

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

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THE HAGUE'S MAVERICK MODERN DANCE COMPANY
NEDERLANDS DANS THEATER I
RETURNS TO THE BAY AREA FOR FOUR PERFORMANCES
MARCH 24, 25, 27 & 28 AT CAL PERFORMANCES

THE NETHERLANDS' ACCLAIMED COMPANY PERFORMS TWO PROGRAMS OF WORKS BY CHOREOGRAPHER JIŘÍ KYLIÁN, INCLUDING THE WEST COAST PREMIERES OF *CLAUDE PASCAL*, *LAST TOUCH*, *27'52"*, AND *CLICK-PAUSE-SILENCE*, AS WELL AS *WALKING MAD* BY CHOREOGRAPHER JOHAN INGER

BERKELEY, February 20, 2004 – Internationally renowned for inventive choreography and superbly trained dancers, **Nederlands Dans Theater I** returns to Cal Performances **Wednesday & Thursday, March 24 & 25 at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, March 27 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, March 28 at 3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. “We suspected they would be good, but we didn’t know how good,” wrote the *San Jose Mercury News* of the company’s memorable performances three years ago in Berkeley. Two different programs feature several West Coast premieres of works by Nederlands Dans Theater’s former Artistic Director—now Resident Choreographer and Artistic Advisor—**Jiří Kylián**, whose work with the company over the last 28 years has produced one of the most progressive and talented ensembles in modern dance. Program A (March 24 & 25) includes Kylián’s *Claude Pascal* (2002), *Last Touch* (2003), and *27’52”* (2002); and Program B (March 27 & 28) features *Click-Pause-Silence* (2000) and *Symphony of Psalms* (1978), both by Kylián, and *Walking Mad* (2001), by former NDT dancer **Johan Inger**.

PROGRAMS

Jiří Kylián’s unique and very personal style defies categorization by blending elements from a myriad of sources. He has conceived works of intense lyrical quality as well as more abstract and surreal ballets, and the NDT I dancers—a multi-national ensemble “of such uniform physical perfection, moving with a special mix of smooth plasticity and glittering precision” (*The*

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Independent, London)—are the perfect vehicle to express this vision. **Program A (Wednesday & Thursday, March 24 & 25 at 8:00 p.m.)** features three West Coast premieres by Kylián. *Claude Pascal* begins the evening, a haunting ballet choreographed for ten dancers to the music of Dirk Haubrich on a stage intersected by giant mirrors. Next, *Last Touch*, which received its world premiere five months ago at the Lucent Danstheatre Den Haag, features the thoroughly modern NDT dancers outfitted in proper Victorian-era dress—a study of marked contrasts. *27’52”*, titled for the precise timing of the piece, completes the program. Set for three couples to an electronic composition by Dirk Haubrich, intertwined with poetic texts by the Dalai Lama, Tao, and Baudelaire (read by the dancers on tape), the work illustrates a blending of Eastern spirituality and Western notions. “The phrases would be hollow without any genuine content,” writes the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, “but the breathtaking intensity of 27’52” makes every second fascinating...Everyone is free to make their own interpretation; Kylián extends only his expressive images to us, but they only prove this profound dance master’s undiminished power.”

Program B (Saturday, March 27 at 8:00 p.m. & Sunday, March 28 at 3:00 p.m.) opens with Kylián’s 1978 classic, *Symphony of Psalms*, set to Stravinsky’s choral ode of the same name. Often described as a danced prayer, eight couples gather and break apart in complex patterns, to moving and expressive effect. “Kylián’s tender movement language captures the piety and primitivism of Stravinsky’s score, while investing each of his dancers with a personal humanity that shines through the veil of spiritualism,” observed the *Times*, London, of a 1999 performance. On a stage illuminated with fluorescent lights, a revolving mirror, and a television screen, the second work on Program B, *Click-Pause-Silence*, set to a musical collage of dismantled Bach compositions and sound effects, seeks to illustrate the fleeting nature of human relationships. Kylián says of the work: “Sometimes things click, the pause tells us something about the passing time, the silence speaks.” *Walking Mad*, choreographed in 2001 by **Johan Inger** (NDT alumnus and artistic director of Sweden’s Cullberg Ballet), closes the program, a whimsical battle-of-the-sexes set to Ravel’s *Bolero* and Arvo Pärt’s *Für Alina* for piano.

NEDERLANDS DANS THEATER

“**Nederlands Dans Theater** left a profound impression upon aficionados, choreographers, dancers, and critics. It would be tough to name more exciting dances or dancers anywhere before the public today,” wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* of NDT’s engagement at Cal Performances in February 2001. The company was established in 1959 by a group of former Het Nederlands Ballet members who broke away from the traditionally oriented company, dedicating themselves to the exploration of new dance techniques, ideas, and experimentation. Without established financial support, studios, or a regular audience, the company’s persistent pursuit of the untried soon won recognition. The 1960s saw a string of distinguished contributing choreographers, including Americans Anna Sokolow and Glen Tetley, and NDT’s innovative repertory grew. When the original directors, Benjamin Harkarvy and Carel Birnie, left in the early ‘70s, the company entered a period of relative uncertainty and transition. But all changed when 28-year-old Jiří Kylián was appointed Artistic Director. Over the years he has created almost 50 works for NDT. He also wisely extended the repertory with works by several of the world’s most renowned choreographers, including among many others Martha Clarke, Mats Ek, José Limon, and Hans van Manen, who returned in 1988 as Resident Choreographer. In August 1999, Kylián passed the torch of Artistic Director to Marian Sarstädt, allowing Kylián to concentrate full-time on choreographic efforts.

Nederlands Dans Theater operates three distinct dance companies: **NDT I**, the main company of 32 dancers; **NDT II**, a group of 14 dancers under the age of 21 with its own repertory; and **NDT III**, a small group of dancers of 40-plus years who bring their experience and expertise to a theatrical repertory. Company members work out of a state-of-the-art theater in The Hague, with five studios and administrative facilities.

JIRÍ KYLIÁN

Jiří Kylián, born in 1947, began his dance training at the ballet school at the Prague National Theatre at age nine. Between the ages of 15 and 20 he studied at the Prague Conservatory, and in 1967 he attended the Royal Ballet School in London on a British Council scholarship. During this period John Cranko, director of the Stuttgart Ballet, offered Kylián a contract and encouraged him to create his own dance works. In 1973 the artistic relationship with

the Nederlands Dans Theater began, and it bloomed in 1978 with the break-through piece *Sinfonietta* for the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina, set to the music of Janáček. The years after Spoleto established Kylián as one of the most creative choreographers with works such as *Symphony of Psalms*, *Forgotten Land*, *Svadebka*, and *Silent Cries*—to name only a few. The late '80s saw a movement towards abstraction and surrealistic imagery, beginning with the “Black and White Ballets” (which include *Sarabande*, *Falling Angels*, *Petite Mort*, and *No More Play*, among others) and progressing to *Bella Figura* and *Stepping Stones*, then to evening-length works and “miniatures,” developed for NDT III.

In 1995, in celebration of his 20th anniversary as director of the company, Kylián created the evening-length *Arcimboldo*, a work for all three groups of NDT. In 1999 he was awarded the prestigious Nijinsky award for best choreographer, and Nederlands Dans Theater won the same award for best company. 2000 brought the choreographer a Laurence Olivier Award in the “Outstanding Achievement in Dance” category, as well as the Herald Archangel Award for his production of *Sinfonietta* for NDT I and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, directed by Sir Charles Mackerras. Also in 2000, Kylián was appointed Artistic Advisor of the Saitama Arts Foundation in Japan.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Nederlands Dans Theater I** on **Wednesday & Thursday, March 24 & 25 at 8:00 p.m.**, **Saturday, March 27 at 8:00 p.m.** and **Sunday, March 28 at 3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$38.00, \$48.00 and \$64.00**. 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.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Thursday, March 24 & 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 27 at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 28 at 3:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus

Bancroft Way at Telegraph, Berkeley

Dance

Nederlands Dans Theater I

Program:

Program A: Wed., Mar. 24 at 8:00 p.m. and Thurs., Mar. 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Claude Pascal (2002): music by Dirk Haubrich; choreography by Jiří Kylián
(West Coast premiere)

Last Touch (2003): music by Dirk Haubrich; choreography by Jiří Kylián (West Coast premiere)

27'52" (2002): music by Dirk Haubrich; choreography by Jiří Kylián (West Coast premiere)

Program B: Sat., Mar. 27 at 8:00 p.m. and Sun., Mar. 28 at 3:00 p.m.

Symphony of Psalms (1978): music by Igor Stravinsky; choreography by Jiří Kylián

Click-Pause-Silence (2000): music by Dirk Haubrich; choreography by Jiří Kylián
(West Coast premiere)

Walking Mad (2001): music by Maurice Ravel and Arvo Pärt; choreography by Johan Inger
(West Coast premiere)

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.

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