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**THE WONDEROUS FEATS OF THE PEKING ACROBATS ARE ON DISPLAY
AT ZELLERBACH HALL FRIDAY–SUNDAY, MARCH 21–23**

BERKELEY, February 12, 2008—Performing the “seemingly impossible to the virtually unbelievable” (*Los Angeles Times*), the Peking Acrobats return to Cal Performances **Friday–Sunday, March 21–23** at Zellerbach Hall for four performances featuring awe-inspiring maneuvers high above the stage, treacherous wire-walking and astounding displays of contortion, flexibility and control. This elite group of 27 gymnasts, jugglers, cyclists, tumblers and musicians from the People’s Republic of China has left audiences around the world spellbound by the graceful athleticism of their ancient folk art, “push[ing] the envelope of human possibility” (*The New York Post*). A feast for both the eye and ear, musicians of the Peking Acrobats complement the performance by playing traditional Chinese string, wind and percussion instruments from China such as the *erhu* (a small bowed instrument with two strings), *pipa* (a string instrument similar to lute), *dizi* (a flute made of bamboo) and the *yangqin* (a dulcimer played with bamboo mallets). The music, along with dramatic lighting design and bright costumes, creates a lively, circus-like atmosphere that *Dance Insider* has proclaimed “surreal, defying laws of body mechanics and physics...an exploration of the full extent of human potential... [A] show [which] can fill you with the wonder of a ten-year-old.” The Peking Acrobats perform under the direction of **Hai Ken Tsai**, whose family is rooted in three generations of Chinese acrobatics.

The Peking Acrobats have been diplomats of their spirited culture since 1952. At age five, the hand-selected performers begin training in master acrobatic disciplines that began more than 2,200 years ago during the Ch’in Dynasty (221–207 B.C.E.). In this period, acrobatics were only practiced among the peasants and on the streets. It was not until the Han Dynasty (207 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) that acrobatics flourished and a wide variety of juggling, tumbling and magic acts came to be known as the “Hundred Entertainments.” Emperor Wu Di of the Han Dynasty presented the first grand acrobatic performance at the Imperial Court, thus making it an important

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element in Chinese performing arts. As precursors to the Peking Opera, acrobatics were incorporated into operatic productions, a tradition that continues today.

The Peking Acrobats' widespread international appeal has led to milestone performances in the United States such as the 2003 Hollywood Bowl Fireworks Season Finale. The troupe's mastery has led to numerous television appearances including *The Wayne Brady Show*, *That's Incredible*, *Wide World of Sports*, NBC's *Ring in the New Year Holiday Special*, Nickelodeon's *Unfabulous* and Fox's *Guinness Book Primetime TV*; and company members were featured in Stephen Soderbergh's hit films *Ocean's 11*, *Ocean's 12* and *Ocean's 13*. Committed to bringing their unique artistry into the 21st century, the Peking Acrobats recently released a DVD which was recorded on their 2005 North American tour as a television special for HDNet, ushering in a new High Definition era for this ancient Chinese tradition.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for the **Peking Acrobats on Friday-Sunday, March 21-23** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$24.00**, **\$32.00**, and **\$46.00**, with special half-price tickets for children 16 and under to all performances. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20.00 for all other community members. Information is available at 510-642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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Cal Performances 2007/08 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Classical 102.1 KDFC is our 2007/08 season media sponsor.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, March 21 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 22 at 2:00 & 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 23 at 3:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus

Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

World Stage

Peking Acrobats

Program: The world-famous Peking Acrobats from the People's Republic of China perform acrobatic feats that have been dazzling audiences since 1952.

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