



## Prologue

[**Blackout.** Duet opens with a long procession by **Eva** on a walkway above the audience. her face is covered by a large mask and she is enshrouded by a sheer gauze-like material, folded upon itself. her body bears the movement of a funeral procession. as she moves she vocalizes. her sound is an emanation, the sound perhaps of the Holy Ghost. it seems to come from some place deep within and behind her. it is piercing. her procession begins in a slow dirge-like fashion. it is detailed, stylized by subtle gestures and movements which appear mythic and archetypal. there is music. a hymn. as **Eva** descends, moving closer to the performance square, her movements become increasingly abstract. as she crosses the edge of the performance square, she walks through a Greek-styled Portal. she stops, and utters the following line]

## **Eva**

i've come to watch a part of myself die.

[**Eva** moves toward the circle of white sand. the *circle* is 10 feet in diameter, located in the center of the performance square. **a female Chorus** in the form of the 3 fates: the spinner (choice), drawer of lots (chance) and fate (the inevitable); together with ten members of the audience, sit in straight-back wooden chairs along the perimeter of the *circle of sand*]

[As **Eva** enters the performance square, **one member of the Chorus** rises to render the prologue. while she speaks she manipulates two long sticks (a mnemonic device) drawing in the sand while speaking in Greek, or gibberish which sounds like Greek. the English appears on the banner]  
this performance has happened before. this performance has occurred for thousands of years. this performance happening right now in this room involves each and every one of you who are watching, who call yourselves 'audience'. it is yourSelf you are watching. the performer enacts for you, each of your lives. as each of you moves through your life as you unconsciously seek what will transform your lives, what will free you from the fetters that bind you...our wish is to release the shadows that lurk behind our every gesture and expression.

[**Eva** moves toward the *Circle of Sand* as the prologue is spoken, and when she reaches its edge, she removes her shroud and mask. it is a ritual...**Eva** is dressed in 100% cotton shorts, a cotton t-shirt and canvas tennis shoes. her look is pastel, soft, and cute]

## **Eva**

it all begins within this circle of sand...

[**Eva** quietly asks the audience members sitting around the edge of the circle, to remove their shoes and socks. she fills a large ornamental jug with sand. while moving around the circle, she pours the sand over each audience member's feet. *The Circle of Sand* section is captured live by a video camera mounted above the *circle* and projected onto the banner]

## The Circle of Sand

**Eva** (while standing at the edge of the circle)

i am eight years old...i am not standing. i am on all fours. i am low to the ground. my center of gravity is wide. i feel awkward in this position...my task is to must smooth each and every grain of sand to perfection...the surface is rough, dark, metallic, harsh, wicked, rough, dark, metallic, wicked, but it is sand. it can be smoothed...(she bends and finds her location within the circle on all fours, moving in place like an animal, low to the ground, with a wide center of gravity) i wait patiently to begin...there is a murmur in the crowd. they have come to watch my show. surrounding me are people's legs. i see the feet and toes of the crowd. all sizes. large nails, bitten nails, pealed skin, smooth skin, wrinkled skin, perfectly shaped toes, crooked toes, ankles. i see ankles. i see knees... calves...i see no one's face...it is very warm today. i am feeling cramped. i am hot, but i am still able to breathe. i am inhaling a large breath through my nose. i am becoming anxious...i desperately want his approval.

(A boxing ring bell rings to start the show...note: the following process has been performed many times, over and over again. every aspect of the process, each and every movement, is utterly familiar. there is a certain sexuality expressed by **Eva** as she moves within the *Circle of Sand*.)

**Eva** (Q1...a slight breath)

i am in Q1. i make my first move. (digs hands deeply into sand) there are deep crevices, fissures, rifts, clefts and chinks, within the sand. inside each crack (begins pulling childhood toys from crevices)...waifs and strays...(musically rendered) waifs and strays, waifs and strays...on all fours my hands are movvvving through the sand movvvving through the sand. i do not look up at the audience. i clutch the sand. i dig my fingers into each crevice in the sand. sharp and painful, like hot tiny rocks. each time i pull my hands out of the sand, tiny particles...(holds hands up, dripping with sand) cling to them...here, is a copper raggedy Anne doll. it's only about two feet tall. it smells like dead skin. it's torn and tattered. has red yarn hair and a flat white face. it's wearing a dirty dress. it has two legs which are covered with striped fabric and it has little red felt shoes on its feet. its right arm is falling off. it has been discarded by a young child. i have never met this raggedy Anne doll before. i feel good about covering this raggedy Anne doll. i do not like raggedy Anne dolls. and that little child had a bad experience with this raggedy Anne doll so i will bury it...my stomach is churning. my mouth feels sour. the roof of my mouth pulsates. i am pushing on the top of the sand to pack it tightly...i am moving my hand over the surface of the sand to make it even. the sand feels comforting. it's soft. it feels like air. i am touching every single grain of sand, every fine particle...i shift my weight slightly to my left...i lift my bent right leg and extend it to the right—as far as it will stretch, placing it in the sand. (very exotic movement)

using my hands i now shift my weight to the right. i lift and move my bent left leg and place it in the sand, distributing my weight evenly. (repeat if necessary)...i use my hands to inch myself forward...(slight breath) i face the next quadrant, Q2...i begin pushing sand from my sides by widening my elbows and stretching my arms. my hands are like shovels, scooping sand toward the center of this quadrant, covering its debris. (hosiery and hair accessories) i am covering this stuff they want me to use. i am covering this stuff which changes my appearance. i am covering

this stuff which changes who i really am...(moves forward toward furthest corner, stops, then speaks directly to audience)...every time i reach this area i am overcome with fear. it is the unknown which burns at the bottom of this chasm which frightens me. but i must do this. (uses weight of body to push down the sides of crevice) here is an iron.

[**Chorus** begins to sing, ‘this is the day we wash our clothes, wash our clothes, wash our clothes...’]

**Eva**

i push this iron to the bottom. where is papa? where is papa? such a large pile of cotton shirts for mama (buries iron)...a rolling pin

**Chorus**

this is the day we bake our bread...

**Eva**

knead the dough.

(kneads the rolling pin into the sand)

a vacuum cleaner

(the vacuum cleaner is buried

as an apron is uncovered)

i don’t like these things

(throws down apron angrily)

i can feel him watching me.

i feel his eyes judging my work,

scrutinizing my every move, making sure i fix

(stops...silence...and whispers) every grain of sand to his perfection...

the way in which i move within the sand is very important. i map out square quadrants and move clockwise from quadrant to quadrant. all of the squares must be seamlessly joined. i work on a small portion at a time to achieve ultimate perfection. nothing goes unnoticed...this second quadrant is taking longer than usual. the crowd is growing restless. they send up a muted roar. i only hear their sound. i don’t look up. i continue working without regard to their desire. i brush the top of this square very slightly (arms shaking), making it perfectly smooth. (deep breath)

i crawl backwards (crawls backwards into Q 3 like a praying mantis) into a contaminated ocean of sand. i am kneeling in a large body of water...(scoops sand raising arms into praying mantis posture. sand falls from her body like a sand dial...listens as through a seashell) i hear strife in this sand. i see fragments within the top layer of this sand, bits and pieces of a life: a moment in time captured by a photograph; a snippet from a long forgotten love letter; dried flowers; a piece of a garment—a wedding dress. these scraps of a life end in discord. they are all that remain of a bitter endeavor. within this sand they are reflected in black. they line the underside of these crevices. they have a metallic cast...i hear a mother scream; a child in the bowels of the sand; an angry father; arguing; spousal grief. i see the mother console her frightened child tucked between her legs, praying. ohhh, ohhh, ohhh, the biggest space that exists is between a man and a woman. along the tight hallway wall his shadow crawls. his shadow hovers...this sand...contains

**Chorus**

this is the day we bake the bread, bake the bread

this is the day we clean the house...

(**Chorus** continues in own fashion)

(**Chorus** stops abruptly)

everything that is evil, everything that is ugly and discarded. it is my task to bury all this... (moves enormous handfuls of sand to cover the voices) it is remarkable i am able to silence them. i will control the raging arguments. these people will stop fighting...i pack the sand tightly till its surface becomes hard and does not reflect what is buried beneath. i use my entire body weight to compress the sand. i force it into place...now i fluff the sand so that it will appear serene and connect it to the other perfect quadrants...i go to the final quadrant...

(Q4) still on all fours, i lift my hand to my hair. i feel every single grain of sand beneath each and every fingernail. i feel my hair cling to my scalp like sandpaper. i wipe the sweat from my hair. i scratch my brow. my forehead is coated with sand. i am covered in sand. my whole body is caked with sand. why didn't i realize this?...here, is a screen door...the screen is pulling away from its' frame (pushes screen with hand. inserts fingers thru screen. slowly rips screen vertically)...he pushed open this door. he walked through the screen door into the world outside with footsteps that knew the way. he walked with footsteps which knew all along he would walk out into the world. though i reached my hand he continued without turning. his shadow lengthened and the distance between us grew...running my fingers along this weathered paint the wood flakes in my hand. it's frail from being shoved open and slammed shut. i don't wanna see this door anymore. I AM NOT READY TO WALK THROUGH ITS SCREEN...vigorously i press down upon it to bury it within the sand. i am reducing this doorframe to kindling. i am eliminating it from sight...concentrating very hard on this final square i knead each and every grain of sand. sharp pain shoots up my arms. it feels like hot sand in my bloodstream. ignore this. i must rid the sand of all imperfection. i must cleanse this sand...the final quadrant is finished. before i am able to leave though, i must smooth the ring surrounding the four quadrants. (moves from Q4 and begins smoothing the narrow ring surrounding the four quadrants, working more quickly than before) i am working with the same energy i began. i work with the same vigor every time i smooth this sand. i can feel his eyes judging my work, scrutinizing every move i make. i feel his eyes penetrate me. if i do better than the last time maybe he won't make me do it again...i am touching the final grain of sand...

(Tape. the sound of an earthquake coming from speakers embedded within audience) i hear a rumble coming from the other end of the field...it is now a roar. it is deafening. the sandpile is shaking. my hands are being sucked into the sand. all four quadrants...the surfaces i painstakingly smoothed...are crumbling. the sanningddd's the sand the sand. nooo!

(The rumblings grow increasingly louder...and then a male voice (on tape) is heard from within the rumblings)

### **Voice on Tape**

*it is time to start again. please get up and prepare to begin. it is time to start once again.*