

CORBIAN and LIGHT WIRE THEATER  
PRESENT

# The Ugly Duckling



and

## The Tortoise & The Hare

... Fresh on the heels of their break out success, the creators of *Darwin the Dinosaur* are at it again! In an age when television, computers and video games reign supreme, the folks at Light Wire Theater (in conjunction with Corbian Visual Arts and Dance) bring their use of cutting edge technology, moving sculpture, and dance to another unforgettable theatrical experience.

Beginning in January 2012, *The Ugly Duckling* and *The Tortoise and the Hare* will follow in *Darwin's* footsteps through the use of Corbian's signature electroluminescent puppetry.

Hans Christian Andersen's "The Ugly Duckling" has helped generations of children understand one of humanity's universal struggles. Lightwire Theater brings this classic story to the modern stage offering hope to us all as we root for the ugly duckling who exemplifies resilience and heroism along the way to becoming a beautiful swan.

Aesop's fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare," now more than 2,500 years old, continues to drive home the time-tested adage, "Slow and steady wins the race."

Lightwire Theater, with its dazzling visuals, poignant choreography and creative use of music ranging from classical to jazz to pop, literally brings these beloved tales into a new and brilliant light.



# SYNOPSIS

## **The Ugly Duckling**

Of the five eggs in Mother Duck's nest, one is the largest and last to hatch. Bigger and paler than the others, this last hatchling is treated as an outsider by Mother Duck and her ducklings. He may be the best swimmer of the brood, but this alone is not enough to ensure his acceptance. Knowing only rejection, this Ugly Duckling goes out into the wild alone. Reflecting upon his plight under the glow of a remote willow tree, he sees a wily cat creeping in the direction of Mother Duck's nest. The Ugly Duckling follows and watches as one lagging duckling is captured and taken back to the cat's lair. In true heroic fashion, this Ugly Duckling succeeds in vanquishing the cat and rescuing the captured duckling. Celebrated by Mother Duck and her ducklings for his uniqueness, all realize that he may have been an ugly duckling, but he has grown into a beautiful and powerful swan.

## **The Tortoise and the Hare**

Ridiculed by the Hare, the Tortoise challenges him to a race. They set off and the Hare takes a commanding lead right away. Thinking he will win easily, the Hare allows himself to be distracted with many modern day activities; texting, video games and the paparazzi, of course. The Tortoise continues to trudge along at his methodical pace and, despite the fact that the Hare is a swifter creature, wins the race due to his discipline and fortitude.



# CREATORS

## **Corbian Visual Arts and Dance**

The show's creators Ian Carney and Corbin Popp met while dancing in Twyla Tharp's Broadway show *Movin' Out*. Becoming fast friends through their mutual love of art, theater and technology, Corbin showed Ian a product called EL wire and their creative partnership took off.

EL wire is electroluminescent wire powered by batteries and is used mostly to illuminate walkways, signs and instrument panels on cars.

Carney and Popp quickly built rudimentary versions of the two main characters, Professor Henslow and Darwin. Then, with the help of their wives, Eleanor Carney and Whitney Popp (who are also dancers), they began to build the rest of their puppetry-based creatures and flesh out the original story.

**Relocating from New York City to New Orleans (Ian and Eleanor's hometown)**, they continued the creative process. It was here, in the Katrina ravaged city, that the show began to take shape. The result, after years of engineering and development is ***Darwin the Dinosaur***. Truly unique and visually dazzling, ***Darwin***, recipient of the prestigious Jim Henson Foundation Grant, is an innovative theatrical experience lauded by audiences and critics all over the Americas and Europe.

## **Lightwire Theater**

Ian and Eleanor Carney founded Lightwire Theater and, in conjunction with Corbian Visual Arts and Dance, began pre-production on their first project, ***The Ugly Duckling and The***

*Tortoise and the Hare*, in January 2011. Using Corbian's signature electroluminescent puppetry, Lightwire Theater has adapted two classic tales for the stage; "The Ugly Duckling" and "The Tortoise and the Hare."

Stephen Charles Nicholson, after relocating from New York City to New Orleans for the first *Darwin* tour, continues his involvement with Corbian Visual Arts and Dance and now Lightwire Theater on *The Ugly Duckling and the Tortoise and the Hare*.

Corbin manages to amaze everyone with his boundless energy. He may push pencils by day as a dental student in Mesa, AZ, where he now lives with his wife Whitney and their daughters Addy and Zoe, but somehow he manages to wire electrical boxes, build ducks and offer sound advice on many aspects of the new project after hours, on weekends and from that other dimension to which many of us suspect he has access.

