

For immediate release: February 4, 2009 (updated February 22, 2010)

Media contacts: Tim Fulton, tfulton@wexarts.org or 614 688-3261; Karen Simonian, ksimonian@wexarts.org or 614 292-9923.

HYBRID VIDEO THEATER PRODUCTION BASED ON HITCHCOCK'S CLASSIC FILM *ROPE* PREMIERES AT WEXNER CENTER

Columbus, OH—New York-based new media artist, director, and designer **Reid Farrington** will debut his hybrid video/theater work ***Gin & "It"*** at the Wexner Center **March 4-7, 2010**. Developed through the support of a 2009-'10 Wexner Center Residency Award, this production's principal source materials are **Alfred Hitchcock's classic suspense film *Rope*** and that film's original inspiration: a one-act play by British playwright Patrick Hamilton loosely based on the sensationalized Leopold and Loeb murder case of 1924. Farrington conducted extensive research with film historians and archivists on the Hitchcock film, which informed the development of *Gin & "It"* for the stage by melding video and live performance.



From Reid Farrington's *Gin and "It,"* using a clip from Hitchcock's *Rope*. Image courtesy of the artist.

Hitchcock's *Rope* provides Farrington **a spectrum of technical feats to mirror**: Shot in luridly saturated color, the film translates the compressed drama of a one-act, one-set play to the big screen by appearing to be shot in one uninterrupted take. To achieve this filmic illusion (the first time this had ever been attempted), Hitchcock had to construct a set with moveable walls and intricately choreograph a large team of technicians to move the walls and props as well as shift the bulky color cameras and equipment within the tight quarters of the apartment set. (*Rope's* cast complained that Hitch spent far more time orchestrating these behind-the-scenes moves than he did rehearsing with the actors.) Farrington's cast of four puts Hitchcock's precisely choreographed tech crew in the foreground of *Gin & "It,"* while they also simultaneously represent *Rope's* main characters as hybrid filmic/human presences—blurring the lines between the roles of the technicians and the actors' characters.

In addition, *Rope* had to skirt its protagonists' homosexual relationship to satisfy the limitations imposed by the Production Code at the time (1948): the director and cast only referred to this aspect of their story as "it." In *Gin & "It,"* **this once-taboo subtext is brought "out of the closet."**

Notes Charles Helm, director of performing arts at the Wexner Center, "Although Reid Farrington has only recently emerged as a director, his fresh, innovative approach to integrating video into live theater made him a strong candidate for our artist-in-residence program which offers our resources to help launch promising projects and

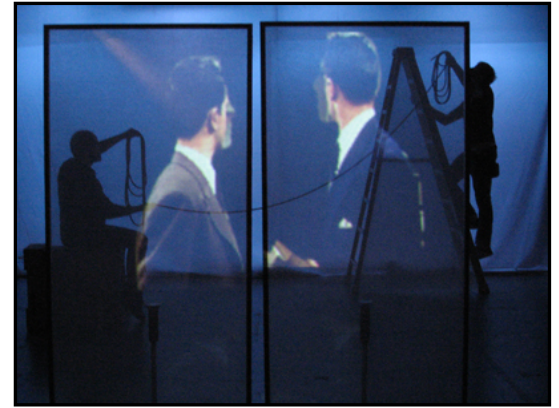
EVENT INFORMATION: The Wexner Center presents the world premiere of Reid Farrington's ***Gin & "It"*** (80 minutes, no intermission) Thursday through Saturday, March 4–6 at 8 pm, and Sunday March 7 at 2 pm in the Wexner Center Performance Space, 1871 N. High St. **Tickets** are \$16 for the general public, \$13 for members, and \$10 for students. **Q&A sessions** after Friday & Saturday evening performances. For tickets, call (614) 292-3535, or visit wexarts.org or ticketmaster.com.
Public discussion with the company: Saturday, March 6, 11 am to noon, Wexner Center Film/Video Theater. Free.

careers. We expect that audiences here that have developed an appetite for such hybrid work through shows by the Builders Association and Hotel Modern, among others, should also embrace Farrington's work."

After the Friday and Saturday evening performances, the artists will conduct **post-performance question-and-answer sessions**.

The Columbus performances of *Gin & "It"* take place in conjunction with the Wexner Center's **Out @ Wex film series** (March 4–6), featuring films on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered themes. More information is available about Out @ Wex is here: <http://www.wexarts.org/outatwex>

Gin & "It" will travel to New York's Performance Space 122 after its Columbus premiere.



Scenes from Reid Farrington's *Gin & "It"*, using clips from Hitchcock's film *Rope* and live actors. Image above courtesy of the artist; image below by Paula Court.

RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES

An essential part of the Wexner Center's role as a multidisciplinary art center that supports the creation of new work as well as the presentation of art in all disciplines, the center's Residency Award program serves the field while complementing The Ohio State University's mission as a leading research institution. Chosen by the center's curators and director, residency artists receive significant financial resources, along with technical, intellectual, professional, and moral support to develop new work.

As part of their residency activities, Farrington and the *Gin & "It"* team will conduct a **discussion session** for Ohio State students in the Department of Theatre; local student advocates of GLBT issues; and the general public to further delve into the concepts the company explores in this hybrid video/theater performance piece. This discussion, to be held in the Wexner Center's Film/Video Theater on **Saturday, March 6 from 11 am to noon, is open to the public**. (Attending a performance of *Gin & "It"* before the discussion is strongly recommended.)

In addition, the company will engage in a series of educational activities in Columbus. In **sessions with area high school students** in the Wexner Center's Pages program focusing on the arts and literacy, Farrington and crew will explore the background story, themes, and substantial technical challenges of both Alfred Hitchcock's classic film and their subsequent creation, which also allowing the students to try their hand at creating some of the effects Farrington devised.



Reid Farrington's *Gin & "It"*

Photo: Paula Court

ABOUT REID FARRINGTON

Farrington's background as a video designer for famed New York theater company The Wooster Group—along with work in set, lighting, and costume design for various theater and dance companies in New York—prepared him for undertaking his own projects as a new media artist, director, and designer. Farrington's signature integration of videoscapes into live theater



Farrington

won him critical acclaim for his first project: *The Passion Project*—a combination of film, theater, and installation re-inventing Carl Theodore Dreyer's silent masterpiece *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. His work has toured to Moscow, Paris, Berlin, Istanbul, Amsterdam, Melbourne, Brussels, and Athens. He is based in New York City. More information is available about Farrington at his website: <http://www.reidfarrington.com/>

EVENT AND SEASON SUPPORT

Major support for the Wexner Center's 2009–10 performing arts season is generously provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Reid Farrington's *Gin & "It"* is coproduced by the Wexner Center for the Arts, Performance Space 122 and 3LD Art & Technology Center. It was developed at 3LD Art & Technology Center, Eyebeam Art and Technology Center and Wexner Center for the Arts' creative residency programs. Reid Farrington is a 2009 fellow in Digital/ Arts from the New York Foundation for the Arts. *Gin & "It"* has also received generous support from New York State Council on the Arts, the Greenwall Foundation, the Experimental Television Center, and the Jerome Foundation.

Wexner Center for the Arts is a partner of the National Performance Network (NPN). This project is made possible in part by support from the NPN Performance Residency Program. Major contributors of NPN include the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency), the MetLife Foundation, and the Nathan Cummings Foundation.

This presentation is supported by the Performing Arts Fund, a program of Arts Midwest funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional contributions from the Ohio Arts Council, General Mills Foundation, and Land O'Lakes Foundation.

Accommodations are provided by The Blackwell.

All performing arts programs and events also receive support from the Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation and Wexner Center members, as well as from the Greater Columbus Arts Council, The Columbus Foundation, Nationwide Foundation, and the Ohio Arts Council.