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**NAKED EMPIRE BOUFFON COMPANY PRESENTS
THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD!
A BIPOC NEW WORKS AWARDEE AT THE CANNONBALL FESTIVAL
SEPTEMBER 25-30, 2020**

Philadelphia, PA. (September, 2022). Multi-award winning Naked Empire Bouffon Company is delighted to make their Philadelphia-area debut with **THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD!** This original, two-person physical comedy is an outlandish satire of colonialism through the lens of the Puerto Rican diaspora. Performances start Sunday, September 25th..

In **THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD!**, Nathaniel Justiniano and Marisol Rosa-Shapiro are two mischievous tricksters who pull you into a jingle and dance-filled fiesta celebrating USA's torrid love affair with Puerto Rico. Within this fast-paced comedy you'll visit the whole archipelago, New York City, Philly, outer space, and even your own colonized mind. Watch as these charming anti-clowns shapeshift into vogue dancers, Broadway stars, trans activists, crypto bros, hurricane gods, Taíno warriors, Harvard graduates, single-celled organisms, and even resurrected ghosts. **THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD!** uses puppetry, parody, lip sync, mime, audience interaction, and physical comedy to create an immersive, joyous, and sometimes disturbing rollercoaster ride of biting satire.

Director, performer, and co-creator, **Nathaniel Justiniano** says, "This is the most personal work I have ever created. It reflects my journey of wrestling with the painful knot binding the colonizer and colonized within my own Puerto Rican heritage. It's important that we highlight and mock the ways our audience (yes, even in Philly!) perpetuate and benefit from the continued colonization of Puerto Rico. However, I'm most excited to be crafting a theatrical experience that invites folx into a jubilant, irreverent, and communal imagining of a decolonized future."

THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD! is co-produced by the Cannonball Festival as one of the inaugural BIPOC New Works Awardees. The show is 1-hour long and runs for 3 performances at the MAAS Building - Studio, 1320 N. 5th Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19122.

Performances Dates:

<p>Sunday, Sept 25th @ 10pm Thursday, Sept 29th @ 10pm Friday, Sept 30th @ 530pm</p>	<p>Tickets are \$5 - \$20 (Nobody turned away) Tix: nakedempirebouffon.org/important</p>
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The all-Puerto Rican lead creative team for **THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD!** features **Nathaniel Justiniano** (director/co-creator/performer), **Marisol Rosa-Shapiro** (co-creator/performer), and **Jade Power-Sotomayor** (dramaturg). Additional support is provided by **Thom Sirkot** (costume design), and **David Raposo** (sound design).

Naked Empire Bouffon Company was founded in San Francisco in 2009 with an activist mission to devise hilarious, cutting, and visually-provocative satires to catalyze urgent discourse. Since then, Naked Empire has toured across the continent with award-winning new works and training intensives becoming North America's premier bouffon company. Their productions have been awarded Best of the Fringe twice in San Francisco, the Talk of the Fringe Award in Vancouver, the Artist's Choice Award in Edmonton, as well as Official Selections from the Toronto Festival of Clowns, Vancouver's Dancing on the Edge Festival, Victoria's UNOFest, Berkeley's Blast Festival, and Xfest in Edwardsville, Illinois. The company uses bouffon, a rarely-seen form of highly physical and extremely irreverent comedic satire leading the Huffington Post to praise the work as "devilishly dangerous theatre."

Nathaniel Justiniano (he/him+) is a queer Cali-Rican actor, deviser, movement designer, educator, activist, and the founding Artistic Director of **Naked Empire Bouffon Company**. Recently, his arts-based racial justice work was featured in [Howlround](#) and [American Theatre Magazine](#). As an actor, he has worked with Shakespeare Orange County, Son of Semele Ensemble, Cornerstone Theater Company, The Dell'Arte Company, Thrillpeddlers, We Players, and Cutting Ball Theater. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor of Comedic Performance at Emerson College and he has served as the Director of Physical Comedy for the Sacramento Shakespeare Festival, Movement Designer at UC Berkeley, core faculty of the SF Clown Conservatory, and guest faculty at the Juilliard School.

Marisol Rosa-Shapiro (she/her) is a Philadelphia-based Jew-Yorican actor, director, teaching artist, community builder, and creator of original works of theater. She has recently worked with Elevate Theatre Company, Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble, Pace University, and Adventure Players Live. Marisol particularly loves creating surprising, playful, sophisticated work for young audiences and families, and has had the opportunity to do so with Spellbound Theatre, the Up Close Festival at the New Ohio Theatre in downtown Manhattan, and with her own SEVEN RAVENS PROJECT, developed in the LabWorks program at New Victory in NYC, where she

also serves as a member of the teaching artist ensemble. Also, she is a proud volunteer performer, educator, and board member of Clowns Without Borders USA, Director of Community Engagement for Shakespeare in Clark Park, and Community Coordinator for Theatre Horizon's own OUR NORRISTOWN project.

Dr. Jade Power-Sotomayor (she/her) is a Cali-Rican educator, scholar and performer who works as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at UC San Diego. Engaging with discourses of embodiment and embodied practices of remembering and creating community, her work focuses on the fluid reconstitution of Latinx identity ultimately produced by doing and not simply being. Overall, she seeks to promote an in-depth engagement with Latinx performance-making as a framework for taking up the most salient issues of our time: colonialism, anti-Blackness, xenophobia, economic disparity, patriarchy and misogyny, queer and transphobia, ableism and mental health access, climate catastrophe and environmental justice.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD!

Performs: Sun 9/25 @ 10pm / Thu 9/29 @ 10pm / Fri 9/30 @ 530pm

At the MAAS Building - Studio, 1320 N. 5th Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19122

Get tickets at: www.nakedempirebouffon.org/important

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