



For Immediate Release
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**YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS CELEBRATES THE 40-YEAR
COLLABORATION OF EIKO & KOMA WITH TWO PERFORMANCE
PROGRAMS, *RETROSPECTIVE PROJECT***



Eiko & Koma with David Harrington

***Fragile*, the West Coast premiere of Eiko & Koma and the Kronos Quartet
Presented by YBCA and the Kronos Quartet**

Thurs-Fri, March 15-16, 2012, 5-9pm

Sat, March 17, 3-7pm

YBCA Forum, \$10/FREE for YBCA members

***Regeneration*, an evening of three iconic performance works by Eiko & Koma**

Thurs-Sat, March 22-24, 2012, 8pm

YBCA Forum, \$25 regular/\$20 YBCA members, students, seniors, teachers

701 Mission St, San Francisco, CA, 415.978.ARTS (2787), www.ybca.org

"While the moving-painting quality of their choreography is profoundly arresting, both theatrically and visually — they find the beauty in ugly — there is another layer that gets to the essence of nature. You connect to their world not by watching, but by imagining that you are living inside their bodies." – Gia Kourlas, New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, February 21, 2012 - Yerba Buena Center for the Arts celebrates **Eiko & Koma's** long history with Bay Area audiences, its venues, its community and its artists with a two-week residency entitled *Retrospective Project* documenting their 40-year collaboration. In the first week of their residency YBCA and the Kronos Performing Arts Association co-present the West Coast premiere of *Fragile*, a performance installation by Eiko & Koma and the Kronos Quartet. In the second week YBCA presents *Regeneration*, an evening of three of Eiko & Koma's most iconic performance works.

Eiko & Koma's multi-year *Retrospective Project* is an evolving examination of the pair's collaboration of four decades. "The goal of the *Retrospective Project*," says Koma, "is not to look back and summarize the past, but within the eternal present to discover ways we can move forward as artists." Since 2009 the pair has been touring *Retrospective Project* in varying incarnations. The project includes video documentaries, several pieces from their repertoire, as well as two new performance works, *Raven* and *Water*, and two living installations, *Naked* and *Fragile*.

In *Fragile*, to be presented March 15-17, Eiko & Koma and Kronos Quartet create an intimate performance work, half stage piece and half living installation, that viewers are invited to experience from multiple viewpoints. *Fragile* allows attendees to stay as long or as short as they wish in unaccustomed proximity to the performers, or remain seated tentatively on the periphery.

David Harrington of the Kronos Quartet is conceiving the musical setting for *Fragile*, drawing on different pieces from its nearly four-decade long repertoire that vary each time the installation is performed. "*Fragile* reflects on the ideas of nakedness and fragility in a way which has been powerfully moving for me as a musician," says Harrington. "Eiko and Koma's bodies become metaphors for the universal, fragile nakedness we try to hide. Their bare skin and awesome, slow movements become a story of communal privacy. To me this is the precise area where music is most alive."

Fragile builds on the successful multi-year partnership launched between YBCA and Kronos in 2010. Since then, Kronos and YBCA have co-produced performances each season, and have co-commissioned three new works. Works presented have included George Crumb's *Black Angels*, the world premiere of Sahba Aminikia's String Quartet no. 3, *A Threnody for Those Who Remain*, and *A Chinese Home* with guest performer Wu Man. In addition to *Fragile*, Kronos will present *Women's Voices* May 11-12, 2012, featuring guest vocalist Tanya Tagaq and the world premiere of YBCA and the Kronos Quartet's co-commission, Vân-Ânh Vanessa Võ's *All Clear*.

The second week of Eiko & Koma's residency is devoted to a performance of three iconic works from their repertoire, together titled *Regeneration*. The evening begins with their latest stage work, *Raven* (2010), a haunting duet that unfolds on scorched canvas strewn with black feathers, and ends with a distilled version of *White Dance* (1976), the first piece they made together and their first to be shown in America. In between they reprise *Night Tide* (1984), a jewel-like example of the way body and landscape blend. The dance was inspired by the story of two mountains who make love in the middle of the night and have to return home before morning light.

The influence Eiko & Koma have had on Bay Area art of the last several decades cannot easily be measured, and their *Retrospective Project* testifies to the indelible impression they have left. Starting in the late 70s, Eiko & Koma made San Francisco their second home for a few months each year, presenting a total of 11 programs consisting of 14 works in 12 different venues, and collaborating with a wide swathe of Bay Area artists including Joseph Krysiak, Irene and Paul Oppenheim, Patty Ann Farrell, Kazu Yanagi, Bob Carroll, George Coates, Chanticleer, Joseph Jennings, Kronos Quartet, Anna Halprin, and Joan Jeanrenaud.

Watch a video about *Retrospective Project*:

eikoandkoma.org/index.php?p=ek&id=1883

BIOGRAPHIES

Eiko & Koma

Eiko (female) and Koma (male) were law and political science students in Japan when, in 1971, they each joined the Tatsumi Hijikata company in Tokyo. Their collaboration began as an experiment and then developed into an exclusive partnership. The following year, they started to work as independent artists in Tokyo and at the same time began to study with Kazuo Ohno, who along with Hijikata was the central figure in the Japanese avant-garde theatrical movement of the 1960s. Neither Eiko nor Koma studied traditional Japanese dance or theater forms, and have preferred to choreograph and perform only their own works.

Their interest in *Neue Tanz*, the German modern dance movement that flourished alongside the Bauhaus movement in art and architecture, and their desire to explore non-verbal theater took them to Hanover, Germany in 1972. There they studied with Manja Chmiel, a disciple of Mary Wigman. In 1973, they moved to Amsterdam, and for the next two years toured extensively in Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Tunisia. It was the late Lucas Hoving, a wonderful dancer who had toured with the early José Limón Dance Company, who encouraged them to go to America.

The Japan Society sponsored the first American performance of Eiko & Koma's *White Dance* in May of 1976. Since then, they have presented their works at theaters, universities, museums, galleries and festivals across North America, Europe and Japan.

Eiko & Koma's noted stage collaborations include *Hunger* (2008, with Cambodian painters-turned-performers Peace and Charian), *Mourning* (2007, with pianist Margaret Leng Tan), *Cambodian Stories* (2006, with the Reyum Painting Collective of young Cambodian artists), *Be With* (2001, with Anna Halprin and Joan Jeanrenaud), *When Nights Were Dark* (2000, with Joseph Jennings and a Praise Choir), the proscenium version of *River* (1997, with Kronos Quartet, who performed Somei Satoh's commissioned score live), and *Land* (1991, with Robert Mirabal).

Eiko & Koma have also created and presented site works as free-admission events at dozens of sites for over 35,000 audience members. *River* takes place in a body of moving water. *The Caravan Project*, a "museum by delivery" installation, is performed in a specially modified trailer. *Offering*, premiered in Battery Park near Ground Zero in 2002, is a ritual in communal mourning. *Tree Song* was presented in the St Mark's Church's graveyard in 2003. *Water*, another collaboration with Robert Mirabal, was performed in a reflection pool with Henry Moore sculpture and opened 2011 Lincoln Center Outdoor Festival.

For more information about Eiko & Koma, visit www.eikoandkoma.org.

Kronos Quartet

For nearly 40 years, San Francisco's Kronos Quartet — David Harrington and John Sherba (violins), Hank Dutt (viola) and Jeffrey Zeigler (cello) — has pursued a singular artistic vision, combining a spirit of fearless exploration with a commitment to expanding the range and context of the string quartet. In the process, the Grammy-winning Kronos has become one of the most celebrated and influential ensembles of our time, performing thousands of concerts worldwide, releasing more than 45 recordings of extraordinary breadth and creativity, collaborating with many of the world's most eclectic

composers and performers, and commissioning more than 750 new works and arrangements for string quartet. In 2011, Kronos became the only recipients of both the Polar Music Prize and the Avery Fisher Prize, two of the most prestigious awards given to musicians.

Since 1973, Kronos has built a compellingly eclectic repertoire for string quartet, performing and recording works by 20th century masters (Bartók, Shostakovich, Webern), contemporary composers (Aleksandra Vrebalov, John Adams, Alfred Schnittke), jazz legends (Ornette Coleman, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk), and artists from even farther afield (rock guitar legend Jimi Hendrix, Azeri vocalist Alim Qasimov, interdisciplinary composer/performer Meredith Monk).

Integral to Kronos' work is a series of long-running, in-depth collaborations with many of the world's foremost composers. Kronos has worked extensively with composers such as the "Father of Minimalism," Terry Riley, whose work with Kronos includes *Salome Dances for Peace*, the multimedia production *Sun Rings*, and 2005's *The Cusp of Magic*; Philip Glass, recording his string quartets and scores to films like *Mishima* and *Dracula*; Azerbaijan's Franghiz Ali-Zadeh, featured on the 2005 release *Mugam Sayagi: Music of Franghiz Ali-Zadeh*; Steve Reich, whose Kronos-recorded *Different Trains* earned the composer a Grammy; Argentina's Osvaldo Golijov, whose work with Kronos includes both compositions and extensive arrangements for albums like *Kronos Caravan* and *Nuevo*; and many more.

In addition to composers, Kronos counts numerous artists from around the world among its regular collaborators, including Chinese pipa virtuoso Wu Man; the legendary Bollywood "playback singer" Asha Bhosle; Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq; Mexican rockers Café Tacuba; the Romanian gypsy band Taraf de Haïdouks; and the renowned American soprano Dawn Upshaw. Kronos has performed live with the likes of icons Allen Ginsberg, Zakir Hussain, Modern Jazz Quartet, Noam Chomsky, Rokia Traoré, Tom Waits, Howard Zinn, Betty Carter and David Bowie, and has appeared on recordings by such diverse talents as Nine Inch Nails, Amon Tobin, Dan Zanes, DJ Spooky, Dave Matthews, Nelly Furtado, Joan Armatrading and Don Walser.

A non-profit organization, the Kronos Quartet/Kronos Performing Arts Association is committed to mentoring emerging musicians and composers, and to creating, performing, and recording new works. The quartet spends five months of each year on tour, appearing in concert halls, clubs, and festivals around the world including BAM Next Wave Festival, Carnegie Hall, the Barbican in London, WOMAD, UCLA's Royce Hall, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Shanghai Concert Hall, and the Sydney Opera House. Kronos is equally prolific and wide-ranging on recordings. The ensemble's expansive discography on Nonesuch Records includes collections such as *Pieces of Africa* (1992), a showcase of African-born composers, which simultaneously topped Billboard's Classical and World Music lists; 1998's ten-disc anthology, *Kronos Quartet: 25 Years*; *Nuevo* (2002), a Grammy- and Latin Grammy-nominated celebration of Mexican culture; the 2003 Grammy-winner, Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite*; and *Floodplain* (2009), spotlighting music from regions of the world riven by conflict.

For more information about the Kronos Quartet, please visit www.kronosquartet.org

About Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA), located in San Francisco's Yerba Buena

cultural district, is one of the nation's leading multidisciplinary contemporary arts centers. With a belief that contemporary art is at the heart of community life, YBCA brings audiences and artists of all backgrounds together to express and experience creativity. The organization is known for nurturing emerging artists at the forefront of their fields and presenting works that blend art forms and explore the events and ideas of our time. As part of its commitment to the San Francisco Bay Area, YBCA supports the local arts community and reflects the region's diversity of people and thought through its arts and public programming.

YBCA programs around four Big Ideas to organize its wide-ranging programs and provide a context with which to engage the art. The Big Ideas are: ENCOUNTER: Engaging the social context; SOAR: The search for meaning; REFLECT: Considering the personal; and DARE: Innovations in art, action, audience. These ideas, which encompass art from all disciplines, are designed to focus an investigation of contemporary art and its relationship to the larger world. Using the Big Ideas as portals,

YBCA has established a framework of thought that invites exploration and risk-taking, quiet reflection and active engagement.

Performing arts, visual arts and film/video programs are curated thematically around Big Ideas which illustrate the connections and associations between the works. Public programs and Big Idea Nights, YBCA's popular free open house series, are dedicated to establishing a deeper understanding and appreciation of contemporary art. YBCA presents programming year-round in the Forum, Screening Room, Galleries and Novellus Theater. For tickets and information, call 415.978.ARTS (2787) or visit www.ybca.org.

Funding

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