

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

CONTACT:

Lisle Peterson (510) 643-6714
lisle@calperfs.berkeley.edu
Stefanie Scott (510) 642-9121
sscott@calperfs.berkeley.edu

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP
IN THE RETURN OF *L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO ED IL MODERATO*
SEPTEMBER 4–7 IN ZELLERBACH HALL

PLUS

**REPERTORY PROGRAM FEATURING A WORLD PREMIERE SET TO THE MUSIC OF
BARTÓK; *SERENADE* (BAY AREA PREMIERE) AND *GRAND DUO*,
BOTH SET TO LOU HARRISON; AND *GOING AWAY PARTY*
SEPTEMBER 12–14 IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**SIGHTLINES: UC Berkeley Professor of Music Kate van Orden, Sept. 4 at 7:00 p.m.;
UC Berkeley Professor of Comparative Literature Anthony Cascardi, Sept. 6 at 7:00 p.m.;
and Mark Morris Dance Group General Director Barry Alterman Sept. 12 at 7:00 p.m.**

BERKELEY, July 31, 2003 – Cal Performances kicks off its 2003/04 season with the acclaimed **Mark Morris Dance Group** (MMDG) and the return of director/choreographer **Mark Morris'** evening-length masterwork *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* **Thursday–Sunday, September 4–7** in Zellerbach Hall; and a program of repertory **Friday–Sunday, September 12–14** in Zellerbach Hall. Gloriously received at its West Coast premiere at Cal Performances in 1994, *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* features the return of **Nicholas McGegan** leading the **Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra**, the **UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus** and guest vocalists. The repertory program honors the late Lou Harrison with the Bay Area premiere of *Serenade* and the reprise of *Grand Duo*, set to Harrison's *Serenade for Guitar* and *Grand Duo for Violin and Piano*, respectively. A **world premiere** set to the music of Béla Bartók is also featured, and *Going Away Party*, set to the recorded music of Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys, completes the program. Free Sightlines talks are given by UC Berkeley Professor of Music **Kate van Orden** (September 4 at 7:00 p.m.); UC Berkeley Professor of Comparative Literature **Anthony Cascardi** (September 6 at 7:00 p.m.); and MMDG General Director **Barry Alterman** (September 12 at 7:00 p.m.).

-MORE-

L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO ED IL MODERATO

Set to **George Frideric Handel's** 1740 choral ode of the same name, ***L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed il Moderato*** (*L'Allegro*) is widely considered one of the greatest modern dance works of the 20th century. "An extraordinary evening," wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* at the West Coast premiere at Cal Performances in 1994. "Among the happiest and most endearing works American dance has seen. There is no question that it is a masterpiece." Upon *L'Allegro's* return in 2000: "One of the most beautiful and deeply satisfying modern dance works of recent times...go see it while you have the chance," raved the *Contra Costa Times*. The upcoming performances again feature an extraordinary convention of musicians, led by early music specialist **Nicholas McGegan**. In the pit, the **Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra** is joined by the **UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus** under the direction of **Marika Kuzma**, and featured soloists include sopranos **Christine Brandes** and **Dominique Labelle**, tenor **Iain Paton**, and bass-baritone **Philip Cutlip**. The artistic equation is complete when 24 members of the **Mark Morris Dance Group**, costumed by **Christine Van Loon**, take the stage in a production that is undoubtedly one of Morris' grandest in both physical and emotional scope. Scenic design is by **Adrienne Lobel** and lighting design is by **James F. Ingalls**.

"A masterwork on a scale hardly known in the U.S. outside the field of classical ballet," wrote the *Wall Street Journal* in 1990. Created by Mark Morris in 1988 at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie when the company was the resident dance troupe of Brussels' state opera house, *L'Allegro* is a work of immense artistic and thematic proportion. The Handel oratorio is based on two poems by **John Milton** ("L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," c.1632), celebrating the extremes of happiness and melancholy; and a third by Handel's librettist **Charles Jennens** ("Il Moderato"), which treads the middle ground. Throughout his interpretation, Morris captures the range of human feeling, traversing our emotional landscape from riotous good humor one minute, to profound pensiveness the next. The work was named the #1 Dance Event of the 1990s by London's *Time Out* magazine, and the British premiere with the English National Opera in 1997 earned the Laurence Olivier Award. *L'Allegro* receives four performances in Berkeley: Thursday–Saturday, September 4–6 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 7 at 3:00 p.m.

REPERTORY

The music of late West Coast composer **Lou Harrison** inspired some of Mark Morris' most lauded works during the 16 years that the composer and choreographer collaborated together, including *Strict Songs* (1987), *Pacific* (1995), and *World Power* (1995). In 1997, MMDG commissioned Harrison to compose the music for *Rhymes with Silver*, which premiered at Cal Performances with cellist Yo-Yo Ma joining the MMDG dancers and musicians on stage. "What isn't fabulous about his music?" Morris told *The Los Angeles Times*. "It is irresistible." This September Morris performs solo the Bay Area premiere of *Serenade*, set to Harrison's *Serenade for Guitar*. Performed in five movements and dedicated to the composer's memory, *Serenade* "is a distillation of Morris' aesthetic in a new, pure fashion. In a quiet, undemonstrative way, it is the essential Morris...its perfect marriage with Harrison's gossamer-fine composition is a gentle gem" (*The Washington Post*). **Oren Fader** (guitar), **Stefan Schatz** (percussion), and Morris' finger cymbals and castanets comprise *Serenade*'s captivating musical accompaniment. The homage to Harrison continues with 1993's *Grand Duo*, set to *Grand Duo for Violin and Piano* (**Jonathan Gandelman**, violin; and **Ilan Rechtman**, piano) for an ensemble of 14 dancers.

September's repertory program at Cal Performances also features a world premiere set to the music of Béla Bartók. Set for a cast of 12 dancers, Bartók's String Quartet No. 4 will be performed by **Jonathan Gandelman** and **Andrea Schultz** (violins); **Jessica Troy** (viola); and **Wolfram Koessel** (cello). Lighting is by **Nicole Pearce** and costumes are by **Martin Pakledinaz**. Rounding out the program is *Going Away Party* (1990), Morris' energetic cowboy romp that swings through nine recorded songs by Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys. The repertory program runs Friday & Saturday, September 12 & 13 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 14 at 3:00 p.m.

MARK MORRIS

"The Mark Morris experience is like nothing else in dance," wrote Arlene Croce in *The New Yorker*. "Morris is a dancemaker and a spellbinder. That is enough to make him transparently a symbol

of his times.” **Mark Morris** the director, choreographer, and dancer grew up in Seattle, Washington, where he studied with Verla Flowers and Perry Bronson. He began his professional career dancing for an eclectic group of companies and in 1980, formed the Mark Morris Dance Group, now one of the world’s leading dance companies. Its talent was recognized abroad, and in 1988 Mark Morris and his company accepted positions respectively as Director of Dance and National Dance Company of Belgium for the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the state opera house, where they remained for three years. Morris’s time in Brussels was a highly creative time as he completed three acclaimed evening-length works: *The Hard Nut*, *L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, and *Dido & Aeneas*.

In 1990, with Mikhail Baryshnikov, Morris founded the White Oak Dance Project. In addition to choreographing more than 100 works for the Mark Morris Dance Group, Mark Morris has also created ballets for the San Francisco Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, and the American Ballet Theatre, among others.

Morris was named a fellow of the MacArthur Foundation and has received honorary doctorates from the Boston Conservatory of Music, The Juilliard School, and Long Island University. He is the subject of a biography by Joan Acocella (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and in 2001, Marlowe and Company published *Mark Morris’ L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, a volume of photographs and essays.

The Mark Morris Dance Center, at the corner of Flatbush and Lafayette Avenues in Brooklyn, was completed in September 2001. Primarily used for the company and school, the Center’s three studios, which range in size and include the largest unobstructed dance studio in New York City, are available for non-profit dance companies to rent at subsidized rates. The Center was honored with a 2002 “Building Brooklyn” award from the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. The awards recognize construction projects that have had a positive impact on the borough’s economy and quality of life.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

The Mark Morris Dance Group began performing at Cal Performances in 1987, and has returned annually since 1994. The company’s 2002/03 visit featured the world premiere of *Something*

Lies Beyond the Scene, Morris' singular take on the music of William Walton and the poems of Edith Sitwell. 2001 saw an encore presentation of Rameau's comic opera-ballet *Platee* as well as a preview performance of the widely acclaimed *V*, and 2000 featured the American premiere of the English National Opera production of Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's *Four Saints in Three Acts*. Past seasons in Berkeley have also witnessed the world stage premiere of *Falling Down Stairs*, created by Morris to Bach's Suite No. 3 for Unaccompanied Cello, performed by cellist Yo-Yo Ma (March 1997); the world premiere of *Rhymes With Silver*, with a commissioned score by Lou Harrison (March 1997); the West Coast premiere of Morris' production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (October 1995); the world premiere of *World Power*, choreographed to the music of Lou Harrison (October 1995); and *Kolam*, a work commissioned by Cal Performances as part of Yo-Yo Ma's *Silk Road Project* in Berkeley (April 2002), with musical accompaniment by Ma, Zakir Hussain, Ethan Iverson, and Ben Street.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Mark Morris Dance Group** performing *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* **Thursday–Sunday, September 4–7** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$38.00, \$48.00, and \$64.00**; tickets to MMDG's repertory program **Friday–Sunday, September 12–14** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$32.00, \$46.00, and \$56.00**. Performance 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.

#

San Francisco Chronicle, *San Francisco* magazine, and KDFC Classical 102.1 FM are media sponsors of Cal Performances' 2003/04 performing arts season.

All Cal Performances programs are supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

#

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Thursday, September 4 at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way At Telegraph, Berkeley

SIGHTLINES

Pre-performance talk with **Kate van Orden**, Professor of Music at UC Berkeley (October 4), and **Anthony Cascardi**, Professor of Comparative Literature at UC Berkeley (October 7). *Sightlines* is a continuing program of pre- and post-performance discussions with Cal Performances' guest artists and scholars, designed to enrich the audience's experience. These events are free to ticketholders.

#

Thursday-Saturday, September 4-6 at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 7 at 3:00 p.m.

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

Dance

Mark Morris Dance Group

Mark Morris, choreographer

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

Nicholas McGegan, conductor

UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus

Marika Kuzma, director

Christine Brandes, soprano

Dominique Labelle, soprano

Iain Paton, tenor

Philip Cutlip, baritone

Program:

L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato (1988); music by George Frideric Handel; libretto by Charles Jennens, based on the poetry of John Milton; choreography by Mark Morris

Tickets: \$38.00, \$48.00 and \$64.00, 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.

-MORE-

#

Friday, September 12 at 7:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way At Telegraph, Berkeley

SIGHTLINES

Pre-performance talk with **Barry Alterman**, General Director of Mark Morris Dance Group. *Sightlines* is a continuing program of pre- and post-performance discussions with Cal Performances' guest artists and scholars, designed to enrich the audience's experience. These events are free to ticketholders.

#

Friday & Saturday, September 12 & 13 at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 14 at 3:00 p.m.

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

Dance

Mark Morris Dance Group

Mark Morris, director and choreographer

Program:

World Premiere (title TBA); music by Béla Bartók, String Quartet No. 4; choreography by Mark Morris

Serenade (2003); music by Lou Harrison, *Serenade for Guitar*; choreography by Mark Morris (Bay Area premiere)

Grand Duo (1993); music by Lou Harrison, *Grand Duo for Violin and Piano*; choreography by Mark Morris

Going Away Party (1990); recorded music by Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys; choreography by Mark Morris

Tickets: \$32.00, \$46.00 and \$56.00, 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.

