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For Immediate Release: July 10, 2007

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FALL 2007 PERFORMING ARTS SEASON

TURNING JAPANESE

AMERICAN ARTISTS INSPIRED BY JAPAN + CITY WIDE CELEBRATION

WITH BASIL TWIST, 3 WEEKS OF BUTOH DANCE FROM OVER 30 U.S. AND JAPANESE ARTISTS, THE FIRST-EVER RESTAGING OF A HARRY PARTCH MASTERPIECE, AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS FROM NOTABLE NEW YORK CITY VENUES

**** FEATURED EVENT OF JAPAN100: CELEBRATING A CENTURY ****

New York, NY -- As Japan Society's 2007-08 centennial celebration continues, the Performing Arts Program presents a prestigious array of music, theater and dance events, from traditional fare to cutting-edge, contemporary work. In Fall 2007, the Program commemorates the 100th Anniversary of Japan Society's founding with an eclectic mix of the most distinguished and exciting Japanese performances and American artists inspired by Japan.

Beginning September 2007, the Fall season theme **Turning Japanese** explores the wide range and depth in which Japanese culture has influenced the performing arts in the U.S. From illustrious legends to emerging talent, programming celebrates the variety of American artists who have been captivated and inspired by Japan and its culture. Society productions include a remounting of **Basil Twists'** Bessie Award-winning *Dogugaeshi* that sold out its 2004 run; **Kazuo Ohno 101: 3-Week Butoh Parade** commemorating the 101st birthday of legendary butoh co-founder **Kazuo Ohno** with artists **Kochuten + Maro Akaji, Eiko & Koma, Akira Kasai**, and **Yoshito Ohno** among others; the first-ever restaging of **Harry Partch's** *Delusion of the Fury* since its 1969 premiere; and the **11th Annual Contemporary Dance Showcase**, which broadens its scope further into East Asia for the first time.

In conjunction with its programming, Japan Society has taken the centennial celebration city-wide by galvanizing seven major performing arts presenters and venues across New York City to join **Turning Japanese**. Each of these participating venues have selected a program from a vast selection of music, dance and theater from and inspired by Japan. Presentations beyond Japan Society include: **Pappa Tarahumara** (Brooklyn Academy of Music), **CAVE New York Butoh Festival**, **Yummy Dance + Nami Yamamoto** (Danspace Project), **Big Dance Theater**

(DTW), **Theatre of a Two-Headed Calf** (HERE Arts Center), **Mika Kurosawa** (The Kitchen), **Kanta Horio, Atsuhiko Ito & Fuyuki Yamakawa** (The Kitchen), and **Sennichimae Blue Sky Dance Club** (P.S. 122). For more information, please visit: www.japan100.org/turningjapanese.

JAPAN SOCIETY SEPTEMBER 2007-JANUARY 2008 PERFORMING ARTS SEASON:

Basil Twist's *Dogugaeshi*

Featuring live shamisen music by Yumiko Tanaka

Wednesday, September 12 @ 7:30 PM;

Thursday – Saturday, September 13 – 22 @ 7 & 9:30 PM;

Sunday, September 16 @ 5 & 7:30 PM;

Wednesday, September 19 @ 7 & 9:30 PM

Tickets: \$38/\$32 Japan Society members

A ferocious tiger appears amidst a bamboo thicket. The urban cityscape of Tokyo dissolves in the whirlpool of ritual and history. Renowned puppet artist **Basil Twist** unfolds an intimate, abstract journey of images of ancient and modern Japan in this gorgeous multidisciplinary theater work, originally commissioned, produced and world premiered by Japan Society in 2004. Inspired by rarified traditional Japanese *dougugaeshi* stage mechanism and Twist's own encounters with the remaining rural caretakers of this once popular art form, ***Dogugaeshi*** is a collaboration with authorized master musician **Yumiko Tanaka**, who directed the scintillating electronic music collage and performs live shamisen accompaniment for the production. Winner of a 2005 Bessie Award and New York Innovative Theatre Artistic Achievement Award.

Kazuo Ohno 101: 3-Week Butoh Parade

Main Event Tickets: \$35/\$30 Japan Society members

U.S. Butoh Marathon Tickets: \$15/\$12 Japan Society members

Butoh Pass (Includes tickets to all programs & Birthday Party): \$113/\$97

In celebration of the 101st birthday of **Kazuo Ohno**, legendary artist and one of the founders of the butoh movement, Japan Society examines butoh, one of Japan's major contributions to the performing arts of the 20th century. Japanese star butoh artists from the founding generation and the younger generation of U.S.-based artists who have freely interpreted butoh for the development of their own voices are brought together for this 3-week extravaganza. **Kazuo Ohno 101** is a benchmark event that surveys the foundations of the revolutionary butoh movement, and tracks its trajectory into the 21st century.

[WEEK-1]

» » Kochuten + Maro Akaji

Two U.S. Premieres

Program A: *Tiger's Cave: Butoh Boot Camp (Butoh: Tora no Ana)*, choreographed by Kumotaro Mukai- Tuesday, Oct. 9 & Wednesday, Oct. 10 @ 7:30 PM

Program B: *Yupiters*, choreographed by Yuko Kobayashi- Friday, Oct. 12 & Saturday, Oct. 13 @ 7:30 PM

Tickets: \$35/\$30 Japan Society members

Following his company's sold-out shows in 2002 and 2003, maverick butoh master **Akaji Maro** returns to Japan Society with theatrically explosive works created by members of his company Kochuten. Maro, who studied with butoh movement founder Tatsumi Hijikata, founded Dairakudakan in 1972 and has since created upwards of 50 pieces that dip into

the undifferentiated world of shamanism. Under Maro's mentorship his company members have choreographed two dozen works under the *Kochuten Series*. *Tiger's Cave: Butoh Boot Camp*, a new all-male work from **Kumotaro Mukai** and the all-female *Yupiters*, choreographed by **Yuko Kobayashi** have their U.S. premiere. Special appearance by Akaji Maro for all performances.

[WEEK-2]

» » **Eiko & Koma's *Mourning* with Margaret Leng Tan**

A World Premiere & Japan Society Commission

Thursday, October 18 – Saturday, October 20 @ 7:30 PM

Tickets: \$35/\$30 Japan Society members

MacArthur "genius" fellowship awardees **Eiko & Koma** return to Japan Society (where they made their U.S. debut in 1976) for the world premiere of their latest work, *Mourning*, with celebrated contemporary-music pianist **Margaret Leng Tan**, known for commissioning new works from living composers and performance on toy piano. Eiko & Koma began to study and perform with Tatsumi Hijikata's company in Tokyo, and later with Kazuo Ohno in the early 1970s. Hailed as "supremely dramatic...mesmerizingly eloquent" by *The New York Times*, the two have developed their own inimitable performance experience that has been seen at prominent venues around the world. Eiko & Koma now return to the home of their U.S. debut to present the world premiere of their latest work created specifically to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Japan Society, with Ms. Tan performing live on both toy and grand piano.

[WEEK-3]

» » **Akira Kasai's *Butoh America***

World Premiere

Thursday, October 25 & Friday, October 26 @ 7:30 PM, Saturday, October 27 @ 2:00 PM

Tickets: \$35/\$30 Japan Society members

As part of the centennial celebration, Japan Society has commissioned legendary performer **Akira Kasai**, one of the co-founders of the butoh movement, to create a new piece, *Butoh America*, in collaboration with five emerging U.S.-based performers who were hand-picked by Mr. Kasai through a 3-day audition at Japan Society last year. Kasai studied modern dance and ballet when he met Kazuo Ohno and performed *Gi-gi* at Asahi Hall under his guidance in 1963. The following year, he visited Tatsumi Hijikata at legendary Asbestos-Kan in Tokyo and performed in his *Barairo Dance (Rose-colored Dance)*. Over decades, Kasai's career as a dancer has flourished in Japan as well as in Europe. Described as "part Marcel Marceau, part Mick Jagger" by *Dance Magazine*, Kasai choreographs and performs in *Butoh America*, which promises to be an electrifying exploration of present-day America.

[WEEK-3: Saturday, October 27 -- Kazuo Ohno's 101st Birthday]

» » **U.S. Butoh Marathon curated by CAVE + Yoshito Ohno solo**

4:30 PM: U.S. Butoh Marathon

7:30 PM: Yoshito Ohno

10:00 PM: Kazuo Ohno 101st Birthday Party

U.S. Butoh Marathon Tickets: \$15/\$12 Japan Society members

**Yoshito Ohno + U.S. Butoh Marathon Tickets: \$35/\$30 Japan Society members
(includes admission to Marathon and Birthday Party)**

Born October 27, 1906, the **Butoh Parade** culminates on Kazuo Ohno's actual birthday with a marathon of performances from U.S.-based artists whose artistic visions have been influenced by butoh. Participating choreographers/dancers hail from across the U.S., including, **Jeff Janisheski** and **Yanira Castro**, **Moeno Wakamatsu**, **Shinichi Momo Koga**, **Haruko Nishimura**, **Juan Merchan**, **Ximena Garnica**, and **Koichi & Hiroko Tamano**. Headlining the evening is *Emptiness (Kuu)*, a haunting solo work by **Yoshito Ohno**, the son of Kazuo Ohno, making his first New York appearance since a 1999 performance with Kazuo Ohno at Japan Society. His performance is followed by an all-out Birthday Party featuring improvisational butoh performances and live music, free to Butoh Parade Main Event ticket holders.

Harry Partch's *Delusion of the Fury*

First-ever restaging since the original production in 1969

Tuesday, December 4 @ 7:30 PM

Thursday, December 6 – Saturday, December 8 @ 7:30 PM

Tickets: \$52/\$45 Japan Society members

The late iconoclastic American composer **Harry Partch** (1901-1974) is among the most individualistic composers, who, like John Cage and Lou Harrison, contributed to the experimental music phenomenon in the 1960s. Partch is famous for designing and creating dozens of unique, larger-than life instruments for the performance of his music, and the micro tuning system that is alternately lyrical, raucous and hauntingly resonate. Japan Society commissions and produces the unprecedented re-staging of Partch's *Delusion of the Fury*, a large-scale musical theater piece that has never been remounted since its first production in 1969. Built upon the timeless theme of life and death, *Delusion of the Fury* is heavily influenced by Japanese noh and kabuki theater, requiring performers to sing, act and dance. Celebrated theater director and MacArthur "genius" grantee **John Jesurun** directs the production with award-winning composer/conductor and Harry Partch expert **Dean Drummond** as musical director in a rare production with Partch's original instruments. Choreographer **Yasuko Yokoshi**, two-time Bessie Award winner, joins the artistic team for this tour-de-force.

11th Annual Contemporary Dance Showcase: Japan + East Asia

Friday, January 11 & Saturday, January 12 @ 7:30 PM

Tickets: \$28/\$25 Japan Society members

The **Annual Contemporary Dance Showcase** returns to Japan Society with the most outstanding cutting-edge dance, and for the first time, expands to present a broader range of contemporary dance from Japan and beyond. Featured artists and companies from Japan include **Makotocluv**, founded in 2001 by Makoto Enda; award-winning **Kingyo**, led by Yukio Suzuki who has choreographed for the Tokyo City Ballet and performed with Ko Murobushi's Edge Co; and Korean-Japanese soloist **Yun Myung Fee**, whose works draw from traditional Korean folk dance and Western dance techniques. The showcase will also feature the delicate and emotional solo work by **Yong-In Lee** of UBIN Dance from Seoul, Korea, who has performed extensively in Germany; and one of Taiwan's most promising companies, **Sun-Shier Dance Theatre**, founded in 1997 by two former dancers of Cloud Gate, Pi-Jung Wu and Hsiu-Ping Chang.

JAPAN SOCIETY FEBRUARY-MAY 2008 PERFORMING ARTS HIGHLIGHTS:

MADE IN NEW YORK: Japanese Artists in NYC

» Akiko Yano - February 2008 (Dates TBD)

Acclaimed pianist, composer and singer Akiko Yano was born in Tokyo and has lived in New York since 1990. A unique artist who began her career as a child prodigy jazz pianist, she has since come to be known as the "Joni Mitchell of Japan" for her extraordinary arrangements and soulful voice, and has released upwards of 24 albums.

» Tzadik Music Label Series III - March 2008 (Dates TBD)

The third in the thrilling new music series curated by John Zorn is dedicated to presenting the best in avant-garde and experimental music from Japan. Featuring Ikue Mori, New York resident since 1977, with other Tzadik artists TBA.

» Play Reading Series - April 2008 (Dates TBD)

A staged reading of a contemporary Japanese play in English translation, directed by New York-based Japanese director and performed by American actors. The Japanese playwright will be invited to engage in the creative process of staging and cultural translation. Work and artists TBA.

» Yoshiko Chuma's *OTHER M* - May 2008 (Dates TBD)

Since 1978, Yoshiko Chuma has lived in New York and created more than 45 choreographic works for venues across the world, constantly challenging the notion of performing for both audience and participant. Her latest work stretches across the cultural boundaries to unearth the physical and emotional hardships that haunt war-torn countries.

About Japan Society's Performing Arts Program: Since the inception of the Performing Arts Program in 1953, Japan Society has introduced more than 500 of Japan's finest performing arts to an extensive American audience. Programs range from the traditional arts of noh, kyogen, bunraku and kabuki to cutting-edge theater, dance and music. The Program also commissions new works, produces national tours, organizes residency programs for American and Japanese artists, and develops and distributes educational programs. "At once diverse and daring, the program stands toe to toe with some of the most comprehensive cultural exchange endeavors today" (Leonard Jacobs, *Back Stage*).

About Japan Society: Founded in 1907 by prominent New York City business people and philanthropists, Japan Society has evolved over 100 years into an internationally recognized nonprofit organization presenting a full range of programs within arts, business, education and public policy. Through over 100 events annually, the Society creates rich encounters and exchanges that offer opportunities to experience Japanese culture, foster sustained and open dialogue on issues important to the U.S., Japan, and East Asia, and improve access to information on Japan.

Japan Society celebrates the 100th Anniversary of its founding with **Japan100: Celebrating a Century**, an unprecedented array of high-profile programming in 2007-08. The celebration occurs throughout New York City and in Japan with further national and international exposure through traveling exhibitions, performing arts tours, symposia, fellowships, and exchanges. The Performing Arts Program kicked off the centennial celebration in February with the world premiere

of Big Dance Theater's *The Other Here* and the Spring/Summer Noh~Now! series. *American Theatre* recently noted: "For a hundred years now, the Japan Society of New York has been a think tank for policy wonks, entrepreneurs, diplomats, and Japanophiles. But the jewel in its crown has always been the performing arts program." Visit www.japan100.org for more information.

Japan Society is located at 333 East 47th Street, between First & Second Avenues.

Tickets may be purchased by calling the Box Office at (212) 715-1258 or in person at Japan Society (Monday–Friday from 10:00 AM–4:45 PM).

For more information call (212) 832 -1155 or visit www.japansociety.org.

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Japan Society 2007-08 Performing Arts Programs are made possible in part by The Starr Foundation; the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Endowment Fund; the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; the Endowment for the Performing Arts; Additional support is provided by The Globus Family, Dr. John K. Gillespie, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Inc., and the New York State Council on the Arts, a State agency. Transportation assistance provided by ANA, All Nippon Airways. Plasma display provided by Pioneer Electronics (USA) Inc.