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DANCE CENTER SEASON EXPLORES SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND DANCE
2009–10 Season Includes Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan,
Koosil-ja/danceKUMIKO, Troika Ranch, Wayne McGregor | Random Dance, Three Chicago Companies

CHICAGO—Leading visionaries in the field of contemporary dance and artists exploring the intersection between dance, science and technology highlight The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago's 2009–10 season. Among companies performing are Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan (at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Millennium Park), Koosil-ja/danceKUMIKO, Troika Ranch and Wayne McGregor | Random Dance, along with three Chicago companies. **Subscriptions and single tickets go on sale July 20 at The Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Avenue, 312-369-8330 (NOTE NEW PHONE NUMBER) and online at colum.edu/dancecenter.**

The Dance Center's **FamilyDance Matinee Series** continues for its 11th season, featuring special one-hour family-oriented performances preceded by free parent/child movement workshops with the artists. FamilyDance Matinees will be presented by the three Chicago companies on the mainstage season—Lucky Plush Productions (Oct. 24), Jump Rhythm Jazz Project (Feb. 20) and Hedwig Dances (Apr. 3)—and participants in The Dance Center's Repertory Performance Workshop, featuring Dance Center students performing work by professional choreographers (Dec. 19).

To facilitate meaningful dialogue with Chicago audiences and artists, most artists will participate in **DanceMasters**, community master classes presented by The Dance Center's Community Outreach and Education office in collaboration with the Lou Conte Dance Studio at the Hubbard Street Dance Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art. Classes are for dancers at the intermediate level or higher.

In addition, discussions with the artists will follow most Thursday performances, and some programs will feature pre-performance talks with artists and Dance Center personnel or guest lecturers. Most out-of-town artists will provide learning opportunities for Dance Center students and conduct community-based residency and educational activities, which might include master classes, lecture/demonstrations, in-school and community-based workshops, professional development workshops for educators and human service providers and panel discussions.

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—Performing at The Dance Center's Intimate Theater

Performances: Program A, October 1 & 2—8 p.m.; Program B, October 3—3 and 8 p.m., The Dance Center
Pre-performance talk with Dance Center Chair Bonnie Brooks: October 1 & 2—7 p.m., October 3—2 and 7 p.m.
DanceMasters class: September 30, 6:30 p.m., Lou Conte Dance Studio at the Hubbard Street Dance Center,
1147 W. Jackson Blvd.

Film screening: *BIPED & Ghostcatching*, September 14, 6:30 p.m., The Dance Center
Merce Cunningham, who celebrated his 90th birthday in 2009, remains triumphantly at the forefront of modern dance and continues to astonish audiences with his devotion to innovation, including new ways of creating dance itself. During the past six decades, Cunningham has created more than 200 dances presented in one of two formats: repertory (completed dance works) and *Events*, which are of an overall set length but draw excerpts from various works in the repertory assembled as a choreographic montage. The Dance Center performances will provide audiences with an exceptional opportunity to experience two distinct *Events*, featuring historically significant Cunningham choreography, in the intimacy of its 272-seat theater.

Lucky Plush Productions—10th Anniversary Season

Performances: October 22, 24, 29, 30 and 31, 8 p.m.; Oct. 23 7 p.m. performance and benefit, The Dance Center
FamilyDance Matinee: October 24 at 3 p.m., free pre-performance workshop at 2:15 p.m.

For Lucky Plush's 10th Anniversary Season, Artistic Director Julia Rhoads is creating a new evening-length work, *Punk Yankees* (working title), which will explore the sampling and pirating of art to create work. In this case, the re-contextualization and "theft" will primarily draw upon moments, movements and images from Lucky Plush's work during the past 10 years. Rhoads may also appropriate more known choreography and pop-culture references. By challenging ideas of ownership and intellectual property, Rhoads will delve into the persuasive and popular idea that direct appropriation is a vehicle to make something new and transformative.

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan—Asia's Acclaimed Company Returns

Performances: January 22 and 23, 8 p.m., Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph

Pre-performance talk with Artistic Director Lin Hwai-Min: January 22 and 23, 7 p.m.

DanceMasters class: January 20, 6:30 p.m., Lou Conte Dance Studio at the Hubbard Street Dance Center, 1147 W. Jackson Blvd.

Asia's most highly acclaimed contemporary dance company returns to Chicago with *Moon Water* (1998), choreographer Lin Hwai-min's signature piece set to selections from Bach's eternal "Six Suites for Solo Cello." *Moon Water*, or Swei Yuei in Chinese, is a metaphor for two things: a Buddhist proverb—"Flowers in a mirror and the moon on water are both illusory"—and a description of the ideal state of Tai Chi practitioners—"Energy flows as water while the spirit shines as the moon." Performed on a black stage with white brush strokes reminiscent of ripples, the piece features mirrors hung overhead to reflect the dancers in white billowy costumes. Towards the end of the piece, water seeps onto stage and soaks the dancing bodies.

Jump Rhythm Jazz Project—20th Anniversary Season

Performances: February 18, 19 and 20, 8 p.m., The Dance Center

FamilyDance Matinee: February 20 at 3 p.m., free pre-performance workshop at 2:15 p.m.

Jump Rhythm Jazz Project (JRJP), directed by Billy Siegenfeld, will mark its 20th Anniversary with three pieces of remounted choreography from past years, including Siegenfeld's *god of dirt*, set to a suite of folk music by Serb-Croat composer Goran Bregovic. Siegenfeld will also premiere a new piece, *Mad, glad, sad*, about the marginalization of emotion in post-modern dance and how one set of emotions can transform into another. To showcase the company's outreach program, a senior company member will create a new piece using high school youth working with JRJP's rhythmic technique.

Three of the companies on The Dance Center's 2009–10 season incorporate elements of science and technology.

"As contemporary dance advances its position and development in the 21st century, numerous choreographers are working with various new technologies and scientific ideas in the development and presentation of their work," said Dance Center Executive Director Phil Reynolds. "Whether commenting on and experimenting with artificial intelligence and interactive technologies or making use of motion capture and related animation techniques, the possibilities for dance artists to create embodied ways of exploring ideas historically associated with scientific inquiry have never been greater. The Dance Center aims to bring forward some of the most provocative and current available work in this territory to our audiences and communities of interest." The three companies are:

“Science, Technology and Dance”—all premieres

1. Koosil-ja/danceKUMIKO

Performances: February 4, 5 and 6, 8 p.m., The Dance Center

Post-performance discussion: February 4

DanceMasters class: February 2, 6 p.m., Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave.

Korean-Japanese choreographer Koosil-ja Hwang’s newest full-evening piece, *Blocks of Continuity/Body, Image, Algorithm*, is a dance and live camera work, involving several technology collaborators, that tells three stories simultaneously. Each story portrays lives that are rather mundane, yet particular in character. Digital scenery will be created in a 3D engine with an interactive system that will detect the location of the dancers in real space, thereby moving avatar images in a virtual game space based on the dancers’ movements. As the piece progresses, the dancers/characters interact with a virtual world on stage and the seemingly autonomous stories and sites begin to intersect and overlap.

2. Troika Ranch

Performances: March 4, 5 and 6, 8 p.m., The Dance Center

Post-performance discussion: March 4

DanceMasters class: March 2, 6 p.m., Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave.

Troika Ranch’s newest work under development, *Loop Diver*, will be an evening-length, multimedia piece for six dancers that portrays an encounter with violence and its characters’ attempts to escape the resulting prisons of repetition. The movement and the sonic and visual environment will emerge from the recording of material—choreographic and spoken word—which will then be looped through a complex, computer-mediated process involving motion capture and Co-Artistic Director Mark Coniglio’s Isadora software (a programming environment that provides interactive control and real-time manipulation of digital media).

3. Wayne McGregor | Random Dance

Performances: March 18, 19 and 20, 8 p.m., The Dance Center

Post-performance discussion: March 18

Pre-performance talk with Wayne McGregor: March 19, 7 p.m.

DanceMasters class: March 16, 6 p.m., Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave.

Wayne McGregor’s *Entity*, a new evening-length work for his London-based Random Dance Company, explores the links between artificial intelligence and choreography. Technically astonishing, the uncompromising, hard-hitting piece is set to a soundscape created by Coldplay, Massive Attack collaborator Jon Hopkins and award-winning composer Joby Talbot (*The Divine Comedy*). While researching *Entity*, McGregor consulted with an international think tank of individuals working in cognitive science, psychology, neurosciences, linguistics, human-computer interaction and robotics.

The 2009–10 season concludes with:

Hedwig Dances—25th Anniversary Season

Performances: April 1, 2 and 3, 8 p.m., The Dance Center

FamilyDance Matinee: April 3 at 3 p.m., free pre-performance workshop at 2:15 p.m.

Hedwig Dances’ 25th Anniversary will celebrate the company’s legacy with dance works by three women choreographers, both emerging and established. Artistic Director Jan Bartoszek’s world premiere *Dance of Forgotten Steps* delves into memory and identity, nature vs. nurture and the influence on the living of those who have gone before. MacArthur and Guggenheim Fellow and New York City-based choreographer Susan Marshall will set sections of her recent cabaret-influenced *Sawdust Palace*, drawn from the travails and serendipitous moments of everyday life, on Hedwig Dances. Andrea Miller, a former Batsheva Dance Company and José Limón Dance Company dancer, is creating *Dust*, a duet for company members Justin Deschamps and Michel Rodriguez that addresses mortality and the fragility of life.

The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, named “Chicago’s Best Dance Theatre” by *Chicago* magazine and “Best Dance Venue” by the *Chicago Reader*, is the city’s leading presenter of contemporary dance, showcasing artists of regional, national and international significance. Programs of The Dance Center are

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Subscriptions and single tickets go on sale July 20 at The Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Avenue. Single tickets are \$24–28, with the following exceptions: Merce Cunningham Dance Company tickets are \$38, Lucky Plush performance and benefit tickets on October 23 only are \$75 (all other performances are \$24–28) and Cloud Gate Dance Theater of Taiwan tickets are \$30–65. Subscription discounts of 20 percent are available when ordering tickets for three or more performances. Single tickets for FamilyDance matinees are \$6 for children 12 and younger, \$10 for adults; a FamilyDance season pass is \$18 for children, \$30 for adults. DanceMasters classes are \$15 each, \$24 for two classes or \$30 for three classes; space is limited. The Dance Center does not allow late seating at its performances. The theatre is accessible to people with disabilities. **For more information, call 312-369-8330 (NOTE NEW PHONE NUMBER) or visit colum.edu/dancecenter.**

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