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**LYON OPERA BALLET PRESENTS CUTTING-EDGE DANCE BY
THREE WOMEN CHOREOGRAPHERS, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27 AND
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28 AT 8:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

BERKELEY, September 26, 2006 — Lyon Opera Ballet, “one of the glories of French contemporary dance” (*The New York Times*), returns to Cal Performances after a three season absence **Friday, October 27** and **Saturday, October 28** at **8:00 p.m.** in **Zellerbach Hall**. Known for its dedication to contemporary dance-makers, the company, led by director **Yorgos Loukos**, will present dances created by three female choreographers whose work sometimes challenges traditional definitions of ballet: Belgium’s **Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker**, Germany’s **Sasha Waltz**, and France’s **Maguy Marin**. The program promises to reinforce the company’s long standing reputation: “Neither hidebound nor trendy, the company brings ballet into the modern age,” says *The Sunday Oregonian*.

PROGRAM

Die Grosse Fuge is by the Belgian choreographer **Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker**. Set to **Ludwig van Beethoven**’s *Die Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133, for string quartet, the piece for eight male dancers in stark black-and-white costumes has been described as a “breakneck-paced, throw yourself on the floor, roll, get up again, collapse again male tour-de-force” (DanceInsider.com). In addition to creating choreography, de Keersmaeker runs Rosas, the internationally known dance company she founded in 1983. Since 1991, Rosas has been the dance company in residence at the Monnaie Theatre of the Belgian Royal Opera in Brussels. De Keersmaeker’s work is renowned for its close association with an eclectic body of music, including dances created for music by Steve Reich, Arnold Schönberg, John Cage, Joan Baez, Mozart, Wagner, Bartók, and others. Performances and films of de Keersmaeker’s works have won numerous awards, including the London Dance and Performances Award, the Japanese Dance Award for the best foreign production, the Sole d’Oro in Italy, and the Lyon Dance Screen Award.

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Fantasia is German choreographer **Sasha Waltz**'s first collaboration with Lyon Opera Ballet. The new ballet for nine dancers is set to **Franz Schubert**'s *Fantasia* in F minor for piano four hands. *The Economist* has described Waltz's choreography as "feisty, witty pieces that marry vibrant choreography with allusions to the everyday, the urban, the familiar: slapstick crossed with pert questions about sexuality," and described the choreographer as "the most exciting German dance artist to emerge from the post-reunification years." Born in Karlsruhe, Germany and trained in Amsterdam and New York, Waltz founded a Berlin dance space, the Sophiensaele, in 1996, and in 1999 was named choreography director of the Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz, the independent Berlin theater known for its socially and politically charged productions. Waltz left the theater in 2004 but maintains an office and rehearsal space in Berlin.

Perhaps the best-known dance on the program—certainly the most controversial—is avant-garde choreographer **Maguy Marin**'s *Groosland*, danced to two of **Johann Sebastian Bach**'s Brandenburg Concertos. Featuring 20 dancers in padded fat suits designed by Montserrat Casanova, the dance "looks like a play of dolls and also a scene from some comic animation" (*Korea Times*). Marin's association with the Lyon Opera Ballet reaches back to the company's first tour to New York, in 1987, where her *Cendrillon* was an instant success, warranting a second two-week engagement. Born in Toulouse to Spanish parents, Marin entered the Toulouse Conservatory at age eight and subsequently studied with Nina Vyroubova in Paris. She subsequently danced with the Strasbourg Opera, Micha Van Hoecke's group Chandra, and Majurice Béjart's Ballets du XXe Siècle. In 1978 she created Theater of the Ark (which became Compagnie Maguy Marin in 1984) with Daniel Ambash, her colleague and then-husband. In 1981 she was appointed resident choreographer at Le Centre Choréographique National in Créteil, outside Paris, where she maintains her company. Maguy's signature piece, *May B.*, an homage to playwright Samuel Beckett, has been performed over 350 times. She was named an officer in the French National Order of Arts and Letters in 1988.

LYON OPERA BALLETT

Louis Erlo, then director of the Lyon Opera, first founded the Lyon Opera Ballet in 1969. The present company, with its reputation for risk-taking and innovation, was established in 1984, when Erlo invited **Françoise Adret** to create a new ballet company committed to

contemporary choreographers; the company made its United States debut in 1987, presenting **Maguy Marin**'s *Cendrillon*, a contemporary reworking of *Cinderella*, for two weeks at City Center in New York. In the years since, Lyon Opera Ballet has become France's most well-traveled ballet troupe, making 12 U.S. tours. The company has performed in Berkeley six times beginning in 1987. Adret retired in 1991 and **Yorgos Loukos** became director.

The company has acquired and commissioned ballets by William Forsythe, Jirí Kylián, Nils Christie, Nacho Duato, Mathilde Monnier and Jean-Françoise Duroure, Louis Falco, Mats Ek, Christopher Bruce, Ohad Naharin, Angelin Preljocaj, and others. Works by American choreographers, including Trisha Brown, Ralph Lemon, Karole Armitage, Lucinda Childs, Susan Marshall, and Stephan Petronio, also are in the troupe's repertoire; Bill T. Jones served as resident choreographer with the group from 1994–1997.

Lyon Opera Ballet was named Opéra National de Lyon in 1995, elevating it to the same level as the 328-year-old Opéra National de Paris. That same year, the company performed as part of the United Nations' 50th Anniversary Celebration in San Francisco, and in 1996 it opened the Lincoln Center Festival in New York. Lyon Opera Ballet was also the first modern ballet troupe to perform in Russia's historic Bolshoi Theatre.

Upon the company's most recent visit to Cal Performances in 2002, when it presented Marin's *Cendrillon*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* proclaimed, "Yorgos Loukos' troupe has returned with a beautifully acted fairy tale as well as an impeccably danced ballet."

YORGOS LOUKOS

Greek-born **Yorgos Loukos**, director of the Lyon Opera Ballet, studied ballet with Igor Foska, Boris Kniasef, and Raymond Franchetti, and also studied philosophy at the University of Aix en Provence and architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He joined Paris' Théâtre du Silence in 1972, dancing neoclassical and modern repertory. He also danced with the Zurich Opera, and then joined the Ballet National de Marseille where he became assistant to Roland Petit. Loukos also worked for the Metropolitan Opera in New York before coming to Lyon

Opera Ballet to help stage Gavin Bryars' *Medea*; he subsequently served as ballet master, co-director, and, since 1991, director of the troupe.

In his tenure at Lyon Opera Ballet, Loukos has invited many choreographers to work with the company and commissioned numerous works, including Angelin Preljocaj's *Romeo and Juliet* in 1990, Maguy Marin's *Coppelia* in 1993, and dances by Frédéric Flamand, Meryl Tankard and Tero Saarinen. Loukos also serves as artistic director of France Moves (a festival of French dance in New York) and the Festival International de Danse in Cannes, France. He is an Officer of Arts and Letters of the French Republic.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Lyon Opera Ballet** on **Friday, October 27** and **Saturday, October 28** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$32.00**, **\$46.00** and **\$58.00**. 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 and 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 Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperfs.berkeley.edu.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, October 27 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 28 at 8:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus

Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Dance

Lyon Opera Ballet

Yorgos Loukos, director

Program:

Die Grosse Fuge: choreography by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker; music: Beethoven's *Die Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133 for String Quartet

Fantasie: choreography by Sasha Waltz; music: Schubert's *Fantasie* in F minor for piano four hands

Groosland: choreography by Maguy Marin; music: Bach's Brandenburg Concertos No. 2 and 3

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