



PRESS RELEASE  
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For Immediate Release  
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## **THEATRE COMPANIES UNITE TO REPRESENT DC IN NATIONAL ‘PLAYS FOR PRESIDENTS FESTIVAL’**

**ONE-NIGHT-ONLY PERFORMANCE OF *44 PLAYS FOR 44 PRESIDENTS*  
IS A PAY-WHAT-YOU-CHOOSE BENEFIT FOR  
THEATREWASHINGTON’S ‘TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN’ INITIATIVE**

(Washington, DC) dog & pony dc is proud to announce an ensemble of theatre companies and artists has formed to present a one-night-only performance of ***44 Plays for 44 Presidents*** a week before the 2012 Presidential election. ***44 Plays for 44 Presidents*** is a 2-hour show comprised of short, biographical scenes highlighting the lives of all the American presidents. ***44 Plays for 44 Presidents*** was written by Andy Bayiates, Sean Benjamin, Genevra Gallo-Bayiates, Chloe Johnston, and Karen Weinberg and originally produced by The Neo-Futurists of Chicago, IL. *44 Presidents* will perform at Source (1835 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington, DC) Monday, October 29, 2012 at 8:00pm. It is being presented as a pay-what-you-choose with all proceeds going directly to theatreWashington’s “Taking Care of Our Own” initiative. Tickets can be reserved online at [dogandponydc.com](http://dogandponydc.com).

dog & pony dc was honored to have been approached to represent DC in the Plays for Presidents Festival--a national collaboration of theatre and educational artists encouraging artistic conversations about the power of democracy and the responsibility of the electorate. d&pdcc is a long-time fan of the Neo-Futurists approach to creating work that draws on artists’ personal experiences to create immediate and visceral performances that connect to audiences’ in unique, compelling ways. The company is also highly invested in promoting theatre that inspires artists and audience to investigate contemporary culture, society, and politics. However the ensemble-based dog & pony dc knew they never wanted to go it alone. “From the start, we saw this as an opportunity to form a momentary ensemble of DC theatre companies and artists,” said Lorraine Ressegger, Ring Leader of dog & pony dc. “DC’s performance of ***44 Presidents*** for the festival was a mini-festival within itself.”

Twelve (12) DC theatre companies have come together to perform the show as a script-in-hand staged reading. Participating companies include: Faction of Fools; Factory 449; Flying V; The Hub Theatre; Landless Theatre Company; Longacre Lea; Pinky Swear Productions; Pointless Theatre; Washington Improv Theater; National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts; Grain of Sand. Contact information below for all companies collaborating on this production.

Each participating company was assigned between 1 and 7 of the 44 scenes and charged with casting, staging, and (minimally) designing them within their own aesthetic and style. CulturalDC graciously donated the use of Source, a black box theatre in the U Street corridor.

This event is free, however donations will be accepted at the door for theatreWashington’s “Taking Care of Our Own” initiative. Seats can be reserved online at dog & pony dc’s website at no extra charge.



**About the Play:** Hailed by the Chicago Sun Times as “zany, clever, ambitious and often surprisingly moving,” *44 Plays for 44 Presidents* has garnered a history of sold out audiences and critical praise since its 2002 premiere at The Neo-Futurists Theatre Company (originally *43 Plays for 43 Presidents*). *44 Plays for 44 Presidents* is a 2-hour show comprised of short, biographical scenes highlighting the lives of all the American presidents. Their mistakes and successes are celebrated by a company of actors who take turns donning a star-spangled coat that symbolizes the presidency. Beginning with George Washington’s almost Eden-like perfection, the scenes shift frequently between the comic and the tragic, from Ben Franklin giving Thomas Jefferson a Borscht Belt-style roast, to the frank portrayal of William Henry Harrison’s life as an “Indian slayer,” and later the grim onset of the Civil War. Act II starts off the twentieth century with the assassination of William McKinley, moves through a Nixon-praising dance number and a George Bush, Sr. mini-musical about dirty campaigning, and arrives at a polarized America in both the George W. Bush and Barack Obama plays. Audience members consider their role in shaping the history they’ve just witnessed, as they are.

**About the Festival:** The Plays for Presidents Festival 2012 is a national collaboration of theatre and educational artists interested in elevating political discourse and highlighting the impact of history through the production of *44 Plays for 44 Presidents*. No fewer than 44 theatres, colleges, and high schools will produce the play in conjunction with the 2012 Presidential Election - culminating in an online composite video production of *44 Plays for 44 Presidents* made up of contributions from all 44 productions. “This experiment is a way of uniting the theatre community around something specific,” says Andy Bayiates Festival Co-Chair and Co-Writer of *44 Plays for 44 Presidents*. “It puts high school drama kids side-by-side, virtually speaking, with professional

**About Taking Care of Our Own:** Taking Care of Our Own is a new initiative of theatreWashington and was born to meet a critical need in our community, assisting currently active Washington area theatre professionals and artists in personal emergency situations. Taking Care of Our Own raises funds in a number of ways including: *The Bucket Brigade*: Following curtain call at performances in participating theatres, artists and staff will hold the buckets to collect audience donations for the fund; *Virtual Buckets*: Collection of funds on theatrewashington.org.

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### ***44 Plays for 44 Presidents***

Written by Andy Bayiates, Sean Benjamin, Genevra Gallo-Bayiates, Chloe Johnston, and Karen Weinberg

Originally produced The Neo-Futurists of Chicago, IL before the 2008 election under the title *43 Plays for 43 Presidents*

### **Collaborating Companies**

Faction of Fools - <http://factionoffools.org/>

Factory 449 – <http://www.factory449.org/>

Flying V - <http://flyingvtheatre.tumblr.com/>

The Hub Theatre - <http://thehubtheatre.org/>

Landless Theatre Company - <http://landlesstheatre.com/>



Longacre Lea - <http://longacrelea.org/>

Pinky Swear Productions - <http://pinkyswear-productions.com/>

Pointless Theatre - <http://pointlesstheatre.com/>

Washington Improv Theater - <http://washingtonimprovtheater.com/>

National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts - <http://www.theconservatory.org/Home.html>

Grain of Sand - <http://grainofsandtheatre.com/>

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE AND LOCATION**

*44 Plays for 44 Presidents* will perform at 8pm on Monday October 29, 2012 at Source (1835 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington, DC).

### **PRESS PERFORMANCE**

This performance is open to coverage but not for review.  
RSVP to [rachel@dogandponydc.com](mailto:rachel@dogandponydc.com).

### **TICKETS**

General Admission; Free; Donations being accepted at the door for theatreWashington's "Taking Care of Our Own" initiative.

Available at [dogandponydc.com](http://dogandponydc.com).

**MORE INFORMATION:** [dogandponydc.com](http://dogandponydc.com) or [playsforpresidents.com](http://playsforpresidents.com)

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### **ABOUT dog & pony dc**

dog & pony dc is an ensemble-based company who creates innovative performances that incorporate new ways for audiences to experience theater. d&pc creates ("devise") theatrical productions from inception to production as a collective ("ensemble"). d&pc's approach engages artists and audiences as a cohesive team, "conspiring" as integral participants in the creation of each performance. With every production d&pc challenges itself and the DC theatre community to explore the elastic relationship between performer and audience through its "audience integration" approach.

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