

Jonathan Slaff & Associates

Theatrical Press Representative 55 Perry Street, #1M New York, NY 10014
Tel. (212) 924-0496 Fax (877) 534-406 js@jsnyc.com www.jsnyc.com

"Sundown" by Yoshiko Chuma and The School of Hard Knocks at Issue Project Room, Brooklyn

7-Hour Site performance with 7 dancers, 7 musicians and 7-foot cubes designed by Ralph Lee
with scenic vistas of the Gowanus Canal.

WHERE AND WHEN:

- Saturday, July 29: 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm
- Sunday, July 30: 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm
- Issue Project Room, 400 Carroll Street (between Bond and Nevins), Brooklyn
- Directions: F, G to Carroll Street (fourth stop in Brooklyn from Manhattan). Exit at front of train. Walk 2.5 blocks from stop down Carroll.
- Presented by GOH Productions and Issue Project Room.
- \$15 general admission, \$10 seniors and students. Recommended for all ages.
- Reservations and info: www.issueprojectroom.org, 718-330-0313.

NEW YORK, June 19 -- The afternoon vista at Brooklyn's Gowanus Canal, long a favorite of sunset painters and photographers, will be the setting for "**Sundown**" by **Yoshiko Chuma**, a seven-hour dance-and-sound installation to be performed twice, **July 29 and 30**, at **Issue Project Room, 400 Carroll Street**. The event is a rare fusion of elements to please fanciers of avant-garde dance and family audiences alike.

There is something eternal about the skyscape that inspired "Sunset at Gowanus Bay in the Bay New York" (1851) by Henry Gritten. Using this setting, the event will frame a new dance performance conceived and choreographed for The School of Hard Knocks by its Artistic Director, Yoshiko Chuma. The work will take place over a period of 7 hours, and will include 7 dancers, 7 live trombonists and four 7-foot cubes designed by Ralph Lee.

"Sundown" builds on performance works that Chuma and company have been developing over the last few years, using 7-foot boxes framing a variety of locations around the world. Last summer, a precursor piece set on the Hudson River Esplanade was performed as part of "Art on the Beach Revisited," and deemed "quite beautiful" by Gia Kourlas in *The New York Times*. Chuma's dances with the cubes have also been quite successful indoors. Robyn Sulcas (*The New York Times*) commended the "extraordinary visual and dramatic effects" of "7 x 7 x 7 x 7 x 7" in City Center's six-night run of Fall for Dance last October. Three months earlier, Gia Kourlas (*The New York Times*) praised "Inside/Outside" at P.S. 122, as "eerie, funny and blessedly dense."

By far, "Sundown" will be Chuma's most elaborate piece of this kind. It will take place in the indoor performance area, as well as outdoor sites around Issue Project, set off by the sun, the sky and the Gowanus Canal. If it rains, the entire production will move into Issue Project's 1000 square-foot performance space, which occupies the second floor of a silo-style building overlooking the Canal.

Issue Project boasts of "open land, open skies and privacy" and the destination is only four subway stops into Brooklyn.

"Sundown" will be performed to new music commissioned by School of Hard Knocks and composed by **Christopher McIntyre** in collaboration with the **7x7 Trombone Band**, which includes **Joe Fiedler, Jacob Garchik, Curtis Hasselbring, Richard Marriott, Christopher McIntyre, Steve Swell, and Peter Zummo**. An additional soundscape will be created by Chuma and sound designer **Jacob Burckhardt**, in collaboration with **Stephan Moore**, for an innovative multi-speaker 16 channel installation by Moore.

The audience will move freely among four installations (three cubes outdoors, one inside), allowing a constantly shifting perspective. The effect is akin to a movie or photograph in which perspective is changed when the spatial relationship of the camera and the object shifts: At times the image moves and the camera stays in place, at other times the

reverse happens. In the course of seven hours, the 7 dancers will be continually mixed and re-matched with the trombonists. The boxes will be constantly manipulated: sometimes rotating, sometimes stable, with the ensemble dancing through and around them. Once night descends, the show will move inside, where an indoor cube with white sides will frame the dancers and provide a backdrop for black-and-white films. Audience members are invited to view the performance for as long as they like. Refreshments will be available. Admission for one or more hours is \$15/ \$10 for students and seniors.

The dancers are **Ursula Eagly, Steven Reker, Saori Tsukuda, Christopher Williams, Ryuji Yamaguchi, Yoshiko Chuma** and guest artist **Jean Butler**. Costume design is by **Gabriel Berry**. Lighting design is by **Pat Dignan**. Hana-michi Movement coach is **Mitsuru Tamatsuka**. Producer is **Bonnie Sue Stein**.

The appeal of "Sundown" as family entertainment was manifest on June 4, when a smaller scale, preliminary workshop was held in the historic surroundings of Tivoli, NY, presented by The Tivoli Project, a partnership of three local organizations. Presented in a restored church, it delighted children as well as adults with its skillful live trombone soundscore and intricate dancing through four 7-foot cubes.

Issue Project Room (IPR), a multi-disciplinary art space, presents music, sound, the spoken word, film, video, dance, performance and artisanal cuisine for a nominal ticket cost in an unusual setting. It is one of the most distinctive institutions for experimental performance in New York City.

In June 2005, IPR moved from the East Village in Manhattan to its unique setting on the Gowanus Canal. Its new space is a renovated industrial silo that contains a ground level exhibition area, an upper level live performance space, and an extensive outdoor area. In this setting, IPR has expanded its site-specific programming to include an outdoor film series, visual art exhibitions, and outdoor sound and sculpture installations.

This past season, IPR has hosted events that included Steve Buscemi reading film scripts from the late Theo Van Gogh, collaborations between local artists and The Kusun Ensemble from Ghana and the Indonesian Consulate Gamelan and Dance Ensemble, and the permanent installation of Composer/Audio Engineer Stephan Moore's revolutionary 16-channel hemispherical speaker system.

The School of Hard Knocks is a New York-based collective of performing artists working under the Artistic Direction of Yoshiko Chuma. Since its premiere at the 1980 Venice Biennale, this award-winning company has created and performed over 50 original works in the United States, Asia, and Europe. It is an ever-changing ensemble, which has performed to wide critical acclaim under Chuma's direction in theatrical dance concerts, street performances, grand parades, large-scale spectacles and intimate living rooms. (www.yoshikochuma.org)

Yoshiko Chuma (Conception/Choreography/Direction) moved from Japan to the United States in 1976. She has received fellowships and awards for choreography and career work from John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, NEA, New York Foundation for Artists, Japan Foundation, Meet the Composer Choreographer/Composer Commission and Philip Morris New Works. Chuma has led workshops and master classes and been commissioned to create new work in East and West Europe, Asia, Russia and the U.S. She received a 1984 BESSIE award for choreography and four more Bessies were awarded to her productions in 1992 and 1998.

"Sundown" is supported, in part, by New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; by Japan Foundation's Performing Arts Japan Program, Live Music for Dance Program of American Music vCenter, and Altria Group, Inc.

#

CRITICS ARE INVITED to both performances. Journalists are advised that the production will be most striking at sundown and that the seven-hour performance can be sampled by staying about an hour.