

CONTACT:
Christina Kellogg/510.643.6714
ckellogg@calperfs.berkeley.edu
Joe Yang/510.642.9121
scyang@calperfs.berkeley.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 8, 2006

**CLOUD GATE DANCE THEATRE OF TAIWAN PERFORMS *WILD CURSIVE*
(THE FINAL CHAPTER OF *CURSIVE: A TRILOGY*) FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 20 AND 21 AT 8:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**SIGHTLINES: Pre-performance talks with artistic director Lin Hwai-min October 20 and 21
at 7:00 p.m.**

BERKELEY, September 8, 2006—Lin Hwai-min's acclaimed modern dance ensemble **Cloud Gate Dance Theater of Taiwan** brings the ancient art of Chinese calligraphy to life in *Wild Cursive*, the final chapter of *Cursive: A Trilogy*, **Friday and Saturday, October 20 and 21 at 8:00 p.m.** at Zellerbach Hall. Inspired by calligraphy and Eastern martial arts, *Wild Cursive* uses dance to explore *kuang chao*, a form of "wild" calligraphy in which rules and set forms are broken. The performance is also inspired by nature; Lin calls traces of rain on walls "nature's calligraphy" and explores the origins of the ink and rice paper used in calligraphy. *Wild Cursive* features a score by **Jim Shum** and **Liang Chun-mei** that combines traditional music with sounds from nature. The 24-member company, considered a Taiwanese national treasure, has received rave reviews. "On every level, Lin's company is superb. Accomplished and striking, as rigorous as it is disciplined" (*The Times*, London).

WILD CURSIVE

Wild Cursive is the third part of Lin Hwai-min's *Cursive: A Trilogy*, a suite of dances that traces the art of Chinese calligraphy from the highly structured to the spontaneous and unleashed. Just as the art of calligraphy takes 10 years to master, it has taken Lin Hwai-min 10 years to bring *Cursive: A Trilogy* to the stage. *Cursive*, the first piece in the trilogy, conveys the structures and rules of calligraphy, as dancers move among projected images of Chinese characters. In *Cursive II*, the rules bend—the choreographer is the painter and the dancers' bodies become the symbols themselves. Finally, in *Wild Cursive*, all rules are broken, and the dance is abstract and spontaneous. With cascading scrolls of white rice paper as the only set pieces, dancers create a language of movement evoking calligraphy on paper. In one scene, the sleeves of a dress flow to the floor like ink; at other times, black ink is poured onto the rice paper sets, creating fluid, abstract forms. In order to prepare for the trilogy, Cloud Gate dancers took weekly calligraphy lessons, and in preparation for *Wild Cursive*, they spent five weeks improvising. Berlin's *Der Tagesspiegel* proclaimed, "the calligrapher dances with the brush; Lin Hwai-min paints with the body."

-MORE-

LIN HWAI-MIN

Founder and Artistic Director of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, **Lin Hwai-min** studied Chinese opera movement in his native Taiwan, modern dance in New York and classical court dance in Japan and Korea, eventually founding his company in 1973. An internationally renowned choreographer, Lin often draws from traditional Asian culture for inspiration. Lin Hwai-min's choreography "presents a distinct and mature Chinese choreographic language. The importance of this evolution in Asian dance is no less profound than the impact of Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt on European classical ballet," says *Dance Europe*.

Lin has received many honors for his artistic achievements, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Department of Culture of New York City in 1996; an Honorary Award of Fellowship by the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in 1997; and the Ramon Magsaysay Award (the "Nobel Prize of Asia") in 1999. He was named "Choreographer of the 20th Century" by *Dance Europe* magazine, cited as the "Best Choreographer" at Lyon Biannual Festival, and was chosen as one of the "Personalities of the Year," along with choreographers Merce Cunningham, Jiri Kylián, Pina Bausch and William Forsythe, by *Ballet International* magazine in 2000. Lin was awarded the National Award for Arts for the second time from the Taiwan National Culture and Arts Foundation in 2002; and in 2003, Lin received an Honorary Doctorate from National Chiao Tung University, Hsinchu, Taiwan. He recently began **Cloud Gate 2**, a dance company established to foster the talents of aspiring choreographers.

An acclaimed writer, Lin holds an MFA from the Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa. His novel, *Cicada*, is an all-time best seller in Taiwan, and several of his works have been translated into English and published in the United States. Lin founded the Department of Dance at Taiwan's National Taipei University of the Arts in 1983 and served as its Chairman for five years. In 1993 and 1994, he was the founding dean of the institute's graduate dance program. In 1999, he gave master classes in Cambodia, assisting local dancers to organize teaching materials of Khmer classical dance for children.

Lin Hwai-min made his debut as an opera director when *Rashomon* received its world premiere in 1996 to at the Graz Opera, Austria. In 2002, he directed a production of *Tosca* with the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan.

CLOUD GATE DANCE THEATRE

Recognized as "Asia's leading contemporary dance theatre" (*The Times*, London), **Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan** takes its name from a 5,000-year-old ritual dance called "Cloud Gate," the oldest known dance in China according to legend. In 1973, choreographer **Lin Hwai-min** adopted this

classical name for the first modern dance company in any Chinese-speaking community. While Cloud Gate's roots are in Asian folk traditions, the company brings to these age-old beliefs and stories a contemporary and universal perspective. The company's 24 dancers are trained in tai chi, meditation, Chinese Opera movement, modern dance, and ballet.

Cloud Gate has toured extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, and North and South America, including engagements at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, The Kennedy Center, the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, Lyon Biannual Dance Festival, the 25th anniversary of Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Wuppertal, and Deutsche Opera Berlin. The company was last presented by Cal Performances in 2003 when it performed *Moon Water* set to nine movements from Bach's Six Suites for Solo Cello. Cloud Gate regularly performs throughout their home country of Taiwan in venues ranging from the National Theatre in Taipei to mid-sized cultural centers in various cities, to high-school auditoriums in remote villages. The company gives free outdoor performances several times a year, drawing audiences of up to 60,000 per performance. Cloud Gate Dance Theatre's productions recorded on film include *Songs of the Wanderers*, filmed in the Netherlands; *Moon Water*, filmed in France; and *Bamboo Dreams*, filmed in Germany by RM Associates, London. These productions are available on DVD and have been broadcast on television around the world.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for *Wild Cursive* on **Friday, October 20 at 8:00 p.m.** and **Saturday, October 21 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$26.00, \$36.00 and \$46.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty, staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu

###

Cal Performances 2006/2007 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Classical 102.1 KDFC and SFStation.com are 2006/2007 season media sponsors.

###

