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MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY RETURNS TO ZELLERBACH HALL
WITH THREE CLASSIC GRAHAM CREATIONS
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JANUARY 31 & FEBRUARY 1 AT 8:00 P.M.

**Former Graham dancer and UC Berkeley dance maven
Marni Thomas Wood will discuss Graham's artistic legacy
on Friday, January 31 at 6:00 p.m. in Durham Studio.**

BERKELEY, December 26, 2013—Classics of the American choreographer's art are brought to passionate life when the [Martha Graham Dance Company](#) returns to [Cal Performances](#) on Friday and Saturday, January 31 and February 1, at 8:00 p.m. in Zellerbach Hall. The company, whose namesake was the defining American dancer and choreographer of the 20th century, will pair two midcentury works (*Appalachian Spring* and *Cave of the Heart*) with Graham's final creation (*Maple Leaf Rag*) in a program that offers a fresh look at the creative genius who changed the dimensions of modern dance. "Martha Graham's impact on dance was staggering and often compared to that of Picasso's on painting, Stravinsky's on music, and Frank Lloyd Wright's on architecture," ([PBS.org](#)). Her choreography transformed dance around the world forever.

In a related Education & Community Event, [Marni Thomas Wood](#), director emerita of the Martha Graham Dance Company and co-founder of the UC Berkeley Dance Department (with her husband David Wood) will present an Artist Talk about the Martha Graham Dance Company. Co-presented with the UC Berkeley Department of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies, the talk will be held on Friday, January 31 at 6:00 p.m. in the Durham Dance Studio on the UC Berkeley campus. This event is free and open to the public.

Martha Graham Dance Company will open its program with her 1944 paean to America's pioneering spirit, *Appalachian Spring*. Created to Pulitzer Prize-winning music by Aaron Copland, *Appalachian Spring* is a warm and poignant tribute, simple but far from trivial, to people who long for a better life. A second work from the same period, *Cave of the Heart*, is a

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setting of the Medea story with music by Samuel Barber. Bloody and violent, the 1946 work is a heart-rending exploration of the dark power of love and loss. Both *Appalachian Spring* and *Cave of the Heart* employ sets by Japanese American artist Isamu Noguchi, the frequent Graham collaborator who revolutionized dance stage design by replacing flat backdrops with three-dimensional sculptural objects. The final dance on the Cal Performances program, Graham's humorous 1990 creation *Maple Leaf Rag*, was the last work of choreography the artist completed. Set to music by Scott Joplin and using silken costumes by Calvin Klein, *Maple Leaf Rag* finds Graham willing to poke gentle fun at her own tropes in a joyous culmination of her work.

Martha Graham's connections with UC Berkeley can be traced to 1916, when as a 22-year-old she danced in the Greek Theatre with Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn's pioneering modern dance company. Graham went on to create 181 works in a storied choreographic career that spanned the entire 20th century—indeed, in 1998 *Time* magazine proclaimed Graham “Dancer of the Century.” She infused her work with social, political, and sexual themes, and created dances with a distinctly American sensibility. Always an independent voice, she founded the Martha Graham Dance Company in 1926 and led it for 66 years; the company and its Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance—the longest continually operating school of dance in the United States—have provided fertile ground for experimentation in the expressive capacity of the human body. Generations of dancers, choreographers, and other artists were trained by Martha Graham, including Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp, Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Bette Davis, Kirk Douglas, Madonna, Liza Minelli, and Gregory Peck.

Graham received countless accolades throughout her career, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She died in 1991 at the age of 94, but her namesake company and school continue to flourish. The company, which programs both Graham classics and new work—much of it commissioned—has been led since 2005 by Artistic Director Janet Eilber. Many of its archives and costumes were damaged in 2013 by Superstorm Sandy, but “Martha's legacy is still alive as long as the company continues to perform her work” (*The New Yorker*).

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for Martha Graham Dance Company on Friday and Saturday, January 31 and February 1, at 8:00 p.m. in Zellerbach Hall range from \$30.00 to \$92.00 and are subject to change. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at <http://www.calperformances.org>; and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to <http://calperformances.org/buy/discounts.php>.

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Cal Performances thanks Wells Fargo and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their major support of the 2013—2014 Season.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, January 31, at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 1, at 8:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Dana Street, Berkeley

Dance

Martha Graham Dance Company
Janet Eilber, Artistic Director

Program:

Appalachian Spring (1944): music by Aaron Copland; choreography by Martha Graham
Cave of the Heart (1946): music by Samuel Barber; choreography by Martha Graham
Maple Leaf Rag (1990): music by Scott Joplin; choreography by Martha Graham

Tickets: Prices range from \$30.00 to \$92.00 and are subject to change. They are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at calperformances.org; and at the door.

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