Press material for

DARWIN THE DINOSAUR

Also billed as:

CORBIAN THE DINOSAUR
A GLOW IN THE DARK ADVENTURE

NEW YORK POST  “You can’t get this at the movies or in a DVD.”
“Darwin the Dinosaur teaches us why live theater will never go extinct.”
Leigh Witchel

LA TIMES  “It is a wonderful hour of fantasy that combines ancient, wordless storytelling with modern technology and music.”

BROADWAYWORLD.COM  “…an eye-popping display of storytelling that's like nothing else you've ever seen” “Corbian Visual Arts and Dance is a force to be reckoned with.”
"You can't get this at the movies or on dvd...Darwin the dinosaur teaches us why live theater will never go extinct."

NEW YORK POST

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LA TIMES

JIM HENSON FOUNDATION

CORBIAN

Detroit Music Hall
Electroluminescent crayon-like creatures light up the night in a heart rending tale of a scientist and his creation. Truly unique and visually dazzling, Darwin has been universally praised for its cutting edge blend of puppetry, technology, and dance.
Creators Ian Carney and Corbin Popp
The story begins with Professor Henslow, a famous scientist who has magic powers. We find him in his workshop, putting his latest creation, Darwin, together piece by piece. With a wave of Henslow’s magic wand, Darwin is brought to life.

Darwin is much more than a pet—he is a dinosaur, a wild and primitive creature. Though he learns to take his first steps from his creator, Darwin’s animal instincts eventually take over and he succumbs to his predatory nature.

Realizing that he is suddenly in danger, Professor Henslow cleverly responds by making Darwin a heart, thereby creating in Darwin compassion for other beings. Darwin is transformed and a lasting bond develops between creator and beast.

Professor Henslow encourages Darwin to explore life beyond the workshop and sends him off with fireflies to guide him through the night. Darwin encounters many different types of creatures—Verla, the gangly ostrich; Peche, the beautiful fish; and Brutus, the menacing red dinosaur to name a few. From each experience, He learns something new about the world around him.

In the end when Brutus threatens Professor Henslow, Darwin is forced to make a decision. A decision that will alter his life forever and, ultimately, lead him to discover the true meaning of love.
Creators Ian Carney and Corbin Popp met while dancing in Twyla Tharp's Broadway show Movin' Out. An immediate connection was made as they discovered their mutual love of art, theater and technology. After coming across a product called EL wire, the lights turned on. EL wire is a electroluminescent wire that is powered by batteries. Unlike black light, this technology glows from within and requires no outside source of power. The possibilities seemed endless. Together with their wives Eleanor and Whitney they began to develop puppetry based creatures that quickly gained personality.

They then relocated from New York, to Ian and Eleanor's home in New Orleans to continue the creative process. It was here, in the Katrina ravaged city that the show began to take shape. The result, after years of engineering and development is Darwin. Truly unique and visually dazzling, Darwin is an innovative theatrical experience. Crayon-like creatures light up the stage in a heart-rending tale of a dinosaur that discovers the true meaning of love. Originally created in partnership with The Detroit Music Hall, Darwin has performed across the country for enthusiastic audiences of all ages.
IAN CARNEY: Born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Mr. Carney was raised in New Orleans, La., where he began his training with Harvey Hysell and Diane Carney. He continued his studies as a scholarship student with David Howard in New York and Devon Carney of the Boston Ballet. Mr. Carney graduated from Tulane University with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature while continuing to perform with Ballet Hysell in New Orleans. He then joined Montgomery Ballet with his wife Eleanor in 1996. He has danced principal roles in Coppelia, The Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty, Scheherazade, Petrouchka, and Les Sylphides to name a few. He danced the lead roll on Broadway in Billy Joel and Twyla Tharps' musical Movin' Out for three years and was also the dance captain. Mr Carney is currently a guest artist with Youth America Grand Prix and performs across the United States as dancer, teacher and choreographer.

CORBIN POPP: From Lincoln, Nebraska, sparked interest in dance at the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company pausing to pursue academics, graduating with a BS in Biochemistry, minor in Math and Physics, from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) 1999. In 2000, he was a Fulbright scholar located in Germany. He began his professional dance training during his final years at UNL, and has since continued on dancing professionally with the Omaha Theater Company, The Sacramento Ballet, Complexions, Billy Joel's Movin' Out on Broadway and most recently The Phantom of the Opera on Broadway.
Loosening the grip that computer games and other technology-based entertainment have on young attention spans could use some “alternating currency.” Recently, Center Theatre Group jolted the effort forward with a P.L.A.Y. production at the Kirk Douglas Theatre entitled “Darwin: An Adventure for All Ages.” The multi-disciplinary production drew a couple of housefuls of Culver City kids and their handlers. And, true to its claim, connected with the full span of viewers.

Created, choreographed and directed by Ian Carney and Corbin Popp, “Darwin” is rich in the technologically dazzling visuals that today’s kids relish. It also promotes appreciation for puppetry and movement, art forms that resonate best in live performance. However, because the onstage characters appear to be mere light drawings, younger patrons may not appreciate what they’re appreciating until the humans reveal themselves at curtain call.

‘Darwin’ creates a menagerie of fantastic figures from squiggles of thin, neon piping and sets them into a dark Douglas stage. With a relationship reminiscent of Geppetto and Pinocchio and images recalling the Main Street Electrical Parade, ‘Darwin’ tells a story of a good-natured dinosaur discovering the outside world. Assembled and nurtured by a lonely scientist, Darwin is soon sent out to experience life for himself. His adventures will include escaping a carnivorous Tyrannosaurus, meeting a friendly pair of longneck creatures, and a deepwater swim with the fishes, including a big bopper with sunglasses.

Eventually, overcome by worry and loneliness, the scientist goes looking for him and gets caught up in the fun and danger.

Justifying naming the dinosaur after Charles Darwin, the biologist who proposed the theory of evolution, a pre-show voiceover explains that he “discovers the evolution of love.” It’s tenuous, but clearly traced by a bright-red squiggle in the shape of a heart. The heart is passed from scientist to dinosaur to fish, etc. leaving each bearer with an increased peace, love and understanding.

Such a mix of science and creation might seem provocative in an age when schoolyards – like those the play visited on its brief tour – are battlegrounds for curriculum challenges. Some now demand that a religious-based ‘Creationism’ get equal time with Darwin’s Evolution theory. Still, it’s hard to imagine a show as inspired and well-intended as ‘Darwin’ stirring up any controversy.

Instead, it is a wonderful hour of fantasy that combines ancient, wordless storytelling with modern technology and music – both orchestral and pop. From the audience response, ‘Darwin’ has made future theater visits an easy sale – for all ages. And that’s evolution our culture needs more of. From my nephews’ post-show discussion, I can add one more rave: “Our favorite part was the light sabers.”
CORBiAN Visual Arts and Dance is a unique group of individuals, led by artistic directors Ian Carney and Corbin Popp, who are committed to bringing startling and engaging imagery to the stage. By utilizing illuminated wiring, puppetry, and a troupe well versed in dance and movement, they're able to bring their simple, but elegant sketches to life. Their clever production Darwin played the Edison Theatre this past weekend (May 8, 2010), and provided a large and receptive audience with an eye-popping display of storytelling that's like nothing else you've ever seen.

The plot is sort of a more benign Jurassic Park-type tale, with a scientist creating a green raptor-like critter, who he provides with a heart that seems to tame his more base instincts. Though they form a bond, the scientist reluctantly sends his creation off to find his place in the world. Along the way, he encounters huge birds, fish, and a vicious red cousin. Saddened at his loss, and wary of what might have become of him, the scientist ventures out to find his lost charge. This leads to a climactic battle between red and green raptors that plays out with nods to both Star Wars and The Matrix.

The performers carry off this action with tremendous skill and grace, easily captivating the audience, and allowing them to become fully invested in the journey taking place. Each member is required to suit up in black before being covered in whatever wiring is needed to conjure up the creature appearing on stage at the time, so their anonymity is assured. But, they all possess the talent necessary to manipulate their bodies and puppets in ways that make each of them seem vibrantly alive and breathing.

Watching Darwin is an exhilarating experience, and a literal feast for the eyes and ears, with atmospheric sound cues and music neatly syncing up to the movements to produce a complete picture. Corbian Visual Arts and Dance is a force to be reckoned with, and it will be interesting to see how they evolve, especially with the inevitable technological advances that will come over time.

I really enjoyed attending the Washington University Ovations! Series at the Edison Theatre this season, because it gave me the opportunity to expose my young son to some of the most innovative and imaginative theatrical companies from around the globe. He was able to experience the thrills of a world-class clown (Jamie Adkins’ Circus Incognito), some super-cool percussion from musicians who build their own instruments (ScrapArtsMusic), and the striking visual artistry of CORBiAN Visual Arts and Dance (Darwin).

by Chris Gibson
GOOD IDEA

Dinosaurs at the Deutsche Theater
To bring light into the dark. That can either be sobering or incredibly beautiful. Both are true for the American light-show “Darwin the Dinosaur” in the Deutsche Theater: It is fascinating when the figures - made of glowing wire - whirl over the stage. It is sobering when the spotlight reveals skeletons full of tech after the show. The dance theatre which can be seen until the beginning of August is definitely an adventure. That is mostly because of the visual originality of Corbin Popp´s and Ian Carney´s concept. Six artists with classic ballet background control figures - consisting of glowing flexible wire - with their bodies. The dancers submerge into the total darkness of the stage but the puppets come to life. The scientist Professor Henslow creates Darwin the dinosaur. He gives a heart to the wild beast and brings it to life. Consequently Darwin starts travelling to discover the world and to have adventures. Finally he has to fight against the evil dinosaur Brutus to save his creator. All that is aesthetical to look at and plays skillfully provided with music, with the audiences perception. The experiment technique meets dance succeeded here.
**EN EL TEATRO DEL GIMNASIO MODERNO**

**Se busca un corazón**

**Darwin** es un dinosaurio que vive en el mundo de hoy y es maloso. Sus amigos lo ayudan a mejorar.

Títeres manejados con cables e iluminados (electroiluminación y teatro negro), así como cinco bailarines hacen la obra **Darwin**, un montaje de la compañía estadounidense Corbin Visual Arts and Dance.

"Darwin no está pensada en el célebre naturista inglés Charles Darwin. Es el nombre que un reconocido científico de la fantasía, llamado Henslow, le puso a su creación de laboratorio: un dinosaurio", dice Ian Carney, director del grupo.

Darwin y el profesor se hacen amigos, pero, con el paso de los días, el dinosaurio comienza a mostrar sus instintos agresivos y se convierte en un peligro para quienes lo rodean.

La solución es conseguirle a Darwin un corazón y, cuando ya lo tiene, el dinosaurio decide buscar la forma de que este corazón tenga sentimientos, encontrando nuevos amigos y aprendiendo de ellos. Este montaje es para toda la familia.

**TEATRO DEL GIMNASIO MODERNO, CARRERA 8A, NO. 74-90, K.OY, 2 Y 6 P.M. MARANA, 11 A.M. Y 3 P.M. 40.000 Y 60.000 PESOS.**
“Darwin the Dinosaur”

Technical Requirements as of October 2010(subject to change)

COMPANY

☐ Cast of five performers.

RUNNING TIME

☐ One hour performance including question and answer period (if time permits).

ACCESS

☐ Corbian’s stage manager will telephone in advance of the engagement to confirm the company’s arrival time and to answer any questions.

☐ We require a minimum of 2 persons for load in\out and 2 professional technicians, one for lighting (just for bows) and one for sound.

☐ Stage area, loading doors and dressing rooms need to be cleared to allow for set up immediately upon arrival.

☐ Stage should be swept.

☐ No food or beverages should be permitted in the theatre.

☐ Set-up: 2 and ½ hours plus 1\2 hour house. ( INTERNATIONAL : if you are the first show of a international tour that requires the company to use air transport, We require a 5 hr load in.

☐ Strike: 2 hours ( since strike is executed by cast, a 30 min cool-down period is required to prevent injury before strike can begin)
PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum dimensions of stage 30’ wide x 30’ deep x 16’ high. These dimensions refer to an unimpeded space, free of hanging lights or heating ducts. Stage access from the audience -stairs on the side or middle if possible for performers to use during the show.

- A darkened auditorium is necessary. Pls check for dark before company arrives. All backstage lights must be off. Any light leaks from doors, skylights, leds etc. must be masked. The darker the theater, the better the show. A black stage floor is required. A black dance marley is preferred if available to be laid before company arrives.

- Three dressing rooms are required for six people. The rooms should have chairs and tables. They should be clean, lockable and ready for the company upon arrival and for up to 90 minutes afterward. A room for tech repairs is needed – a green room would be fine.

- The availability of cold juice or water would be appreciated.

- When the company is performing an early morning and noon performance, the presenter is to supply a light lunch (ie: soup, sandwiches, veggie or fruit platter), if possible.

- Masking: Legs and borders, ballet hung, must be black. A black back drop or traveler with a minimum crossover of 10 feet. If stage depth permits a 15 foot crossover is ideal as long as there is at least 20 feet of performance space remaining. There must be room for a 20’ rack that holds all puppets. Ideally this is placed in the 15’ crossover behind the black backdrop but can work on sr or sl if depth of stage is not adequate. 15’ of clear wing space is required to house the rack if it is sr or sl.

If your venue doesn’t meet technical requirement specifications please contact:

Ian Carney @ 504-610-1077

ELECTRICAL / LIGHTING

- The company requests the venue have a general lighting wash available for the curtain call and question and answer session.

- One downstage center special 10 foot diameter for bows.
The company requires the service of one professional lighting technician to operate the venue’s lighting.

Ambient light for backstage costume changes be provided by company.

**SOUND**

The company will use the house sound system and requires the service of one professional sound technician to operate the venue’s sound. We usually use mp3 format but also carry cd.

The cast will need access to a microphone for the Q & A session if applicable and must be arranged in advance.

Corbian reserves the right to film each performance for company archive and not for public use.

Speakers: The playback will be run through the front of the house speakers. Two monitors should be placed in either corner of the stage front.

*It is important that all sound be set up and operational before the company arrives.*

**IMPORTANT**

In the interest of safety we would appreciate having the audience away from the performance and working area once the show is underway as our equipment and set pieces are fragile. However supervised visitors are most welcome at the close of the show. *Cameras and video cameras are prohibited during the performance.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

We can be reached by telephone 504-669-3580 or by email lanel@juno.com

**AGREED TO BY:**

Sponsoring Organization: __________________________ Date: __________

Sponsor’s Signature: _____________________________________________