

PRESS RELEASE

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MARYLAND ENSEMBLE THEATRE'S FUN COMPANY SHOW WINS ENSEMBLE AWARD AT THE NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL FRINGE FESTIVAL

FREDERICK, MD (September 4, 2013) The **2013 New York International Fringe Festival's Producing Artistic Director Elena K. Holy** announced this year's recipients of the festival's **Overall Excellence Awards** on August 25 at a ceremony held at the **New York** night club **The Cutting Room**. An independent panel of over 40 theater professionals selected the winners from among the festival's 185 entrants. Among those 185 shows was ***The Young Olympians and the Most Amazingly Awesome Adventure Ever*** produced by **Maryland Ensemble Theatre's** family theatre, **The Fun Company**. The show was also among those whose name was announced at the ceremony on the 25th, winning an Overall Excellence Award for an Ensemble.

Young Olympians made its **World Premiere** in April of 2012 as the third show in the Fun Company's season. Written by MET ensemble member **Sarah Shulman**, *The Young Olympians* tells the story of **Perseus, Jason, Hercules, and Andromeda** as heroes in training at **Homer's School of Heroism** when the Gods of **Mt. Olympus** suddenly develop amnesia and it is up to these four young friends to go on an epic quest to save the day and along the way learn what it really means to be a hero. Along with being an original story, *The Young Olympian's* also contained completely original music composed by fellow MET company member **Thom Huenger**. Fun Company **Artistic Director Julie Herber** directed the show, which was so well received extra performances were added.

Building on the momentum of the World Premiere a fundraising campaign on the crowdfunding website **Indiegogo** was launched in March of 2013 with the goal of raising \$3,500 by May 1 to help make it possible for the show to go the **2013 Capital Fringe Festival** in **Washington DC**. The campaign was successful raising more than the targeted amount and before the end of May the show had also been accepted to the New York International Fringe Festival.

This past June the show received a two week run back home in **Frederick** before heading to the Capital Fringe Festival in July, where it was performed at the **Studio Theatre's** Stage 4. After a successful run in DC the show headed to NYC for the New York International Fringe Festival in late August.

"The Fringe Festival experience is a new one for MET and The Fun Company", said the show's director and Fun Company Artistic Director, Julie Herber. "It was very challenging for us as a producing company that has programming year-round to etch the time out of our busy schedules to take on this pretty monumental task. We had just closed our large-scale production of **Peter Pan**, while beginning rehearsals for our Mainstage and Family Theatre series here at our home in Frederick and now, needed to head to NYC for a week." The show received five performances at **The Theatre at the 14th Street Y** between August 19 and August 25. Herber continued, "The success of our trip is just a testament to the way that our ensemble works. Everyone from cast and crew to administration to fellow ensemble members landed a hand to help us prepare and get ourselves out the door and on the bus to the city. Once there, we had a great time performing the show for new audiences. We received some terrific feedback, not only on our show, but how we handled ourselves as a company. Again, this is another testament to our ensemble philosophy."

On August 25 following the shows final performance it was that ensemble philosophy that was recognized with an Award for Overall Excellence for Ensemble. "You can imagine, we were just thrilled to

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hear that the organization selected us as one of the best ensembles of the Festival”, said Herber. “The atmosphere of new and challenging work that surrounded us while we were there gave us exhilarating inspiration to come back home and continue our creativity at our theatre. We’re so excited to begin another season of work, including another Fun Company original show, ***The Star Stealer***, by ensemble member (and *Young Olympian*) Caitlyn Joy!”

“I don’t really think any of us felt like we were done with the show. We were always wondering what’s next”, said Sarah Shulman, the show’s playwright about the cast and crew that included **Lisa Burl, Karli Cole, Renee Gerard, Thom Huenger, Joe Jalette, Caitlyn Joy, Francis Mwale, Ken Poisson, Reiner Prochaska, Rich Cole, Courtney McLaughlin, Vanessa Strickland** and **Joann Lee**. Young Olympians just wrapped up an exhausting but very rewarding adventure so we’ll all have to wait and see what’s next for the show.

PRESS INFORMATION

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