



**INCUBATOR ( )**

The Ontological-Hysteric Theater's programs for Emerging Artists  
131 East 10th Street, New York, NY 10003 [www.ontological.com](http://www.ontological.com)

# Laika Dog in Space Press Kit

# NEW YORK NEO-FUTURISTS

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Shannon Sindelar at 212-420-1916 or shannon@ontological.com**

The Ontological continues with its fifth year of the Incubator, the theater's programming for emerging artists. The listing below details the fall 2009 season. Please note that Incubator programming will continue through 2010 this year while Richard Foreman's Idiot Savant begins performances at the Public Theater October 27, 2009. Winter/spring updates will follow.

Ticketing info: General \$17/Student \$14. Purchase in advance at ontological.com or by calling TheaterMania at 212-352-3101.

Cash only at the door.

Ontological Theater at St. Mark's Church • 131 East 10th Street (at 2nd Ave.)

L to First or Third Ave; R, W to Broadway/8th St.; 6 to Astor Place; N,Q, 4, 5 to Union Sq.

## **Laika Dog in Space**

October 1–17

*Laika Dog in Space* uses the New York Neo-Futurists' unique blend of storytelling, dance, and live music to tell the story of the first space-bound mammal, the Russian dog Laika, and her trip into the cosmos in November 1957. The show's writers, Rob Neill and Eevin Hartsough, drew surprisingly unlikely inspiration for the piece largely from the famed French children's story "The Little Prince," the 1960s cult television show *The Prisoner*, and the art and sculptures of Alexander Calder. Joining Neill and Hartsough in the performance is fellow Neo-Futurist Jill Beckman, with Carl Riehl and the Cake Monkeys providing live music.

The New York Neo-Futurists are best known for their long running late night show, Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind, which celebrates its fifth year in New York in 2009. "Too Much Light, which includes a dizzying variety of plays, is like an entire Fringe Festival condensed into one show...it is the ideal entertainment for an audience with eclectic taste..." says Jason Zinoman of the New York

Times. Laika Dog in Space succeeds last year's critically acclaimed mainstage production, (Not) Just a Day Like Any Other, which was nominated for two NYIT awards in 2009. Press kits and photos available in digital format

[www.nyneofuturists.org/site/docs/presskit/Laika\\_Press\\_Kit.pdf](http://www.nyneofuturists.org/site/docs/presskit/Laika_Press_Kit.pdf)

*Directed by Dave Dalton; Created and performed by Eevin Hartsough, Jill Beckman and Rob Neill; Composer and Musician: Carl Riehl; Assistant Director and Dramaturg: Christopher Diercksen; Technical Director: Lauren Parrish*

**October 1—4, 6, 8—11, 13, 15—17 at 8p.m.**

**<http://www.ontological.com/INCUBATOR/newyorkneofuturists09.html>**

### **About the Ontological-Hysterical Incubator**

Artistic Director Richard Foreman founded the Ontological-Hysterical Theater in 1968 with a mission to make high-quality, intellectually resonant work for a large and diverse audience. Foreman's "total theater" unites elements of the performing arts, visual art, music composition, philosophy, psychoanalysis and literature to produce a unique result. Core programming consists of Foreman's theater pieces with over 50 original shows created in the last 41 years.

Since taking up its home at the Ontological Theater at St. Mark's in 1992, the OHT has also been nurturing a new generation of artists who share Foreman's goals and passion for theater. In 2005, the OHT reorganized its programming for emerging artists under the name Incubator, which today includes festivals, work-in-progress programs, a concert series, and fully-realized productions, as well as artist roundtables and workshops. The Incubator serves artists who follow in the compositional theater footsteps of Foreman, but have their own unique artistic visions and strategies.

The Incubator is led by managing and programming director Shannon Sindelar and staff curators Brendan Regimbal, Peter Ksander and Travis Just, and includes regular programming from resident organization free103point9.

### **About the New York-Neo Futurists**

The New York Neo-Futurists are the prolific minds behind the ongoing weekly show, Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind, performed every Friday and Saturday at the Kraine Theater in Manhattan's

East Villiage. Celebrating their fifth year in New York, the New York Neo-Futurists have premiered over 1700 new plays. In addition to writing and performing for the show, they have a stalwart presence in the Off-Off Broadway community, and are the winners of the 2006 New York Innovative Theater Award for Outstanding Performance Art. This year the have been nominated for three more IT Awards including Two Outstanding Ensemble Awards and an Outstanding Performance Art Production Award. More information is available on their website [www.nynf.org](http://www.nynf.org).

# ENSEMBLE BIOS

**Eevin Hartsough (Co-Writer & Performer)** is an actor whose credits include Hellen Keller in *The Miracle Worker* (Roundabout Theater), Agnes in *A Bright Room Called Day* (Vassar College), the title role in *Presumed Retarded* (Manhattan Theater Source), a white-trash ghost in *Cockfighters* (Oberon Theater Co.) and the perky girlfriend of a government assassin in *Many 'Cides* (Prospect Theater Co.). Eevin lives in Manhattan where she also enjoys producing radio and Bollywood dancing.

**Rob Neill (Co-Writer & Performer)** is the Managing Director and an active ensemble member of the New York Neo-Futurists. He trained at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, the National Theater Institute, Improv Olympic and Grinnell College. He has performed *Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind* in New York and Chicago since 1995. He has taught performance workshops around the country and his plays have appeared at the Ontological, P.S. 122, HERE, Cherry Lane and The Kraine, as well as in Chicago and Los Angeles. Performance credits include: Broadway: *London Assurance*; London: *The Cherry Orchard*; Regional: *You Never Can Tell*, *Tartuffe*, and *The Real Thing*; Off-Off Broadway: *Spring Awakening*, *Hamlet* and *Doughboy*.

**Jill Beckman (Co-Writer & Performer)** hails from the Land of Lincoln, where she trained with ImprovOlympic and Second City. She has lived and worked in NYC for the last 10 years. In that time, she earned a BFA from NYU, trained with SITI Company and Upright Citizens Brigade, and collaborated in many various capacities with many various theater companies.

**Dave Dalton (Director)** Dave Dalton has directed plays at The Duke on 42nd Street, The Flea Theater, and The Vortex Theater Company, among others. He recently directed *The Threepenny Opera* at Connecticut Repertory Theatre, and his adaptation of *H.M.S. Pinafore* received a Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Revival of a Musical in 2007. He is a resident director at Vortex Theater Company and a former Artist in Residence at Tribeca Performing Arts Center. He was a member of the St. Ann's Warehouse Puppet Lab, and he currently volunteers with America-in-Play. Dave is a founder of Quinnopolis, NY whose work has been seen at the Vortex Theater, Philadelphia's 1812 Productions, St. Lawrence Arts in Portland, Maine, and was selected to perform at the Shakespeare Association of America's annual conference. He has an MFA in Directing from Columbia University and a BA from James Madison University.

**Carl Riehl (Composer & Musician)** studied piano and music theory and composition at Oberlin Conservatory. He is the accordionist and primary arranger for art-folk-punk band Uncle Moon ([www.UncleMoon.com](http://www.UncleMoon.com)). He composed the musical *The Architecture of Sight* and music for the performance of *Howl* at the 2005 Howl! Festival in New York City. In addition to performing with Uncle Moon, he has performed as a soloist and as part of various ensembles at venues including BAMcafe, the Brooklyn Museum and Green-Wood Cemetery (as part of the Open House New York festival). He has frequently collaborated on theatrical pieces, with recent performances including *Four Saints In Three Acts* (Encompass New Opera Theatre), *The Blue Flower* (Prospect Theater Company), and *Bukowski From Beyond* (Soho Playhouse), as well as the Neo-Futurist pieces *Apocalypse Neo*, *Tiny Isolation Experiment* and *Laika Dog In Space*.

# COMPANY BASICS

The New York Neo-Futurists' signature show *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind* is an ongoing attempt to perform thirty original plays in sixty minutes. The plays, all written and directed by the ensemble, are performed in random order as determined by the audience as the show goes along. The 'menu' of 30 plays changes each week; once a play leaves the menu, it is gone often forever.

Inspired by the Italian Futurists, whose artistic response to the industrial shock of the Twentieth Century was to embrace speed, movement, spectacle and mechanization, the New York Neo-Futurists venture forth into the Twenty-First Century, forging through New York City with a bold undertaking: in a society that is constantly changing, so too will our theater.

The NEW YORK Neo-Futurists (in random order) are: **Christopher Borg, Lauren Sharpe, Jeffrey Cranor, Erica Livingston, Rob Neill, Adam Smith, Lusia Strus, Ryan Good, Jacquelyn Landgraf, Kevin Free, Alicia Harding, Cara Francis, Jill Beckman, Dan McCoy, Eevin Hartsough, Joey Rizzolo, and Christopher Loar.**

We perform 50 weeks of year at The Kraine Theatre, 85 East Fourth Street, between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> avenues on the first floor.

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Check out our website: [www.nynf.org](http://www.nynf.org).

# COMPANY MISSION

The New York Neo-Futurists are a collective of wildly productive writer/director/performers who create:

- Theater that is reactionary to the rapid-pace, sensory-overload, evolving climate of New York City.
- Theater that is fusion of sport, poetry, and living-newspaper.
- Non-illusory, interactive performance that conveys our experiences and ideas as directly and honestly as possible.
- We embrace those unmoved by conventional theater-inspiring them to thought, feeling, and action.

As a group, we are dedicated to:

- Strengthening the human bond between performer and audience. We feel that the more sincere and genuine we can be on stage, the greater the audience's identification with the unadorned people and issues before them.
- Embracing a form of non-illusory theater in order to present our lives and ideas as directly as possible. All our plays are set on the stage in front of the audience. All our characters are ourselves. All our stories really happened. All our tasks are actual challenges. We do not aim to "suspend the audience's disbelief," but to create a world where the stage is a continuation of daily life.
- Embracing the moment through audience interaction and planned obsolescence. In order to keep ourselves as alive on stage as possible, we interweave elements of chance and change — contradicting the expected and eliminating the permanent.
- Influencing the widest audience possible by keeping our ticket prices affordable and our productions intellectually and emotionally challenging yet accessible.

# COMPANY HISTORY

In 2004, the New York Neo-Futurists began playing to sold-out houses at the Brooklyn Lyceum as a branch of Chicago's Neo-Futurists. Originally conceived by Greg Allen in 1988, the company's aesthetic emerged from the theatrical experiments of the 1960s through 1980s, calling for a theater of audience interaction, breaking down all notions of distance, character, setting, and illusion, and articulating a socially conscious voice in a low-tech, "poor theater" format.

In the past four years, the New York Neo-Futurists moved from the Brooklyn Lyceum, to set up shop at HERE, the Belt, and Cherry Lane, before, in 2006, settling into their current home at the Kraine Theater. In addition to bringing shows to area colleges, the New York Neo-Futurists have performed at various other New York theaters, including P.S. 122, the Ontological-Hysteric and the Public. To date, we have written over 1300 new original short plays.

In 2006, *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind* won the New York Innovative Theater Award for Outstanding Performance Art Production.

That same year the New York Neo-Futurists participated in Suzan-Lori Parks's *365 Plays/365 Days* with performances at the Makor and the Public Theater, and in June created a daily spectacle in Astor Place executing *60 Plays in 30 Days* at 6:30pm; rain or shine, large or small crowds.

In 2007 the New York Neo-Futurists were Nominees for the New York Innovative Theater Award for Outstanding Performance Art Production.

In 2007, the New York Neo-Futurists began teaching the Neo-Futurist aesthetic and style of theatre to eager students. With an overwhelming positive response, the company continues to offer workshops throughout the year.

The New York Neo-Futurists have developed three original main stage shows *Tightening*, *The 6-Pack*, *Apocalypse Neo* and in November of 2008 look to mount at the Red Room, an original multi-media production of *(Not) Just A Day Like Any Other*.

# IN THE PRESS

*Like the glory days of Saturday Night Live, Too Much Light is not just funny but faintly surreal.*  
Back Stage – GWEN OREL

*“Like an entire Fringe Festival condensed into one show... it is the ideal entertainment for an audience with eclectic taste and a rapidly shrinking attention span.”*  
New York Times - JASON ZINOMAN

*“The performance itself is unbeatable: spontaneous, exciting, and perfect for the ADD-riddled masses. The 30 plays... are alternately hilarious and heartbreaking.”*  
Washington Square News – JAMIE FELDMAR

*“Intrepid, interactive theater performed by writers, directors, and actors. . . who are not afraid to be emotionally naked onstage.”*  
Drama Review - CINDY PIERRE

*“A group of actors who attempt to perform 30 original plays in 60 minutes—an athletic endeavor to be sure, and one which viscerally exploits the connection between performer and spectator for maximum ka-pow.”*  
nytheatre.com – JEFF LEWONCZYK

*“A rejuvenating exploration of the human condition.”*  
Washington Square News – MICHAEL CONNELLY

*“Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind offers the perfect gift for everyone on your list.”*  
New York Cool.com – TARA KOPPEL

*“What separates Too Much Light from sketch comedy or improv is its deliberately eclectic approach to form. The show I saw included the genres of musical, confession, agit-prop, poetic gesture, physical comedy, puppet theater, audience interrogation, folk song, sex joke, something that can only be described as “dance-walking,” mime, and many others.”*  
offoffonline.com - WILLIAM CORDEIRO

# ELEVEN FUN FACTS ABOUT THE NEW YORK NEO-FUTURISTS (NYNF)

1. Every sold out *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind* is celebrated by ordering pizza for the audience.
2. Since April 2004, the NYNF have debuted over 1,700 world premieres TMLMTBGB.
3. The NYNF prop cabinets include 25 kazoos, 9 safety goggles, and 3 lab coats.
4. Neo-Futurism does not buy into “the suspension of disbelief” – it does not attempt to take the audience anywhere else at any other time with any other people.
5. Plays in *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind* are performed in random order: audience members receive a menu and call out the number of the play they would like to see when they hear the word “curtain.”
6. The NYNF challenge their Twitter followers to write plays in 140 characters or less. You can follow too at [www.twitter.com/nyneofuturists](http://www.twitter.com/nyneofuturists).
7. Futurism began as an artistic movement in 1909 and paved the way for Surrealism and Dada-ism.
8. Audience members often join the NYNF on stage to perform in plays.
9. The show is every-changing: every Friday and Saturday, a die is rolled. The sum of those numbers determine how many plays will be subtracted from the old menu and added to the new menu for the following week.
10. The NYNF often give gifts to the audience--Q-tips, beer, mixapes, and on occasion, their credit report.
11. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti founded Futurism with an 11-point manifesto because 11 was his favorite number.