

For Immediate Release

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**Third Rail Projects Immersive Hit
THEN SHE FELL
Closes after Seven and a Half Years
And 4,444 Performances**

"This is extreme theater: fresh, fun, totally absorbing" — Time Magazine

Top 10 of 2012. One of "this year's most memorable productions." "I felt like a bewildered but enchanted child, made privy to the arcana of another, darker world... Creepy and thrilling." — Ben Brantley, The New York Times

"Wildly imaginative... wonderfully written, directed and choreographed." — The New Yorker

"One of the most hauntingly lovely pieces of theater that I've ever experienced... The experience is deeply personal, re-creating the wonders and terrors of childhood with hallucinatory vividness." — Vogue

Third Rail Projects' award-winning *THEN SHE FELL*, which suspended shows on March 12, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will permanently close the production, a show that set records for dance, immersive theater, and off-Broadway with 4,444 performances total, over the course of seven and a half years.

Written, directed, designed and choreographed by Zach Morris, Tom Pearson and Jennine Willett in collaboration with the originating cast, *THEN SHE FELL* evoked the inner, psychological landscapes of Lewis Carroll (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*), Alice Liddell (the real Alice), and iconic characters from Carroll's texts. Every aspect of each audience member's experience was meticulously designed, from lush environments to the smells, tastes, and objects that they discovered as they explored the space, unravelling a narrative that balanced dream, reality, fact, and fiction.

Morris, Pearson, and Willett, co-directors of *Then She Fell* and of Third Rail Projects, explained the decision to close the show, in a joint statement: "Like so many other businesses at this time, we are suffering the results of the pandemic shutdown, and we found ourselves unable to continue to pay the associated costs of holding a show in indefinite limbo without foreseeable income from ticket sales. Not wishing to compromise the design of the show or risk anyone's health, we have made the difficult decision to end this amazing run at 4,444 performances. We hope someday there will be another way to share *Then She Fell* again with audiences. We recognize the impact of this decision is great and affects many: the directors, staff, the many performers, designers, vendors, and partners, our audiences, and the culture of immersive theater at large."

Then She Fell became a touchstone for many in the immersive theater movement that defined a decade. Its closure, like so many shows during this time, marks a cultural loss. Morris said, "I have been grappling to understand what the impact of this pandemic and its long-term economic fallout will be on the broader performance community. Across the country, we're seeing regional stages and organizations, numerous projects and companies whose existence was already tenuous, close. We're seeing artists leave the city. I've often imagined New York as sort of a hothouse, one that was able to give rise to a whole ecosystem of performance, from the radically avant-garde to totally mainstream endeavors and everything in between. I

fear that what we are experiencing could be an extinction level event for many sectors of this ecology. Now more than ever, we need to invest in and support artists and creators, who are the natural resources that will make this ecosystem rebound.”

Willett further commented, “*Then She Fell* exemplified a unique approach to crafting audience experiences that resonated with audiences and critics, and the recognition it received paved the way for opportunities for the directors and the company. The remarkable audience response and longevity of *Then She Fell* has had a profound impact on our work as multi-disciplinary artists and educators. It is heartbreaking to reconcile that this type of performance may not be possible for a while. With its small numbers and close proximity between performers and audience, it had empathy and intimacy at its core. It may take the longest for this type of work to have a safe return, but we imagine when it does, the need for this type of engagement between audience and performer will be even more profound and impactful.” Pearson added, “Limitations have always led to invention. It’s what caused us to re-define our formats in the wake of the 2008 market crash and led us to the creation of *Then She Fell*. That, plus a real desire to connect to audiences, that is what we continue to commit to and challenge ourselves with in order to create new projects for this new era. So, stand by.”

Morris went on to say, “*Then She Fell* was an investigation of how one might design performance so that every audience member could be at the center of their own dream-like journey, creating poetic space where individuals could find themselves seen, heard, and integral to the action, and thereby find themselves reflected in it. Working with an extraordinary group of collaborators over the years, I am thankful to have been able to practice the notion of making art as an offering, to be reminded of the import of being able to create and hold space, and reaffirmed in the value of and transformative power of human-to-human connection.” Willett concurred, “We are so grateful for the successful run that afforded us the chance to share this work so widely, expanding our reach nationally and internationally and fostering rich collaborations with artists, communities, and industries that will continue into the future.”

In conclusion, Pearson remarked, “*Then She Fell* was never a very profitable business model, but it provided an unusual level of stability for all of us in a very volatile field and created jobs opportunities for more than 90 performers and 70 staff over the course of its long run, not to mention the many neighborhood business relationships the show partnered with and supported. The show also put our artistic endeavors on the map in a much more substantive way and created a slew of new opportunities for us with commissions, consultations, workshops, and a consistent ability to branch out and experiment in other genres. It has been a calling card of sorts and a door opener to countless possibilities, but of all of the types of performance work that we create, *Then She Fell* has always been one of the most intimate and unique. We will miss it, but we are also energized to create new projects that help shape the current culture we find ourselves in, and help define what comes next, with brand new projects. Though we are closing *Then She Fell*, Third Rail Projects continues”

THEN SHE FELL took place at The Kingsland Ward, with a first run at Arts@Renaissance in the outpatient wing on the campus of the former Greenpoint Hospital, and in several extensions of the show at St. Johns the Evangelical Lutheran Church’s former parochial school, a century-old institutional building in Williamsburg, Brooklyn where the action played out on 3 floors. The show was a fully immersive, multi-sensory experience in which only 15 audience members at a time explored a dreamlike world where every alcove, corner, and corridor was transformed into a lushly designed performance space. Inspired by the life and writings of Lewis Carroll, ‘*Then She Fell*’ offered an ‘Alice-like’ experience for audience members, as they explored rooms, often by themselves, discovering hidden scenes; encountering performers one-on-one; unearthing clues that illuminated a shrouded history; using skeleton keys to gain access to guarded secrets; and imbibing custom-designed elixirs.

This genre-defining production of ***THEN SHE FELL*** was originally directed, designed, written and choreographed by Zach Morris, Tom Pearson, and Jennine Willett in collaboration with original cast members: Elizabeth Carena, Alberto Denis, Stacie C. Tobar, Rebekah Morin, Marissa Nielsen-Pincus, Tara O'Con, and Zoë Schieber. The production featured production design by Zach Morris, Tom Pearson, and Jennine Willett; original music & sound design by Sean Hagerty, with collaborating musicians Brian Olin and Isaiah Singer; costumes by Karen Young; lighting design by Kryssy Wright; production management by Debra Beardsley; technical direction by Carlton C. Ward.

THEN SHE FELL at the time of closing was performed by the company: Erika Boudreau-Barbee, Andrew Broaddus, Quinten Burley, Cameron Michael Burns, Kyle Castillo, Devika Chandnani, Serena Chang, Andrew Chapman, Ross Daniel, Elisa Davis, Morgaine DeLeonardis, Alberto Denis, Lena Engelstein, Justin Faircloth, Lindsey Ferguson, Julia Galanski, Gierre J. Godley, Jamie Graham, Carolyn Hall, Joseph Harris, Cody Hayman, Shiloh Hodges, Julia Jurgilewicz, Madison Krekel, Justin Lynch, Rebekah Morin, Lauren Muraski, Marissa Nielsen-Pincus, Tara O'Con, Jenna Purcell, Claudia Lynn Rightmire, Kelsey Rondeau, Julie Seal, Taylor Semin, Mackenzie Sherburne, Jessie Smith, Charly Wenzel, Clair Westby, and Lucy Wild. Supported by Kristen Carcone, Larry Daniels, Caitlin Dutton-Reaver, Mary Madsen, Edward Rice, Kim Savarino, Alex M. Schell, Bre Short, Jeff Sykes, and Niko Tsocanos. The production featured production management by Brittany Crowell; assistant direction by Marissa Nielsen-Pincus; stage management by Kristin Dwyer; assistant stage management by Kasey Blanco and Amy Castro; additional stage management by Stephanie Armitage, Leyla DeMolina, Caroline Labreche, Patrick St. John, and Terra Warman; production assistance by Shelby Gilberto and Kyla Kantor; rehearsal direction by Mary Madsen, Jenna Purcell, and Julie Seal; production maintenance by Kasey Blanco and Rebekah Morin; wardrobe by Kelsey Buerger; and beverage maintenance by Patrick St. John.

In its formation and throughout its long-run and many extensions, we also acknowledge the contribution of Kristina Vnook as stage manager, and Julia Kelly, the company's first rehearsal director for *Then She Fell*.

Third Rail Projects has been hailed as one of the foremost companies creating site-specific, immersive, and experiential performance. The company is led by Artistic Directors [Zach Morris](#), [Tom Pearson](#), and [Jennine Willett](#), and is dedicated to re-envisioning ways in which audiences engage with contemporary performance. *Then She Fell*, was named as one of the "Top Ten Shows of 2012" by Ben Brantley of *The New York Times* and acclaimed as one of the best theater experiences of 2013 by *Vogue*. The artistic directors have made work in New York and nationally since 2000 with projects including *Ghost Light* at Lincoln Center Theater, the immersive theater hit *The Grand Paradise* in Brooklyn, *Sweet & Lucky* with Denver Center for the Performing Arts, *Ikaros* with La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego, and *Learning Curve* in Chicago with Albany Park Theater Project, as well as internationally through the Global Performance Studio (GPS), which combines the company's creative and educational offerings through a program of cultural listening and exchange. Third Rail Projects and its directors has been the recipients of several prestigious awards, including: two New York Dance and Performance (Bessie) Awards; a Chita Rivera Award for Choreography; a Drama Desk Awards Nomination for Unique Theatrical Experience; several fellowship awards including two CEC Artslink Back Apartment Residencies (Russia); a Theater Fellowship from the Bogliasco Foundation (Italy); an IllumiNation Award from the Ford Foundation and National Museum of the American Indian; and more. Third Rail Projects has also been recognized as part of the creative team of the Emmy Award-winning virtual reality adaptation of Neil Gaiman's *Wolves in the Walls*. In 2016, the artistic directors were named among the 100 most influential people in Brooklyn Culture by *Brooklyn Magazine*. Visit thirdrailprojects.com to learn more.

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