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**PASADENA PLAYHOUSE WELCOMES**  
**Multi-Award-Winning International Theater Company**  
**WAKKA WAKKA'S *DEAD AS A DODO***  
**to the 2026/2027 Season**

*The New Yorker* and *Slant Magazine* Best Theatre of 2025

"Among the most ceaselessly inventive pieces of theater  
I have seen in the past year." – *The New York Times*

**WAKKA WAKKA'S**  
***Dead as a Dodo***  
**A Boundary-Breaking Musical Odyssey Where**  
**Puppetry, Mischief, and Stunning Visual Wonder Collide**  
**Dazzling audiences ages 8 to 88!**

**February 3 - 28, 2027**  
**Member Tickets Available Now at [pasadenaplayhouse.org](https://pasadenaplayhouse.org)**  
**Single Tickets On Sale October 20th**

October 13 2026, Pasadena, CA | Pasadena Playhouse welcomes **Wakka Wakka**, a multi-award-winning international theater company to the 2026/2027 Mainstage Season with their critically acclaimed all-ages production of ***Dead as a Dodo***, which will serve as the first show of 2027 and joins the previously announced *Passing Strange*, *Real Women Have Curves: The Musical*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* to complete the 2026/2027 Season. The production made the Best Theatre of 2025 lists of both *The New Yorker* and *Slant Magazine*.

Pasadena Playhouse's Producing Artistic Director, Danny Feldman says, "I have never seen anything like DEAD AS A DODO. The visionary artists of Wakka Wakka have made something wildly funny and deeply moving at the same time. It is sophisticated, breathtakingly crafted theater that works on many levels at once. The eight-year-old next to you and the eighty-year-old behind you will laugh out loud, and then both find themselves unexpectedly moved. It is rare, it is extraordinary, and it must be seen."

The production is led by co-directors & co-writers Gwendolyn Warnock & Kirjan Waage. The ensemble includes Peter Russo, Sigurd Rosenberg, Kirjan Waage, Gwendolyn Warnock, Anna Soland, Mairead Kohler, Anya Opshinsky, Lilia Ireland, and Lexie Baker. The production is produced by Gwendolyn Warnock, Tom Gustafson & Kirjan Waage. Original music & sound design by Thor Gunnar Thorvaldsson. Puppet design by Kirjan Waage. Projection Design by Erato Tzavara with touring design by Pelham Johnston & OBLSK Interactive. Lighting design by Daphne Agosin with touring design by Scott Monnin. *Dead as a Dodo* is represented by Moon Artists Management.

*The New Yorker* said, "Is it telling that the sweetest and most transporting production I remember from 2025 happened in early January? *Dead as a Dodo*, a virtuosic puppet show by the theater company Wakka Wakka, about a dancing-skeleton boy and his extinct-bird friend, was clearly born out of environmental grief, yet I still think of that show in the Under the Radar festival as my last contact with a certain type of pleasure. Ambiguity? Mystification? The leisure to dream?"

*Slant Magazine* went on to say "An offering from the company Wakka Wakka ... the musical tempered the weight of its heartbreaking core with the glittering visual wonder of the show's expressive ensemble storytelling."

*The New York Times* calls *Dead as a Dodo* "As morbidly poetic as *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. The bigger story here is concerned with new beginnings, and it is told gorgeously."

Deep within the underworld, two skeleton friends, a Dodo and a boy, tirelessly dig for fresh bones. Their ancient skeletal forms are deteriorating and without them they will disappear completely. One day something peculiar happens: The Dodo miraculously sprouts feathers! A wave of transformation begins, shattering the established order of the dead.

As the Dodo continues to grow flesh, fear and chaos erupt. The two friends must flee, fighting to stay together as they are drawn into the heart of an epic battle between life and death. Infused with puppetry, humor, and stunning visual effects, *Dead as a Dodo* is a mesmerizing musical odyssey about survival, transformation, and the power of true friendship.

Wakka Wakka Productions is a multi-award-winning international theater company based in New York City and Oslo. Since 2001, Wakka Wakka has been creating original works of theater and touring extensively throughout the US and the world. Today, Wakka Wakka specializes in bold, unique and unpredictable puppet theatre, incorporating object manipulation, masks, and original music.

Their work seeks to expose the contradiction of human existence through biting humor, absurdity, and profound ridiculousness. Five of their shows have been *New York Times* Critic's Picks. In 2013 they were awarded a Drama Desk Award for Sophisticated Puppetry, and in 2011 they received an Obie Award. Additionally, the company has been nominated for four Drama Desk Awards, a Helen Hayes Award, and a Hewes Design Award.

Tickets for ***Dead as a Dodo*** starting at \$35 will go on sale Tuesday, October 20. More information is available at [pasadenaplayhouse.org](http://pasadenaplayhouse.org), by phone at 626-356-7529, and at the box office at 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101.

### **ABOUT PASADENA PLAYHOUSE**

Pasadena Playhouse, the official State Theater of California and recipient of the 2023 Regional Theatre Tony Award, is one of the most prolific theaters in the country. The Playhouse has staged thousands of original productions since its founding in 1917 including premieres of works by Tennessee Williams, Eugene O'Neill, Suzan-Lori Parks, Gloria Calderon Kellett, and hundreds more. For decades, its pioneering School for Theater Arts was a training ground for actors and theatermakers who went on to make significant contributions to the entertainment industry. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Danny Feldman since 2016, Pasadena Playhouse's productions and community programs are centered on its founding idea of being a living force in its community, making theater for everyone. [pasadenaplayhouse.org](http://pasadenaplayhouse.org).

### **WAKKA WAKKA'S DEAD AS A DODO**

*Norway/USA*

*A co-production with Nordland Visual Theatre, Nord Universitet and The Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival*

### **CREATIVE TEAM:**

**Written by:** Gwendolyn Warnock & Kirjan Waage

with help from the ensemble (note: should be smaller than Kirjan & Gwen's names)

**Directed by:** Gwendolyn Warnock and Kirjan Waage

**Original Music & Sound Design:** Thor Gunnar Thorvaldsson

**Puppet Design & Construction:** Kirjan Waage

**Projection Design:** Erato Tzavara

**Projection Touring Design:** Pelham Johnston, OBLSK interactive

**Lighting Design:** Daphne Agosin

**Touring Lighting Design:** Scott Monnin

**Set Design, Costume Design:** Gwendolyn Warnock & Kirjan Waage

### **Ensemble:**

Peter Russo, Sigurd Rosenberg, Kirjan Waage, Gwendolyn Warnock, Anna Soland, Mairead Kohler, Anya Opshinsky, Liana Ireland

**Producers:** Gwendolyn Warnock, Thomas Gustafson & Kirjan Waage

**Props and Additional Puppet Construction:** Lei-Lei Bavoil, Alexandra Bråss, Frida Vige Helle, Dorothy James, Andy Manjuck, Hanna Magrete Muir, Jack Markussen, Sigurd Rosenberg, Peter Russo, Marie Skogvang-Stork, Anna Soland, Gwendolyn Warnock

**Additional Prop, Painting & Sewing:** Rosalie Arends, Cornelia Waage and Hallie Perlman

*Dead as a Dodo* is represented by Moon Artists Management

<https://www.wakkawakka.org/>

Wakka Wakka is led by Gwendolyn Warnock and Kirjan Waage

**Dead as a Dodo has received support from: Arts Council Norway, The Jim Henson Foundation, The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FFUK, and Sea-Cargo AS.**

**Special Thanks to the Nord University Theatre Class of 2023.**

#### **ABOUT WAKKA WAKKA**

Wakka Wakka is visual theatre company led by co-artistic directors Kirjan Waage and Gwendolyn Warnock. Since 2001, the company has developed 13 original works that combine physical performance, puppetry, masks, and original music to explore contemporary global themes through visually arresting, often surreal storytelling. Our mission is to create new works that are bold and unpredictable. The work is driven by a commitment to formal experimentation and an interest in the intersections between fantasy and reality, humor and sincerity. Productions such as SAGA (on the Icelandic financial crisis), Made in China (on international consumerism and human rights), and The Immortal Jellyfish Girl (on climate change and genetic engineering) reflect the company's ongoing pursuit of stories that are both thematically ambitious and formally inventive. Wakka Wakka has collaborated with international institutions including the Princeton Atelier, Stockholm Royal Opera, the Oslo Philharmonic and Nordland Visual Theatre (Norway). They have toured internationally since 2006. The company has been recognized with honors including an OBIE Award, a Drama Desk Award, and multiple UNIMA Citations of Excellence.

#### **NORDLAND VISUAL THEATRE:**

Nordland Visual Theatre, based north of the Arctic Circle in Northern Norway, offers residencies and co-production to artists and theater companies. The theater plays a key role in developing and promoting visual theater in Norway. Nordland Visual Theatre's co-productions range from traditional puppet theater to cross-over works merging elements from the visual arts, theater, mime, dance and multimedia. Productions are collaborations with theater companies, puppeteers, actors, directors, stage designers, composers and artists from all over the world.

#### **NORD UNIVERSITY DRAMATIC ARTS:**

Nord University educates skilled actors who can devise and perform original theatrical productions. The school is widely connected to the national and international performance industry and the quality of the education is portrayed through the work of their graduates. Great emphasis is placed on developing students' artistic independence to create their own theatrical expressions.

#### **CALENDAR LISTING**

##### ***Wakka Wakka's Dead as a Dodo***

Venue: Pasadena Playhouse, 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Dates: February 3 – February 28, 2027

Tickets: **Prices:** Single tickets start at \$30 and go on sale Tuesday, October 20  
Tickets available immediately for current and new Members/season ticket holders.

**Online** -- PasadenaPlayhouse.org

**By phone** at 626-356-7529

**In person** -- Pasadena Playhouse Box Office

39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Performance Schedule: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Sundays at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; Tuesday, February 16 at 7:30 p.m.; No 7:00 p.m. performance February 14 and February 26.

Ages: Recommended for all ages 8 and above