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**INTER-DISCIPLINARY PERFORMANCE PIECE
TO TAKE AUDIENCE ON 8-HR JOURNEY**

Upcoming production defies traditional artistic conventions

San Francisco's Mission & SOMA Districts, (Sunday May 22, 2005) - The SF cityscape is about to be transformed into a massive and dispersed performance that will blur the line between art and life. **Odyssey Works**, founded by **Abraham Burickson & Matthew Purdon**, will employ scores of artists and performers in locations throughout the Mission and SOMA to create a work of art which defies definition. Part experimental theater, part artistic procession, and part psychological journey, "**Locating the Borderlands**" will happen on a single day, will be viewed by the public at strategic locations, and will have as its protagonists a dozen participants for whom the artists and audience are supporting characters.

As they travel, the protagonists will progress through a series of interactive installations and performances, living a story where dancers, performance artists, painters, actors, musicians, installation artists, psychologists, sculptors, and poets among others play Virgil to an artistic journey which would make Dante and Homer proud. In previous journeys audience members have found themselves in rowboats crossing the river Styx to the underworld, or happened upon a tunnel echoing with recordings of their own thoughts, or been asked to conduct an orchestra of screams, laughs and tears. What will happen this time is a closely guarded secret. At various points throughout the day, however, the public will be invited to join in, becoming extras in a story which will be played and replayed as the participants pass through each scene.

"We brought together artists of every kind who were interested in re-defining the relationship between art and audience," says Burickson. "What we have begun will only be finished by those who pass through it. As they interact with the piece it changes from a series of limitless possibilities into a personal and aesthetic story of which they are the central part."

"Locating the Borderlands" is the culmination of four years of experimental performances by San Francisco based Odyssey Works. "The first pieces were 12 to 24 hour experiences created for a single person," explains Purdon. "We would interview them, videotape them, get to know all their friends, visit their homes, and do whatever else it took to know them well enough to create something that emerged out of them as well as us."

The results were transformative. "Not a day goes by when I don't think about it," says local film maven and subject of Odyssey Works' last piece, **Henry Rosenthal**. Rosenthal's 24- hour journey found him, after endless strange and humorous encounters, deep in the hull of a WWII cargo ship serving as the lone juror at his own trial. To the raucous clamor of a makeshift courtroom full of friends and strangers, he watched as his sins were prosecuted and his virtues defended. "Now," says Rosenthal, "I see the world created in front of me and disappear behind me."

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The new piece attempts to do for a dozen people what the previous pieces did for just one. "All of our works have been experiments," says Burickson. "In this one, without interviewing our audience, we have tried to make each episode participatory to such a degree that the larger themes we are exploring become personal. It's about connecting the universal with the personal."

Collaborating Artists: Mary Anderson, Kay Ceridwen Bachman, Jakob Bokulich, Deborah Burkman, Kim Criswell, Todd "Spark" Donahue, LaRece Egli, Natalia Foster, Fred Grasset, Shoshana Green, Frieda Kipar, Phil Kohlmetz, Virigina Kleker, Jason Linetzky, Ryan Lucas, John Maris, Yuki Mariyama, Dan McDowell, Michelle Morby, Tomoko Murakami, Amy Petrolati, Henry Rosenthal, Liz Sklar, Paul Spitz, Bill Streett, Vivian Triantafillou, Nell Waters, Fay Wyles. Aaron Ximm.

Odyssey Works is an interdisciplinary collaborative arts and performance group that explores the boundary between artist and audience. Odyssey Works does this by creating structures and processes that invite audience participation in a co-creative environment. These environments employ techniques ranging from social relational aesthetics and improvisation to ritual theatre and interactive technologies. This continuing dialogue results in original new work that is immersive, interactive and most of all, immediate.

Odyssey Works was born in 2001 from a continuing dialogue between Mr. Burickson and Mr. Purdon. The group is comprised of dozens of artists in all mediums. It has produced five previous day-long performance events, focused on an audience of one person. Their most recent production, "The Heart of the Labyrinth" was a 24-hr performance created for producer Henry Rosenthal. *Read the SF Bay Guardian article:* <http://www.odysseyworks.org/press.htm>

Matthew Purdon (co-founder) is an interdisciplinary artist, performer and teacher. He has collaborated with Mr. Burickson on five previous Odyssey Works projects. He has also directed more than thirty theatrical productions, including professional work at Victory Gardens Theatre, American Stage Festival, and Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. You may have also caught him acting on the stages of Marin Shakespeare, Ross Valley Players or Masquers Playhouse. Mr. Purdon was the co-creator of The Campus Beat, Chicago's first interactive improvised sitcom that played live on the web and on the stage at ImprovOlympic Theatre. Mr. Purdon currently teaches New Media art at Cal State University East Bay and is completing an MFA degree in Interdisciplinary Art and Performance at JFK University. Mr. Purdon received a BA in theatre at Northwestern University where he studied acting, directing and creative writing.

Abraham Burickson (co-founder) is an accomplished poet whose most recent work has been published in *Gumball Poetry*, *Hubbub* and *Epicenter Magazine*. Trained as an architect at Cornell University, his interest in spatial design evolved into an exploration of installation art. His initial collaborations with Mr. Purdon were immersive and interactive installations, such as the "Co-Lab Network" and the "Eavesdropping Confession Booth". These collaborations stimulated the dialogue that developed into the Odyssey Works performances. This summer, Mr. Burickson will be a writer in residence at the acclaimed Millay Colony in New York State.

For more information, to be considered for one of the twelve participant spots, or to find out where and when to view pieces open to the public, go to:

www.odysseyworks.org

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