

# THEATER OOBLECK

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## **Theater Oobleck Receives National Endowment for the Arts Grant to support "SOS: A Decameron Clown Cruise."**

Chicago, Ill. -- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chairman Jane Chu announced yesterday that Theater Oobleck is one of 919 nonprofit organizations nationwide to receive an NEA Art Works grant. Oobleck is recommended for a \$15,000 grant to support the further development of "SOS: A Decameron Clown Cruise," a two-year collaboration with El Circo Nacional de Puerto Rico that combines El Circo's circus performance skills with Oobleck's new play development methodology. This cross-genre collaboration, a first for both Oobleck and El Circo, kicked off in July 2014 in Chicago, when circus performers and musicians from Puerto Rico came together with Chicago-based actors and musicians for a week of intensive workshops of a script by Theater Oobleck founding member Dave Buchen and El Circo director Arturo Gaskins, culminating with two performances in Humboldt Park, the heart of Chicago's Puerto Rican community. The project continues with workshops and performances in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in January and May 2015 and a four-week run of the final production at the Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center in Chicago's Hermosa neighborhood in June 2015.

NEA Chairman Jane Chu said, "I'm pleased to be able to share the news of our support through Art Works including the award to Theater Oobleck. The arts foster value, connection, creativity and innovation for the American people and these recommended grants demonstrate those attributes and affirm that the arts are part of our everyday lives."

**Art Works** grants support the creation of art, public engagement with art, lifelong learning in the arts, and enhancement of the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,474 eligible applications under the Art Works category, requesting more than \$75 million in funding. Of those applications, 919 are recommended for grants for a total of \$26.6 million. For a complete listing of projects recommended for Art Works grant support, please visit the NEA website at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov). Follow the conversation about this and other NEA-funded projects on Twitter at #NEAFall2014.

**Theater Oobleck** is a 26-year-old collective dedicated to producing and performing original works of theater for the benefit of, and at low or no cost to, the people of Chicago, Illinois, and elsewhere. Oobleck's artists are directly engaged with all aspects of the art-creation process, and directly engaged with the concerns of the community at large. Our

works are written by members of the ensemble; developed by the group, working in concert to create a collective vision without an overseeing director; presented in open rehearsals, allowing audience input before the work's premiere; and "free if you're broke," fostering an unmediated engagement between performer and audience.

**El Circo Nacional de Puerto Rico** is a populist circus founded in 2010 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. They have performed throughout the island in numerous settings including schools, festivals, hospitals, theaters, and the streets.

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