

January 2010  
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**NEWS RELEASE**  
MEDIA CONTACT  
K. Brian Neel, Writer/Performer (206) 240-8811

## **INTERNATIONAL THEATER ARTIST PERFORMS “MUST SEE” UKULELE OPERETTA**



**SEATTLE, WA** — Seattle solo theater artist, K. Brian Neel, and Balagan Theatre present *VAUD RATS*, January 7 - 16, 2010 at Balagan Theatre on Capitol Hill. This Vaudevillian ukulele operetta has played to critical acclaim and sell-out crowds in Washington, D.C. and Charleston, S.C.

More information about K. Brian Neel and *VAUD RATS* can be found at [www.kbrianneel.com](http://www.kbrianneel.com).

**THE PLAY:** Cecil B. DeUkulele was Big Time.<sup>1</sup> He played the Palace, the Hippodrome and every ritzy Vaudeville house on the Keith-Albee circuit. From the time he was a kid hoofing a song-and-dance, to the comedic headlining patter-man<sup>1</sup> he became, Cecil was born to trod the boards and always knocked ‘em bowlegged.

But then one bad business move puts him on the blacklist. His agent has no option but to sign him to a small, small time nine-act of washed up deadbeats touring Odd Fellows halls and community auditoriums in midwest stix U.S.A.

The silver lining: our hero falls head over heels for a brunette midget sidekick in a strong man routine. The tragedy: the strong man is the husband.

Cecil finds himself singing to the rats in an abandoned warehouse in an unknown whistlestop in the middle of... without a circuit, without an agent, without a cent. He’s just rearing up for his wow finish!<sup>1</sup>

*VAUD RATS* consists of original music and libretto by Neel, peppered with lively dance numbers, tickling comedic banter, and thrilling pantomime. Originally workshopped at Theater Babylon in 2004, selections have been performed for Intrepid Theater in Victoria, Canada, on national tour with the Seattle Mime Theatre, and in cabarets around Seattle. The consummate production premiered at the Capital Fringe Festival in Washington, D.C., Summer of 2006. The full production was also selected for the 2007 Bumbershoot Arts Festival in Seattle, and most recently played the 2008 Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, S.C., presented by Pure Theatre.

<sup>1</sup> Definitions and historical references available online at [www.kbrianneel.com/vaud.html](http://www.kbrianneel.com/vaud.html)

**THE WRITER/PERFORMER:** The inimitable K. Brian Neel has been amazing audiences around the globe for almost twenty years. From his award-winning published writing to his dynamic, highly physical performance style, Brian always captivates and inspires.

Brian began his career directing and performing with *Kings' Elephant Theatre*, America's premiere experimental improvisational ensemble. He became Artistic Foreman of the *Seattle Mime Theatre*—an internationally renowned touring company stretching the definitions of mime. Now he is a freelance theatre artist—performing, writing, directing, and teaching.

Brian has created five other amazing full-length solo shows, including *PRYK*, which was accepted as the final workshop production in the Empty Space Theatre's 2001-02 season and played to standing ovations at Re-bar in Seattle in 2003. *DOUBLE CLIMAX* was crowned Best of Fest at the Edmonton Theatre Festival in 1999, performed at the Bumbershoot Arts Festival in 2001 and across Australia in 2002, including a sold-out run in the Adelaide Festival Fringe. *THE 42ND FLOOR* premiered at On The Boards in Seattle, played the Bumbershoot Arts Festival in 1996 and was crowned Best of Fest at the Vancouver Theatre Festival in 1998. His solo work has been selected Critic's Pick by the Chicago Reader and Seattle Weekly. Here is a selection of praise his work has garnered:

"Seattle's premiere physical theatre powerhouse." - *The Peak, Vancouver (Canada)*

"Amazing writing and performing. Neel is a one-man panorama." - *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

"An elastic, agile performer who uses his body to create an onstage language." - *CBC Radio (Canada)*

"Engrossing and adventurous work, done with consummate skill." - *Seattle Times*

"Neel creates characters that are at once vivid and nuanced." - *Georgia Straight, Vancouver (Canada)*

"Memorable, pure, live theater." - *Adelaide Advertiser (Australia)*

"Brilliant. Dynamic. A true artist in evolution" - *Seattle Weekly*

In 2003, Brian received the Seattle Kibby Award, where he was commissioned to create a solo adaptation of the Russian novel *Omon Ra*. In 2001 he received two Garland Awards—best directing and best ensemble cast—for *Pieces of the First*, which he wrote and directed. His plays have been accepted to the FringeAct Festival at ACT Theatre in Seattle. For eleven seasons, he's participated in 14/48, the world's quickest Theater Festival, as a performer and playwright.

In 2005, Brian performed at the Tony Award winning Intiman Theatre in Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, directed by Tony Award nominated Bartlett Sher. He originated the role of Hamster in the world premiere production of *Emperor Incorporated* for the Children's Theatre Company of Sioux Falls. He played Oscar Wilde in Left Coast Theatre's run of the award winning musical *Vera Wilde*, and fifteen characters in the world-premiere of John Moe's rock musical *The Big Time* at the 2004 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. In February 2010 he will perform in Book-It Repertory Theater's adaptation of *The River Why* by David James Duncan, directed by Myra Platt.

Brian has studied with Del Close of the COMPASS PLAYERS and SECOND CITY, Byrne Piven of NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY, Sheldon Patinkin of COLUMBIA COLLEGE, Donna Blue Lachman of the BLUE RIDER THEATRE, Amy Legendre of VELOCITY DANCE, Beverly Mann of IMAGO THEATRE, Richard Henzel's MASK THEATRE and more.

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For more information about the show, or to schedule an interview, please call Brian Neel at **206.240.8811** or email **king@kbrianneel.com** or visit the web page: **www.kbrianneel.com**.

**VAUD RATS**  
**Fact Sheet**

**WHAT:** VAUD RATS, a ukulele operetta  
Written & Performed by K. Brian Neel

**WHERE:** Balagan Theatre  
1117 East Pike Street  
Seattle, WA 98122

**WHEN:** January 7 – 16, 2010  
Thursday – Saturday  
Monday, January 11  
8:00 pm

**TICKETS:** \$15 advanced online, \$20 at the door  
[www.BrownPaperTickets.com](http://www.BrownPaperTickets.com)  
1.800.838.3006  
Students, Seniors, Military, TPS:  
\$12 online, \$15 at the door

**RUNNING TIME** 90 Minutes

**WHO:** **Creative Team:**  
Directors: Meghan Arnette and James Pargulski  
Choreographer: Burke Nemo  
Lighting Designer: Brent Berkley  
Sound Designer: Burke Nemo  
Dialect Coach: Nelly Barker  
Graphic Design: zebre creative

**Production Team:**  
Artist Wrangler: Jennifer Marie  
Technical Conspirator: Brontë Neel

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