater-making process in an open studio setting. The program provides short-term residencies, including 40 hours of rehearsal and performance space, to companies in the midst of creating ambitious new work. HNW serves as an artistic respite, where new works are given space to breathe, grow, and engage with outside eyes at an early stage.



Pick up your keys. Unpack your ideas. Stay a while.

**Past Hotel New Work Residencies Include:**

- THE TRIP - July 14, 2019
- GF&CO - February 17, 2019
- The Female Role Model Project - January 26, 2018
- DODO - *Trenches* - April 14, 2017
- Liza Cassidy - *Woman Receipt* - April 16, 2016
- This is Not a Theatre Company - *Readymade Cabaret* & *Loading Dock* - *The Trojans* - February 22, 2015



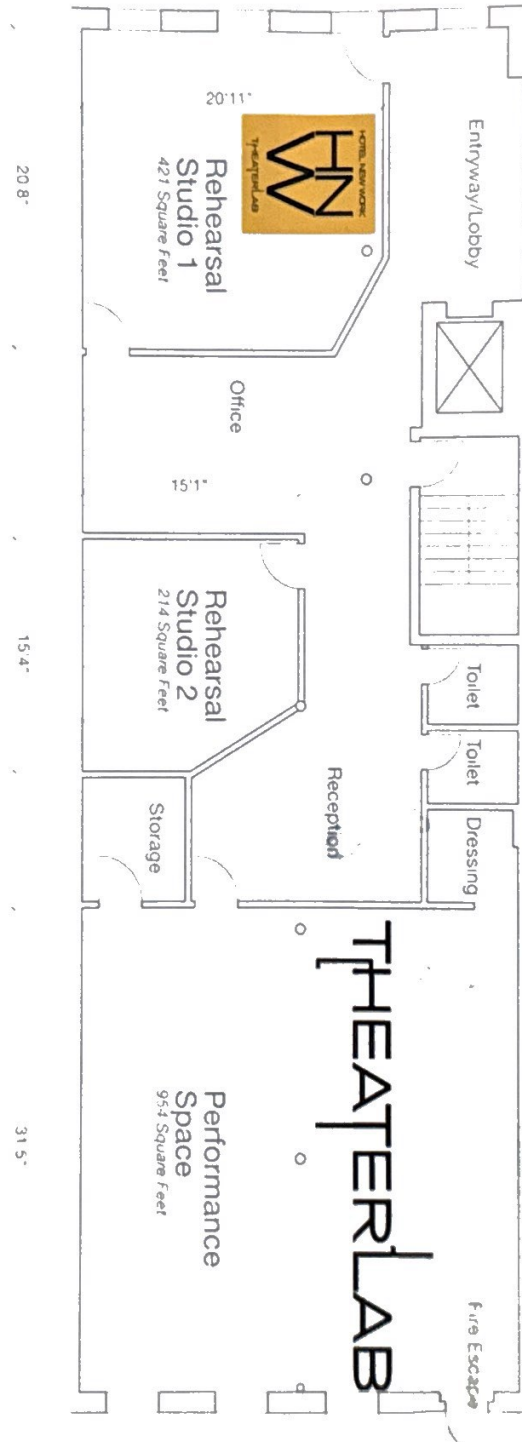
Theaterlab is a non-profit organization committed to maintaining affordable rates for artists, while providing a professional and inspiring space to develop innovative work. We are run by a team of women writers, directors, producers, and dramaturgs including: **Orietta Crispino** (Artistic Director), **Jolene Noelle** (Program Director), **Gahlia Eden** (Studio Manager), and **Lanie Zipoy** (Grant Writer & Media Manager).

For more information visit: [www.theaterlabnyc.com](http://www.theaterlabnyc.com).



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SEPTEMBER 1  
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