

For Immediate Release

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**PEAK PERFORMANCES @ MONTCLAIR OPENS 2010/2011 SEASON WITH
ARCHITECT/COMPOSER CHRISTOPHER JANNEY'S SONIC/LIGHT
"EVERYWHERE IS THE BEST SEAT" ON SEPTEMBER 1**

Three additional Janney events highlight the Peak Season:

**A September 11 concert with live music; an October 12 film showing of
"What is a Heart?" and an ongoing lobby exhibition, "Architecture of the Air:
The Sound and Light Environments of Christopher Janney"**

The magical wit, radical imagination and generous heart of composer/architect Christopher Janney will resonate through Montclair State University in four ways beginning September 1 with the opening of Janney's "Everywhere Is the Best Seat," a sonic/light installation that commandeers the University's 80 year old Amphitheater through mid-November.

For this installation, Christopher Janney, who has a long history of creating sonic and light environments in existing public spaces, was inspired by John Cage's democratic comment, "Everything you do is music/And everywhere is the best seat." Commissioned by Peak Performances, this user-friendly, interactive work, comprised of 36 columns equipped with sensors, invites passersby to create their own sounds and light, thereby giving new, vibrant life to the space. "Everywhere Is the Best Seat" is free, accessible 24 hours a day, every day, and runs through November 14.

An exhibition entitled "Architecture of the Air: The Sound and Light Environments of Christopher Janney," will be on display in the Alexander Kasser Theater lobby, also from September 1 through November 14. Celebrating Janney's unique fusion of music and

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architecture, the exhibition features color transparencies of his previous interactive installations including "Rainbow Cove: Red and Green," "Harmonic Runway," "Sonic Forest," "Soundstair" and "Sonic Plaza." There will also be images of what Janney calls architecture as performance, "A House is a Musical Instrument," one created in Lexington, MA and the other in Kona, HI.

A free 60 minute concert, "Disembodied Instruments," on September 11 at 10pm will integrate the electronic sounds from "Everywhere Is the Best Seat" with live performances by saxophone player Stan Strickland, bass player Wes Wirth and tabla player Jerry Leake, with Eddie Grenga on the electric piano and vocalists Dave Revels and Jimmy Hayes of The Persuasions. Revels and Hayes will move in and out of scat/doo-wop phrases live and delayed within the electronic performance in the Amphitheater.

On October 12 at 7pm, there will be the tri-state debut of "What is a Heart?," a half-hour documentary chronicling "Heartbeat," the celebrated performance piece Janney has been exploring and restaging on and off over the last 25 years. He first set the work in 1982 on dancer/choreographer Sara Rudner, then principal with Twyla Tharp Dance. In the late 1990s, Mikhail Baryshnikov asked Janney and Rudner to set it on him for a season at New York City Center and a world tour. In 2008, the American Heart Association underwrote the creation of a new version with New York City Ballet dancer Emily Coates and the a cappella group The Persuasions. The film is directed by Theodore Bogosian. A discussion with Janney will take place in conjunction with the Peak Performances screening.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Originally from Washington, D.C., Christopher Janney graduated from Princeton University in 1973. He also studied music, specifically eurhythmics at the Dalcroze School of Music and percussion at Mannes College of Music in New York City. Janney received his master's degree in Environmental Art at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1978.

His ongoing, interactive work, "Soundstair," has been installed worldwide including the Spanish Steps in Rome in 1981 and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1990. Among his other interactive works are "Reach: New York," which was installed in the 34th Street/Herald Square Subway station in NYC (1996), "Harmonic Runway" in the Miami International Airport (1995), and "Whistle Grove: The National Steamboat Monument" in Cincinnati (2002).

Janney developed his own multimedia studio, PhenomenArts, Inc., while continuing his affiliation with M.I.T.'s Center for Advanced Visual Studies. He has received numerous awards and grants, including the Edison Award from General Electric for innovation in design.

"Architecture of the Air," a book chronicling his work, was published in 2006.

Please click <http://bit.ly/SundayMorning> for a *CBS Sunday Morning* video of Christopher Janney.

TICKET, TRANSPORTATION AND DINING INFORMATION

Event: "Everywhere Is the Best Seat"

Date(s): September 1 – November 14

Time: 24/7

Location: Montclair State University Amphitheater

Admission: Free

Event: "Architecture of the Air: The Sound and Light Environments of Christopher Janney" exhibit

Date(s): September 1 – November 14

Time: Monday through Friday: noon to 6pm, On performance dates: 10am until curtain

Location: Alexander Kasser Theater lobby

Admission: Free

Event: "Disembodied Instruments" live performance

Date: September 11

Time: 10pm

Location: Montclair State University Amphitheater

Admission: Free

Event: "What is a Heart?" documentary screening

Date: October 12

Time: 7pm

Location: Alexander Kasser Theater

Admission: Free, but advanced reservations are required. Reserve tickets online at www.peakperfs.org or call the Alexander Kasser Theater Box Office at 973-655-5112.

For train service from New York City to the Alexander Kasser Theater, available only on weekdays, go online to www.njtransit.com or call 973-275-5555.

For restaurants close to the Alexander Kasser Theater, visit <http://www.destinationmontclair.com>

Montclair State University is located at 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, New Jersey 07043.

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Architect's renderings of *Everywhere Is the Best Seat* ©PhenomenArts, Inc. *Everywhere Is the Best Seat* is commissioned by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ) and is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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