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**CUTTING BALL THEATER OPENS 14TH SEASON WITH
FINAL AUGUST STRINDBERG CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION PROGRAM
“STRINDBERG CYCLE: THE CHAMBER PLAYS IN REP”**

October 12 – November 18, 2012
World Premiere translations by Paul Walsh

SAN FRANCISCO (September 06, 2012) – **Cutting Ball Theater** opens its 14th season with **Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep**, a festival of August Strindberg’s five Chamber Plays in new translations by **Paul Walsh**. Cutting Ball Artistic Director **Rob Melrose** directs **Strindberg Cycle**, featuring **James Carpenter, Robert Parsons, Caitlyn Louchard, Danielle O’Hare, Carl Holvick-Thomas, David Sinaiko, Ponder Goddard, Paul Gerrior, and Gwyneth Richards**, along with **Anne Hallinan, Nick Trengove, Michael Moerman, and Alex Shafer**. **Strindberg Cycle** plays **October 12 through November 18** at the Cutting Ball Theater in residence at EXIT on Taylor (277 Taylor Street) in San Francisco. **Strindberg Cycle** provides audiences with an opportunity to see the Chamber Plays performed separately, as well as in a “Chamber Play Marathon” of all five shows in one day. For tickets (Regular performances \$10-50; Strindberg Cycle Festival Pass \$75) and more information, the public may visit **cuttingball.com** or call **415-525-1205**.

Strindberg Cycle is the final offering in Cutting Ball’s year-long programming celebrating the centennial of August Strindberg’s death, which honored the playwright’s vast career throughout 2012 with symposiums, lectures, and staged readings of his works. Additionally, Cutting Ball is partnering with UC Berkeley, University of Wisconsin - Madison, and Harvard University on a special website for **Strindberg Cycle**. The company received a \$20,000 grant from the NEA to build the website, which will create many avenues for unique forms of audience engagement, targeted both at theatergoers and those who may not be able to attend the live performances.

The Chamber Plays are **THE GHOST SONATA, THE PELICAN, THE BLACK GLOVE, STORM,** and **BURNED HOUSE**; this will be the first time all five of Strindberg’s Chamber Plays will be performed together in repertory in any language.

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THE GHOST SONATA tells the story of a strange encounter between a student and an old man and begins the morning after a terrible fire. A “ghost supper” is shared in a round room, secrets are divulged, plots are foiled, illusions are shattered, and the true haunting nature of things is revealed. The most well known of Strindberg’s Chamber Plays, **THE GHOST SONATA** serves as the centerpiece of **Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep.**

Based on the myth that a pelican sheds its own blood to feed its young, **THE PELICAN** presents a family where the exact opposite is true. The widow Elise plots with her lover to steal her children’s inheritance while they starve in their own home. When the children discover the truth, the revelation sparks a small revolution.

In **THE BLACK GLOVE** a lost black glove found in the entryway to a large apartment building the day before Christmas Eve mystically passes through the hands of many of its residents as it bestows a Christmas spirit.

In **STORM**, an elderly gentleman near the end of his life lives peacefully in a building neighbors call “the quiet house.” His peace is shattered, however, when the new neighbors upstairs, the young wife and child he left many years ago, and her new husband, plan to turn their home into a private casino. Years of jealousy and resentment rise to the surface as he tries to help his former wife out of a bind and finds that the ghosts of his past still haunt him.

In **BURNED HOUSE**, prodigal son Arvid arrives in his hometown of Stockholm after decades of living in the United States only to find that his childhood home burned down the night before. While detectives search through the rubble for clues about the cause of the fire, Arvid sifts through the ashes to uncover the dark secrets hidden by his family and the town. As more secrets are revealed, Arvid finds the tools he needs to exact revenge on his brother for crimes committed long, long ago.

Translator Paul Walsh, director and Cutting Ball Artistic Director Rob Melrose, and actor and Cutting Ball Associate Artistic Director Paige Rogers dreamt about bringing **Strindberg Cycle** to fruition for years, as all three are Strindberg aficionados. Melrose completed his thesis at the Yale School of Drama on Strindberg’s last play *The Great Highway*, and directed the play, which, at the time, had only been produced once in the United States. Walsh completed his doctoral dissertation on the early plays of Strindberg at the University of Toronto on “August Strindberg and Dramatic Realism, 1872-1886.” Rogers completed her Princeton University senior thesis on Strindberg’s *Miss Julie*, performing the title role in a production which she also directed.

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“The highlight of the new season is certainly **Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep,**” said Cutting Ball Artistic Director Rob Melrose. “This is an opportunity for Cutting Ball to do what is by far our biggest project to date and allows us to be an important part of the worldwide celebration of Strindberg’s centennial.”

Continued Melrose, “The Chamber Plays encapsulate the themes and techniques Strindberg mastered over his lifetime: ghosts, being haunted by one’s past, the subjectivity of perception, and the thorny relations between men and women. In addition to pioneering theatrical movements in both Realism and Expressionism, Strindberg was a painter, writer, botanist, chemist, photographer, and a linguist. Strindberg was like the Leonardo da Vinci of the Modern world. He was a fascinating human being and one of the fathers of avant garde theater. At the end of his career, Strindberg wrote five thematically connected plays for the Intimate Theater in Stockholm; he called them chamber plays because he thought that they related to his earlier, large-scale work in the same way that chamber music relates to symphonies. We are thrilled to present these works in repertory for the first time, and very grateful to the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation for providing major support for **Strindberg Cycle.**”

A pioneer of naturalism, expressionism, and the theater of dreams, **August Strindberg** (1849 –1912) was one of the world’s most important playwrights and his influence can still be felt today. Tennessee Williams, Eugene O’Neill, Edward Albee, Ingmar Bergman, and Strindberg’s contemporary Henrik Ibsen all cite him as an important influence on their work. Strindberg was a novelist, poet, painter, linguist, and scientist. Near the end of his life, he moved back to his native Sweden and became involved with a small theater in Stockholm called the Intiman (or “intimate”) Theater, for which he wrote five plays, each under 90 minutes. He called them Chamber Plays, signaling that these works would be more compact than the “symphonic” plays he wrote earlier in his career, and noted an affinity he had with chamber music by composers like Beethoven and Chopin. Strindberg wrote more than 70 plays, novels, short stories, and studies of Swedish history, and is arguably one of Scandinavia’s most influential authors. He is widely known as one of the fathers of modern theater.

Rob Melrose is the Artistic Director and co-founder of the Cutting Ball Theater. In addition to **Strindberg Cycle**, his directing credits for the company include *Pelleas & Melisande*, the Bay Area Premiere of Will Eno’s *Lady Grey (in ever lower light)*; *The Tempest*; *The Bald Soprano*; *Victims of Duty*; *Bone to Pick* and *Diadem* (World Premiere); *Endgame*; *Krapp’s Last Tape*; *The Taming of the Shrew*; *Macbeth*; *Hamletmachine*; *As You Like It*; *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*; *Mayakovsky: A Tragedy*; *My Head Was a Sledgehammer*; *Roberto Zucco*; *The Vomit Talk of Ghosts* (World Premiere); *The Sandalwood Box*; *Pickling*; *Ajax for Instance*; *Helen of Troy* (World Premiere);

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and *Drowning Room* (World Premiere). Translations include *No Exit*, *Woyzeck*, *Pelléas and Mélisande*, *The Bald Soprano*, and *Ubu Roi*. He has directed at The Guthrie Theater (*Happy Days*, *Pen*); Magic Theatre (*An Accident*, World Premiere); PlayMakers Rep (*Happy Days*); California Shakespeare Theater (*Villains, Fools, and Lovers*); Black Box Theatre (*The Creature*, starring James Carpenter, World Premiere, BATCC Award for direction), as well as Actors’ Collective; Alias Stage; and Crowded Fire, among others. He is a recipient of the NEA / TCG Career Development Program award for directors. In spring 2010, he was the Public Theater’s artist-in-residence at Stanford University, where he directed *Troilus and Cressida*; Melrose directed *Troilus and Cressida* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in association with the Public Theater as part of OSF’s 2012 season, as well as the Acting Company’s production of *Julius Caesar* at The Guthrie.

Paul Walsh is Associate Professor of Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism at the Yale School of Drama and Artistic Director of the New Harmony Project, a new play development residency program dedicated to serving writers who celebrate hope and the resiliency of the human spirit. For nine years (1996-2005), Walsh was resident Dramaturg and Director of Humanities at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, where he collaborated on dozens of productions, including his own translations of August Strindberg’s *Creditors* (1992), Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* (2004), and *Hedda Gabler* (2007). His translation of Ibsen’s *The Master Builder* was produced to critical and popular acclaim in 2005 by the Aurora Theatre Company in Berkeley and in a revised version at Yale Repertory Theatre in 2009. Additionally, Walsh has worked at new play development venues including the O’Neill Playwrights Conference, the Playwrights Center in Minneapolis, and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, among others; he serves on the Board of Directors of the Ibsen Society of America.

Paige Rogers is an actress, Associate Artistic Director and co-founder of the Cutting Ball Theater. Roger’s directing credits at Cutting Ball include *Tontalwald*, The Hidden Classics Reading Series, Suzan-Lori Parks’ *365 Plays/365 Days*, RISK IS THIS...The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival, and *Mud*. Additionally, Rogers has appeared in Cutting Ball’s productions of Eugenie Chan’s plays *Bone to Pick* and *Diadem*; in the company’s hit production of *The Bald Soprano*; *My Head Was a Sledgehammer*; *As You Like It*; *The Vomit Talk of Ghosts*; *Macbeth*; *Accents in Alsace*; and *The Taming of the Shrew*. She has been seen locally with Berkeley Opera, Lamplighters, Sonoma County Repertory Theater, and on tour with California Shakespeare Theater; national credits include performances at The Kennedy Center, McCarter Theater, Trinity Repertory Company, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Cutting Ball Theater has assembled a talented ensemble of actors for **Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep**. Bay Area theater veteran **James Carpenter** has performed in the Bay Area for 30 years.

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He appeared in over 30 productions during his 14 years as an Associate Artist at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. An Associate Artist at California Shakespeare Theater, Carpenter has appeared in over 30 productions for the company, as well as numerous productions at Aurora Theatre Company, American Conservatory Theater, Marin Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, TheatreWorks, and Black Box Theatre (*The Creature* directed by Rob Melrose). Additional credits include productions at The Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, and Huntington Theatre Company, among others.

Veteran actor **Robert Parsons** makes his Cutting Ball debut in **Strindberg Cycle**. Credits include productions at American Conservatory Theater, Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, San Jose Stage, Word for Word, Shotgun Players, Aurora Theatre Company, SF Playhouse, TheatreWorks, Huntington Theatre Company, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, among others. Cutting Ball Associate Artist **Catilyn Louchard** returns to the company in **Strindberg Cycle**; she previously appeared in the company’s productions of *Pelleas & Melisande*, *The Tempest*, and *The Bald Soprano*. Additional Bay Area acting credits include productions with San Francisco Shakespeare Festival and Actor’s Theatre of San Francisco. She appeared in Shotgun Players’s *The Coast of Utopia Part One: Voyage*; in March 2013 she will return to appear in *Part Two: Shipwreck*. Also returning is Cutting Ball Associate Artist **Danielle O’Hare**, who appeared in the company’s productions of *Lady Grey (in even lower light) and other plays*, *No Exit*, *Helen of Troy*, *Fighter Airplanes*, *The Sandalwood Box*, *the evolutionists club*, *Mr. Fujiyama’s Electric Beach*, and The Hidden Classics Reading Series. Additional credits include productions with theatre Q, Unidentified Theatre Company, Minnesota Fringe Festival, and Theater in the Round.

Making his Cutting Ball debut is **Carl Holvick-Thomas**. Credits include productions at Shotgun Players (*Great Divide*, *God’s Plot*), San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Stage Company, Pacific Repertory Theater, Playwrights Foundation, Marin Shakespeare Company, and Word for Word. A Cutting Ball Associate Artist, **David Sinaiko** most recently appeared in the company’s hit World Premiere production *Tenderloin*, as well as *Lady Grey (in ever lower light)*, *The Tempest*, *Krapp’s Last Tape*, *...and Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi*, *The Bald Soprano*, *Victims of Duty*, and *Endgame*. Other Cutting Ball credits include *The Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *The Sandalwood Box*, *Ajax for Instance*, *Macbeth*, *365 Plays/365 Days*, *Woyzeck*, *Chain Reactions*, and *RISK IS THIS...*The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival. Additional credits include productions at Golden Thread Productions, Crowded Fire Theater, and SF Playhouse; Sinaiko has been seen at the Goodman Theatre, The Actor’s Gang, and in the popular Bay Area one-man production of David Sedaris’ *SantaLand Diaries*.

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Associate Artist **Ponder Goddard** returns to Cutting Ball for **Strindberg Cycle**. Credits include Cutting Ball’s *Taming of the Shrew* and productions at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, The Cochrane Theatre (London), Grassroots Shakespeare London Company, 21 Limbs (London), and the Drama Centre. Cutting Ball Associate Artist **Paul Gerrior** returns for **Strindberg Cycle** having previously appeared in the company’s productions of *Pelleas & Melisande*, *Krapp’s Last Tape*, *Endgame*, *Roberto Zucco*, and *As You Like It*, as well as the workshop production of Trevor Allen’s *Chain Reactions* for RISK IS THIS... The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival, and as part of the Hidden Classics Reading Series. Cutting Ball Associate Artist **Gwyneth Richards** was most recently seen at Cutting Ball in *Pelleas & Melisande*, *Lady Grey (in ever lower light)* and other plays, and appeared in Cutting Ball’s production of *The Taming of the Shrew* and Hidden Classics readings of *Trojan Barbie*, *Snakewoman*, and *Pelleas & Melisande*. She is the recipient of a Bay Area Critics Circle Award and has numerous Bay Area stage credits, including her one-woman show, *Born Again Through Shakespeare*, and the title roles in *Ruth and the Sea* and *The Widow West* for Wily West Productions, with whom she is a company member.

Rounding out the cast, and making their Cutting Ball debuts in **Strindberg Cycle**, are **Anne Hallinan**, **Nick Trengove**, **Michael Moerman**, and **Alex Shafer**. Hallinan’s credits include productions at Shotgun Players (*Voyage*), Boxcar Theatre (*American Dream*, *Museum*), theater Q (*Torch Song Trilogy*), TheaterFIRST (*Arab Israeli Cookbook*), Woman’s Will (*Good Person of Szechuan*), Teatro Campesino (*Mummified Deer*), and San Francisco Mime Troupe. Trengove’s credits include productions at Custom Made Theatre Company, Impact Theatre, and We Players. Moerman’s credits include productions at La Jolla Playhouse, North Coast Repertory, Boxcar Theatre, Center REpertory Company, and San Jose Stage. Shafer’s credits include productions at Shotgun Players, Pear Avenue Theatre, Cinnabar Theater, and Ross Valley Players.

Co-founded in 1999 by theater artists Rob Melrose and Paige Rogers, Cutting Ball Theater presents avant-garde works of the past, present, and future by re-envisioning classics, exploring seminal avant-garde texts, and developing new experimental plays. Cutting Ball Theater has partnered with Playwrights Foundation, and the Magic Theatre/Z Space New Plays Initiative to commission new experimental works. The company has produced a number of World Premieres, West Coast Premieres, and re-imagined various classics. Cutting Ball received the 2008 *San Francisco Bay Guardian* Goldie award for outstanding talent in the performing arts, and was voted “Best Theater Company” in the 2010 *San Francisco Bay Guardian* Best of the Bay issue. The company also earned the Best of SF award in 2006 and “Best Experimental Theater Company” in 2012 from *SF Weekly*, and was selected by *San Francisco* magazine as Best Classic Theater in 2007. Cutting Ball Theater was featured in the February 2010 and 2012 issues of *American Theatre* Magazine.

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Following **Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep, RISK IS THIS...The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival** returns in January with three new works and two new "Risk Translations" in staged readings that push the boundaries of what theater can be. The season continues in March with Eugene Ionesco's absurdist classic **THE CHAIRS** in a new translation by Rob Melrose, directed by Annie Elias (*Tenderloin*). Rounding out the main stage season in May, Cutting Ball presents the World Premiere of **KRISPY KRITTERS IN THE SCARLETT NIGHT**, San Francisco playwright Andrew Saito's poetic portrayal of the heart of a dystopian city.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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Strindberg Cycle features **James Carpenter, Robert Parsons, Caitlyn Louchard, Danielle O'Hare, Carl Holvick-Thomas, David Sinaiko, Ponder Goddard, Paul Gerrior, and Gwyneth Richards**, along with **Anne Hallinan, Nick Trengove, Michael Moerman, and Alex Shafer**.

DATES:

Part 1: **THE GHOST SONATA**

Previews: October 12-13, 8pm; October 14, 5pm

Opens: October 18 (*Press opening: October 18, 7:30pm*)

Part 2: **THE PELICAN and THE BLACK GLOVE**

Previews October 25, 7:30pm; October 26, 8pm

Opens: October 27 (*Press opening: October 27, 8pm*)

Part 3: **STORM and BURNED HOUSE**

Previews: November 1, 7:30pm; November 2, 8pm

Opens: November 3 (*Press opening: November 3, 8pm*)

Closes: November 18, 2012

All regular performances Thursday at 7:30pm, Friday-Saturday at 8pm, and Sunday at 5pm

**Chamber Play Marathon performances:
STORM and BURNED HOUSE, 12pm**

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THE GHOST SONATA, 4:30pm

THE PELICAN and THE BLACK GLOVE, 8:30pm

Strindberg Cycle special events – for more information visit cuttingball.com

Gala Opening Night – October 19, 8pm, \$50 tickets

Strindberg Cycle Marathon Celebration Event – November 10, Storm and Burned House, 12pm; The Ghost Sonata 4:30pm; The Pelican and The Black Glove, 8:30pm; a light boxed lunch will follow Storm and Burned House, dinner will follow The Ghost Sonata, and a post-marathon party will cap off the evening. Tickets \$150.

Mid-Marathon Conversation– November 10, 11, 17 and 18, 3:30pm, lecture and discussion series; coffee and cookies will be served

Sundays– post-performance talkbacks with the artists

Translating and Adapting for the Stage – Friday, October 12, 2:45-3pm, lecture by Paul Walsh in Berkeley; free and open to the public as part of the Association of Swedish Teachers and Researchers in America conference: Strindberg and the Stage. for more information visit astra.us/conference.html

WHERE: The Cutting Ball Theater in residence at EXIT on Taylor, 277 Taylor St., San Francisco

TICKETS: For tickets (Regular performances \$10-50; Strindberg Cycle Festival Pass \$75) and more information, the public may visit **cuttingball.com** or call **415-525-1205**; student discounts available

PHOTOS: High-resolution photos for **Strindberg Cycle** can be found at **cuttingball.com/press** or upon request by emailing **[brightbutterfly\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:brightbutterfly[at]hotmail.com)**

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