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#### Background Information:

Video Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j6NCmOKGrQ>

Pictured Monica Hunken, Photo by  
HUNTER CANNING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## THE POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE NEW YORK AND CULTURE PROJECT PRESENT

### ***THE WILD FINISH*, A POLISH-AMERICAN STORY OF EXILE, LOVE AND JUSTICE SPANNING THREE GENERATIONS OF A FAMILY'S SURVIVAL**

**A bicycle tour written and performed by Monica Hunken,  
directed by Melissa Chambers**

**Opens January 25 and runs through February 11 at ABC NO RIO**

"...autobiographical and innovative, *The Wild Finish* is presented with physical and spiritual rigor of one multi-faceted actress." —Judith Malina, Founder, The Living Theatre

New York, NY, December 29, 2011 — The Polish Cultural Institute and Culture Project present *The Wild Finish* written and performed by Monica Hunken and directed by Melissa Chambers. The play opens at Lower Eastside's ABC NO RIO at 156 Rivington Street (between Clinton and Suffolk). Performance dates are January 25 through 28 February 1-4 and 8-11, 2012. All shows start at 8:00 pm, except Saturdays at 9:00pm. The press preview is Thursday, January 26, 8:00pm. Running Time: 60 minutes. Tickets are \$10-15. For tickets log on to [brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com).

*The Wild Finish* is produced by The Polish Cultural Institute and Culture Project. Originally produced as a workshop by Culture Project, Women Center Stage Festival At The Living Theatre.

In this one-woman travelogue, Monica embarks on a bicycle journey across the vodka-soaked roads of Poland in search of Leonidas Dudarew Ossetynski, her grandfather. Resolving to hunt down the mystery of this enigmatic character, Monica sets off to an overland bicycle odyssey to understand the demon that still haunts her family. She squats with anarchist punks in old factories, barely escapes a knifing by Neo-Nazis, hides in churches and encounters a strange and amazing cast of characters: a sardonic filmmaker, Peer Gynt, the ghost of a beautiful, Norwegian bride, a clairvoyant, possessed dominatrix, and in the climax, Rena Mirecka, one of the last original members of Jerzy Grotowski's theater company who leads Monica in a para-theatrical workshop guiding her into the wilderness of her mind, into the darkness of her past where she must face her family demons once and for all.

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Writer/performer Monica Hunken is a solo performer who creates docu-adventure drama inspired by her international bicycle voyages. Her first play, *Reading the Water*, produced at HERE Arts Center and selected for the American Living Room Festival, explores the mysterious death of her scientist father and illuminates the dangerous conditions at his laboratory. *Blondie of Arabia*, produced at The Living Theatre, relays the tale of Hunken's solo bike ride across three countries in the Middle East. It won first place, the Audience Award, at the Apostrof Festival in Prague and was selected for the Theater of Change Festival in Athens, Greece, Sibiu International Theater Festival in Romania, and De Parade Festival in the Netherlands. Her latest play, *The Wild Finish*, was originally produced in Culture Project's Women Center Stage Festival and has been chosen for the Amsterdam Fringe Festival in September 2011.

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Hunken earned a B.F.A. in Drama from the Experimental Theatre Wing and an M.A. in Educational Theatre at NYU and has since taught in Thailand, Greece, India, trained in Amsterdam, Poland and Ireland, worked with the bicycle advocacy group Time's-Up! and is "Action Captain" for Rev. Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping. Hunken has performed with Les Freres Corbusier, International WOW, Not Man Apart Physical Theater Company and is a member of The Living Theatre Company.

Director Melissa Chambers has worked as a performer and deviser in Australia for the Melbourne Theatre Company, Red Stitch, the Black Lung, Hothouse and the Hayloft Project. In New York she has worked with 59E59 Theatres with the Outhouse Theatre, The Ohio /Soho Think Tank and has collaborated in workshops and developments at the Lark, P73, Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Dramatists Guild, Ontological Hysteric, Dixon Place and the New Dramatists. She is a fellow of the Ian Potter Cultural fund in Australia and The Australian American Association Dame Joan Sutherland fund in New York. Chambers is a member of the International WOW Company for whom she has written, devised and performed and recently trained in physical theatre with the Awake Project in the south of France. As a bicyclist she has appeared on the streets of Brooklyn and Manhattan and has ridden the length of the Canal du Midi in France as well as the Verdon Canyon, Provence.

**THE POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE NEW YORK**, established in 2000, is a diplomatic mission to the United States. One of 22 such institutes around the world, it serves under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. The Institute is dedicated to nurturing and promoting cultural ties between the United States and Poland, both through American exposure to Poland's cultural achievements, and through exposure of Polish artists and scholars to American institutions, professional counterparts, and to currents in American culture.

The Institute has been producing, initiating and promoting a broad range of cultural events in theater, music, film, literature, the humanities, and visual arts. Among its American partners are such distinguished organizations as Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; Brooklyn Academy of Music; The Museum of Modern Art; The Jewish Museum; The PEN American Center; The Poetry Society of America; National Gallery of Art; Yale University; Columbia University; Princeton University; Harvard Film Archive; CUNY Graduate Center; Julliard School of Music; The New Museum; St. Anne's Warehouse; La MaMa E.T.C.; and many more. Our programs have included American presentations of works by such luminaries as filmmakers Roman Polanski, Andrzej Wajda and Jerzy Skolimowski; writers Czeslaw Milosz, Adam Zagajewski and Wislawa Szymborska; composers Krzysztof Penderecki, Witold Lutoslawski and Mikolaj Gorecki; theatre directors Krystian Lupa, Jerzy Grotowski, Tadeusz Kantor and Grzegorz Jarzyna; visual artists Krzysztof Wodiczko, Katarzyna Kozyra, Artur Zmijewski; and many other important artists, writers, historians, scholars, musicians, and performers.

*The Wild Finish* | Written and Performed by Monica Hunken | Directed by Melissa Chambers | Sound by Xana Chambers and Benjamin Cerf | Lights by Evan True | Technical Direction by Evan True | Produced by The Polish Cultural Institute and Culture Project. Originally Produced as a workshop by Culture Project, Women Center Stage Festival At The Living Theatre

60 minutes, no intermission | Wednesday – Saturdays, January 25 – February 11, 8:00 pm, Saturdays 9:00 pm | ABC NO RIO | 156 Rivington Street NYC (between Clinton and Suffolk) | Tickets: \$10-\$15 | For tickets log on to [www.brownpaper-tickets.com](http://www.brownpaper-tickets.com)

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