FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 15, 2015

CONTACT: Jill Chukerman 773-392-1409/jchuk@rcn.com

CHICAGO—The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago concludes its 2015–16 season with the choreographer-performer duo of Rennie Harris and Michael Sakamoto, performing their dance-theatre duet *Flash*. Performances take place March 31–April 2, 2016 at The Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

Written, choreographed and performed by Harris and Sakamoto, *Flash* is conceived as a “conversation” between the artists’ respective aesthetics (hip hop and butoh), cultural backgrounds (African-American and Japanese-American) and personalities. Hip hop and butoh were born from marginalized, postwar urban subcultures, and each embodies a philosophical approach to the creation of cultural identity through dance. In this work, Sakamoto and Harris combine their respective approaches to manifesting a body in crisis. *Flash* is an interdisciplinary performance project incorporating butoh and hip-hop dance, multimedia and other theatrical elements to address the intersection of urban and environmental crisis, social resistance and corporeal identity.

**RENNIE HARRIS**

Rennie Harris is the founder and artistic director of Rennie Harris Puremovement, a hip-hop dance company dedicated to preserving and disseminating hip-hop culture through workshops, classes, hip-hop history lecture demonstrations, long-term residencies, mentoring programs and public performances. Harris founded his company in 1992 based on the belief that hip hop is the most important original expression of a new generation. With its roots in the inner-city African-American and Latino communities, hip hop can be characterized as a contemporary indigenous form, one that expresses universal themes that extend beyond racial, religious and economic boundaries and, because of its pan-racial and transnational popularity, can help bridge these divisions.

**MICHAEL SAKAMOTO**

Michael Sakamoto is an interdisciplinary artist and scholar active in dance, theatre, performance, media and photography. His solo, ensemble and visual works have been presented in 14 countries throughout Asia, Europe and North America. His research and performance interests include contemporary imaginings of the butoh-based “body in crisis,” corporeal and mediated embodiments of self-reflection and social resistance and performing the cultural commons and cultural sustainability.

**RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES**

A post-performance conversation with the artists takes place Thursday, March 31, free to ticket holders. Additional residency activities with community partners and Columbia College Chicago students take place throughout the week leading up to the performance weekend.

**FUNDING**

The Dance Center’s presentation of Rennie Harris and Michael Sakamoto is funded by The Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation and Engaging Dance Audiences, a program administered by Dance/USA and made possible with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Additional funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

**THE DANCE CENTER**

The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago is the city’s leading presenter of contemporary dance, showcasing artists of regional, national and international significance. The Dance Center has been named “Chicago’s Best Dance Theatre” by *Chicago* magazine, “Best Dance Venue” by the *Chicago Reader* and Chicago’s top dance venue in 2014 by *Newcity*, and *Time Out Chicago* cited it as “…consistently offering one of Chicago’s strongest lineups of contemporary and experimental touring dance companies.” Programs of The
Dance Center are supported, in part, by Alphawood Foundation; Engaging Dance Audiences, a program administered by Dance/USA and made possible with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The Chicago Community Trust; The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation; The Irving Harris Foundation; the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation; and the Arts Midwest Touring Fund. Additional funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council Agency and The City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Special thanks to Friends of The Dance Center.

**Ticket Information**
The Dance Center presents Rennie Harris and Michael Sakamoto March 31–April 2, 2016, Thursday–Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at The Dance Center, 1306 S. Michigan Ave. Single tickets are $30; subscriptions to three or more performances during the season offer a 20 percent savings. All programming is subject to change. The theatre is accessible to people with disabilities. For information, call 312-369-8330 or visit [colum.edu/dancecenterpresents](http://colum.edu/dancecenterpresents) ###