

IATSE Local 58

April 20, 2005

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**Blue Man Group backs out of Raptors half-time show in face of union opposition**

TORONTO – The Toronto production of the Blue Man Group has cancelled plans to show a segment of its theatrical production during half-time at tonight's Raptors basketball game at the Air Canada Centre. The cancellation was made after Blue Man learned of plans to picket the ACC by the Boycott Blue Man Group Coalition.

The Coalition is made up of Toronto's major live theatrical unions: Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Toronto Musicians Association and Locals 58 and 822 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

"We know that it was the planned picket that caused the cancellation," said Gordon Graham, President of IATSE 58.

"A number of our members were booked on Friday for today's rehearsal and tonight's performance. We then contacted the ACC and told them we would be putting up an information picket to protest Blue Man's refusal to deal with the legitimate theatrical unions in Toronto.

"On Monday, we learned of the cancellation and from our sources in New York (home of Blue Man Productions) that it was because of the planned picket."

"Blue Man Group has reason to be concerned. They are coming to our community to disrupt the good will and cooperation that has long marked relationships between theatrical producers and the professionals who provide the entertainment.

"We all have been willing to sit down with Blue Man Productions to negotiate a fair and equitable agreement that serves everyone's interests, especially the theatre-going public. To date, they have refused to meet but we remain open to discussion."

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