

For Immediate Release

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TAPIT/new works Ensemble Theater Announces 30th Anniversary Production.

What do you get when you combine performance art with a Catskills attitude? You get ***Work the Act***, a new comedy from TAPIT/new works Ensemble Theater, marking the Company's 30th year of developing and producing original theater.

Work the Act follows the misadventures of the Rolling Bag Players, a struggling theater company. After a series of comic mishaps gets them fired from a Holiday Inn in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, they decide to re-invent themselves as an avant-garde performance group. When their show – “Take the Spanish Civil War, Please” – is a huge success, the reactions of these misfit comics are even more surprising.

Performances take place at the TAPIT/new works Studio Theater, 1957 Winnebago Street, Thursday – Saturday, May 28 – 30, and Friday – Saturday, June 5 – 6, at 7:30 PM, with a special 30th anniversary performance and reception at 3:00 PM, Sunday, June 7. Written by Danielle Dresden, directed by Francisco Torres, this comedic adventure features actors Viktor Petterson, Alex Roller, Dresden, Peckett, cameo appearances by the Kierstyn Torres Duo, music interludes by Dave Adler of Gomeroke notoriety, scenic design by Christopher R. Dunham, and costumes by Rebecca Sites.

A series of panel discussions, with Anne Katz of Arts Wisconsin; Heather Good, Wisconsin Union Theater; Diane Ragsdale, cultural critic in residence at UW-Madison; Courtney Beylich, Wisconsin Union Directorate; and Sherry Wagner-Henry of the UW Bolz Center for Arts Administration, will dig more deeply into what it means to be a working artist today. From symphony orchestras to solitary sculptors, working artists live in a world shaped by economic realities and cultural myths. However, most who enjoy the arts, and many who practice them, rarely examine any of these issues. Panel presentations at outreach events and following performances of ***Work the Act*** will provide audiences with insight into how the performing arts function, and what that means for artists and society as a whole.

Work the Act is the featured production of the Company's 30th year. Other 2015 projects include “The Me I Want To Be,” a 6-month arts residency at Whitehorse Middle School; “The Creative Link: A Play about Loneliness and Social Connectedness,” showcasing the work of seniors from St. Mary's Care Center collaborating with students from the Functional Vocational Program for 18 – 21 at Verona High School.

Work the Act is supported, in part, by the Wisconsin Humanities Council, with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Wisconsin; the Wisconsin Arts Board, with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of Wisconsin; Dane Arts; the Neil Allen Peckett Memorial Fund of TAPIT/new works Ensemble Theater.