



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Linda Devers, linda@lunfan.com

Press photos and kits: <http://www.lunfan.com/press/>

"Astonishingly creative use of found objects" - SF Chronicle

"More emotion and eloquence than most dialog-filled plays" - Oakland Tribune

"This story leaves one afraid to blink for fear of missing out" - Nichi Bei Times

"Puppetry like you've never seen before, it's more like watching Live 3D animation" - San Jose Mercury News

**The Topaz Museum To Present
Exclusive Performance of Lunatique Fantastique's
E.O. 9066
at the Grand Opening of the Topaz Museum**

July 8, 2017, Delta, Utah

San Francisco (April 24, 2017) - Lunatique Fantastique is pleased to announce an exclusive performance of the timeless show ***E.O. 9066*** for the Grand Opening of the Topaz Museum on July 8, 2017 in Delta, Utah.

Lunatique Fantastique's ***E.O. 9066*** show relies on puppetry and ordinary objects, to recount the story of a Japanese American family incarcerated in an internment camp during World War II. Using a Japanese tea set, a table cloth, sand, brown paper and an old suitcase, Lunatique Fantastique creates the heart-wrenching story of one family's forced evacuation from their home in Berkeley to the Topaz camp in Utah.

Beginning February 19, 1942, approximately 110,000 American men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry living on the west coast were forcibly removed from their homes and held in remote camps in California and Utah - 11,000 of them were confined in Topaz. These Americans were never convicted nor charged with any crime, yet they were incarcerated for up to four years. This incarceration was the result of the infamous Executive Order 9066, signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the wake of Pearl Harbor.

Liebe Wetzel, Object Choreographer, explains “this is an exceptional opportunity for **E.O. 9066** to appear in front of the survivors of the Topaz internment camp. It is one thing to write a piece of art about a political issue and present it to the public. It is another thing entirely to perform this piece in Utah for people who have a personal connection to the content. When I got the call from Jane Beckwith of the Topaz Museum, the puppeteers were overwhelmingly positive about performing this show. Originally written in response to the political climate in 2003, **E.O. 9066** is even more relevant today. This show is an excellent vehicle for fostering conversations around civil rights and civil liberties.”

E.O. 9066 is dedicated to Donna Nomura Dobkin, Wetzel’s friend and fellow puppeteer, whose parents were sent to Topaz. Dobkin wanted to create a puppet performance rooted in her parents’ experience. Unfortunately, she died of cancer before she was able to fulfill this intention. This show was created through interviews of survivors, historical texts, and consultation with Keith Nomura, Jane Beckwith, Director of the Topaz Museum, The Japanese American Museum of San Jose, and the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

The creative team for **E.O. 9066** includes: Shinji Eshima (Music), Christine Young (Original Direction), Liebe Wetzel (Object Choreography) and the puppeteers: Jen Colasuonno, Susie Danzig, Sheila Devitt, Bill Olson, Slater Penney, Robin Plutchok, and Christina Shonkwiler.

“E.O. 9066’ (is) serious stuff....timely...a reflection on the erosion of civil liberties in times of national crisis...performed (with) the...ensemble’s usual, often astonishingly creative use of found objects.” - Rob Hurwitz, San Francisco Chronicle.

“In a nearly silent 60-minute puppet show...(the ensemble) creates more emotion and eloquence than most dialogue-filled plays can produce in two hours...one stirring image after another. Chalk up another amazing adventure in puppetry for the remarkable...cast of Lunatique Fantastique.” - Chad Jones, ANG Newspapers

About Lunatique Fantastique: The company is known for its unique style of object puppetry. Using a wad of newsprint, a sweat shirt, PVC pipes, or a Japanese tea set, the performance alchemists of Lunatique Fantastique release the sweet, sad, naive, and emotional beings inside ordinary objects. Without using words, these everyday objects tell universal truths in tales that speak to our hearts. The company previously performed **E.O. 9066** in 2005 for the 60th Anniversary of the Closing of the Topaz Camp and the acquisition of property for the Topaz Museum in Delta, Utah. The company has created other shows including: “*Objects in Predicaments*,” “*Reframing the Hourglass*,” “*Snake in the Basement*:

The Prosecution of Reverend Bill Pruitt,” “The Wrapping Paper Caper,” “Brace Yourself,” “Cirque de Celery,” “Chicken Stock,” and “Nutcracker Nutz and Boltz.”

About the Topaz Museum: The non-profit, volunteer organization owns 634 acres of the Topaz Camp site. Their mission is “To preserve the Topaz site and the history of the internment experience during World War II; to interpret its impact on the internees, their families, and the citizens of Millard County; and to educate the public in order to prevent a recurrence of a similar denial of American civil rights.” July 7-8, 2017 is the Grand Opening of the Topaz Museum in Delta, Utah.

###

FACT SHEET FOR *E.O. 9066*

WHAT:

With a Japanese tea set, a table cloth, sand, brown paper and an old suitcase, Lunatique Fantastique uses puppetry to show the human impact of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The heart-wrenching story follows one Japanese American family's forced evacuation from their home in Berkeley to the camp in Utah. It shows their struggles with camp life and the harsh desert environment. It chronicles the pain and loss of war and ultimately the family's return home to Berkeley. Originally written in 2003 in response to the political climate, the *E.O. 9066* resonates strongly today with current events.

WHO:

Original Direction: Christine Young

Original Music: Shinji Eshima

Object Choreography: Liebe Wetzel

Written by: Liebe Wetzel and Lunatique Fantastique Ensemble

PUPPETEERS:

Jen Colasuonno, Susie Danzig, Sheila Devitt, Bill Olson, Slater Penny, Robin Plutchok, and Christina Shonkwiler

2003 PERFORMANCE:

Made possible by grants from CASH, Zellerbach Family Fund and the Jim Henson Foundation.

DEDICATION:

Dedicated to the memory of Donna Nomura Dobkin whose parents were interned at Topaz.

These performances are dedicated to the memory of Ben Dzuiba a member of the original cast.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND APPRECIATIONS:

Keith Nomura, David Hirata, Kathleen Hirata, Ken Iwagaki, Jo Yasutake, Japanese American Museum of San Jose, Kathleen Hironaka, John Hayakawa, Gary Hoshiyama, Barbara Hoshiyama, Fred Hoshiyama, Yane Morishita, "Moffet" Ishikawa, May Shimoguchi, Donna Ozawa, Atsuko Moriuchi, George Oiye, Kats Hikido, Roy Matsuzaki, Jane Beckwith (Topaz Museum Board), The Japanese American Museum of San Jose, and the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles

PHOTOS:

<http://http://www.lunfan.com/press/>

