

Celebrating La MaMa's 47th Season

La MaMa etc.

and

YARA ARTS GROUP

present

Er Toshtuk



**an original theatre piece created by Virlana Tkacz, Kenzhegul Satybaldieva,
Yara Arts Group and Kyrgyz artists**

The First Floor Theatre at La MaMa

74A East 4th Street, NYC 10003

March 27 thru April 12, 2009

Thursday - Saturday @ 8:00PM & Sunday Mat. at 2:30PM

Er Toshtuk

a magical and humorous theatre piece
about a journey into the underworld and out into the cosmos

based on the Kyrgyz epic as first recorded by **Vasily Radlov**
with excerpts from **Sayakbay Karalaev**

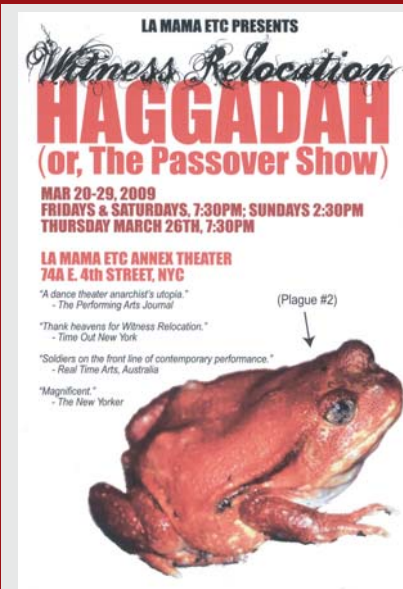
an original theatre piece created by **Virlana Tkacz, Kenzhegul Satybaldieva,**
Yara Arts Group and **Kyrgyz artists**

Kenzhegul Satybaldieva.....Singer, Black Bird, Mother Bird
Umarbek Kadyrov.....Toshtuk
Ainura Kachkynbek Kyzy.....Bektoro
Nurlan Erzhanov.....Eleman, Gogdu
Daniel Darrow.....Agay Khan, Dzhelmogus
Susan Hyon.....Kenzheke, Fast as the Wind, Chick
Azamat Serkebaev.....Chalkyuruk – the Magic Horse
Eldiar Dzharashev.....All-Ears, Chick
Nurbek Serkebaev.....musician

directed by **Virlana Tkacz** with **Kenzhegul Satybaldieva**
set/lights/costumes designed by **Watoku Ueno**, assistant designer **Kenji Watanabe**
shadow images by **Watoku Ueno** and **Makoto Takeuchi**
costumes made by **Ainura Asanbekova** and **Naomi Takada**
music by **Nurbek Serkebaev**, movement by **Shigeko Suga**
English translation by **Roza Mukasheva, Virlana Tkacz** and **Wanda Phipps**
stage manager **Sarah V. Michelson**, asst stage mgr **Aleksandra Myrna**
shadow images manipulated by **cast** and projectionist **Tamashi Jackson**
projected mountains and photographs of production by **Margaret Morton**
Yara Arts Group is a resident company of La MaMa Experimental Theatre in New York.

This show is dedicated to all the people who have told this story through the ages.

Er Toshtuk was made possible in part by the Open Society Institute, The Edith Lutyens and Norman Bel Geddes Foundation, public funds from the New York City Department of Culture, and New York State Council on the Arts and Yara friends: Alexandra Tkacz, Barbara Glaser and Paul Zachos.



LA MAMA ETC PRESENTS
Witness Relocation
HAGGADAH
(or, The Passover Show)
MAR 20-29, 2009
FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS, 7:30PM; SUNDAYS 2:30PM
THURSDAY MARCH 26TH, 7:30PM
LA MAMA ETC ANNEX THEATER
74A E. 4th STREET, NYC
"A dance theater anarchist's utopia."
- The Performing Arts Journal
"Thank heavens for Witness Relocation."
- Time Out New York
"Soldiers on the front line of contemporary performance."
- Real Time Arts, Australia
"Magnificent."
- The New Yorker
(Plague #2)
The Annex Theatre
by Witness Relocation
directed by Dan Safer
March 20 - March 29, 2009
Thursday - Saturday @7:30PM & Sunday @2:30PM
Tickets: \$25

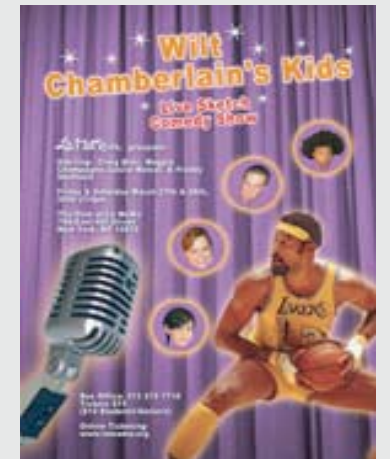
ER TOSHTUK



The First Floor Theatre
By Yara Arts Group
Directed by Virlana Tkacz
March 27 - April 12, 2009
Thurs - Saturday @ 8PM/Sun Mat @ 2:30PM
Tickets: \$18

CELEBRATING OUR
47th SEASON
La MaMa etc.
2009

WILT CHAMBERLAIN'S KIDS



The Club Theatre
Starring Craig Blair, Maggie Champagne,
Leslie Meisel and Freddy Sheffield
March 12 - March 15, 2009
Friday & Saturday @10PM
Tickets: \$15

FOOLS MASS



The First Floor Theatre
By Theatre Group Dzieci
Directed by Matt Mittler
April 16 - April 19, 2009
Thurs - Saturday @ 8PM/Sun Mat @ 2:30PM
Tickets: \$18

THE FULL LUCY MOON SHOW



The Club Theatre
Co-hosted by The Factress (Lucy Sexton)
and Alien Comic (Tom Murrin)
April 3 - April 5, 2009
Friday - Sat @ 10PM & Sun at 5:30PM
Tickets: \$15

HEAR ME WITH THE EYES



Created by flamenco dancer, Maria Elena Anaya
and Jorge Chanona,
April 2 - April 12, 2009
Thursday - Sat @ 7:30PM & Sun at 2:30PM
Tickets: \$25



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4" x 8" \$250

8" x 8" \$500

Name of Show: _____

From: _____

Size: _____

Amount: \$ _____

- Give this form to the house manager with your check made out to La MaMa
- Go to the box office and charge it, or
- Drop this form in the mail with your check to La MaMa, 74 E. 4th Street, NYC 10003

Text and songs used in the show

The scenes were created by the artists in rehearsal and incorporate the following:

“Er Toshtuk” as recorded by Vasily Radlov in 1864

“Er Toshtuk” as told by Sayakbay Karalaev and recorded by Ibraim Abdyrakhmanov in 1937

“Bekbelkeg” - (Epic Melody)

“Bozuda” (In the Yurt) traditional, jygach ooz komuz

Lullabye, traditional

“Oigonom” (I Lie Awake) by Musa Baetov

“Jol Jorush” traditional, kyl-kyak

“At Ketty”(Horses) traditional, kyl kyak

“Jindibe” traditional, komuz

“Tagyldyr Too” (High Mountains), traditional ooz-komuz

“Bektoro’s Magic” by Nurbek Serkebaev, kyl kyak

“Lullabye” traditional

“Altynym” (My Gold) by Ekia Mukanbetov

“Toi” (Feast) traditional, komuz

“Kyzdar – ai” (Girls) by Musa Baetov

“Kuu kbanoch” (Joyful News) by Nurbek Serkebaev, komuz

Koshok (Lament) traditional

“Bektoro’s Music” by Nurbek Serkebaev

“Running River” by Nurbek Serkebaev, bells

“Men Ashek”(I ‘m in Love) traditional, song

“Choor guu” (Choor Melody) traditional, chogoino

“Kuudum chok” (I Burn) by Atai Ogonbaev

“Kara Ozge” (A Person’s Character) by Niazaly, komuz

“Ker Tolgoo,”(Horse Race) by Niazaly, komuz

“Falling into the Underworld,” percussion and temir ooz-komuz

“Paryzad” (Strange melody)

“Chopochoor unu” (Melody for a chopochor)

“Uzguchum” (My Beloved) traditional

“Shyryldan” (Steppe Grass) traditional

“At Chabysh” (Horse Race) traditional

“Ak Boz Attyn Takasy” (Hooves of the White Horse) traditional song

“Jailoodo” (In the High Pasturelands) traditional, jigach-oz-komuz

Koshok (Lament) & Dastan (Epic melody)

“Dragon’s Music” by Nurbek Serkebaev, sybyzgy

“Kara Kush” by Nurbek Serkebaev, percussion

Koshok (Lament)

“Akuunun Uchushu” (Flight of the Swan) traditional

The Making of *Er Toshtuk*

Yara Arts Group has created many theatre projects based on traditional stories and music. In 2005 I met the artists of Sakhna Theatre, who are committed to reviving the shorter Kyrgyz epics. Sakhna's director Nurlan Asanbekov suggested that I direct a production with our two companies. I chose ***Janyl Myrza*** an epic about a woman warrior from the 18th century. I returned to Kyrgyzstan in July 2006 with Yara members to develop our production. Sakhna artists came to New York in February 2007 and we premiered ***Janyl*** at La MaMa Experimental Theatre. In July 2007 we returned to Kyrgyzstan and performed ***Janyl Myrza*** at the B'Art Center in Bishkek, at the Naryn Dramatic Theatre and at the Koshoi Korgon Festival in the village of Kara Suu, where the events of this epic actually took place 300 years ago. Our work on this project is featured in the book ***Kyrgyz Epic Theatre in New York: Photographs by Margaret Morton***, published by University of Central Asia, 2008.

In February 2008 I returned to Bishkek as a Fulbright Senior Scholar to work with Kenzhegul Satybaldieva and the Kyrgyz artists. We began with *Er Toshtuk*, considered the second oldest Kyrgyz epic that existed only orally for hundreds of years. We started with the most famous published version of the epic by Sayakbay Karalaev from 1937, but soon discovered the first version noted in the 1860's by Vasily Radlov. Our production uses sections from both versions of the epic, as well as additional songs and laments. Last summer the workshop of *Er Toshtuk* performed at the B'Art Center in Bishkek, at the Kara Suu Cillage Cultural Center in the Celestial Mountains and at the National Theatre Festival in Issyk Kul.

– Virlana Tkacz

The production of ***Er Toshtuk in New York*** was made possible in part by the Open Society Institute, The Edith Lutyens and Norman Bel Geddes Foundation, public funds from the New York City Department of Culture, New York State Council on the Arts and the numerous friends of Yara Arts Group including Alexandra Tkacz, Barbara Glazer and Paul Zachos.

Special Thanks to Jacqueline Benavides, Deputy Immigration Director for Senator Charles E. Schumer's Office, Kamila Kojokmatova and Valerie Chittenden of the American Embassy in Bishkek for assistance with visas. Thanks to Margaret Morton, Shigeko Suga, Aleksandra Myrna, Steve Gano, Brian Drolet, Brendan Schwartz for sharing their favorite parts of New York with the Kyrgyz artists. Our thanks to Dr. Mary Efremov.

Er Toshtuk was developed last spring when Virlana Tkacz was on a Fulbright Senior Scholar Fellowship in Bishkek. Nurbek Serebaev's development of music for *Er Toshtuk* was sponsored by the Aga Khan Music Initiative in Central Asia. Yara Arts Group sponsored Kenzhegul Satybaldieva work with the Kyrgyz artist. Special thanks to the Theatre Institute at the National Theatre, the Sakhna Theatre and the B'Arts Center where the workshop production of this project took place. The development of ***Er Toshtuk*** was funded by the US Embassy in Bishkek. Our thanks to the Ambassador of the US in the Kyrgyz Republic Marie L. Yovanovitch, Mark Cameron, Kamila Kojokmatova, Michael Rosenthal, Guljana Tobaeva, Munara Mundzuzbaeva, Raziya Syrdybaeva, Fairouz Nishanova, Jamby Dzjusubalieva, Almakan Naizabekova, the Central Asian Network for Arts and Culture, Thaya Salamacha, Alexandra Tkacz and Bohdan Krawchenko. Tour to the village of Kara Suu made possible by Askar Salymbekov and the Dordoi Association. The artists who participated in the development of ***Er Toshtuk*** also included Baktygul Akmatolieva, Makhabat Asanbekova, Tilek Ayatov, Almas Bekbotoev, Ernes Boronbaev, Nurgazy Kaldarov, Tilek Kasimaliev, Asel Mudunova, Tumarbek Oldzobaev, Jyldyz Samsalieva, Roza Sarymsakova, Anara Solpueva, Nurlan Torogeldiev, Shaarbek Amakul, Begaim Turumbekova, Damir Nasibullin, Baktygul Dzanibekov and Altyn Kapalova. **The artists thank:** Tilek Jumagaziev of the Theatre Institute, Nurlan Asanbekov of Sakhna Theatre and Shaarbek Amankul of B'Art Center for their support. **We also thank** Sulayman Kayipov, Elmira Kuchumkulova, Dinara Chochunbaeva, Gulnara Aitpaeva, Munarbek Alibaev, Talant Bakchiev, Svitlana Dekhnich and the American Music Center.

VERY SPECIAL THANKS to Ellen Stewart of La MaMa, Mia Yoo, Kiku Sakai, Denise Greber, Beverly Petty and Kaori Fujiyabu.



YARA ARTS GROUP brings together drama, poetry, song, myth and movement to create original pieces that explore timely issues rooted in the East. Since its founding in 1990, Yara has created nineteen original theatre pieces based on extensive research in Easter Europe, Siberia and Asia in the company's signature style of multilingual dialogue and songs supported by evocative visuals and documentation. Yara Arts Group is a resident company of La MaMa E.T.C.

Yara Arts Group: 306 East 11th Street #3B, New York, NY 10003 phone/fax:212/475-6474 yara@prodigy.net visit our web site at: <http://www.brama.com/yara>

Production staff

Press Repreresntative.....Jonathan Slaff
Lighting Board OperatorJack Reynolds
Electrical crew.....Matthew Reynolds, Willie Shewin
Production managementOleg Braude
Research in BishkekAltyn Kapalova
Preparation and research in New York.....Masha Vlasova/Christhian Diaz

Sayakbay Karalaev (1894-1971) born in the Issyk-Kul Region, he was the most famous reciter of the great Kyrgyz epic *Manas* and started telling the story when he was still a child. In 1937 Ibraim Adyrakhmanov recorded Karalaev's renowned version of *Er Toshtuk* which includes 16,559 lines of verse.

Vasily Radlov (1837-1918) was born Fridrich Wilhelm. He was a famous scholar of Central Asian and Turkic Studies. He graduated from Berlin University, writing about the influence of religion on Asian culture. He lived in Russia and researched the cultures of Siberia, Central Asia and Mongolia. His book on the literature of Turkic Speaking People brought him world fame. He recorded *Er Toshtuk* in 1864 and published it soon afterwards.

INSTRUMENTS: *Kyl-Kyak* the oldest Kyrgyz instrument, is a two string bowed instrument with strings tuned a fourth or a fifth apart with a long fretless neck. *Komus* – the most popular Kyrgyz instrument, is a three-string strumming instrument without frets used by bards, to accompany themselves. *Sybyzgy* is a wooden wind instrument similar to a cross flute used by shepherds. *Chogoino chor* was the instrument of horse herders and was used to call the herd together. It is a long flute with four holes used by all Turic speaking people of Central Asia. *Temir o komuz* a metal jaw's harp and *jygach ooz komuz* a wooden jaw's harp with a string that is unique to Kyrgyz music and sounds like throat singing.

THE COMPANY

DANIEL DARROW (Agay Khan & Dzelmogus) was born in Columbus, Ohio. This is his first project at La MaMa. He is inspired by the dedication and craft of his new Kyrgyz friends.

ELDIAR DZHARASHEV (All-Ears/Chick) was born in the village of Chaldovar in the Chui Valley. He studied at the Theatre Institute and at the Bishkek Humanities University. Recently, he performed the lead in a production at Bishkek Russian Theatre.

NURLAN ERZHANOV (Eleman) is from Naryn and studied at the Kurenkiewa Music Institute. He studied at the Theatre Institute in Bishkek and performs with the Talas Music Drama Theatre.

SUSAN HYON (Kenzheke) *Romeo & Juliet* (NYSF/The Public), *Tartuffe and Scapin* (Classic Stage Company), *Bring Love* (Guthrie), *Opus* (Florida Studio Theatre) *Henry VI* (Shakespeare & Co.), *Smoke and Mirrors* (The Flea), *Janyl* (La MaMa). International: *Janyl* (Kyrgyz Republic), *Metamorphoses* (Teatro Nacional, Lisbon), *The Comedy of Errors* (Schauspiel Essen, Germany), *Scapin* (Arezzo, Italy), *Snow* (Dublin Fringe). Training: Columbia University Graduate Acting.

AINURA KACHKYNBEK KYZY (Bektoro) is from Bishkek. She studied at the Abdraieva Music School and the Theatre Institute. She is a member of the Chamber Orchestra.

UMARBEB KADYROV (Toshtuk) is from the village Alaikuu in the Osh Region. He studies at the Theatre Institute and performs with Talas Music and Drama Theatre. He writes and is interested in poetry and dance.

AZAMAT SERKEBAEV (Chalkyuruk – the Magic Horse) is from the Chui Valley and has been reciting *Manas* since he was six years old, participating in national recitations of the epic since 1999. He took part in the *Janyl Myrza* workshop with Yara Arts Group and performed in the production in Bishkek and on tour last summer.

VIRLANA TKACZ (director) is the founding director of the Yara Arts Group. She has created 19 original shows with the company that have performed in New York, Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Ulan Ude, Ulan Bator, Bishkek, Naryn, as well as the villages of the At-Bashy Region and the Buryat Aga Region. She would like to thank Ellen Stewart (La MaMa), Nurlan Asanbekov and Kenzhegul Satybaldieva, Shaarbek Amakul and Tilek Jumagaziev for their support.

KENZHEGUL SATYBALDIEVA (co-creator) sings *dastans*, or traditional stories. She graduated from the St. Petersburg Institute of Theatre, Music and Film. She works with the Sakhna Theatre and has participated in many international festivals. She created the part of Medea in a Kyrgyz-French co-production which played in Paris. She received prizes for best debut in 1993, best female actress in 1997 and actress of the year in 2000. She created the title role of *Janyl Myrza* and performed with Yara in New York in 2007.

WATOKU UENO (designer) is a founding member of Yara Arts Group, He has designed most of Yara's shows and directed Yara's *Sundown* and *After the Rain*. Over the last eighteen years with Yara he has traveled to Ukraine, Siberia, Mongolia and Kyrgyzstan to create original theatre pieces by collaborating with local artists. He is a recipient of NEA/TCG design fellowship and was nominated for the Henry Hewes Design Award. With Ping Chong & Co. he designed *Deshima*, *After Sorrow*, *Pojagi* and *Secret History*.

SHIGEKO SUGA (movement) has worked with Yara Arts Group for over 17 years since *Blind Sight* and traveled with Yara to Lviv, Kharkiv, Kiev and Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan). Shigeiko has appeared recently as the lead Witch in "Shogun Macbeth" with Pan Asian Rep. She is a resident company member of Ellen Stewarts' Great Jones Rep, as well as Umbria International.

NURBEK SERKEBAEV (music) is from the village of Kajisay near Issyk-Kul. He studied music from his parents, who are professional musicians. He has participated in numerous competitions and was awarded "Young Talent of the Year" from 1998-2003. He taught a music workshop at the Bulgarian Music Festival, and works with Ilgis Zhunusov and the Omatta Theatre. During the summer of 2007 he worked with Yara on *Janyl Myrza* and last the winter traveled with his family ensemble Kut to the United States.

ROZA MUKASHEVA (co-translator) is a Kyrgyz poet currently working as a communications manager. She is the author of numerous articles on the folk arts and has published eight collections of poetry. She has collaborated with Virlana Tkacz on translations from Kyrgyz since 2005, including the epics *Janyl Myrza* and *Er Toshtuk*.

WANDA PHIPPS (co-translator) is a writer/performer living in NYC. Her publications and recordings include of *Field of Wanting: Poems of Desire*, *Wake-Up Calls: 66 Morning Poems*, and the CD-Rom *Zither Mood*. Her poetry has been translated into Ukrainian, Hungarian, Arabic and Galician. As a founding member of Yara Arts Group she has collaborated on numerous theatrical productions presented in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Siberia, and at La MaMa, E.T.C.

MAKOTO TAKEUCHI, a photographer and set associate has been working with Watoku Ueno and Yara Arts Group for eight years.

KENJI WATANABE was born in Yokohama, Japan and worked with Yara Arts Group on *Still the River Flows: A Celebration of Winter Rituals* at La MaMa Annex last December.

AINURA ASANBEKOVA (costumes) is an architect and designer. She works for the Kolisy Company and specializes in interior design. She is particularly interested in felt design. She created the hats for Yara's production of *Janyl* at LaMaMa and worked on the workshop production of *Er Toshtuk*.

MARGARET MORTON (photographs of the production), a New York City artist whose photographs have been published in four books and exhibited internationally, has spent the past three summers photographing in Kyrgyzstan. Morton is a graduate of Yale University School of Art and currently Professor at The Cooper Union School of Art in New York City.

SARAH V. MICHELSON (stage manager) moved to New York City after her graduation from Ohio University's Honors Tutorial College, where she studied directing and stage management. Sarah stage managed the Obie Award winning production of *The Brig* directed by Judith Malina and she directed *Camino Real* for the Provincetown and New Orleans Tennessee Williams Festivals. She is an alumni of the La MaMa Symposium for Directors.

ALEKSANDRA MYRNA (assistant stage manager) currently is the organizer of Ukrainian Language and Social Networking Group in New York. She previously worked with Yara Arts Group as a projectionist, on *Waterfall/Reflections* in 1995 and as an assistant stage manager on Yara's *Still the River Flows* at La MaMa Annex in December.

TOMASHI JACKSON (projectionist) is a fourth year student at the Cooper Union School of Art. She lives and works in New York and has exhibited installations in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Miami and New York City.