

For Immediate Release

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### **ART THAT DEFIES**

**PEAK PERFORMANCES@MONTCLAIR PRESENTS PREMIERES AND REVIVALS IN DANCE, MUSIC AND THEATER IN 2010 WINTER/SPRING SEASON, BEGINNING WITH REVIVAL OF “SHLEMIEL THE FIRST” ON JANUARY 16**

**MONTCLAIR, NJ**– *Category-eluding art has been a specialty of PeakPerformances@Montclair since Peak began five years ago. This spring’s round of shows proves the point once again. So, move over New York City, Montclair is up to the challenge. Consider the next four months.*

For editors who require categorization, below are color-coded clues to the predominant art form.

**PLEASE NOTE: BLUE = MUSIC, GREEN = THEATER, PLUM = DANCE/DANCE THEATER**

**MORE**

## REVIVAL OF "SHLEMIEL THE FIRST"

**JANUARY 16-17, 20-24, Times: January 16 at 8pm; January 17 at 3pm; January 20, 21 at 7:30pm; January 22 at 1pm; January 23 at 8pm; January 24 at 3pm**

Brimming with wacky wit and humor that disguise its deeper message, "Shlemiel the First" moves with the clangorous speed of its klezmer music score to tell the story of a group of self-proclaimed wise men, each less wise than the next. They order that Shlemiel, played by Michael Iannucci, leave the imaginary town of Chelm to travel the world to spread their ill-informed wisdom. While celebrating the victory of women's common sense over men's self-promoted wisdom, Shlemiel's gullibility and ultimate self-delusions make the musical a witty warning about the dangers of self-regard --all of which is delivered with a directorial sleight of hand. Another twist of fate caused by delusion turned into a happy reality: Shlemiel discovers new love in the old. The hilarious, postmodern klezmer musical "Shlemiel the First," which received its world premiere at the A.R.T. in Cambridge, MA in 1994, is once again directed and choreographed by David Gordon. "Shlemiel the First," based on Isaac Bashevis Singer's play of the same name, was conceived and adapted by Robert Brustein. Produced by Peak Performances, "Shlemiel" will be presented at Montclair State University's Alexander Kasser Theater in association with the National Yiddish Theatre-Folksbiene and Pick Up Performance Co(S).

## LULA WASHINGTON DANCE THEATRE PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE

**JANUARY 28-31, Times: January 28, 29 at 7:30pm; January 30 at 8pm; January 31 at 3pm**

The Lula Washington Dance Theatre, whose work radiates social awareness and political consciousness, will present the world premiere of Washington's "WWW.CONNECTIONS.2010." The Los Angeles-based company will showcase selections from recent repertoire, including Washington's "Ode to the 60's" (2007); "We Wore the Mask" (2006); and "Beautiful Venus and Serena" (2008), Tamica Washington-Miller's examination of the sister tennis stars, as well as "Angelitos Negros," an excerpt from Donald McKayle's "Songs of the Disinherited" (1972).

## ALTO SAX PLAYER/COMPOSER MIGUEL ZENÓN & ESTA PLENA PERFORM

**FEBRUARY 6, Time: 8pm**

The rapidly rising thirty-one year old alto sax player Miguel Zenón, a 2008 MacArthur Foundation Fellow (a.k.a. the "Genius Award"), will present his newly revised "Esta Plena" on February 6. The work was inspired by the traditional rural Puerto Rican music style, *plena*, which he crosses with bebop, classical and modern jazz influences. Comprised of ten pieces, five of which are instrumental and five vocal, the work includes lyrics that range from political commentary to personal tales. "Esta Plena" will be performed by Zenón plus six musicians, three of whom will play *panderos*, the traditional percussion instrument of *plena*.

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## **KRONOS QUARTET**

**FEBRUARY 7, Time: 3pm**

Never a group to second-guess, the Grammy Award-winning Kronos Quartet celebrates contemporary and traditional world music by composers from the four corners of the earth including Serbia, India, Yugoslavia, the West Bank, Mexico, Egypt as well as the United States. Several of the works are from the tradition-challenging quartet's most recent album, "Floodplain."

## **WAYNE MCGREGOR | RANDOM DANCE PRESENTS EAST COAST PREMIERE OF "ENTITY"**

**FEBRUARY 11-14, Times: February 11, 12 at 7:30pm; February 13 at 8pm; February 14 at 3pm**

Wayne McGregor, whose dual choreographic life as Resident Choreographer at the Royal Ballet and Artistic Director of his own internationally acclaimed troupe, creates dances as fiercely demanding of mind as they are of body. In "ENTITY," reputedly conceived in an American university science lab, McGregor creates a work of furious speed, physical wit and emotional sensuality. The full-evening dance is set to two original scores: one by Joby Talbot and the other by Coldplay and Massive Attack collaborator Jon Hopkins.

## **DOUG ELKINS AND FRIENDS' "FRÄULEIN MARIA"**

**MARCH 25-28, Times: March 25, 26 at 7:30pm; March 27 at 8pm; March 28 at 3pm**

"Fräulein Maria," by Doug Elkins, whispered to be one of the wickedest wits in town, is a loving and hilarious send-up of the classic American musical, "The Sound of Music." Elkins's affectionate humor shines through his seamless merging of modern and popular dance forms, including hip-hop and "voguing," and his unique, revolving cast drawn from the New York City downtown art scene.

## **VINCENT DANCE THEATRE PRESENTS AMERICAN PREMIERE OF "IF WE GO ON" AND REPRISE OF "BROKEN CHORDS"**

**APRIL 15-18, Times: April 15, 16 at 7:30pm; April 17 at 8pm; April 18 at 3pm**

Vincent Dance Theatre, based in Sheffield, England, returns to our shores with the American premiere of "If We Go On," directed by Charlotte Vincent with text by Wendy Houstoun. Comprised of miniature dances, songs, manifestos and long exits, "If We Go On" looks at uncertainty, hesitancy and ignorance, each of which is explored with darkly informed humor. The underlying question asked in the piece is: "If you had one last dance in you, what shape would it take?" Alternately scheduled with "If We Go On" is "Broken Chords," a hit of Peak's 2007 season. The 90-minute work, although a lament for lost love, uses satire to offset its bleak tone and to inspire laughter. The dancer/actor/performers, including an unaccompanied violinist playing Bach, move through a set comprised of 150 church chairs and a room-size chandelier.

**MORE**

## SHANGHAI QUARTET COMBINES EASTERN AND WESTERN MUSIC IN PERFORMANCE

**APRIL 25, Time: 3pm**

The Shanghai Quartet will present an afternoon of Western classical music plus selections from “ChinaSong,” a compilation of Chinese folksongs arranged by the Quartet’s second violinist Yi-Wen Jiang. The songs are recollected from Jiang’s youth growing up in China during the Cultural Revolution. The concert will also include Haydn’s *Quartet No. 1 in G Major, Op. 77* and Dvořák’s *String Quintet in G Major with Double Bass, Op. 77*. Guest Artist, Christian McBride, one of the world’s most renowned jazz bassists, makes a rare classical appearance on the double bass.

## CRASH ENSEMBLE WITH SINGER IARLA Ó LIONÁIRD

**MAY 8-9, Times: May 8 at 8pm; May 9 at 3pm**

The Peak season concludes with two concerts by the fiercely energetic Irish new-music band, Crash Ensemble. On May 8, the band will perform music by David Lang (“Forced March”); Terry Riley (“Loops for Ancient Giant Nude Hairy Warriors Racing Down the Slopes of Battle”); Steve Reich (“Cello Counterpoint”); and Donnacha Dennehy (“Grá agus Bás”). The next afternoon, May 9, the band plays music by Evan Ziporyn (“Kebyar Maya”); John Godfrey (“Aria 51”); John Zorn (“Paran”) and Donnacha Dennehy (“Aisling Gheal”). Featuring singer Iarla Ó Lionáird, a highlight is the world premiere of Donnacha Dennehy’s “Sean Nós Settings,” written especially for the Montclair dates.

## TICKET, TRANSPORTATION AND DINING INFORMATION

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

Van or bus service is available from New York City (\$10 per person, roundtrip) from the Maritime Hotel on 9th Avenue and 16th Street to the Alexander Kasser Theater for selected performances. Bus reservations may be made by calling 973-655-5112. For train service, available only on weekdays, go online to: [www.njtransit.com](http://www.njtransit.com) or call 1-973-275-5555

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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**PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SCHEDULE**

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