



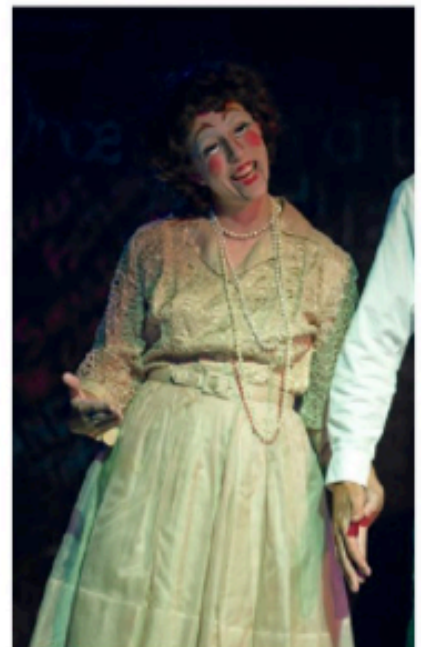
Yellow Lab Productions

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Big things often have small beginnings. This is the case with every theatrical production; what begins as an awkward read-through of a script bears little resemblance to the final show and performances. It is often hard to believe it is the same group of people who, in a mere few week's time, have transformed a stilted reading into a moving production. Yellow Lab Productions, an independent theatre company operating in the Hill Country for the last six years, is no exception to this rule.

Yellow Lab is committed to bringing an alternative brand of theatre to the local Hill Country community, specializing in producing shows

that are intended for adults, that are innovative, unique, and powerful. "We're not trying to be better than any other company or shows. Art is subjective. It's not a competition. We just want to be different," says founder, David McGuff. The Kerrville community is rich with theatre with Playhouse 2000 and the Point Theatre each producing six full, multi-week run shows per year. In addition, Schreiner University's Flag is Up program, as well the award winning educational theatre at Tivy, Ingram, and Bandera high schools, among others, have been very successful yet quite traditional.





Unlike those others, Yellow Lab set out to create and produce shows that would draw in people who didn't think theatre was for them or only thought theatre was a stuffy, upper-class art full of only silly comedies and outdated prose. McGuff sought to change that image from the outset. "Our first show was *Sleuth* was a two-person show with just myself and Jeff Cunningham on stage. Jeff directed and designed the set and we built the set ourselves. It was just the two of us

trying to make something fun and different. It was very well-received."

Fast-forward six years and Yellow Lab is in the midst of a calendar spanning trilogy of science-fiction plays called *The Honeycomb Trilogy* that pushes that boundaries of what can be put on the stage with a cast of over thirty people across the productions, and even more behind the scenes and backstage. "I've always had a *Field of Dreams* approach to art," says McGuff. "You build something good and they will

come. There were a lot of opinions on what 'could' and 'couldn't' be done on Kerrville stages. I think we've proven there is an audience in this town that is hungry for a different brand of theatre, one that is more challenging, edgier, and, in its own way, just as rewarding as any other show you can see in town."

Over the years Yellow Lab has produced shows of varying genres and styles: from horror with the stage adaptation of Stephen King's *Misery*, quietly devastating dramas like *Tape*, reimagined classic epics like *Equus*, dark and provocative shows like *Pillowman*, and sold out an original adaptation of the best-selling David Foster Wallace book, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*. Their current project, *The Honeycomb Trilogy* (*Advance Man*, *Blast Radius*, and this September's *Sovereign*) puts an alien invasion, human rebellion, and a planetary war within the confines of a stage and feels right at home while dealing with issues like family, sacrifice, death, war, love, and the fear/empathy of "others." The shows have been incredibly well-received by veteran theatre-goers and new audience members who have been enthralled and shocked by what theatre can be.

"It's a mistake to put theatre in a box. To think it's only musicals or this or that. We have a responsibility to show people this art is for them too, by offering them as many different types of shows as possible to get people to experience the unmitigated joy of live performance," said McGuff. "Whether that is kids shows, musicals, Neil Simon, Shakespeare, the newest Pulitzer Prize winner or some unknown show that has a lot to offer, we, as artists, have to offer it all to people. They deserve to know there is something they could love."

