



stella starr presents

THEATRE

of **FUR**

THEATRE of FUR

Theatre of Fur is planned as a new type of Surrealist inspired cinematic dance theatre.

Not a theatre company as such, but the brainchild of Stella Starr as a vehicle for working with a variety of talented companies and individuals.

All our work will be in collaboration with different artists, performers and groups.

OUR AIM is to produce innovative and thought provoking work that's beautiful, surreal and often humorous.

OUR WORK is designed to inspire, cross boundaries, be all inclusive and reach as wide an audience as possible.

OUR MISSION with all our projects is to develop exciting collaborations with many different companies, artists and newcomers, as well as mentoring and teaching wherever possible.

WE CREATE work to be performed in a wide variety of venues and site specific areas.

All artists must create their own mythology.



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"Imaginative, enjoyable, hilarious, sexy, sumptuous and sensuous"
Three Weeks Brighton Festival Review, May 2009.

**Stella is now planning for this show to be recasted as a film and retitled
"Fifi's Follies" in memory of our late great choreographer Fifi De Maintenon.**

"Femmes Fatales" started out as an extravagant dance theatre show, part of which previewed at The Famous Spiegeltent at Brighton Festival 2005 and again at The Old Market Arts Centre in 2009 to sellout acclaim.

Partly inspired by the great Burlesque Revues of the past (eg. Ziegfeld Follies, Moulin Rouge), "Femmes Fatales" incorporates bizarre comedic elements of British Music Hall with archetypal artistic references to create a magical show of surreal beauty and humour. The show plays with the iconic representations of Woman as both elusive Goddess and Muse, with the darker more complex image of the seductive 'Man Eater', whilst exploring transgender issues of femininity. "Femmes Fatales" explores the various female archetypes within the context of how women are still being represented today by the media. The show takes us on a surreal and beautiful journey through the ages where various Tableaux Vivantes are brought miraculously to life. We see the classic iconography of Goddess, Muse and Seductress in her many disguises and the 'girl next door' Pin Up played out against a dreamlike moving backdrop of imagery on the big screen. The show mixes dance and mime with large scale moving and still projections as an constantly changing backdrop to magical and potent effect. The music in the show is a skilful blend of specially composed set pieces with tunes from such diverse 'cult icons' as Iggy Pop, PJ Harvey, Goldfrapp and the Tindersticks.

"Femmes Fatales" brings into question the image of women in the 21st Century. Has it fundamentally changed through the ages and, if so, how? Why has there always been a need for glamour and 'mystique' surrounding women and has Reality TV changed all that? What do women aspire to these days, how do they want to be perceived, and do the core values of Feminism still hold true today? What did the New Burlesque movement say about women's attitudes to their own sexuality and portrayal in society?



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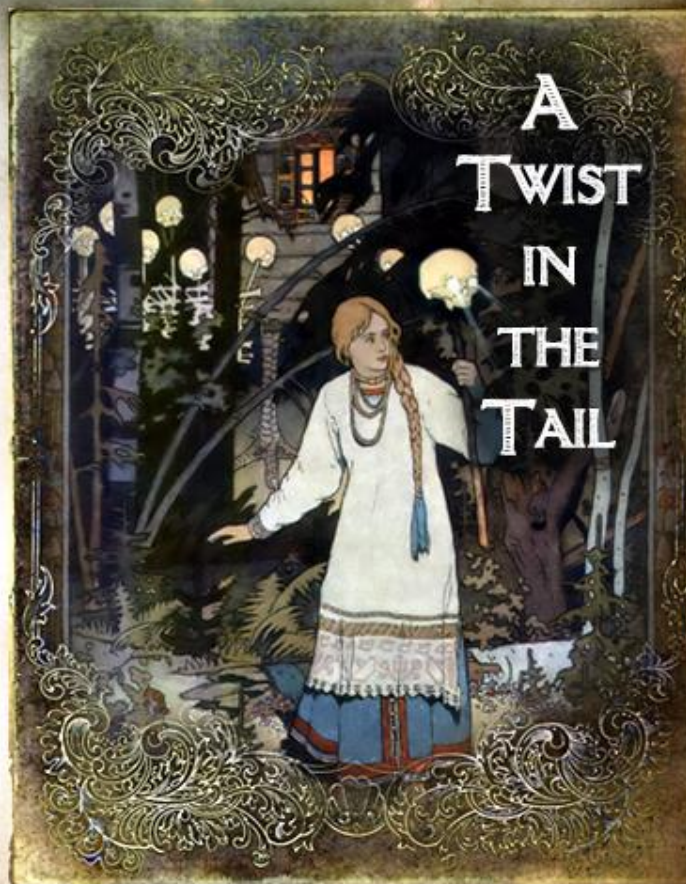
This is, in many ways, a classic 'fairy tale' of the quest for happiness, the happy ending and the eternal themes of love and redemption. It is suitable for adults and children from the age of 10+.

The show begins and ends at a small wooden house in the woods.
The heroes are a boy and girl of about 12 years who grow up during the course of the performance.

The show is interactive - the audience follows the actions of the main protagonists and actively engage in what happens to them - like an adventure game. There are Guides along the way to narrate and lead them through the play. They are also given three wishes to make during the course of the show &/or some riddles to answer which will be posed by the Guides and other characters they meet en route. How they perform these tasks affects how they move to the next stage. There will be paths to follow, lit by paper lanterns and projected images.

It's a very ambitious site specific production - a collaborative piece - working with an already established theatre company who are used to doing this kind of promenade performance. A professional cast of actors/dancers is required + technical crew including lighting designer, sound designer and technician etc.

The set will need a wooden house with moving mechanical interior parts, very much in the macabre style of Jan Svankmajer and the Brothers Quay.
Performer, lighting designer and artistic practitioner Gabriel Burden will design and build the Baba Yaga on stilts. (www.falling-angel.co.uk)
The wooden house in the woods installation is the main set. All other scenes are acted out in woodland in specially lit areas. There will be lighting in the trees and from projected light from projectors.



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“She kicked up her heels and danced”

‘Lola Montez’ installation and solo performance

An installation piece featuring Lola Montez in a glass case.
Lola is a combination of doll/mannequin, religious icon, sideshow freak and mechanical fortune teller in ornate lace costume and heavy makeup. She remains still most of the time... but outside her case are various small moving artefacts from her miniature circus - mysterious toys and miniature relics.

A projected loop is displayed in the form of a large zoetrope effect of Lola as an old lady still doing a high kicking polka. Also a changing magic lantern type show - a moving backdrop of painted scenery changing from countryside to city to circus.

Inspired by the notorious 19thC ‘Burlesque’ performer and courtesan Lola Montez, whose lovers included the composer Franz Liszt and King Ludwig I of Bavaria.

The installation has a 19thC sideshow/carnival/circus element using mixed media and projection. It ideally needs to be staged in a tent. Sound will include a musical box type polka theme + fairground barker.



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"The city has many voices, each with a different story to tell. This one started around 3am at the back of the Tropicana night club. A small time crook called Charlie got shot. Nothing much to remark there you might think. Happens all the time.

The name's Johnny - Johnny Thursday. Everything good has always happened to me on a Thursday. But today was Friday. I'm a private detective. I don't do murders but I do just about everything else. I have principles - but they need some revision."

A Classic Noir tale told through dance with specially composed music and voiceover script. The only colour is in the dancers costumes. The set is a Sin City style black and white giant comic strip - projected on large hanging gauze backdrops. The protagonists move through a dark city landscape - rain washed streets, nightclubs and seedy hotel rooms. Features live band playing in the nightclub scenes.



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A three part aerial based ballet to create an atmospheric undersea world performance piece. The set is layers of hanging gauze with images projected through to create the effect of under the sea. Visuals are a combination of paintings and mysterious underwater layers.

The three sections are linked by a floor based piece - the Flying Dutchman/Ancient Mariner/ Captain Ahab character.

The Handsome Cabin Boy

Music – “The handsome cabin boy” – Traditional Sea Shanty
Sailors perform group aerial dance on ropes.

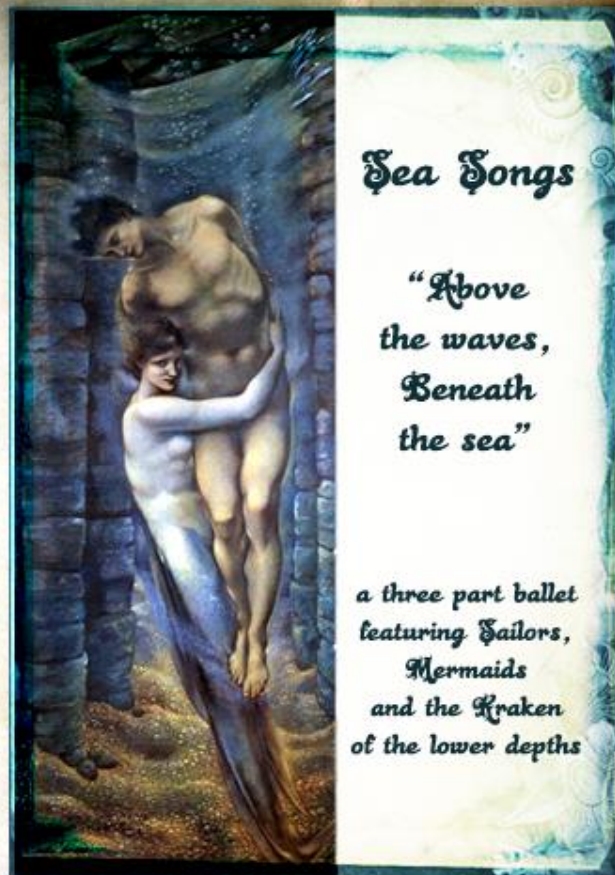
The fair maid who lived by the shore

Music – “The fair maid by the shore” - Peggy Seeger + “Song of the Siren” – This Mortal Coil
Aerial pas de deux with Sailor and Mermaid on hanging fabric with projected imagery

Full Fathom Five

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that does fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
From Shakespeare’s “The Tempest”
Music – Laurie Anderson

Solo performance on ground and some aerial work on long hanging material.
A Kraken creature wearing an extra long cloak encrusted with jewels and barnacles. It drags the cloak along the ground to the heightened sound effects of shingle dragged by the sea.



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A three part ballet celebrating the English countryside and ever changing weather.

'The colour of rose petals, the glimmer of songbirds'

Abstract ballet exploring colour tones/texture/theme of roses and shimmering light.
Music by Elgar and also featuring birdsong + projected colour backgrounds and FX.

Force of Nature

Begins with a performance to a reading by Richard Burton of Dylan Thomas'
"The force which through the green fuse drives the flower drives my green age".
Abstract ballet celebrating the life force in Nature. Footage from the Powell and
Pressburger film "Gone To Earth".
Music: Jim Jones Revue and P.J. Harvey.

Elemental

Dance piece using large scale back projections of different weather and light effects
with dramatic sound FX:
Lightning/storms, rain, wind, dappled sunshine on water etc.
Dancers dressed as owls, foxes and other creatures.



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A ballet piece inspired by the work of Surrealist painter Dorothea Tanning.
Part of a series inspired by Surrealist and Dadaist work.

Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

Inspired by the famous painting and another painting **Paleastra** this piece features dancers in various states of Victorian disarray with hair flying wildly upwards being confronted by a giant sunflower and other disturbing apparitions.

Birthday

A dancer in skirt made from branches rustles through doors - in and out of rooms...

Poppy Hotel, Room 202

including **Rainy Day Canape** and **Tragic Table**

A room with soft fabric forms that move

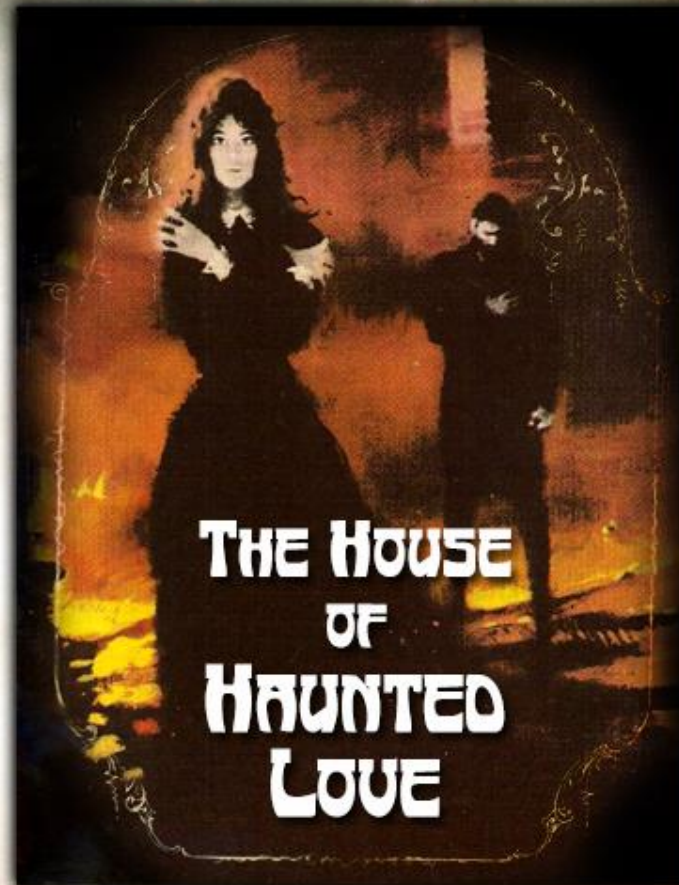
A sofa has two writhing entwining forms within...



THEATRE of FUR

Work in Progress. A classic Gothic Horror tale of obsessive love from beyond the grave. What was the cruel fate of his first wife - the fair Lenore? And why does it seem she still walks the halls of this house of secrets ...

Melodramatic theatre, dance or opera piece inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's "*The Tomb of Ligeia*" and "*Fall of the House of Usher*".



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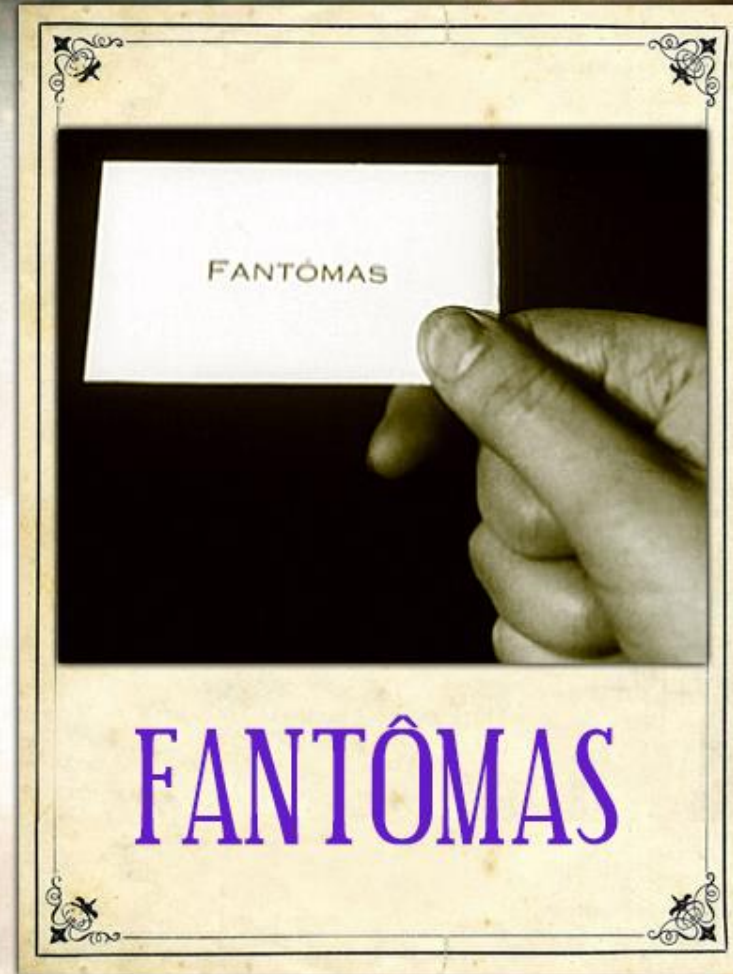
Work in Progress. An atmospheric theatre spectacle inspired by the original Fantômas serial by Louis Feuillade using ilusionary Magic Lantern and cinematic effects within the macabre theatre setting.

Based on the books by Marcel Allain & Pierre Souvestre, the Fantômas serial in 1913 was Feuillade's first masterpiece in what the modern critic, from both a literary and a cinematographic point of view, would later call "the fantastic realism" or the "social fantastic".

He is credited with developing many of the thriller techniques used famously by Fritz Lang, Alfred Hitchcock and others.

Feuillade is primarily known for the serials Fantômas, Les Vampires and Judex.

FANTOMAS: THE CORPSE WHO KILLS (Le Mort Qui Tue, 1911), the third and perhaps most inventive book in this astonishing series, was acclaimed by the Surrealists for its dream-like imagery, wanton cruelty and gallows-black humour.



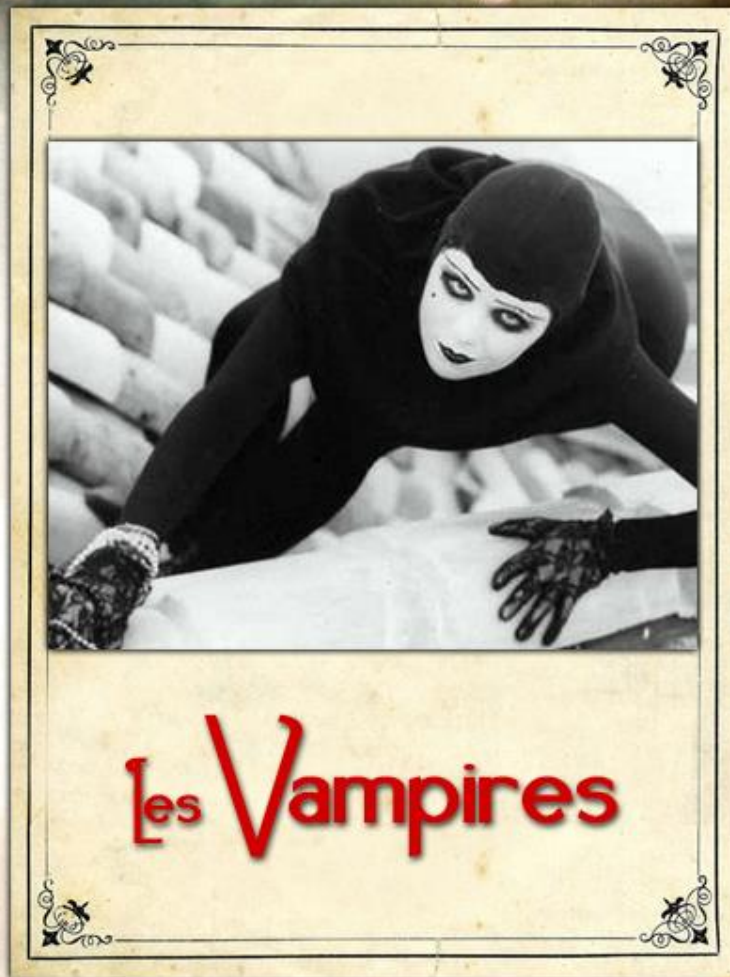
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Work in Progress. A companion piece to Fantômas, this similarly atmospheric theatre spectacle inspired by the original Les Vampires serial by Louis Feuillade introduces the notoriously seductive and ruthless figure of Irma Vep (an anagram of Vampire). The story isn't about bloodsucking vampires but an evil gang of crooks called Les Vampires who stop at nothing to get what they want.

The original Les Vampires is a 1915–16 French silent crime serial film written and directed by Louis Feuillade. Set in Paris, it stars Édouard Mathé, Musidora and Marcel Lévesque. The main characters are a journalist and his friend who become involved in trying to uncover and stop a bizarre underground Apache gang, known as The Vampires. The serial consists of ten episodes, which vary greatly in length. Being roughly 6.5 hours long, it is considered one of the longest films ever made. It was produced and distributed by Feuillade's company Gaumont. Due to its stylistic similarities with Feuillade's other crime serials Fantômas and Judex, the three are often considered a trilogy.

Fresh from the success of Feuillade's previous serial, Fantômas, and facing competition from rival company Pathé, Feuillade made the film quickly and inexpensively with very little written script. Upon its initial release Les Vampires was given negative reviews by critics for its dubious morality and its lack of cinematic techniques compared to other films. However, it was a massive success with its wartime audience, making Musidora a star of French cinema. The film has since come under re-evaluation and is considered by many to be Feuillade's magnum opus and a cinematic masterpiece. It is recognised for developing thriller techniques, adopted by Alfred Hitchcock and Fritz Lang and avant-garde cinema, inspiring Luis Buñuel and others. It is included in the book 1001 Movies You Must See Before You Die.

As in our version of Fantômas, this theatre show combines ilusionary Magic Lantern and cinematic effects within the macabre theatre setting.



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Work in Progress.

Alice Ernestine Prin (2 October 1901 – 29 April 1953), nicknamed Queen of Montparnasse, and often known as Kiki de Montparnasse, was a French artist model, nightclub singer, actress, memoirist and painter. She flourished in, and helped define, the liberated culture of Paris in the early 1920s.

Kiki was the embodiment of free feminine spirit and 'la vie Boheme' - not afraid to show her body or proclaim her bisexuality and a great bon viveur! She famously posed for Man Ray but also modelled for many other artists - many of whom were also lovers - and appeared in Dadaist films like Leger's "Ballet Mechanique".

This moving, funny and sometimes outrageous show tells her story with the combination of live drama, film footage and the iconic images of her which defined the era.



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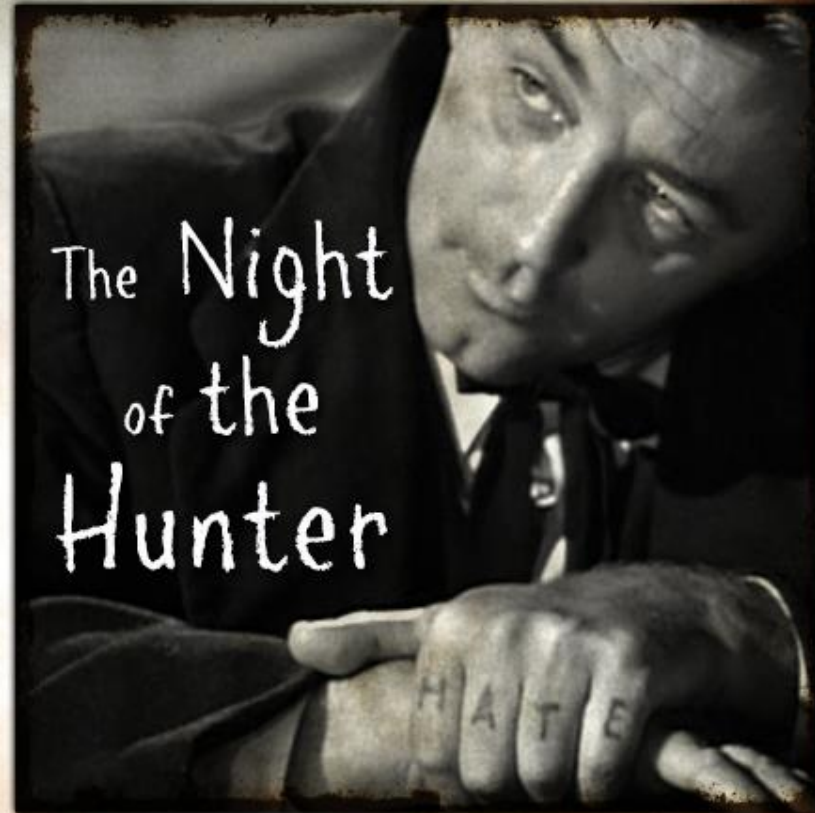
Work in Progress.

The Night of the Hunter is a theatre piece inspired by and adapted from the 1955 thriller film directed by Charles Laughton and starring Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters and Lillian Gish. The play will incorporate cinematic elements and expressionistic set.

The film is based on the 1953 novel of the same name by Davis Grubb, adapted for the screen by James Agee and Laughton. Its plot focuses on a corrupt reverend-turned-serial killer who uses his charms to woo an unsuspecting widow and her two children in an attempt to steal a fortune hidden by the woman's dead husband. The novel and film draw on the true story of Harry Powers, hanged in 1932 for the murders of two widows and three children in Clarksburg, West Virginia.

The film's lyric and expressionistic style sets it apart from other Hollywood films of the 1940s and 1950s, and it has influenced later directors such as David Lynch, Martin Scorsese, Terrence Malick, Jim Jarmusch, the Coen brothers, Rob Zombie and Spike Lee.

In 1992, The Night of the Hunter was deemed "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" by the United States Library of Congress and was selected for preservation in its National Film Registry.





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