



# Squirrel Stole My Underpants

*A poignantly silly adventure tale for families*

## ABOUT THE SHOW

A lonely, awkward girl is sent out to the backyard to hang up the laundry and keep herself busy. The moment Sylvie's back is turned, a mischievous squirrel appears, steals her favorite piece of clothing and runs off. When the girl gives chase, she finds herself lost in strange lands. As the story unfolds, an entire world emerges from her laundry basket and Sylvie learns that she is a strong girl with magic within herself.








With *Squirrel Stole My Underpants*, we are exploring that delicate time in childhood when you desperately want to be a grown up but you still need your blanket to make you feel safe. We are using puppetry as a way to fill the world of one lonely girl with many friends, foes, and magical creatures. We are using rod puppets, hand puppets, and object manipulation to bring to life an unordinary world. Blending puppetry, dance, and physical theater, we are creating a world that transforms in scale, color, texture, and time.

Austin Live Theater described Bonnie's work, which mixes puppetry with other forms of performance, as "an artful world of silent dreams, mime, and dance." We are drawing inspiration from the worlds of magical adventure tales: *Alice in Wonderland*; *The Wizard of Oz*; *Where the Wild Things Are*; and, a new story, *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making*.



*Squirrel Stole My Underpants* premiered at Puppet Showplace Theatre, Brookline, MA, January 2013, with a completely sold out 10 show run. It has since been seen by over 35,000 people and featured in venues such as Centre for Puppetry Arts, Atlanta, GA; Detroit Institute of the Arts, MI; La MaMa E.T.C., NYC; and in festivals in Canada, Scotland, Turkey, and India.

## HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

-  **Pinned To The Max:** We meet Sylvie, see her get tangled up in the clothes she tries to hang. A sheet becomes a puppet stage, and a pair of lovely underwear is hung with great care in the center of the line.
-  **The Deed Is Done:** On the puppet stage, the nefarious Squirrel appears, discovers the underpants, and makes off with them, before Sylvie can stop him.
-  **Row, Row Your Boat:** Sylvie folds herself into her laundry bag, only to discover that it turns into a boat, floating her along on an ocean of gauzy nightgowns. She survives a storm and almost catches up to Squirrel.
-  **Underpants Have Feelings, Too:** Sylvie's underpants perform an earnest love song for Sylvie.
-  **Squirrel's Party:** Sylvie manages to sneak into a party at Squirrel's tree and attempts to steal back her underpants. Does she succeed? You'll have to see the show to find out!



*This show was awarded a 2017 UNIMA-USA Citation of Excellence Award; a 2013 Jim Henson Foundation family project grant; and was developed with the generous support of the Puppet Showplace Theater's Incubator program. In 2015, it also earned an "Artistic Achievement" award from the Puppeteers of America's Northeast Region.*

# About The Gottabees

*The Gottabees are passionate about community, family joy and empowerment and have been guiding families through stage performances, interactive experiences, and audio adventures since 2013.*

The Gottabees are a Boston-based ensemble dedicated to creating inspirational, engaging, and empowering theater for family audiences. Our company is known internationally uniting simple-but-elegant visual theater with astonishing technique. We apply our interdisciplinary training in music, dance, acrobatics, theater, and design to share original non-verbal stories set to live music that weave together human and puppet characters in surprising ways.

The Gottabees' stories reflect children's everyday aspirations, concerns, and emotional experiences. We find it deeply satisfying to create this style of theater for families to giggle, gasp, sigh, and cheer together in 45 minutes or less. One of the things that makes us happiest is when we meet children who have seen a show and parents tell us how their child acted out the entire show for weeks after seeing it. This is the core reason why we make theater for young audiences:

Our work earned a 2017 UNIMA-USA Citation of Excellence and won the "Artistic Achievement Award" for Puppeteers of America's Northeast Region in 2015. The Gottabees have performed all over, including the Center for Puppetry Arts (Atlanta, GA), La MaMa E.T.C. (New York City), Detroit Institute of the Arts (Michigan), ICA/Boston (MA), Izmir International Puppet Days (Turkey), Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Scotland), and AHA! International Theater Festival for Children (India).

*We want children to know in their hearts that they, too, can make theater wherever they are and whomever they are.*

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

**Bonnie Duncan** (lead artist) is a Boston-based theater maker. She creates work grounded in joy, truth, and magic and invites audiences to imagine themselves as creators of their own world. She has been entertaining audiences of 5 to 5000 people, from Bangalore to Kalamazoo, as a dancer, acrobat, costume designer, and puppeteer, as a solo artist and in touring companies for the last 22 years, most notably with Snappy Dance Theater and They Gotta Be Secret Agents. She has studied with Paul Zaloom, Martin P. Robinson, and Alice Gottschalk to name a few. Her movement was called both "breathhtakingly simple" and "delightfully crafty" by the Boston Globe. She is also mother to three children who are growing up a bit too quickly.



**Brendan Burns** (music) is a guitarist & educator based in Boston, MA. Brendan is a founding member of the music & puppetry troupe: Elephant Tango Ensemble (nominated for an IRNE) and former director of the house band for Bent Wit Cabaret.

**Tony Leva** (music) is a multi-disciplinary musician & educator in Cambridge, MA who is known for his playful, responsive and supportive bass lines. He has recorded on over 30 albums to date and regularly performs with the Dylan Jack Quartet, Charlie Kohlhasse's Explorer's Club, Eric Hofbauer, Jaggery and the Singer Mali Trio. He is on faculty at the Longy School of Music and is a teacher-facilitator at Tunefoolery where music is used as a tool for social change.

**Dan Milstein** (director/co-creator) is the founding Artistic Director of Boston's Rough & Tumble Theater with whom he made over thirteen original plays and was a Critic's Pick for Best Fringe Theater multiple years running. He has directed all of The Gottabees' shows and holds fast to his quixotic belief that theater should be cheap, fun, and deeply satisfying.

**Penney Pinette** (costumes) grew up in the untamed woods of Maine where she spent hours studying the shapes and colors in nature. As a Boston-based designer focusing in dance and theatre, she is currently Boston University's Costume Shop Manager.

**Hamideh Rezaei-Kamalabad** (set) is a jewelry maker who sometimes dabbles in theater when asked. She is a graduate of Massachusetts College of Art and works as a fabricator for local jewelers.

# Show Listing Information

## TECHNICAL NEEDS

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### *Squirrel Stole My Underpants*

A poignantly silly adventure tale for families

Sneaky squirrel robs girl!

In this poignantly silly adventure tale for families, Sylvie is sent to the backyard to hang up the laundry. The moment her back is turned, a mischievous squirrel steals her favorite piece of clothing and runs off. When Sylvie gives chase, an entire world emerges from her laundry basket, and curious characters show her the way through mysterious lands.

Featuring: physical theater, puppetry, and a giant pile of clothes.

- Recommended Audience: ages 3 & up; family audiences; pre-K-5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Audience Size: up to 250
- Performance Time: 35 minutes plus Question & Answer session with audience
- Stage Requirements: minimum of 10 feet wide x 10 feet deep x 10 feet high, clear space with clean, safe floor
- Lighting & Sound Requirements: electrical outlet no more than 15 feet of stage area, adequate general lighting of stage area or focused stage lights (lighting cue sheet provided)
- Can be performed with LIVE MUSIC or recorded
- Set-Up / Breakdown Time: 40 minutes for set up with arrival to space one hour prior to performance or house open; 30 minutes for breakdown
- More detailed TECH RIDER available upon request

## SHOUTOUTS FOR THE SHOW

“Talented performer-creator Bonnie Duncan brings her handmade puppets, fanciful sets, charming stage persona, and always imaginative flair to this family-friendly piece.” --Boston Globe

“Squirrel Stole My Underpants’ is very likely to steal your heart...There are so many visual delights you won’t want to blink, for fear of missing one.” --CBC News

“★★★★★”

--Winnipeg Free Press & CBC News

“it’s enthralling...and full of whimsical charm.” --The List

“Squirrel Stole My Underpants’ and Therein Hangs a Tale”  
—by Laurel Graeber, New York Times, October 6, 2016:  
<http://bit.ly/squirreltale>



## For Photos & Video

For on-line videos: <http://www.bonnie-duncan.com/for-presenters.html>

For downloadable high-resolution photographs:  
<http://bit.ly/squirrelPICS>

Get in touch with Bonnie for more information!



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super fun theater for the whole family

Workshops, residencies available upon request