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**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS THE
MERCE CUNNINGHAM DANCE COMPANY
IN A TWO-WEEK RESIDENCY NOVEMBER 3-16**

**FOUR SEPARATE PROGRAMS; A NEW SITE-SPECIFIC EVENT AT
FORD POINT; PLUS COLLABORATIONS WITH SOME OF THE MOST CREATIVE
MINDS ON CAMPUS ARE OFFERED**

BERKELEY, October 3, 2008—Cal Performances is pleased to announce a two-week engagement by one of the most creative and influential artistic figures of our time—“the high priest of the dance avant-garde” (*The New York Times*)—choreographer **Merce Cunningham**. The engagement will feature four distinct programs with a total of seven works performed by the 14-member **Merce Cunningham Dance Company** (MCDC) **Friday and Saturday, November 7 and 8** plus the following weekend **November 14 and 15**; all performances will be at **8:00 p.m.** at Zellerbach Hall. Works include *Second Hand*, originally choreographed in 1944, *BIPED* (world premiere at Cal Performances in 1999), iPod friendly *eyeSpace* (2006) and the most recent work *XOVER* (2007). The four multi-instrumentalists that comprise the Cunningham ensemble are MCDC music director **Takehisa Kosugi, John King, David Behrman** and **Christian Wolff**. Two Bay Area artists will join the ensemble: **Aurora Josephson** (soprano) and **William Winant** (percussion).

Just added to the schedule is a new site-specific work titled *Craneway Event* that will be performed **Sunday, November 9** at **1:00** and **3:00 p.m.** at **Ford Point** in Richmond. Additionally, there is a variety of Campus and Community Events in conjunction with the formal performances. The list includes a colloquium on composing, a conversation with Merce Cunningham, a film series and a two-hour multimedia happening featuring the work of students and faculty. For further information, see page 5.

THE PROGRAMS

Program A (Friday, November 7 at 8:00 p.m.) will open the engagement with three works. *Suite for Five* (1956) is set to the music of John Cage. Laced with balletic themes, “*Suite for Five* is one of [Cunningham’s] most beautiful works, a complex, fluid distillation of

time and space...also considered one of his most accessible pieces,” wrote *The New York Times*. Mikel Rouse’s score for a 20-minute version of *eyeSpace* (2006) incorporates the use of iPod Shuffles and an environmental soundscape that is performed live and projected throughout the hall. The score is crafted so that audience members can have a unique listening experience, whether they are tuned into the iPod portion (with headphones on, shuffling through tracks at their own pace) or the ambient sound component (sans headphones). MCDC travels with 1000 iPod Shuffles, which are distributed to audience members on a loan basis before each performance. Or audience members can download the tracks onto their own iPods at <http://www.merce.org/p/eyespaceberkeley/>. The final work on the program is *BIPED*, which received its world premiere at Cal Performances in April 1999 and demonstrates Cunningham’s dedication to the capabilities of technology to create new dance forms. Through the process of motion capture, sensors on dancers’ bodies transmit the information of their movements to a computer. The movements were then digitally transformed into three-dimensional projections that are the ghostly figures that “accompany” the live dancers on stage. *BIPED*’s hypnotic score for cello, guitar and bass clarinet is by Gavin Bryars.

Program B (Saturday, November 8 at 8:00 p.m.) begins with *Second Hand*. In 1944, Cunningham choreographed a solo called “Idyllic Song” to the first movement of Erik Satie’s *Socrate*, in an arrangement by John Cage for piano solo. The work was first performed January 1970. However, the Satie estate refused permission for the use of the work in any form. Cage, therefore, composed a new work, using the structure and phraseology of Satie’s original, but otherwise using chance operations to determine what notes would be played. He called this “Cheap Imitation,” and Cunningham called his work *Second Hand*. *Split Sides* was a departure for MCDC in that, for the first time, the music was by two bands: Radiohead, the British alternative rock group, and Sigur Rós, the experimental group from Iceland. MCDC ensemble will perform.

A 40-minute version of *eyeSpace*, with additional music by David Behrman and Annea Lockwood, and *BIPED* comprise Program C on Friday, November 14 at 8:00 p.m.

The fourth evening, Program D on Saturday, November 15 at 8:00 p.m., opens with *Views on Stage*, first performed in Edinburgh, Scotland in October 2004, and is the stage version

of Cunningham's latest filmdance, made in collaboration with Charles Atlas and set to music by John Cage. *Crises* was described as "a dramatic, though not a narrative, dance concerned with decisive moments in the relationship between a man and four women," by Cage who was Cunningham's longtime artistic and life partner. *XOVER* (pronounced crossover) is danced to two 1958 compositions by Cage: "Aria," for solo vocalist, soprano **Aurora Josephson** in Berkeley, and "Fontana Mix," for any number of players. Robert Rauschenberger, a favorite collaborator of Cunningham and Cage's, designed the costume and décor. As the title suggests, the white unitard-clad dancers cross back and forth across the stage, interrupted by quartets and duets.

A new, site-specific work titled *Craneway Event* will be performed at the landmark former Ford assembly plant in Richmond—rechristened Ford Point—on Sunday, November 9 at 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Ford Point was designed by renowned industrial architect **Albert Kahn** and was entered on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. The 517,000-square foot 1930's building was the site of Jeep and tank production during the WWII, and with hundreds of windows installed to bring natural light to the assembly floor, boasts breathtaking views of the Bay.

Like recent Events that Cunningham has created for spaces such as Dia:Beacon in Beacon, New York on the Hudson River, and London's Tate Modern, the work will be choreographed on multiple stages specifically for the environment. Audience members will stand and are encouraged to move between the stages to view the work from multiple angles. Events, as Cunningham has referred to these performances for more than four decades, are made up of new material and movement from past and current repertory assembled using Cunningham's signature choreographic methods, including chance operations. Events have been performed in train stations, on beaches, in galleries and museums, ancient amphitheatres and parks. "It was an extraordinary layering of events I knew of old, things of which I had no memory and things that revealed themselves in new ways" wrote Alastair Macaulay in *The New York Times* of the July 8, 2008 Dia:Beacon event.

Craneway Event will be danced to live music from **Takehisa Kosugi, John King, David Behrman** and **Christian Wolff**. They will perform a score that includes both composed works and improvisation.

During the rehearsal period in the week prior to the November 9 performances, the award-winning visual artist **Tacita Dean** will film alongside Merce Cunningham and his company. She will produce a new film, scheduled to be completed by April 2009, when Cunningham will celebrate his 90th birthday. This will be the second collaboration of Cunningham and Dean, but the first time the entire company has been involved. Dean's first work with the choreographer, an installation entitled "Merce Cunningham performs Stillness (in three movements) to John Cage's composition 4'33" with Trevor Carlson, New York City, 28 April 2007 (six Performances; six films)" was shown through out the summer at the Dia:Beacon.

To watch a video of Merce Cunningham and Cal Performances' Director Robert Cole visiting Ford Point go to www.calperfs.berkeley.edu/presents/season/2008/dance/mcdc.php.

MERCE CUNNINGHAM

Merce Cunningham was born in Centralia, Washington, in April 1919. He received his first formal dance and theater training at the Cornish School (now Cornish College of the Arts) in Seattle. From 1939 to 1945, he was a soloist in the company of Martha Graham. He presented his first New York solo concert with John Cage in April 1944. Merce Cunningham Dance Company was formed at Black Mountain College in the summer of 1953. Cunningham has choreographed nearly 200 works for his company.

Merce Cunningham has worked extensively in film and video, in collaboration first with Charles Atlas and later with Elliot Caplan. Films by both artists are included in the Campus and Community Event film series; see page 5 for further information.

Cunningham's interest in contemporary technology has also led him to work with the computer program DanceForms, which he has used in making all his dances since *Trackers* (1991). In 1997, he began to work in motion capture to develop the décor for *BIPED*, a dance that was co-commissioned by Cal Performances. Other notable works presented in Berkeley in

recent years include the world premiere of *Loose Time* (2002); and the American premiere of *Fluid Canvas* (2003) which, like *BIPED*, also incorporates the motion-capture artistry of Paul Kaiser and Shelley Eshkar. In April 1996, Cal Performances presented the American premiere of Cunningham and Cage's final collaboration, *Ocean*; the work was performed in Harmon Gymnasium on the UC Berkeley campus (the last event to take place there before the building was torn down), in an arena-like setting surrounded by audience and a 112-piece orchestra.

Merce Cunningham has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Praemium Imperiale, Tokyo (2005), the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize (2000), the Handel Medallion from the Mayor of New York City (1999), the Golden Lion of the Venice Biennale (1995), and the Wexner Prize of the Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University, Columbus (with John Cage, posthumously, 1993). Cunningham was also a recipient of the National Medal of Arts (1990) and the Kennedy Center Honors (1985), a Laurence Olivier Award in London (1985), and a MacArthur Fellowship (1985). In France, he was made Officier of the Legion d'Honneur (1989) and Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters (2004).

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

During this two-week residency, Cal Performances, in association with departments on campus, will present a variety of free and open to the public Campus and Community Events. A **Composer Colloquium** with Cunningham musicians Takehisa Kosugi, Christian Wolff, John King, Stephan Moore and David Behrman will be held Thursday, November 6 at 4:00–5:30 p.m. in 125 Morrison Hall followed by an **Artist Talk with Merce Cunningham** at 7:00 p.m. at Wheeler Auditorium; both events are held on UC Berkeley campus.

A film series titled **Merce Cunningham Dance on Film** will be held on two evenings at Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive: Sunday, November 9 at 5:30 p.m. and Thursday, November 13 at 7:30 p.m. The first evening will feature two 1991 films by Elliot Caplan, *Beach Birds for Camera*, a dancefilm, and *Cage/Cunningham: A Film*, a documentary about the artists' 50 year collaboration, with archival footage and interviews with artists, musicians and dancers, including Viola Farber, Robert Rauschenberg and David Tudor. On November 13, *Locale*, a 1979 dancefilm by Charles Atlas and Elliot Caplan's *CRWDSPCR* (1996), a documentary about

the yearlong process of creating a dance, beginning with Cunningham's use of a computer program to choreograph movement will be screened.

The final Campus and Community Event is titled ***Panorama: Multi Media Happening***. Under the artistic direction of **Lisa Wymore**, head of UC Berkeley's dance program, dance makers, artists, scientists, engineers, roboticists, and digital game makers at UC Berkeley honor the groundbreaking collaborations and technological explorations of Merce Cunningham and John Cage in an evening of interactive and technologically alive theater. Contributors include Wymore with members of the dance theater company Smith/Wymore Disappearing Acts, **Ruzena Bajcsy** of Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society (CITRIS), **Ken Goldberg** of Berkeley Center for New Media (BCNM), **Greg Niemeyer** of Art Practice, and **Gail Derechio** of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies (TDPS) and CITRIS. It will happen on Friday, November 14 at 5:00–7:00 p.m. at the Pauley Ballroom, at the MLK Student Center on campus.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Merce Cunningham Dance Company Friday & Saturday, November 7 & 8** and **Friday & Saturday, November 14 & 15 at 8:00 p.m.** at Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$26.00, \$34.00** and **\$48.00**. Tickets for the *Craneway Event* on **Sunday, November 9 at 1:00 and 3:00 p.m.** at Ford Point in Richmond, CA, are priced at **\$40.00**, general admission. Both performances at Ford Point are sold out. Tickets may become available due to last minute returns. Please check with the Cal Performances Ticket Office at 510.642.9988 for availability. All other 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 2008/09 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Classical 102.1 KDFC is our 2008/09 season media sponsor.

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**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:
CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Friday & Saturday, November 7 & 8 at 8:00 p.m.
Friday & Saturday, November 14 & 15 at 8:00 p.m.**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave, Berkeley**

Dance

Merce Cunningham Dance Company

Program A: Friday, November 7 at 8:00 p.m.

Suite for Five (1953-1958, revived in 2002), music by John Cage; *eyeSpace* (20-minute version, 2006), music by Mikel Rouse; *BIPED* (1999), music by Gavin Bryars

Program B: Saturday, November 8 at 8:00 p.m.

Second Hand (1970, revived 2008), music by John Cage; *Split Sides* (2003), music by Radiohead and Sigur Ros

Program C: Friday, November 14 at 8:00 p.m.

eyeSpace (40-minute version, 2007), music by David Behrman and Annea Lockwood; *BIPED* (1999), music by Gavin Bryars

Program D: Saturday, November 15 at 8:00 p.m.

Views on Stage (2004), music by John Cage; *Crises* (1960, revived 2006), music by Conlon Nancarrow; *XOVER* (2007), music by John Cage

All choreography by Merce Cunningham

Tickets: \$26.00, \$34.00 and \$48.00, 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.

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Sunday, November 9 at 1:00 & 3:00 p.m.

Ford Point

1414 Harbour Way S.
Richmond, CA 94608

Dance

Merce Cunningham Dance Company

Program: *Craneway Event*, a new site-specific work created by Merce Cunningham for his company, will be performed at Ford Point, former Ford assembly factory, in Richmond.

Tickets: These performances are sold out. Tickets are **\$40.00**, general admission, and may become available due to last minute returns. Call the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988 for availability.

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CALENDAR OF CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Thursday, November 6 at 4:00–5:30 p.m.

125 Morrison Hall, UC Berkeley Campus

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Bancroft Way at College Ave., Berkeley

Composer Colloquium

Merce Cunningham Dance Company's musicians and composers Takehisa Kosugi, Christian Wolff, John King, Stephan Moore and David Behrman participate in an open forum. Presented by Cal Performances in association with the UC Berkeley Department of Music. This event is free and open to the public.

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Thursday, November 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Wheeler Auditorium, UC Berkeley Campus

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave, Berkeley

Artist Talk with Merce Cunningham

The legendary choreographer discusses his boundary-pushing work and career. Presented by Cal Performances in association with the Department of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies. This event is free and open to the public.

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Sunday, November 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive

Thursday, November 13 at 7:30 p.m.

2575 Bancroft Way at Bowditch, Berkeley

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Merce Cunningham Dance on Film

Program: Sunday, November 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Beach Birds for Camera (Elliot Caplan, 1991) a dancefilm

Cage/Cunningham: A Film (Elliot Caplan, 1991) a documentary about the artists' 50 year collaboration, with archival footage and interviews with artists, musicians, and dancers, including Viola Farber, Robert Rauschenberg and David Tudor.

Program: Thursday, November 13 at 7:30 p.m.

Locale (Charles Atlas, 1979) a dancefilm

CRWDSPCR (Elliot Caplan, 1996) a documentary about the yearlong process of creating a dance, beginning with Cunningham's use of a computer program to choreograph movement.

Tickets: For advance tickets call 510. 642.5249 or visit bampfa.berkeley.edu/filmseries.

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Friday, November 14 at 5:00–7:00 p.m. **Pauley Ballroom, MLK Student Center, UCB Campus**
CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Panorama: Multi Media Happening. Under the artistic direction of Lisa Wymore, head of UC Berkeley's dance program, dance makers, artists, scientists, engineers, roboticists, and digital game makers at UC Berkeley honor the groundbreaking collaborations and technological explorations of Merce Cunningham and John Cage in an evening of interactive and technologically alive theater. Contributors include Lisa Wymore with members of the dance theater company Smith/Wymore Disappearing Acts, Ruzena Bajcsy of CITRIS, Ken Goldberg of BCNM, Greg Niemeyer of Art Practice, and Gail Derechio of TDPS and CITRIS. The event unfolds in synchronized looping patterns over two hours that audience members may enter at any time. Presented by Cal Performances in association with Theater, Dance and Performance Studies, Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society, Berkeley Center for New Media, Center for New Music and Audio Technology, Art Practice Artistic Director: Lisa Wymore. This event is free and open to the public.

- Cal Performances -