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A SEASON IN HELL DEBUTS AT THE 3rd 01SJ BIENNIAL
SAN JOSE CA, SEPTEMBER 17 – 19, 2010

SEASONINHELL.COM



New multimedia performance chronicles artist journey through the underworld of America

Washington, DC, March 15, 2010— *A Season in Hell* is a multimedia performance that debuts September 17 - 19, 2010 at the San Jose Stage as part of the **3rd 01SJ Biennial** produced by **ZER01**. Created by **Randall Packer**, *A Season in Hell* is a historical portrait of political and social turmoil in the post-9/11 era, a hallucinatory, spectacle of America as a vision of Hell. The work is a collaboration with tenor Charles Lane, director Melissa Weaver, and designer Gregory Kuhn.

A Season in Hell chronicles an artist's journey through the underworld of America as told by his doppelgänger, the rogue government official, Secretary-at-Large of the US Department of Art & Technology (USDAT). The title of the work is borrowed from Arthur Rimbaud's 19th-century farewell poem, *A Season in Hell*, the poet's psychological struggle to confront the deterioration of humanity. The work integrates music-theater and multimedia installation, an experience that evokes the inexplicable, and the unimaginable.

The forerunner of *A Season in Hell* was the creation of USDAT in 2001, which gave sociopolitical voice to the artist, "the artist as mediator" in times of crisis. Work on the opera began in early 2005, as a response to deepening U.S. crisis. Packer chronicled political and social conditions as they unfolded: from the war in Iraq, to Hurricane Katrina, to extremist actions of the religious right, to the collapse of the economy. Packer traveled to locations of crisis and unrest including his home base Washington, DC, the industrial heartland, New Orleans, Crawford Texas, and the Bible Belt. A multi-layered narrative emerged from extensive journal and blog writing, photography and video, and site-specific performances.

A Season in Hell is a ground-breaking multimedia performance work that integrates a complex electronic musical score and vocal performance with multiple forms of digital media, video projection, surround-sound, objects, and storytelling to fuse live performance, installation, and sculpture into an otherworldly theatrical environment.

For press images and additional information, visit www.zakros.com/press

Zakros InterArts, founded in 1988 by Randall Packer, is dedicated to the creation of artistic forms that dissolve the distinction between disciplines and defy categorization. Zakros focused on emergent forms of interdisciplinary art and its incorporation of evolving technologies. Based in Washington, DC, Zakros is involved in the research, creation, and presentation of art & technology projects and initiatives.

About ZER01 | The Art and Technology Network is an independent 501 c (3) nonprofit whose mission is to inspire creativity at the intersection of art, technology, and digital culture. ZER01 is the producing organization for 01SJ Biennial, North America's newest and largest multi-disciplinary, multi-venue event of visual and performing arts, the moving image, public art, and interactive digital media. For more information about ZER01, visit www.zero1.org.

About the Artists

Randall Packer, Composer & Multimedia Artist, founded Zakros InterArts in San Francisco in 1988, producing events and new works that explored the integration of multimedia and live performance. Packer continued to create new works throughout the 1990s, pioneering collaborative forms of new music theater, installation and performance art. In 1999, his sound installation Mori debuted at the Intercommunication Center (ICC) Biennial exhibition in Tokyo, Japan. In 2001, he founded the virtual government agency, US Department of Art & Technology, as a performance project. In 2004, the Experimental Party Disinformation Center was featured in a solo exhibition at the LUXE Gallery in NYC. In 2006 he composed music for Ballet Mori, performed by the San Francisco Ballet at the SF Opera House. Packer has received international acclaim for his multimedia and political works, with feature articles in the New York Times, Washington Post, Village Voice, among others. He has performed and exhibited at galleries, museums, theaters and festivals internationally, including ZKM in Karlsruhe Germany, Transmediale Festival in Berlin, Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington DC, the Kitchen in NYC, and Theater Artaud in San Francisco. He has taught at San Francisco State University, University of California, Berkeley, the Maryland Institute College of Art, and American University in Washington, DC. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including an ASCAP Prize for music composition, the George Ladd Prix de Paris, three Artist Fellowships from the Washington DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, and an Isadora Duncan Award.

Charles Lane, Tenor, is a native of Los Angeles. As a tenor and performance artist he has spent his career traveling across the boundaries of opera, concert music, cabaret performance, and experimental music. He is a graduate of the California Institute of the Arts where he earned an MFA in music and studied with baritone Marvin Hayes. He has worked with world renowned artists, performers, directors, and conductors including: performance artist Guillermo Gomez Pena, choreographer Donald Byrd, directors Robert Benedetti and Beatrice Manley, tenor Placido Domingo and conductors Pierre Boulez, Essa Pekka Solomon, and Simon Rattle. He is a member of the LA Opera, LA Philharmonic and LA Master Chorale, performing in numerous productions with leading conductors and directors.

Gregory T. Kuhn, Stage & Sound Designer, has participated in the avant-garde of the performing arts since 1986, as sound engineer, scenic designer, composer, and collaborator. After receiving a BA in Music from Swarthmore College and doing graduate studies at Combs College of Music, he worked with Relache, New Music America 1987, and at the Yellow Springs Institute in Philadelphia. Since 1988 in the San Francisco Bay Area, he has contributed to numerous arts organizations, institutions, and individuals on a great diversity of local, national, and international projects for theater, multimedia, dance, and experimental and contemporary music performances. Kuhn is also an interdisciplinary artist. He collaborated on the sound installation Mori (1999), which has been exhibited in Japan and throughout the US, including a solo show at Kitchen Art Gallery in New York City.

Melissa Weaver, Director, is artistic director of Agapé Performance Group and created original works including "The Winchester Rosary" with Amanda Moody, "A.ga.pe," "Last Stand" and "Trespass Knot," featuring music by Miguel Frascón and choreography by Jess Curtis. Weaver also directed Rinde Eckert's "The Gardening of Thomas D." and "Dry Land Divine," presented across the U.S. and Europe, and Hans Werner Henze's "El Cimarron" featuring John Duykers, which was given the L.A. Times Beckmesser Award for Outstanding Contemporary Performance of 1983. Weaver is currently collaborating in the development of two upcoming music theatre works: the new opera, "Caliban Dreams," with composer Clark Suprynovicz, commissioned by the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival under artistic director Charles McCue; and the original oratorio, "Bitter Harvest (a love story)," with composer Kurt Rohde and sound designer Mark Grey, for The Berkeley Symphony Orchestra under the musical direction of Kent Nagano.