

November, 2000

## Experimental performance at Skidmore's new Tang Museum will feature Skidmore faculty, students, guest artists, and alumni

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. -The Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College will present three showings of *Satie/Cage Tango*, an experimental performance work created by nearly two dozen Skidmore faculty, students, alumni, and guest artists. A blend of music, dance, art, readings, and audience participation reflecting the new museum's interdisciplinary spirit, *Tango* will be performed at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 11, then at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 12, and again at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 14. All three performances will be free and open to the public. **Space is limited; for more information, please call the Tang at 518-580-8080.**

Presented in conjunction with the new museum's inaugural exhibition, *SOS: Scenes of Sounds*, *Tango* takes as its starting points two masterworks of 20th-century piano music: *Sports and Divertissements*, composed in 1914 by the witty and irreverent French composer Erik Satie (1866-1925), and *Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano*, from the influential avant-garde American composer John Cage (1912-1992). Both works will be played by concert pianist and Skidmore President Emeritus David H. Porter.

*Sports* sets to word and music 20 vignettes of human diversions, ranging from hunting, yachting, and fishing to flirtation and dancing (including a "Perpetual Tango" danced by the devil and his family.) Original choreography created for Satie's work by Mary DiSanto-Rose, director of the college's dance program, will be performed by Skidmore student dancers and visiting guest artist Yoel Cassell.

As the brief vignettes segue into each other, Satie's playful accompanying text will be read aloud in French by Skidmore Professor of French John Anzalone; the text will also appear in the program in both a literal translation and one rendered by Satie's admirer, John Cage. The work will be complemented by projections of prints created expressly for the piece by artist Charles Martin, in pochoir, a stenciling medium popular in the first decades of the 20th century.

Cage's *Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano*, completed between 1946 and 1948, will be performed in a second space within the Tang, on a piano "prepared" in advance by the insertion of some 80 objects - screws, bolts, a large eraser, pieces of plastic and rubber, etc. - between its strings to create lyrical and percussive sounds similar to those of a Balinese gamelan. To accompany the piece, Associate Professor of Dance Debra Fernandez has choreographed movement to take place simultaneously in different spaces of the Tang. Fernandez's cast of 13 includes Skidmore visiting-artist Cassell, current student dancers, professional alumni dancers, and actors from New York City. Installation artist Margo Mensing of the college's art faculty will direct a series of activities in conjunction with the work, some of which will involve the audience.

"There will be a certain zaniness to some of the proceedings, as is only right with Cage and Satie," says Porter, who calls the events "eye-, ear-, and attention-catching." But, he adds, the performances also exemplify "the cross-disciplinary and experimental activities the Tang is meant to encourage."

The Tang Museum at Skidmore College is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, closed Mondays and major holidays. On view through January 28, 2001, are *SOS: Scenes of Sounds*, an

exhibit of art about sound; Vik Muniz, idiosyncratic works from a contemporary photographer; and recent additions to the college's permanent art collection. For more information about exhibitions and events, call the Tang at 518-580-8080.