

Company: NATURE THEATER OF OKLAHOMA

Project title: LIFE AND TIMES – EPISODE 8

Conceived and Directed by: PAVOL LISKA AND KELLY COPPER

From a telephone conversation with: KRISTIN WORRALL

Featuring: ILAN BACHRACH, ASLI BULBUL, GABEL EIBEN, DANIEL GOWER,  
ROBERT M. JOHANSON, ELISABETH CONNER SKÆRVOLD and KRISTIN  
WORRALL

Composer/Music Director: DANIEL GOWER

Director of Photography: PETER NIGRINI

Art Director/Production Manager: DANY NAIERMAN

Editor/Colorist: KELLY COPPER

Camera: PAVOL LISKA

Co-commission, co-producers, supporters, etc.:

*A Nature Theater of Oklahoma Production, made with the support of the  
Fondation d'entreprise Hermès / New Settings programme and developed partly in  
residence with Live Arts Bard at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing  
Arts at Bard College.*

*Episode 8 has also been made possible in part by the Doris Duke Performing  
Artist Awards program.*

Run time: 2 hours (estimated)

COMPANY WEBSITE:

[www.oktheater.org](http://www.oktheater.org)

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION of LIFE AND TIMES – EPISODE 8

Nature Theater of Oklahoma are back again with *Episode 8* of their epic serial saga – *Life and Times*.

Based on the life story of one of their own company members, *Life and Times* uses a verbatim transcript of over 16 hours of recorded telephone interviews as found material to construct an extremely ambitious genre-bending spectacle – the tale generated from one simple question, asked of a friend: “can you tell me your life story?”

*Episode 8*, which takes the form of an early color Cinemascope movie, takes us for the first time in the history of this project out into the open air and natural world. Inspired by the vast American landscapes of the Hudson River School painters, the entire movie was shot in color in the wild and industrial environs of the Hudson River Valley and New York City, primarily in the early morning hours of dawn – or early evening, at sunset.

At this point in the story of *Life and Times* -- the narrative finally shifts to adult life: work, career – and finding a place in the larger world. For the first time we contemplate mortality, and also history. (This is the period of the 9/11 attacks in New York City.) Personal crisis and political crisis vie with one another for attention. And which do we recall with greater clarity? What has the greater impact on our lives?

Sung throughout – with original music and shot entirely on location with available light in single long takes -- this episode of *Life and Times* promises to be one of the company’s most ambitious and visually stunning works to date.

## RECENT PRESS:

“Nature Theater of Oklahoma stands on the frontier... The group applies scientific precision to their enactments of transcripts taken from real conversations; by dissecting contemporary speech, they reveal our splendidly otherworldly thought processes, and show how we struggle to articulate our individual realities...”

*The Village VOICE*

“A phenomenal experience.” *The New Yorker*

“An ambitious, brilliantly executed production from one of the most innovative theater companies in New York.”

*New York Times*

“One of the most unforgettable adventures of my theatergoing experience.”

*New York Times*

“In our faltering attempts to make meaningful sense of the journey from cradle to grave, Nature Theater seeks to unearth something that approaches beauty, or at least a fresh, strange kind of entertainment... I emerged from “Life and Times” in a state that blended wonder, gratitude, excitement and also relief.”

*New York Times*

“The Nature Theater of Oklahoma takes aesthetic appreciation of everyday discourse to fascinating, funny, even perverse new extremes... in their inspired hands, the most unbeautiful, sometimes maddeningly hazy and imprecise language takes on a distinct and surprising appeal... You come away from their shows with an ear freshly attuned...”

*New York Times*

“Life and Times is the most ambitious theatrical undertaking of my generation... an almost unbearable stream of pure, epiphanic bliss.”

*Time Out New York*

“This epic-in-miniature, derived from a series of loooong telephone conversations with one of the company’s members...was at times maddening but ultimately a marvel. Mixing genres (the musical, the mystery), the show’s creators Kelly Copper and Pavol Liska, reminded us that magical art can be made from even the most mundane material.”

*New York Times*

“Sprawling, bizarre, trivial, profound, holy, idiotic and quite resistant to criticism, the piece was as messy and capacious as life itself.”

*Time Out New York*

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

"Personnel is being hired for the Theater in Oklahoma! The Great Nature Theater of Oklahoma is calling you! It's calling you today only! If you miss this opportunity, there will never be another! Anyone thinking of his future, your place is with us! All welcome! Anyone who wants to be an artist, step forward! We are the theater that has a place for everyone, everyone in his place! If you decide to join us, we congratulate you here and now! But hurry, be sure not to miss the midnight deadline! We shut down at midnight, never to reopen! Accursed be anyone who doesn't believe us!"

-- Franz Kafka, Amerika

Nature Theater of Oklahoma is an OBIE-Award winning New York performance art group under the direction of Pavol Liska and Kelly Copper. Since *Poetics: a ballet brut*, our first dance piece created as an ensemble, Nature Theater of Oklahoma has been devoted to making the work we don't know how to make, putting ourselves in impossible situations, and working from out of our own ignorance and unease. We strive to create an unsettling live situation that demands total presence from everyone in the room. We use the readymade material around us, found space, overheard speech, and observed gesture, and through extreme formal manipulation, and superhuman effort, we affect in our work a shift in the perception of everyday reality that extends beyond the site of performance and into the world in which we live.