

Thursday, November 19, 2015, 8pm  
Friday, November 20, 2015, 8pm  
Saturday, November 21, 2015, 8 pm  
Sunday, November 22, 2015, 3pm  
Zellerbach Playhouse

## Rude Mechs



### *Stop Hitting Yourself*

*These performances are made possible, in part, by  
Patron Sponsors Art Berliner and Marian Lever.*

*Cal Performances' 2015–2016 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

*Stop Hitting Yourself*

Created by Rude Mechs

## CAST

*(in alphabetical order)*

Thomas Graves	<i>Wildman</i>
Heather Hanna	<i>Maid</i>
Joey Hood	<i>Unknown Prince</i>
Hannah Kenah	<i>Trust Fund Sister</i>
Lana Lesley	<i>Socialite</i>
E. Jason Liebrecht	<i>Magnate</i>
Paul Soileau	<i>Queen</i>

*This performance has no intermission.*

## PRODUCTION TEAM

<i>Set Designer</i>	Mimi Lien
<i>Costume Designer</i>	Emily Rebholz
<i>Lighting Designer</i>	Brian H. Scott
<i>Composer &amp; Sound Designer</i>	Graham Reynolds
<i>Properties Designer</i>	Faye Armon-Troncoso
<i>Production Supervisor &amp; Technical Director</i>	Madge Darlington
<i>Production Stage Manager</i>	Dave Polato
<i>Assistant Stage Manager</i>	Samantha Accettulli
<i>Lighting Design Assistant</i>	Christine Causey
<i>Set Design Assistant</i>	Brittany Vasta
<i>Costume Design Assistant</i>	Andie Day
<i>Costume Design Assistant</i>	Mira Veikley
<i>Sound Design Assistant</i>	M. Florian Staab
<i>Tap Choreographer</i>	Danny Herman
<i>Concept Art</i>	Lance Myers
<i>Scenery</i>	Sightline Fabrication
<i>Writer</i>	Kirk Lynn
<i>Director</i>	Shawn Sides
<i>Author</i>	Rude Mechs*

*\* Rude Mechs creates new works collaboratively. The work wouldn't exist without the generative contribution of every artist in the room. Period.*

*Our thanks to the artists on the creation team for this original work that are not listed above: Lisa Laratta, Hope Bennett, Matt Hislope, Dallas Tate, Erin Meyer, Robert S. Fisher, Isaac Klein, Rocker Verastique, Deanne Croan, Patricia Bennett, Paige Evans, Paul Smithyman, Natasha Sinha, and Alexandra Bassett. And to Rick Pappas for his love and support.*

*Originally commissioned and produced by LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater, New York, 2014, creation support for this project came, in part, from The MAP Fund, a program of Creative Capital supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation; the National Endowment for the Arts, because art matters; and the Mid-America Arts Alliance.*



ONCE A YEAR at the Charity Ball, a single worthy cause is selected to benefit from the queen's annual good deed. Families of note compete to find the citizens most deserving of assistance. This year, a socialite has discovered a wildman in the forest and endeavors to improve him. The wildman's desire to save the natural world and to bring about an era of love and harmony is a sure winner. Now she must teach him how to eat and dance, how to bow and flatter, how to behave in society so that his cause can be victorious.

With *Stop Hitting Yourself*, Rude Mechs is embracing the fundamental beliefs underlying late-stage capitalism and indulging in our version of 1930s Hollywood glamour. Part *Pygmalion*, part Busby Berkley, part self-help lexicon—all while dancing around a *queso* fountain. Rude Mechs borrows from the plots of 1930s musicals to dig into the contemporary conservative dilemma: how to honor steely individualism without disavowing the virtue of charity. Tap dancing, fine dining, and the missionary position will be employed in order to help all Americans to stop hitting yourself.

“Improvement. Queso. Charity. Belief.”—*Wildman*



Bret Brookshire

**R**UDE MECHS is an ensemble-based theater collective from Austin, Texas, with a full company of 28 members led by five Co-Producing Artistic Directors. Since 1995, Rude Mechs has created a genre-averse slate of original works that we produce at home in Texas and tour nationally and abroad. What these works hold in common is the use of play to make performance, the use of theaters as meeting places for audiences and artists, and the use of humor as tool for intellectual investigation. In Austin, we manage The Off Center, a performance venue for arts groups of every discipline; run The Austin Scenic Co-op; and conduct outreach in performance and writing for teenage girls. Our off-Broadway productions include *Stop Hitting Yourself*, *The Method Gun*, *Dionysus in 69*, *Get Your War On*, and *Lipstick Traces*. We are deeply proud to represent Texas as a home for cutting-edge theater.

Our creation and development process shifts from production to production. For *Stop Hitting Yourself*, the Co-Producing Artistic Directors met a few times per week for about six weeks in fall 2012. We were thinking about altruism and ended up really focusing on Ayn Rand, especially her novel *Anthem* and an online lexicon of her ideas. We worked around the themes of charity and money and personal extravagances, and we introduced ourselves to

the world of tap dance with YouTube videos (and later with the fabulous Danny Herman). We mounted a full workshop production in April 2013 at The Off Center, then another smaller workshop in September 2013. We ate a lot of *queso*. We did a lot of talking with our audience in Austin and LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater. We cut scenes, added scenes, reinserted scenes. Tap-danced. Ate more *queso*. Started over. We premiered the play at Lincoln Center's Claire Tow Theater in January 2014, and, like we do, we continue to nip and tuck and tweak.

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RECIPE

*Chile con queso*, which translates to peppers with cheese, is pronounced “kay-so.”

*Ingredients*

16 ounces Velveeta cheese, cubed, and one ten-ounce can Rotel

*Directions*

- Combine un-drained tomatoes and Velveeta in medium saucepan.
- Cook over medium heat five minutes or until Velveeta is melted completely and mixture is blended, stirring frequently.
- Serve warm as a dip with tortilla chips.

*Cook's tips*

- You can also make *queso* in the microwave. Or better yet in a crockpot, where it will develop a delicious crust before the party is over.
- You can add milk or half and half if you prefer a runnier *queso*.

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