

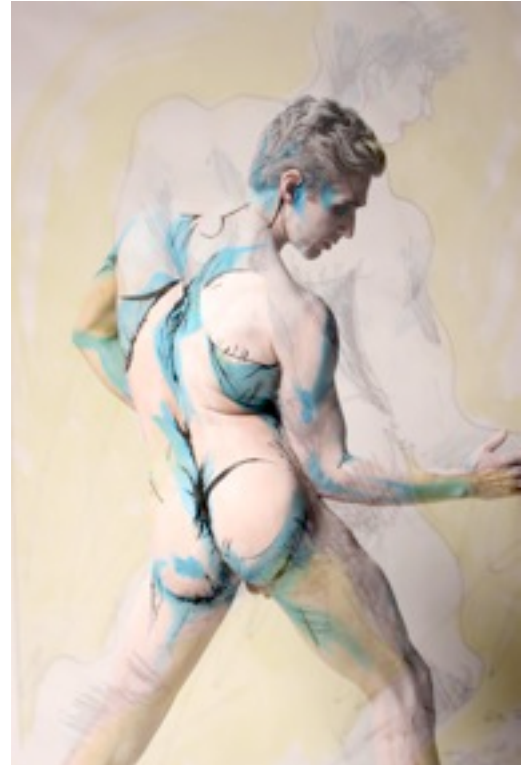
'...a politically charged musical about the modern construction of the homosexual that's ambitious in scope, well-researched, and aesthetically brilliant'. - NOW Magazine

Ecce Homo Theatre Presents

LOVING THE STRANGER OR HOW TO RECOGNIZE AN INVERT

**written and directed by Alistair Newton
based on the life of Peter Flinsch
a part of the 2012 Next Stage Theatre Festival
January 4 - 15, 2012**

Award winning company Ecce Homo Theatre (Of a Monstrous Child: a gaga musical, The Pastor Phelps Project) present an updated remount of Alistair Newton's Loving the Stranger or how to recognize an invert. Meet Montréal's Peter Flinsch: theatre designer, visual artist, and survivor of the Nazi persecution of homosexuals, arrested in 1942 for kissing a friend at a Luftwaffe Christmas party. From the cabarets of 1920's Berlin, to the ongoing battle over gay marriage, all the way to the office of the Prime Minister; sexuality, spectacle, and satire launch a musical blitzkrieg on apathy. Developed through a residency with Buddies in Bad Times Theatre and the 2010 SummerWorks Theatre Festival.



In December of 2009, Ecce Homo Theatre Artistic Director Alistair Newton travelled to Berlin to conduct research on a verbatim theatre project which compared California's anti-gay marriage legislation Proposition 8 with Germany's infamous anti-sodomy law Paragraph 175. During his time in Germany, Alistair learned of the remarkable story of Peter Flinsch. Flinsch was born to upper class parents in Leipzig Germany, was a member of the Hitler Youth as a child and went on to join the Luftwaffe's anti aircraft unit. He was arrested under Paragraph 175 and spent time in a Nazi military prison. After the war, Peter made a life for himself in East Berlin where he worked as a designer for opera and ballet and created political art for the Communist Party. He moved to British Columbia where he co-founded the

Vancouver Ballet and later settled in Montréal in the 1950s. Peter went on to become an internationally recognized visual artist and was awarded the first Lifetime Achievement Award from the Leslie/Lohman Gay Art Foundation in New York in 2006. In 2008, Arsenal Pulp Press released a retrospective of Flinsch's work titled *Peter Flinsch: the Body in Question* by Concordia University's Ross Higgins. Alistair met Peter on January 2, 2010 and recorded what was to be his final interview. With poignant theatrical timing, Peter passed away the very same day of the first public showing of *Loving the Stranger*.

Drawing on the techniques of verbatim theatre, and with a text culled from memoirs, personal interviews, newly translated documents from the history of the gay rights movement in Germany, homophobic Nazi propaganda, and satirical recreations of Proposition 8 TV ads, *Loving the Stranger* presents the incredible story of a witness to queer history in the 20th Century. With a cast of five playing over 30 characters and Canadian stage veteran Hume Baugh as Peter Flinsch. Featuring live music from the queer cabarets of 1920s Berlin and presented in Ecce Homo Theatre's unique visual style which draws influence from German Expressionism and the Epic Theatre of Bertolt Brecht.

Loving the Stranger or how to recognize an invert

written and directed by **Alistair Newton**

production design by **Matt Jackson**

featuring **Hume Baugh** as Peter Flinsch with **Seth Drabinsky, Matt Eger, Kimberly Persona, Geoff Stevens** and dancer **Laurence Ramsay**

original choreography by **Graham Mckelvie**

choreography adapted by **Sky Fairchild-Waller**

musical direction by **Dan Rutzen**

with accompanist **Adam Weinmann**

projection design by **Alex Josselyn**

makeup by **Stacey Laureyssens**

translations and language coaching by **Birgit Schreyer Duarte**

Advance tickets available...

by PHONE (416) 966-1062

ONLINE at www.fringetoronto.com

IN PERSON at the Factory Theatre at the Next Stage Festival Box Office

(between January 4th and 15th, starting one hour before the first show of the day)

