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Groundbreaking director Brian Jucha returns to Houston for The Catastrophic Theatre's world premiere of *Toast*

TOAST marks New York-based Jucha's long-awaited follow-up to *We Have Some Planes* with Infernal Bridegroom Productions

(Houston, TX) The Catastrophic Theatre is thrilled to welcome experimental director Brian Jucha back to Houston for the world premiere of his newest work, *Toast*. The collectively-realized production reunites Jucha and many of the same artists at Infernal Bridegroom Productions that created legendary productions of *Last Rites* and *We Have Some Planes* together. *Toast* opens April 12 and runs through May 5, with a preview on April 11. Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased at matchouston.org or by calling the Box Office at 713-521-4533. Performances are Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. As always at Catastrophic, all tickets are Pay-What-You-Can.

"Do I smell toast or am I having a stroke?"

Toast takes audiences on a raucous and mind-bending journey through a bizarre Dante's Nine Circles of Hell complete with an alien abduction, group psychosis, a mock trial and text ripped straight from the headlines. It is expressionistic, absurdist dance theatre with so many pop culture references, it will make your head spin. A timely study on love and our modern culture, aging and the afterlife and grieving our missing loved ones. *Toast* is derived largely from the creative work of the ensemble. It's like Catastrophic met Pina Bausch met Richard Foreman met Brian Jucha.

Toast completes a trilogy that started with 1997's *Last Rites* and 2002's *We Have Some Planes*, two legendary Infernal Bridegroom productions, the latter of which landed Jucha and the company on the cover of *American Theatre* magazine. Jucha says, "I am working collaboratively with the ensemble using Viewpoints and composition work, pulling from pop culture and current events. It's gonna be fucking nuts." Internationally renowned lighting designer Roma Flowers will join the production team as she has for many of Jucha's original works including *Last Rites* and *We Have Some Planes*.

If you were lucky enough to see either of Jucha's prior works with Infernal Bridegroom you already know you're in for a wildly funny, deeply moving ride. The *Houston Press* said *LAST RITES* was "ridiculously funny and mesmerizingly thoughtful." *American Theatre* called *WE HAVE SOME PLANES* "darkly hilarious and compelling" and raved "Jucha and the extraordinary Infernal Bridegroom Company have given us a way to open our eyes."

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

BRIAN JUCHA has created original interdisciplinary theater works for over 25 years. He is delighted and inspired to return in 2019 to create a new work with Catastrophic Theatre of Houston, Texas called *TOAST*.

Jucha's greatest personal triumph came in collaboration with the company of actors of INFERNAL BRIDEGROOM PRODUCTIONS with *WE HAVE SOME PLANES*. Less than 6 months after September 11 – the New York artist used the verbatim transcripts from the morning of 9/11 between the cockpits and pilots of the four planes that crashed that day and the air traffic controllers along the east coast corridor as the basis of a new work. *WE HAVE SOME PLANES* received critical rave reviews, standing ovations and landed both Jucha and Infernal Bridegroom on the cover of *American Theatre* magazine.

Jucha is known for working closely with ensembles of actors to create original pieces. He is a theater artist who is not a playwright. He relies as heavily on stylized movement as he does on spoken text. His singular performance style is always visually arresting, engaging, and entertaining. The performances – conceived by Jucha – have ranged from performance/dance to adaptations of plays to original rock operas, to theater of the absurd collages using current events, texts from found sources (court trials, newspaper articles, self-help books); kaleidoscopes of music, sound and soaring singing; and always a technically proficient array of imagery and movement.

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ABOUT THE CATASTROPHIC THEATRE

Formed in 2007 by Jason Nodler and Tamarie Cooper, The Catastrophic Theatre is Houston's premier creator and producer of new work for the theatre. The nationally acclaimed organization is dedicated to developing productions that foster a meaningful exchange between artists and audiences. A recipient of two prestigious MAP Fund commissioning grants, the theatre has gained an international reputation for its original pieces, which have attracted audiences from across the United States, Europe, and Australia. Artistic director Jason Nodler is the recipient of a NEA/MacDowell Colony fellowship, a Houston Press Mastermind award, and an unsolicited and unrestricted creative grant from Creative Capital. Awarded Best Season, Best Actor, and Best Artistic Director by the Houston Press Theatre Awards in 2017, The Catastrophic Theatre offers Houston audiences a repertoire of challenging, innovative work that can't be seen anywhere else in the country.

TICKET INFORMATION: All performances are held at The Midtown Arts Theatre Center (MATCH). Tickets can be ordered online (catastrophictheatre.com OR matchouston.org) or by phone (713-521-4533). ALL PERFORMANCES ARE PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN.

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