

# Performance

## KILLER CUISINART!

[Stacy Davies](#) Wed. November 04

**‘Deadly Appliances’: A hilarious look at machinery run amok**



PHOTO by ELLEN BUTLER

With the American stage still being bastardized by corporate commercial interests (just like television and film), obsessing over big-budget, splashy musicals and high-tech special FX, it is, as usual, up to the smaller theater houses to promote interesting work. Yet, trying to keep the local blue-hairs engaged in subscription ticket sales, even most of the smaller theaters try to book a mainstream season. That means those of us truly in search of revolutionary theater must go practically subterranean to unearth elusive, original and courageous presentations. And I did. Yes, skirting along the underbelly of Long Beach is a company that not only rejects the manacles of corporatism but embraces the timeless theater of the absurd—and ridiculously tripped-out and awesome it is!

Critic Martin Esslin wrote “theater of the absurd strives to express its sense of the senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thought”—and this could easily be considered the theme of Cynthia Galles and Virginia DeMoss’ creation *Deadly Appliances*. But it’s not just the dancing spatulas, unruly ironing boards and twirling tea cups that torment and attack Karla (DeMoss), a housewife who’s fallen off the train of linear thought—it’s what these surreal encounters say about a life overrun with machinery and commercialism. And it’s a riot—a real *Alice in Wonderland* daytrip with soap-opera characters coming out of the TV, a radio (tuned into a cooking show) that tries to hack Karla to bits with cleavers and a wrestling match between Karla and a giant bottle of sage spice.

The Found is known for its kitschy, experimental shows (*Donner Party: The Musical*, *Beyond the Valley of the Flight Attendants*), but what makes their productions unlike other theaters who generate spoof is their unique grasp of absurdity. Galles (who passed away in 2005) and DeMoss (and director Lauren Nave) have something to

say here. Instead of hitting us up with vapid slapstick and puns, they focus on desperate human beings trapped in worlds that have gone illogically awry, and we laugh because it's hilarious—and because we recognize these characters as reflections of ourselves.

**DEADLY APPLIANCES** THE FOUND THEATRE • 599 LONG BEACH BLVD • LONG BEACH 90802 • 562.433.3363 • FRI-SAT 8:30PM; SUN 2:30PM • THROUGH NOV 22 • \$15 • [FOUNDTHEATRE.ORG](http://FOUNDTHEATRE.ORG)

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