

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Ellen Jacobs Associates
611 Broadway #403 New York, NY 10012 USA
eja@ejassociates.org
http://www.ejassociates.org
212.245.5100



DRAWINGS BY ROBERT WHITMAN; PHOTO BY BEN BLOOM

BEING IN TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME
ROBERT WHITMAN'S 'PASSPORT' RECEIVES WORLD PREMIERE AT PEAK PERFORMANCES AND THE DIA ART FOUNDATION, APRIL 16 & 17 AT 8PM

The world premiere of Robert Whitman's "Passport," a geographically split theater spectacle, takes place simultaneously on the Montclair State University campus, courtesy of Peak Performances, and on the banks of the Hudson River near the Dia Art Foundation in Beacon, NY, courtesy of Dia: Beacon Art Center, April 16 and 17. For it, Whitman, a pioneer and master of multimedia installation and performance work, re-imagines our ability to be in two places at the same time. A fiber optic network serves as our passport.

In this witty, poetic example of collaborative boundary-crossing, Peak and Dia transmit real time images unique to its own space: The expanse of the Hudson, the budding trees, the whistle of a passing Metro North train and a blazing row boat are transmitted to the Kasser Theater, while select happenings on the Kasser Theater stage, including a white clad dancer walking upside-down midair and an erudite discussion of the meaning of words are mixed together and shared. Video capture, wireless transmission and real-time image streaming create this

MORE

magical jump in time and space. The result is a theatricalization of the visual arts and a visual art experience in the theater.

Commissioned by both Peak and Dia, "Passport" represents a singular joining of two major, cutting edge arts institutions--a theater and a gallery--to create what would otherwise be an impossible artistic experience.

Robert Whitman

Born in New York in 1935, Whitman first studied literature and drama, then visual arts, at Rutgers University. As a pioneer of artists' theater of the late 1950's and early 1960's, Whitman, together with Jim Dine, Red Grooms, Allan Kaprow and Claes Oldenburg, presented performances that combined props, sound and lights, in non-traditional theater spaces throughout lower Manhattan. Notably, with his pioneering piece, "The American Moon" (1960), Whitman became the first artist to incorporate film into his performances. During the 1960's, Whitman also became increasingly interested in creative collaboration with scientists, engineers and specialists beyond the realm of the visual arts world, which led first to his participation in 9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York City in 1966 and subsequently to the formation of E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology). He also collaborated on the design for the landmark Pepsi Pavilion at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan (1970), and made a new work for the Art and Technology Program at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1971).

In addition to the retrospective of his early performance work at Dia in 1976, Whitman had solo exhibitions at the Jewish Museum in New York (1968) and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (1968) and was the inaugural artist in the Museum of Modern Art's Projects series (1973). In the 1980's, several of Whitman's theater works traveled to the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (1983), and Moderna Museet in Stockholm (1987 and 1989). After a long hiatus, he returned to gallery exhibitions with shows at PaceWildenstein Gallery in New York (1995 and 1997). Whitman's historic work was also included in the exhibitions "Les années Pop" at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (2001), "Into the Light: The Projected Image in American Art 1964-1977" at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2001-2002) and "New Realisms: 1957-1962" at Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid. Whitman has staged more than 40 theatre and performance pieces since the 1960's and received numerous awards including a Guggenheim Fellowship, Creative Artists Public Service Grant, Citation of Fine Arts from Brandeis University, and a Creative Arts Award Xerox Company Grant.

MORE

Peak Performances @ Montclair State University—Peak Performances presents new and specially commissioned performances by innovative artists from across the globe. Under the direction of Jedediah Wheeler and housed at the University's Alexander Kasser Theater, the program presents performances by a diversity of artists, including Bill T. Jones, Fred Hersch, Jan Fabre (Belgium), Trisha Brown Dance Company, Wayne McGregor (UK), Christopher Janney, Susan Marshall, Jim Clayburgh—Joji Inc. (Belgium), Dumb Type (Japan), and, most recently, Robyn Orlin (South Africa). Peak Performances is proud to add Robert Whitman to this illustrious list of artists. For tickets and more information regarding the Montclair performances of Passport, please visit www.peakperfs.org.

PEAK PERFORMANCES TICKET, TRANSPORTATION AND DINING INFORMATION

Performance times:

April 16, 17 at 8pm

All tickets are \$15 and are available at the Alexander Kasser Theater Box Office, by calling 973-655-5112 or online at <http://www.peakperfs.org>.

Charter bus service is provided from New York City's Port Authority Bus Terminal – arcade on 41st Street between 8th and 9th Avenues – to the Alexander Kasser Theater (\$10 per person, roundtrip) for all Saturday and Sunday performances. Bus reservations may be made by calling 973-655-5112 or by visiting <http://www.peakperfs.org>.

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.

DIA: BEACON TICKET, TRANSPORTATION AND DINING INFORMATION

Performance times:

April 16, 17 at 8pm

\$10 general admission; \$7 students, seniors; free for Dia members and children under 12
Free admission on Saturdays and Sundays for City of Beacon residents, by calling 845-440-0100 or online at www.diaart.org.

By Train

Dia:Beacon is located adjacent to the Beacon train station, which is served by Metro-North Railroad trains from Grand Central Terminal and Poughkeepsie. Trains run hourly in either direction during museum operating hours. For train information, visit www.mta.info or call 212.532.4900 or 800.METRO.INFO. For train travel from north of Poughkeepsie, take an Amtrak train to Poughkeepsie and transfer to a Metro-North train. Beacon is the second stop.

From New Jersey and points South (and by bus from New York City)

Take the Garden State Parkway North until it merges with the New York State Thruway 87/287. Take I-87 North to Exit 17, I-84. Follow local signs to I-84 East and continue on I-84 East across Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. Immediately after the tollbooths, take exit 11. Turn right at the top of the ramp onto Route 9D south. Turn right at the second light – Beekman Street. Continue on Beekman Street .5 miles. Dia:Beacon's entrance is on the right, marked by a gray sign

Dia: Beacon is located at 3 Beekman Street, Beacon, NY 12508

###

030711