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## **NYU'S SKIRBALL CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS ANNOUNCES THE 2009/2010 SEASON OF CULTURAL AND PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS**

*New Season Will Feature Three Theatrical World Premieres*

New York University's Jack H. Skirball Center for the Performing Arts has announced highlights of its forthcoming 2009-2010 season. According to L. Jay Oliva, executive producer, and Michael Harrington, director, the new season will once again feature the four thematic series—*Project 566: What's Next*, *Big Red Chair Family*, *Beyond the Classroom*, and *World Stage*. This year's multi-faceted lineup will include something for the youngest as well as the young at heart, enthusiasts of the rich intellectual context of the arts, not to mention fans of the dynamic and diverse cultures of New York City.

The Skirball Center, now in its sixth year as the premier venue for the presentation of cultural and performing arts events for NYU and lower Manhattan, is especially proud to announce that the new season will also feature three theatrical world premieres. Leading off and opening the new season will be The Public Theater's contemporary production of *Othello*, by William Shakespeare, directed by Peter Sellers and featuring John Ortiz and Philip Seymour Hoffman. The two other world premieres are: *Talk Like Singing*, a groundbreaking original Japanese musical, written and directed by Koki Mitani, with music by Yasuharu Konishi; and *FINN*, a unique theatre piece based on the Celtic legend of Finn McCool, and staged by the avant-garde theatre company Mabou Mines.

NYU's Skirball Center for the Performing Arts is located at 566 LaGuardia Place (at Washington Square South). Tickets for most events will be made available to purchase online and by phone starting August 3, and in person starting August 24. The BRC (Big Red Chair) 8-pack, a \$99 family ticket package will be available to purchase August 3-November 30. Tickets may be purchased: online at [www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu](http://www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu), by phone at 212.352.3101 (toll-free 866.811.4111), or in person at the Skirball Center's Shagan Box Office. For a complete and current calendar of the Skirball Center's 2009/2010 season please visit: [www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu](http://www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu).

The following are highlights, organized by thematic series, of the Skirball Center's season:

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## PROJECT 566: WHAT'S NEXT

### ***Othello (World Premiere)*** September 12 - October 4, \$60-\$95

This is The Public Theater's contemporary production of Shakespeare's classic with John Ortiz as Othello and Philip Seymour Hoffman as Iago. Peter Sellars, renowned for pushing the boundaries with his visionary stagings of the classics, explores the new prospects for hope in 21st-century America by giving the play a modern resonance that raises a mirror to our culture's racial struggles and achievements, both darkened and illuminated by overwhelming personal and political yearning.

### ***Aziz Ansari with John Mulaney*** October 8, 8pm \$25

Ansari's critically acclaimed hit sketch-comedy series *Human Giant* recently completed its second season. He plays Tom Haverford in the new television series *Parks and Recreation*, and has been singled out in the media as a "hot standup" and a "comedian to watch." Mulaney has performed on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, and *Live at Gotham* and writes for *Saturday Night Live*.

### ***Talk Like Singing (World Premiere)*** November 12 – 22, \$30-\$70

Japanese superstar Shingo Katori makes his international stage debut in the first original Japanese musical to premiere in the U.S. The comedy is spoken in both Japanese and English and tells the story of a unique young man struggling to overcome the singing voices inside his head in order to speak normally.

### ***The Derek Trucks Band*** December 10, 8pm \$40-\$50

Derek Trucks is one of the most critically acclaimed guitarists and the youngest musician to be included in *Rolling Stone's* list of *The 100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time*. Known for their blues roots and Southern rock style, the group has taken their latest album, entitled *Already Free*, well beyond to incorporate the larger sounds of rock, soul, jazz, Latin, and Indian music.

### ***Dance Gotham*** January 8-10, \$10 - Co-presented by Gotham Arts Exchange

This annual dance festival presents a thrilling range of aesthetics and artistry. Twenty-four dance companies are showcased over the course of just three nights in fifteen minute spotlights. Participants include: Battleworks, ZviDance, PARADIGM, Gallim Dance, ARENA Dances, ezDanza, Keigwin + Company, Kate Weare Company, Monica Bill Barnes & Company, Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company, River North Chicago, Brian Brooks Moving Company, among others.

### ***Diane Birch*** February 13, 8pm \$25

Mixing piano-playing virtuosity with easy-going soul, Birch strikes an uplifting groove on even the most melancholy tune. Her debut album, *Bible Belt*, was recorded with a formidable team of Grammy-winning producers and incorporates 60's and 70's soul with New Orleans second-line rhythms, gospel fervor, doo-wop harmonies, country-blues guitar, and classic AM radio-style melodies. Her song *Fire Escape* was in *USA Today's Playlist*. Birch has been featured on NPR and has performed at Joe's Pub.

### ***FINN (World Premiere)*** March 4 - 7, \$30-\$55

Internationally acclaimed and legendary avant-garde theater company Mabou Mines celebrates its 40th anniversary with this digital and live-action adventure based on the ancient Celtic legend of Finn McCool (Fionn macCumhaill). Finn's coming of age journey to avenge his father's death and seize leadership of the clan leads him to choose between a life of vengeance and violence or of tolerance and moral courage. *FINN* combines large-scale digital animation with traditional storytelling, music, and poetic text to illustrate this powerful tale in a fantasy world of live performers, virtual characters, and animated settings.

### ***New York City Opera's VOX: Showcasing American Composers*** April 30 - May 1

Each year VOX presents previously un-produced works from both emerging and established composers. VOX demonstrates the rich diversity and potential of contemporary opera. Over the last five years, submissions for VOX have more than doubled and audiences have reached capacity. With the close of

VOX 2009, on the program's 10th anniversary, a total of 100 new works had been presented with the full resources of America's preeminent company for original opera. Of those works, more than one-third has gone on to a future beyond VOX national and international opera houses and theaters.

### **BIG RED CHAIR FAMILY SERIES**

***A Special Family Show with They Might Be Giants* October 18, 4pm \$25**

This is the kick off for the second season of the Big Red Chair series and features New York's own legendary rock band. TMBG will be performing music from their brand new CD/DVD *Here Comes Science* as well as their entire catalog including the Grammy-winning *Here Come the 123s*. From their critically acclaimed albums and videos to their film and TV music the founding duo of John Linnell and John Flansburgh have generated millions of records worldwide and continue to play to sold-out crowds at home, across the nation, and abroad.

***The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon* November 1, 3pm \$20**

This storybook character, from the beloved book series by Crockett Johnson, is brought to life in an Enchantment Theater Company production featuring puppets, masks, magic, and music. One evening, Harold decides to go for a walk in the moonlight. As it turns out, there isn't any moon that night nor is there a path to walk on, so Harold simply draws them creating the world he wants to explore and embarks on an incredible journey using nothing more than a big purple crayon and his sky's-the-limit imagination. A mask-building workshop will be held prior to this performance in the lobby.

***Darwin* March 13, 2pm \$20**

Darwin is a dinosaur who discovers the true meaning of love in this heart-rending tale told by Corbian Visual Arts and Dance. In his numerous encounters, Darwin meets many different types of creatures; learning the value of good and bad, love and hate, friends and enemies. The crayon-like characters in this glowing fantasy world are brought to life with flexible electroluminescent wires in a blackout setting with orchestral and pop music. Stay after the performance for a post show Q&A with the artists and actors.

***Michael Moschen* April 17, 7pm \$25**

Considered to be one of the world's most visionary performing artists and a juggler extraordinaire, Michael Moschen combines the magic of light and movement to transcend object manipulation from a novelty to a true art form. He blends the rich beauty of art, science, physics, and mathematics in a show of fantastic feats and illusions. He is the only variety artist ever to receive a MacArthur Genius Grant.

***Nobody's Perfect* May 8, 2pm \$20**

This touching new musical is an important reminder that despite first impressions nobody's perfect. The production is presented by The Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour and is a co-commission with VSA arts, based on the children's book by Marlee Matlin and Doug Cooney. *Nobody's Perfect* will be simultaneously performed in spoken English and American Sign Language, and is the first production ever to tour the US with a built-in open-caption system.

### **BEYOND THE CLASSROOM**

***Intelligence Squared U.S. Debate Series (Fall 2009 Debates)* \$35-\$45 for each reception and debate**

**September 21, Buy American/Hire American policies will backfire**

**October 6, America cannot and will not succeed in Afghanistan/Pakistan (AfPak)**

**October 27, Good riddance to mainstream media**

**November 16, Obama's economic policies are working effectively**

**December 1, America is to blame for Mexico's drug war**

Building on a sold-out inaugural season, the Oxford-style public policy debate series holds provocative and informative live debates on hot-topic issues of today with some of the leading thinkers on those issues. John Donvan, correspondent for ABC News *Nightline*, returns to moderate and among the

participants are; Phil Bronstein, David Carr, Steve Coll, James Galbraith, Leo W. Gerard, Katrina vanden Heuvel, John Hockenberry, Asa Hutchinson, Robert Kuttner, Patrick Lang, John MacArthur, Andres Martinez, John Nagi, Paul O'Neill, Susan Schwab, Eliot Spitzer, Jim VandeHei, and Fareed Zakaria.

***PAST/FORWARD: A Tisch Dance Alumni Celebration January 29, 8pm \$25***

This evening of dance highlights the work of several generations of Tisch Dance alumni, who are engaging and successful choreographers and dancers. Graduates of NYU's Tisch Dance program have gone on to join many different types of renowned companies. This year's participants include Kun-Yang Lin, John-Mark Owen, Carolyn Dorfman, Trebien Pollard, Elizabeth Beres, and Elliot Reiland.

## WORLD STAGE

***Ninth Annual Peking Opera Festival October 31, 7:30pm \$38-\$100***

This is an evening of music, mime, costumes, and amazing martial arts in an action-packed production. Combining singing and dialogue with acrobatic tumbling and kung-fu fighting, the Qi Shu Fang Peking Opera Company stages the *Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Hell* from the classical Chinese epic novel *The Journey to the West* as well as the story of the *Nine-Tailed Fox Spirit*.

***Masters of Persian Music February 18, 8pm \$30-\$40 - Co-presented by World Music Institute***

Three of Persian music's most important figures present new works drawing on the rich heritage of Persian classical music, ancient Sufi, and contemporary poetry. Performing are: *tar* (long-necked lute) maestro Hossein Alizadeh; Kayhan Kalhor, a virtuoso of the *kamancheh* (spike-fiddle) who has been instrumental in popularizing Persian music in the West through solo concerts and his work with Ghazal and Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project; and Hamid Reza Nourbakhsh, a student of Mohammad Reza Shajarian and one of today's finest Iranian vocalists.

***New York Tango All-Stars March 20, 8pm \$30-\$35 - Co-presented by World Music Institute***

Pianist and composer Gustavo Casenave, one of Uruguay's most celebrated artists, directs a captivating evening of passionate and sensuous tango, bringing together an all-star cast of New York-based Argentine performers who appeared in many of tango's top international productions. This innovative program offers new music by Casenave and electrifying dance while honoring tango's roots and traditions.

***De Volta as Raizes: Back to our Roots April 15, 8pm \$30-\$35 - Co-presented by World Music Institute***

Featuring the famed Brazilian-born brothers Sergio and Odair Assad, acclaimed for their brilliance in the classical, folk, jazz, and Latin repertoires. The duo has set new performance standards, and played a major role in creating new music for two guitars. In this program, they are joined by Lebanese singer Christiane Karam, percussionist Jamey Haddad, and composer/pianist Clarice Assad.

***The Conga Kings May 15, 8pm \$32 - Co-presented by World Music Institute***

Return of the rumba! Under the direction of four-time Grammy-winner Ray Santos, a vibrant trio of master *congueros* of Afro-Cuban music: Candido Camero, the 88-year-old elder statesman who is a living encyclopedia of Cuban music; 83-year-old Francisco Aguabella, the "John Coltrane of the conga" and winner of the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship; and Giovanni Hidalgo, current master of congas.

*The Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, New York University, is the premier venue for the presentation of cultural and performing arts events at NYU and lower Manhattan. Located at 566 LaGuardia Place (at Washington Square South), it provides a large-scale, professional performance space for university productions and events and live professional performances from around the world. The 860-seat theater opened in October 2003 and hosts the only major university-based professional multi-arts presenting program in Manhattan. As a result, one natural and continuing mission of the Skirball Center is to build young audiences for live performance through a broad range of compelling performance events at affordable ticket prices. For more information, visit [www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu](http://www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu).*