

wexner center for the arts
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESENTS

Niwa Gekidan Penino

The Room Nobody Knows



THU-SUN, JAN 23-26

Performance Space

2013-14 PERFORMING ARTS SEASON

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performance.

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POLICIES

Late seating and reentry after the program has begun are generally not permitted at dance and theater presentations. When late seating is permitted, latecomers will be seated during a break so as not to disturb other patrons.

Taking photographs, filming, or operating recording devices during the performance is strictly prohibited.

Please turn off mobile phones and other electronic devices before the performance.

All programs are subject to change. Sorry, no refunds or exchanges unless an event is canceled.

Niwa Gekidan Penino

The Room Nobody Knows

THU-SAT, JAN 23-25 | 8 PM

SUN, JAN 26 | 2 PM

PERFORMANCE SPACE

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**.

Major support for the Wexner Center's 2013-14 performing arts season is generously provided by the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**.

Accommodations are provided by **The Blackwell Inn**.

The Wexner Center receives general operating support from the **Greater Columbus Arts Council**, **The Columbus Foundation**, **Nationwide Foundation**, and the **Ohio Arts Council**. Generous support is also provided by the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation** and **Wexner Center members**.

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PROGRAM

Niwa Gekidan Penino ***The Room Nobody Knows***

WRITTEN AND

DIRECTED BY **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

RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES

In addition to organizing public presentations of contemporary work in the performing, media, and visual arts, the Wexner Center actively seeks to provide opportunities for interaction among visiting artists, students, faculty, and staff of The Ohio State University, and members of the community. These activities and associated discussions led by authorities in many fields offer our audiences a better understanding of the creative process and the work of artists engaged by the Wexner Center.

While at the Wexner Center, Niwa Gekidan Penino artistic director Kuro Tanino met with students of Ohio State's Department of Theatre to discuss his creative process. At this session students gained insight into Tanino's emphasis on visuals and framing for his productions, his choice to create intimate works within the confines of the 30-seat venue Atelier Hakobune (Studio Ark), which he built inside his tiny Tokyo apartment, and his outsider status among his contemporary theater peers in Japan, among other topics. Thanks to Michael Lea for serving as translator for this discussion.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Good evening, I am Kuro Tanino, director/playwright of Niwa Gekidan Penino. I grew up in a family of psychiatrists and I too used to be a psychiatrist. However, there were reasons why I stopped practicing. The play you will see tonight was derived from my childhood memories growing up in my home environment and created through meticulous self-analysis and reflection. Although this work could be called an autobiographical drama, I believe that it can certainly cross borders to reach to the bottom of everyone's heart.



PROGRAM NOTES

About *The Room Nobody Knows*

The Room Nobody Knows premiered in February 2012 at Kuro Tanino's small apartment theater, Atelier Hakobune (Studio Ark), in central Tokyo. That same year, *The Room Nobody Knows* was restaged in Osaka in May and again at Atelier Hakobune in July before touring Europe in August and September. The story revolves around two brothers in an apartment on the oldest brother's birthday. The younger brother, who is supposed to be studying for college entrance examinations, instead devotes himself to the creation of bizarre objects for his beloved brother's birthday celebration. Meanwhile, the younger brother's alter egos, derived from his fevered imagination, assist with the party preparations in the upper room.

About Niwa Gekidan Penino

Kuro Tanino formed Niwa Gekidan Penino from the drama club he helped create when he was a student at Showa University School of Medicine. The company strives 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, and 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 *The Room Nobody Knows* to Europe, performing at Korjaamo Culture Factory in Helsinki (Finland) and Musik Tanz Theater in Lucerne (Switzerland). Later that year, the company coproduced Fabrice Melquiot's *Bouli Miro* with the French Institute in Tokyo and the Owl Spot Toshima Performing Arts Center (Tokyo). In 2013 the company premiered its new work *Box In The Big Trunk* at Morishita Studio (Tokyo) and the Kyoto Experiment Festival to much acclaim. niwagekidan.org

BIOGRAPHIES

Kuro Tanino (writer and director) was born in Toyama Prefecture in 1976. Tanino formed the theater company Niwa Gekidan Penino in 2000 while he was a student at Showa University School of Medicine and has written and directed all of Niwa Gekidan Penino's works. He is also a sculptor and painter and 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* (2007) and *Starry Shadow Jr.* (2008). In addition to his activities with Niwa Gekidan Penino, Tanino

directed Henrik Johan Ibsen's *Vildanden* (2007) and wrote and directed *Chekhov!?* (2011), which was commissioned and presented by Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre for the 150th anniversary of Chekhov's birth. He worked with the director of Dewey Dell on *Marzo* (2013), which was presented at the Steirischer Herbst Festival (Austria) and Next Festival (Belgium). Tanino became a licensed psychiatrist in 2003 but has since ceased his practice.

Ichigo Iida (actor) was born in 1977 and has appeared in film and theater. His film credits include *Space Police* (2003) and *Captain Tokio* (2007) both directed by Kazushi Watanabe. His theater credits include Niwa Gekidan Penino's *Underground* (2006), *Fortification of Smiles* (2007), *Starry Shadow Jr.* (2008), *Extase* (2011), *The Room Nobody Knows* (2012), *Box In The Big Trunk* (2013), and Fabrice Melquiot's *Bouli Miro* (2012). Iida also performed in the reading of Roland Schimmelpfennig's *Vorher/Nachher* as part of the International Drama Reading Festival at Kawasaki Municipal Arts Center; Gotandadan Theater Company's *Ikiterumonoka* (2009), written and directed by Shiro Maeda; and Mamagoto's *Swing-By* (2010), written and directed by Yukio Shiba.

Momoi Shimada (actor) is a member of Seinendan Theater Company. Her credits with Seinendan include *The Little Match Girls* (1997) and *The Balkan Zoo* (2001), written and directed by Oriza Hirata. Her film credits include *Hospitalité* (2010), directed by Koji Fukada. Credits with Niwa Gekidan Penino include *A Small Restaurant in 'Limbo'* (2004), *Black Office Ladies* (2004), *Underground* (2006, 2010), *Frustrating Picture Book for Adults* (2008), *The Room Nobody Knows* (2012), and *Box In The Big Trunk* (2013). Shimada has also participated in Gotandadan Theater Company's *Ikiterumonoka* (2009), written and directed by Shiro Maeda, and Mamagoto's *Swing-By* (2010), written and directed by Yukio Shiba, and worked with Crack Iron Albatrossket Theater Company in a work written by Akito Inui and directed by Ushijima Misawo.

Taeko Seguchi (actor) was born in 1976. She has performed in a number of Niwa Gekidan Penino works including *A Small Restaurant in 'Limbo'* (2004), *Black Office Ladies* (2004), *Dark Master* (2006), *Fortification of Smiles* (2007), *Starry Shadow Jr.* (2008), *Frustrating Picture Book for Adults* (2008), *Underground* (2006, 2010), *The Room Nobody Knows* (2012), and *Box In The Big Trunk* (2013). Seguchi also participated in *Three People Here!* (2009), written by Junnosuke Tada and directed by Norimizu Ameiya.

Ikuma Yamada (actor) was born in Kagawa Prefecture in 1970. He was a central member of the performance group HIGHLEG JESUS from 1992 until 2002, when the company dissolved. Following the group's disbandment, Yamada has gone on to perform in a wide range of productions from comedy skits to contemporary theater and has become a regular in Niwa Gekidan Penino's productions. Credits with Niwa Gekidan Penino include *Fortification of Smiles* (2007), *Frustrating Picture Book for Adults* (2008), *The Room Nobody Knows* (2012), and *Box In The Big Trunk* (2013) at Morishita Studio in Tokyo and Kyoto Experiment. His film credits include *After School* (2008), directed by Kenji Uchida; *Twentieth Century Boys 3: Redemption* (2009), directed by Yukihiko Tsutsumi; and *SP The Motion Picture* (2011), directed by Takafumi Hatano.

UPCOMING EVENT

A black and white photograph of two male dancers in mid-air, performing a dynamic move. They are positioned in front of a brick wall. The dancer on the left is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, with one arm extended upwards. The dancer on the right is wearing a dark tank top and dark pants, also with one arm extended upwards. The background is a brick wall with some vertical lines and a fire extinguisher visible on the right side.

COMPANHIA URBANA ^{DE} DANÇA

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This project is made possible in part by a grant from the National Performance Network's Performing Americas Program. Lead funding of the National Performance Network Performing Americas Program is provided by the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. For more information: npweb.org.

PHOTO: COMPANHIA URBANA DE DANÇA

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