BARYSHNIKOV ARTS CENTER TO PRESENT EIKO & KOMA’S
NAKED: A LIVING INSTALLATION, MARCH 29—APRIL 9

Part Two of Eiko & Koma’s Three-Year Retrospective Project,
Naked Re-imagines Theatrical Space and Time

Eiko & Koma is a starkly unusual collaborative pair of artists who, since 1976, have created a unique and riveting theater of movement out of stillness, light, texture, sound and silence. For four decades, almost always designing and handcrafting every aspect of their work, the iconoclastic Japanese-born duo has straddled the worlds of the performing and visual arts, presenting works in galleries and museums as well as theaters and outdoor sites. Twelve years after Breath, their groundbreaking month-long living installation at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Eiko & Koma offer Naked, a new marathon-like living installation for which they will be on view, nude, four to six hours a day for two weeks. Originally presented at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Baryshnikov Arts Center is proud to present the work’s New York engagement March 29-April 9.

Naked: A Living Installation will take place in Studio 6A of the Baryshnikov Arts Center (450 West 37th Street, NYC). Audiences are welcome to arrive anytime and stay as long as they wish Tuesday-Friday, 6:00 P.M.—10:00 P.M. and Saturday, 3:00 P.M.—9:00 P.M. Admission is free and multiple visits are encouraged. Audience members can bring drawing or writing material. In adjacent spaces, a companion video installation of Eiko & Koma’s media work will be on view. Reservations can be made in advance by visiting www.smarttix.com. For more information, please visit www.bacnyc.org or call 646.731.3224. To arrange class visits, please write to info@eikoandkoma.org.

The New York premiere of Naked at BAC is a part of Carnegie Hall’s citywide JapanNYC Festival and is presented in partnership with Asia Society and Danspace Project.

Naked was commissioned by the Walker Art Center as a part of an exhibition of its permanent collection, Event Horizon, and performed there during all the hours the museum was open throughout November 2010, receiving close to 8,000 visitors. The Walker Art Center’s Senior Curator Phillip Bither, who has long presented Eiko & Koma, said of the commission, “Eiko & Koma create stunningly intense, uncategorizable performance works that live between worlds of dance, non-verbal theater, visual installation, and timeless ritual. Our commissioning of Naked offers both the artists and audiences a new opportunity and, along with the retrospective catalogue, caps three decades of Walker support for these essential innovators.”

An exploration of nakedness, desire, vulnerability and the elasticity of time, Naked features Eiko & Koma’s powerful slow movement performed in an immersive and charged organic environment of their own design, composed of burnt canvas, soil, feathers, rice paste, sea salt and dripping water. The work exemplifies what The New York Times describes as “the moving-painting quality” of Eiko & Koma’s work, but in a new context. They have never, to this degree, embraced such intense intimacy and the erasure of the protective
“fourth wall.” In *Naked*, Eiko’s and Koma’s bodies are never more than a foot away from each other and only several feet away from the viewers, who come and go as they please. Eiko & Koma invite audiences to “visit us closer, linger, and kinetically observe how our bodies age, dream, and move toward the unknown.”

*The Retrospective Project* (2009-2012) was prompted by producer Sam Miller’s idea that the museum/gallery concept of a retrospective can be applied effectively to certain performing artists. Examining 40 years of performative and non-performative work, the project offered *Regeneration* at Danspace Project in May 2010, which included *Raven* (2010) and the revival of *White Dance* (1976). *Naked* at BAC is the *Retrospective Project* highlight of 2011.

This summer, the Walker Art Center will publish the first comprehensive monograph of the artists’ work. Entitled *Eiko & Koma: Time Is Not Even, Space Is Not Empty*, the catalog includes scholarly essays, an interview with the artists, and an illustrated catalogue of works that provides details about each of the duo’s projects to date, accompanied by reprints of primary materials and short essays on specific works. The 288-page volume is edited by curator Joan Rothfuss and includes texts by Philip Bither, Suzanne Carbonneau, Doryun Chong, Forrest Gander, André Lepecki, Sam Miller, and Olga Viso, as well as more than 250 color and black-and-white images and a bibliography.

A five-month, multi-room exhibition of and by Eiko & Koma will open at Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art. During 2011, *The Retrospective Project* will also visit Miami, Sarasota, Los Angeles, Dublin, Salt Lake City, Albuquerque, Colorado Springs, and College Park (MD).

In celebration of Eiko & Koma’s 35th year in New York, all of their 2011 performances will be free, including engagements at Columbia University, the New School and a new outdoor work, in addition to *Naked* at BAC.

Prior to the presentation of *Naked*, Eiko & Koma will offer a Delicious Movement Workshop at BAC, co-presented with Movement Research. The workshops will be held Tuesday, March 15 and Wednesday, March 16, 7:00 P.M.—9:30 P.M. in Studio 6A. Grounded in Eiko & Koma’s movement vocabulary, the Delicious Movement Workshop is emphatically noncompetitive and appropriate for all levels of ability and training. To register for this workshop please visit www.movementresearch.org.

For more information about *Naked*, please visit http://eikoandkoma.org/naked. To see a video of *Naked* at the Walker, please visit http://eikoandkoma.org/videoofnaked.

**Funding Credits**

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**About Eiko & Koma**

Born and raised in Japan and resident in the United States since 1976, Eiko & Koma’s creativity is informed by growing up in post-war Japan, political ferment they actively participated in the end of 60’s, European Expressionism they experienced in the mid-seventies, and socio-political activism of late 20th Century New York. Eiko & Koma tours to various communities in many countries and also leads multi-disciplinary collaborations, projects and outreach activities.
Eiko (female) and Koma (male) were law and political science students in Tokyo when, in 1971, they began to study with Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno, two central figures of avant-garde art movement in post-war Japan. Their collaboration began as an experiment and soon developed into an exclusive partnership. Leaving Japan in 1972, Eiko & Koma studied with Manja Chmiel in Germany and Lucas Hoving in the Netherlands before moving to New York in 1976 with their first piece, White Dance. Since then, they have presented their works in a variety of venues and sites worldwide, including numerous appearances at BAM’s Next Wave Festival and the American Dance Festival.

Eiko & Koma have created and presented site works as free-admission events at dozens of sites for over 40,000 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 and performed in various parks throughout Manhattan in 2002 and 2003, is a ritual of communal mourning. Tree Song and Cambodian Stories Revisited were presented in the St Mark’s Church’s graveyard in 2003 and 2007.

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), the proscenium version of Offering (2002, with clarinetist David Kraukuer), 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), Wind (1993, with Chanticleer) and Land (1991, with Robert Mirabal and Sandra Lerner).

Eiko & Koma have received two Bessie Awards (1984 and 1990), as well as a double Guggenheim (1985), a MacArthur (1996) and one of the first United States Artists (2006) Fellowships. They were honored with the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award (2004) and the Dance Magazine Award (2006) for lifetime achievement in modern dance.

About the Baryshnikov Arts Center

The Baryshnikov Arts Center is the realization of a long-held vision by artistic director Mikhail Baryshnikov, who sought to build an arts center in Manhattan that would serve as a gathering place for artists from all disciplines. BAC’s opening in 2005 heralded the launch of this mission, establishing a thriving creative laboratory and performance space for artists from around the world. BAC’s activities encompass a robust residency program augmented by a range of professional services, including commissions of new work, as well as the presentation of performances by artists of excellence at varying stages of their careers. In tandem with its commitment to supporting artists, BAC is dedicated to building audiences for the arts by presenting contemporary, innovative work at affordable ticket prices. In February 2010, BAC opened the Jerome Robbins Theater, which serves as an organic extension of the existing center, featuring multi-disciplinary work, emerging talent, and international artists, and including artist-centered activity that fosters creative exploration.

The Baryshnikov Arts Center is located at 450 West 37th Street (between 9th and 10th Avenues) in New York City. For more information about the Baryshnikov Arts Center, visit www.bacnyc.org.

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