



B I O G R A P H Y

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JON LUDWIG, Associate Artistic Director

Jon Ludwig is an accomplished performer, director and theater designer who has worked nationally and abroad.

In his more than 25 years at the Center for Puppetry Arts, Ludwig has written and directed more than 15 distinctive shows for the Center's Family Series and the New Directions Series for teens and adults. *Avanti da Vinci! The Secret Adventures of Leonardo da Vinci*, which he co-wrote with Jason von Hinezmeyer, sold out its world premiere in the New Directions Series before traveling in 2004 to the Slovak Republic, where it became the first U.S. production to be performed at the Bábkarska Bystrica Puppetry Festival. Among his other adult works, *Safe as Milk* has been performed throughout the U. S. and was staged in 1994 at P.S. 122 in New York as part of the Jim Henson Foundation's International Festival of Puppet Theater. *Safe As Milk*, as well as *Heaven-Hell Tour* and *Kwaidan* (with Mitsuru Ishii and Ping Chong) received UNIMA-USA Citations of Excellence in the Art of Puppetry, considered to be the Oscars of the puppetry world. His family show *The Plant Doctors* also was awarded the UNIMA-USA Citation of Excellence.

Ludwig's adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, commissioned and produced for the 1996 Olympic Arts Festival, received national and international acclaim and was heralded as one of the highlights of the Festival by art critics including *Newsweek* magazine and the *Boston Globe*. He has been a featured guest artist at the National Puppetry Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, where he workshopped *Home*, an original production. *Kwaidan*, his collaboration with Ping Chong of New York and Mitsuru Ishii of Japan, premiered in Atlanta in 1998. *Kwaidan* then toured to the Walker Art Center, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Dartmouth College and Spoleto USA Festival '99 as well as three cities in Japan, the Barbican Center in London, the New Victory Theater in NYC, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

Ludwig has also collaborated with Canada's Puppetmongers Powell, on the *Pirate Widow Cheng*, and Theater DRAK's Petr Matasek from the Czech Republic, on *Fire!*, both which premiered at the Center for Puppetry Arts. As a performer, Ludwig was part of Theater DRAK's *Tower of Babel* project in the Czech Republic and he puppeteered in Lee Breuer's *The Warrior Ant* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

In children's television, Ludwig wrote, designed and puppeteered the shadow puppet segments for the Disney Channel/Henson Production show *Bear in the Big Blue House*. He also puppeteered in the Disney Channel's *The Book of Pooh*. In 2005, along with Mitchell Kriegman and Dean Gordon, Ludwig received an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Director for the *Book of Pooh* episode *The Great Honey Pot/Paging Piglet*.

Initially, Ludwig garnered national attention for two productions commissioned by the Arts Festival of Atlanta: *Cirque Pataphysique*, based on the work of Alfred Jarry, in 1988, and *Zeitgeist: Der Geist Der Stets Vennient* (*The Spirit of Our Times: The Spirit That Always Denies*), a solo performance in 1990.

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Ludwig is a co-founder of *XPT*, the thriving *Xperimental Puppetry Theater* at the Center for Puppetry Arts. He has performed as part of the Center's resident company in his own works and in numerous productions of the Center's repertoire, including Theodora Skipitares' *Defenders of the Code*, Bruce D. Schwartz's *Marie Antoinette Tonight*, and many of Janie Geiser's earlier productions. Ludwig also works with various Atlanta theatres and was most recently the puppet coach for Synchronicity Performance Group's 2005 production of Paula Vogel's *Long Christmas Ride Home*.

Ludwig has taught puppetry workshops for theatres and organizations, including the New Dramatists in New York City, Emory University in Atlanta, and the University of Texas in Austin. He is a member of the Directors Guild of America and ASCAP.

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