



NOAH PALINA

Reggie Watts pictured in *Transition*.

NEA report is only about the demand, if you will. If you're seeing productions and performances go up, and the demand isn't keeping up with them, that could explain the gap."

Iyengar also grants that the sporadic nature of the NEA's arts-participation surveys—they've been done in 1982, 1985, 1992, 2002, 2008 and 2012—means

that they can only offer a "snapshots" of attendance trends rather than clear annual trend lines.

"It's true that often people will model these trends, assuming the rates were constant between 2008 and 2012. That's why periodicity—how frequently you take the survey—is so important." To that end, Iyengar

reports, "We are moving toward doing an annual survey with a shorter number of questions that will tell us arts attendance rates." The NEA plans to release the full 2012 report next spring. Go to [www.arts.gov/news/2013/national-endowment-arts-presents-highlights-2012-survey-public-participation-arts](http://www.arts.gov/news/2013/national-endowment-arts-presents-highlights-2012-survey-public-participation-arts).

## Screen Streams

### SEATTLE AND NEW

**YORK:** Cutting-edge live performances are coming to a screen near you—indeed, maybe the screen in your pocket, now that two major players in the field have joined forces. Seattle-based **On the Boards**, a center for the creation and presentation of contemporary performance, has partnered

with **TenduTV**, a New York-based digital network for performing arts programming, to distribute select films from its video-on-demand streaming platform, *OntheBoards.tv*. The deal with Tendu expands On the Boards' digital reach to iTunes and Amazon Instant, and to global platforms, and, in return, Tendu—which has focused primarily on dance and ballet—can add more theatrical titles to its catalog.

So while the partnership's initial offering is **Catherine Cabeen's** dance/performance piece *Into the Void*, the next two will be **Reggie Watts** and **Tommy Smith's** *Transition* (covered in *AT*, Oct. '11) and **Radiohole's** *Whatever, Heaven Allows* (*AT*, Dec.

# AYN RAND'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

**AUSTIN AND NEW YORK CITY:** Ayn Rand is tap dancing her way from Texas to the Big Apple—not personally, of course, but via **Rude Mechanicals'** *Stop Hitting Yourself*, which will run Jan. 13–Feb. 23 at the Claire Tow Theater, after two workshops in the company's Austin hometown. Commissioned by **Lincoln Center Theater's** LCT3 program, the play examines Rand's objectivist philosophy in the manner of a '30s film musical. Audiences have a chance to hear confessionals from the cast, bask in the glow of a giant queso fountain, and possibly walk away with some extra cash (if they don't mind a little public humiliation).

True to Rude Mechs' collaborative approach, the style of the piece comes from various ideas the ensemble brought to the table. "We were driven by pleasure a lot. People wanted to learn to tap dance," notes writer **Kirk Lynn**, one of the collective's six co-producing artistic directors. "The inspiration of the 1930s *Gold Diggers* musicals really drove us into bigger characters and more plot." The title developed out of "Celebrate Thanksgiving the Ayn Rand Way: Thank Yourself," a *Christian Science Monitor* article by **Debi Ghate** of the Ayn Rand Institute in Irvine, Calif.

*Stop Hitting Yourself* isn't the first time the author of *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead* has appeared on a Manhattan stage in the past year. Last January **Mike Daisey** offered the pointedly titled monologue *Fucking Fucking Fucking Ayn Rand*, and in April **Wolf 359** mounted *Song of a Convalescent Ayn Rand Giving Thanks to the Godhead (in the Lydian mode)*, both at **Joe's Pub** in New York City. And the Rudes (who derived their name from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and who presented Lynn's *Fixing King John* in November at their home base) join another troupe from the Texas state capital with ties to the Bard. The **Austin Shakespeare Theatre Company** staged Rand's early novel *Anthem*, adapted by **Jeff Britting**, curator of the **Ayn Rand Archives**, in October at the Jerome Robbins Theater at the **Baryshnikov Arts Center**.

Incidentally, *Anthem* was *Stop Hitting Yourself's* main inspiration. "We had been talking about this scenic diptych of an industrial/urban environment and a forest environment, and it reminded me of *Anthem*," cast member and co-producing artistic director **Lana Lesley** explains.

"We were interested in some intersection between nature and capital and between compassion and altruism. Probably Ayn Rand was in the air because Paul Ryan offered so publicly that he was a follower," Lynn adds. "And Rand is amazing, so intelligent and so feral. So high on speed so often in public (look at her eyes in her interviews) saying the wildest stuff. It's like a right-wing Jim Morrison." Ayn Rand, Lizard Queen? —**Russell M. Dembin**



BRETT BROOKSHIRE

Thomas Graves and Lana Lesley in *Stop Hitting Yourself*.