

FRINGE ARTS

Media Contact:

Canary Promotion
Office: 215-690-4065
Carolyn Huckabay, carolyn@canarypromo.com

Web: fringearts.ticketleap.com

Photos: www.canarypromo.com/FringeArts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 14, 2014

FringeArts presents *The Room Nobody Knows*, a surreal fever dream from avant-garde Japanese theater company Niwa Gekidan Penino

Experimental work explores the bizarre fantasies of two brothers living in close quarters; on stage at FringeArts' new waterfront headquarters, January 30 – February 1



PHILADELPHIA — Introducing local audiences to one of Japan's most original artistic voices, **FringeArts** presents the Philadelphia premiere of the dreamlike, psychologically twisted ***The Room Nobody Knows***, created by Tokyo-based avant-garde theater company **Niwa Gekidan Penino**. *The Room Nobody Knows* is on stage **Jan. 30 – Feb. 1**; tickets are available now by calling 215-413-1318 or visiting fringearts.ticketleap.com.

A surreal, semi-autobiographical fever dream from the mind of Japanese psychiatrist-turned-playwright **Kuro Tanino**, *The Room Nobody Knows* centers on two brothers who inhabit a mysterious, otherworldly apartment. On the day of the elder brother's birthday, the younger, who is supposed to be studying for college entrance exams, is preoccupied with creating unusual objects for the celebration. Meanwhile, in the upper room, the younger brother's alter-egos take the form of creatures that help with the party preparations.

The brothers' enigmatic, erotic world — replete with pig faces, phalluses, demented plastic heads and secret compartments — plays out on a comically claustrophobic set placed atop the FringeArts stage.

The Room Nobody Knows, touted as “a one-man psychological trip into the underbelly of our desires” (*Tokyo Stages*), premiered in February 2012 in the director's small Tokyo apartment, and has since been restaged elsewhere in Japan and around the world. This is the company's first U.S. tour. Performed in Japanese with English subtitles, *The Room Nobody Knows* runs 60 minutes with no intermission.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

The Room Nobody Knows

Thursday, January 30, 8 p.m.

Friday, January 31, 8 p.m.

Saturday, February 1, 8 p.m.

\$29, FringeArts, 140 N. Columbus Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19106

Running Time: 60 minutes

Performed in Japanese with English subtitles

To purchase tickets, call 215-413-1318 or visit fringearts.ticketleap.com.

CREDITS

Director/Writer: Kuro Tanino

Dramaturgy: Junichiro Tamaki, Yukiko Yamaguchi, Mario Yoshino

Actors: Ichigo Iida, Momoi Shimada, Taeko Seguchi, Ikuma Yamada

Stage Manager: Hisashi Mitsu

Set Design: Michiko Inada

Lighting Design: Masayuki Abe (LICKT-ER)

Sound Design: Yoshihiro Nakamura

Subtitle Translation: Ami Shiekierczak Oki

Company Tour Manager: Miwa Monden

Company Managing Director: Chika Onozuka

Produced by: Niwa Gekidan Penino, ARCHE LLC

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Niwa Gekidan Penino grew out of the drama club at Showa University Medical School, which was formed by students with Kuro Tanino as leader. When Tanino was a junior, he developed his company out of the club. The company endeavors to create freewheeling productions based on an abstract concept of “the garden” (*niwa* meaning garden in Japanese, and *gekidan* meaning theater company), and aims to achieve what they call “form beyond formula” by transcending the conventions of theater through performances in unconventional spaces such as Tanino’s own apartment (Atelier Hakobune), an outdoor tent, in addition to installation-like performances. Niwa Gekidan Penino productions are known for their complex and surrealist stage sets. The company has been invited to perform throughout Japan and at festivals and venues abroad such as Hebbel am Ufer Berlin (Germany), Zürcher Theater Spektakel (Switzerland), Noorderzon Performing Arts Festival Groningen (Netherlands), Next Festival (Belgium), and Kulturschiene (Germany), to name a few. In the summer of 2012, Niwa Gekidan Penino toured throughout Europe with *The Room Nobody Knows*, performing at Korjaamo Culture Factory in Helsinki

and Musil Tanz Theater in Luzern. Later that year, the company co-produced Fabrice Melquiot's *Bouli Miro* with the French Institute in Tokyo and OWL SPOT (Tokyo). In 2013 the company premiered its new work *Box In The Big Trunk* at Morishita Studio in Tokyo and KYOTO EXPERIMENT festival in Kyoto to much acclaim. For more information, visit niwagekidan.org.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Kuro Tanino (writer and director) was born in Toyama Prefecture in 1976. Tanino formed his theater company Niwa Gekidan Penino in 2000 while a student at Showa University Medical School. All of Niwa Gekidan Penino's works have been written and directed by Tanino. As a serious practitioner of sculpting and painting, Tanino is highly involved in the stage designs of each production. Tanino was nominated as a finalist for Japan's most prestigious theater award, the Kishida Kunio Drama Award, for his plays *Fortification of Smiles (Egao no Toride)* (2007) and *Starry Shadow Jr. (Hoshikage no Jr.)* (2008). In addition to his activities with Niwa Gekidan Penino, Tanino directed Henrik Johan Ibsen's *Vildanden* (2007); wrote and directed *Chekhov!?* (2011) which was commissioned and presented by Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre for the 150th anniversary of Chekhov's birth; and worked with director of Dewey Dell on his *Marzo* (2013) which was presented at the steirischer herbst festival (Austria) and Next Festival (Belgium). Tanino became licensed as a psychiatrist in 2003 and practiced up until recently.

ABOUT FRINGEARTS

FringeArts supports artists and brings the world's newest and most cutting-edge cultural experiences to Philadelphia, amplifying the vibrancy of the city as a renowned cultural center and an unparalleled place to live, work and visit. Founded in 1997 and formerly known as the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe, the organization serves local, national and international artists of all disciplines and levels of achievement through an annual 16-day Festival along with year-round series of high-quality contemporary dance, theater and music performances; commissioned public art installations; and a residency program that continues to expand and grow as a state-of-the-art incubator for artists.

The five-city tour of The Room Nobody Knows is produced and organized by Japan Society, New York and supported by The Japan Foundation through the Performing Arts JAPAN Program, Arts Council Tokyo and The Saison Foundation.

#

To request interviews, photos and more information, please contact:
Canary Promotion | 215-690-4065 | Carolyn Huckabay, carolyn@canarypromo.com