

# *La MaMa Experimental Theater Club*

*"Theater of the World"*

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for immediate release

## **THE FLOATONES ARE A POSTVERBAL VOCAL QUARTET IN THE NEWEST MUSICAL BY JIM NEU**

**March 9 to 19, 1995**

FEBRUARY 8, 1995 -- In **Jim Neu's** musical "**The Floatones**," four rather strange characters meet at their encounter group and decide the best way to get better is through show business. They form a vocal quartet on the cutting edge of a new fusion between entertainment and self-help. Their night club act shares their group insights in speech and song, interweaving their individual stories, creating a post-Chorus Line. "The Floatones," Jim Neu's second musical comedy, will be presented by The Club at La MaMa E.T.C. and Otrabanda Company in The Club, 74A East Fourth Street, **March 9 to 19**, with music by **Harry Mann** and **Neal Kirkwood**, directed by **Rocky Bornstein**, performed by **Bill Rice, Mary Shultz, John Nesci and Jim Neu.**

Neu specializes in an elliptical take on language. His plays and musicals ride on a wry, cool humor that is intelligently zany. In "The Floatones," while his characters claim to be "coherency-neutral," their observations about themselves and their world often make a strange sense ("I identified with people who didn't remember me," "I've never seen one thing lead to another so graphically before," "Have you ever seen a mob standing in line? Quite a sight. Losing control without losing your place."). Their reality is in the crack between what you know and what you think you know. The pleasure is the logic of the word play that supports this.

Such humor has attracted an enthusiastic following of Neu-philes. Critic Brandon Judell (American Online) recently called Jim Neu "one of the most effulgent beams currently shining on Off-off Broadway." **Bill Rice** has acted in most of Neu's plays and is well-practiced in their second-hand sense of reality and doublespeak. He regularly appears with Jeff Weiss, Stuart Sherman, Charles Allcroft, Gary Indiana and Gary Goldberg. **Mary Shultz** is one of the most sought-after actresses on the Downtown scene. Two of her most-recent performances were in Caryl Churchill's "Mad Forest" and Tony Kushner's "Slavs." Her last Neu plays was "Situation Room" (1991). **John Nesci** performed in some of Neu's earliest plays, including "Him or Me" and "Basic Behavior," and recently played major roles in Mac Wellman's "Swoop" and Len Jenkin's "Dream Express." Director **Rocky Bornstein**, co-artistic director of Otrabanda Company, has previously staged Neu's "Dark Pocket," "Chance's Place" and "Live Witness."

Neu's first full-length musical, "Dark Pocket," was presented by The Club at La MaMa last season to approving audiences and critics. The Native (L.C. Cole) wrote, "It was minimalist writing and acting at one of the best performance levels around....This was controlled chaos, manipulated madness, intellectual idiocy, from which a lot of deconstruction-minded performers and writers could well learn....The fun of course was entirely in the stylish ride and the ideas it took us by."

The collaboration between Neu and musicians **Harry Mann** (reeds) and **Neal Kirkwood** (piano) has been nourished in a series of well-received projects, from short songs to full-length plays, since the mid-80's. Previous collaborations included "Deep Cover" (1986), "Chance's Place" (1990), "Fake Book" (1991), "The Optimismo Lounge" (La MaMa, 1991), "Airtime" (1992), "The Wrong Mistake" (La MaMa, 1993) and "Dark Pocket" (La MaMa, 1994).

"The Floatones" is presented by The Club at La MaMa E.T.C. and Otrabanda Company **March 9 to 19**. Otrabanda's many productions have included Neu's "Live Witness," recently cited by D.J.R. Bruckner in the New York Times as a highlight of the Chain Lightning Theater Company's short plays festival. The set is design by David Nunemaker and lighting design is by Howard Thies. Performances are **Thursdays through Saturdays at 10:00 pm plus added performance Sunday, March 19 at 5:30 pm** in the second-floor Club at La MaMa E.T.C., 74A East Fourth Street. Tickets are \$12/TDF; the box office number is **(212) 475-7710.**

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**CRITICS ARE INVITED on or after MARCH 9.**