

For Immediate Release

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PHOTOS BY JACLYN BOROWSKI

THE MATTER OF ORIGINS
SCIENCE AND DANCE CREATE NEW PARTNERSHIP IN LIZ LERMAN'S
'THE MATTER OF ORIGINS,' WHICH RECEIVES LOCAL PREMIERE AT PEAK
PERFORMANCES AT THE ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER, MARCH 24-27

Liz Lerman's "The Matter of Origins," a highly original marriage of science and art, presents big questions, such as the origins of matter, transformed by the creative wit and human heart that instigate such imagination. The work, the result of three years of research, receives its local premiere at Montclair State University's Alexander Kasser Theater as part of Peak Performances 2011 season in Montclair, NJ, March 24-27.

Meditative, rivetingly theatrical, emotionally complex, this one-hour multi-media inquiry into questions that have maddened scientists—and civilians—since the dawn of man, includes—as do most of Lerman's work—a multi-generational cast. Integrated into the work are panoramic views of New Mexico's natural beauty, glimpses through the Hubble Telescope, a video tour of the Large Hadron Collider at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and a suggestion

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of the tea house in Los Alamos where Edith Warner served tea and chocolate cake to Robert Oppenheimer and Niels Bohr on their breaks from their work on the Manhattan Project.

In Act II, the audience joins the performers on stage, where they will be seated at tables of ten and served chocolate cake and tea (duplicated from Edith Warner’s recipe). Conversations will be led by “provocateurs,” that is to say, artists, scientists, thinkers, religious leaders and professors from a range of disciplines who will facilitate conversations about the issues raised in the performance.

Liz Lerman, who received a MacArthur “Genius Grant” Fellowship in 2002, founded the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange in 1976. Her work, resulting from and distinguished by her collaboration with her dancers and often with the communities in which it is being performed, ranges from abstract to personal to political. From 1994-1996, she collaborated with the Music Hall of Portsmouth, New Hampshire to create the Shipyard Project, which has been widely noted as an example of the power of art to enhance such values as social capital and civic dialogue. From 1999 to 2002, she led the Hallelujah project, which engaged people in 15 cities throughout the United States in the creation of a series of dances “in praise of” topics vital to their communities. Lerman has received commissions from the American Dance Festival, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and the MetBallet, among others.

In January 2011, Lerman announced that she is passing on her leadership role of the Dance Exchange to company member and choreographer Cassie Meador beginning in July 2011. Lerman will be artist-in-residence at Harvard University in the fall, and continue to choreograph. She is presently in discussion with American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) in Cambridge, MA, the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC, and Sadler’s Wells in London.

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TICKET, TRANSPORTATION AND DINING INFORMATION

Performance times:

March 24, 25 at 7:30pm

March 26 at 8pm

March 27 at 3pm

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 train service, 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.

Co-commissioned by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ) and the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at Maryland. Additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Additional funding for National Dance Project is provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Community Connections Fund of the MetLife Foundation. This project is supported, in part, by a grant from the National Science Foundation for research to investigate the relationship of arts-based audience engagement to informal science education.

The 2010/11 Peak Performances season is made possible in part by funds from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, The National Endowment for the Arts, The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Discover Jersey Arts, Alison and James T. Cirenza, and The Honorable Mary Mochary.

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