



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2007

## **CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS WELCOMES CHOREOGRAPHER BILL EVANS**

SEATTLE, WA – The Cornish College of the Arts Dance Department is pleased to present a three week residency with master choreographer Bill Evans, September 24 – October 15. The residency will celebrate Evans's influence on modern dance in the Pacific Northwest and at Cornish College of the Arts. During his three-week residency, Evans will teach daily master classes to Cornish dance students and re-stage his dance *Mixin' It Up* for the Cornish Dance Theater, the department's undergraduate performing ensemble. The residency will include several community events.

*Mixin' It Up* was premiered in Seattle in 1979. It was Evans' second collaboration with the renowned jazz ensemble, the Bill Evans Trio. *Mixin' It Up* will be re-staged at Cornish College in collaboration with the Cornish Music Department. The Cornish Dance Theater performances will feature live performances by Cornish music students. Former Bill Evans Trio drummer Joe La Barbera will be a visiting artist in the Music Department, enabling both music and dance students to learn about this collaborative work from its originators.

As part of his residency with the Music Department, La Barbera will direct a trio of music students in rehearsals of the original music for *Mixin' It Up*. In addition, La Barbera will teach master classes to music students and, with his band the Joe La Barbera Quintet, perform in a Cornish Music Series concert at PONCHO Concert Hall.

Bill Evans has choreographed more than 200 works for more than 60 professional dance companies throughout the world, including Utah Repertory Dance Theater, Ballet West, Ririe-Woodbury, Pacific Northwest Ballet, American Ballet Theater, and Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers. He was choreographer and artistic director of the Bill Evans Dance Company, based primarily in Seattle and then Albuquerque, from 1975 through 2004. The BEDC performed in all 50 states and was among the most-booked companies in the country for several years under the Dance Touring and Artist-in-the-Schools Programs of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). An entire generation of Seattle choreographers either performed with the BEDC or initially moved to Seattle to study with Evans, including Wade Madsen, Pat Graney, Llory Wilson, Christian Swenson, Gail Heilbron and Shirley Jenkins. Subsequent generations of Seattle choreographers studied or performed with these artists, carrying the Evans legacy into the 21st century.

The reconstruction of *Mixin' It Up* is made possible by American Masterpieces: Dance, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts, which is administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts with Dance/USA. Cornish College of the Arts was one of 28 colleges across the country to receive this prestigious award. Additional funding for the project has been provided by The Boeing Company, the Bossak-Heilbron Charitable Foundation and Tim Summers.

*Images available upon request.*

## **PUBLIC RESIDENCY EVENTS**

The residency will include several community events. A symposium, "Seattle Modern Dance: the Legacy of Bill Evans," will be presented in partnership with On the Boards and Velocity Dance Center September 30. Combining video presentations with a panel discussion, the symposium will explore Evans's approach to dance-making and trace his profound influence on the development of Seattle modern dance.

Evans and La Barbera will perform together in a Cornish Music Department Noon Concert at PONCHO Concert Hall, October 4.

Evans will discuss his approach to dance-making and collaboration at an open rehearsal of *Mixin' It Up* at Cornish College of the Arts, October 12. The rehearsal will include live musical performances.

A lecture demonstration about Evans's choreographic process and influence on dance in Bellingham, Washington will be presented in partnership with Bellingham's Firehouse Performing Arts Center, October 14. The lecture demonstration will include performances by Evans, Cornish Dance Theater and Bellingham's Dance Gallery.

The residencies will culminate in the performance of *Mixin' It Up* during the Cornish Dance Theater Fall 2007 Concert at Broadway Performance Hall, November 16 and 17.

Other community residency activities will include master classes in Evans Technique for students of the Cornish Preparatory Dance Program and Pacific Northwest Ballet School's Professional Division.

### ***Seattle Modern Dance: The Legacy of Bill Evans***

#### **Symposium presented by On the Boards, Velocity Dance Center and Cornish College of the Arts**

Sunday, September 30, 1-4pm

On the Boards

100 West Roy Street, Seattle

Free and open to the public

#### **Joe La Barbera and Bill Evans Noon Concert**

Thursday, October 4, 12pm

PONCHO Concert Hall

710 East Roy Street, Seattle

Free and open to the public

#### **Joe La Barbera Quintet - Workshop**

Friday, October 5, 12-1:30pm

PONCHO Concert Hall

710 East Roy Street, Seattle

Free and open to the public

### **Joe La Barbera Quintet - Cornish Music Series Concert**

Friday, October 5, 8pm

PONCHO Concert Hall

710 East Roy Street, Seattle

Tickets: \$15 general, \$7.50 students, seniors & Cornish College alumni.

Tickets can be purchased through Ticket Window at 206.325.6500 or at

[www.ticketwindowonline.com](http://www.ticketwindowonline.com) or at Ticket Window box offices located at Broadway Market,

Pacific Place, Pike Place Market, Bellevue's Meydenbauer Center.

### **Bill Evans *Mixin' It Up* Open Rehearsal with Cornish Dance Theater**

**Features live music by music department students**

Friday, Oct 12, 2:00-4:00 pm

Kerry Hall

710 East Roy Street, Seattle

Free and open to the public

### **Bill Evans Firehouse Lecture/Demonstration**

Sunday, October 14, 2pm

Firehouse Performing Arts Center

1314 Harris Avenue, Fairhaven

Free and open to the public

### **Cornish Dance Theater Fall 2007 Concert**

Friday, November 16 at 8 pm

Saturday, November 17 at 2 pm & 8 pm

Broadway Performance Hall, 1625 Broadway Avenue, Seattle

Choreography by Bill Evans, Gérard Théorêt, Daniel Wilkins, and Deborah Wolf

Tickets: \$10 general, \$5 students, seniors & Cornish College alumni.

Tickets can be purchased through Ticket Window at 206.325.6500 or at

[www.ticketwindowonline.com](http://www.ticketwindowonline.com) or at Ticket Window box offices located at Broadway Market,

Pacific Place, Pike Place Market, Bellevue's Meydenbauer Center.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Bill Evans**

Bill Evans is active internationally as a choreographer for modern, ballet and tap dance companies, and performs solo concerts regularly. He was choreographer and artistic director of the Bill Evans Dance Company, based primarily in Seattle and then Albuquerque, from 1975 through 2004. The BEDC performed in all 50 states and was among the most-booked companies in the country for several years under the Dance Touring and Artist-in-the-Schools Programs of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In 1992, Evans founded the Evans Rhythm Tap Ensemble, which he still directs on a project basis. Prior to forming his own company, he was a dancer, choreographer and artistic coordinator for Utah's Repertory Dance Theatre where he now serves on the advisory board. For two years, he was artistic director and then choreographer in residence of Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers and its professional training programs, where he is now a permanent guest artist.

Bill Evans has choreographed more than 200 works for more than 60 professional dance companies throughout the world. He has been awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship, numerous grants and fellowships from the NEA, and more than seventy other awards from public and private arts agencies in the U.S. and Canada. He received the New Mexico Governor's Award for

Excellence in the Arts and two Bravo Awards for Excellence in Dance from the Albuquerque Arts Alliance. He was named Scholar/Artist of the year by the National Dance Association in 1997 and was awarded the National Dance Education Organization Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005.

An article about Evans's national impact was featured in the October 2003 issue of Dance Magazine. He was voted one of the three top American tap dance artists (with Savion Glover and Brenda Bufalino) in the 2004 Dance Magazine Readers Poll. His book Reminiscences of a Dancing Man: A Photographic Journey of a Life in Dance was published in November 2005.

Evans earned an MFA from the University of Utah and is a Certified Laban Movement Analyst. He has been a professor of dance at the Universities of Utah, Washington, Indiana and New Mexico, where he is now professor emeritus. He is currently serving as a guest artist in residence at the State University of New York at Brockport Department of Dance.

### **Joe La Barbera**

Joe La Barbera attended the Berklee College of Music in Boston where his teachers included John LaPorta, Charlie Mariano, Herb Pomeroy and the great Alan Dawson. After Berklee, Joe began his professional career with Woody Herman and the Thundering Herd. He subsequently performed with the Chuck Mangione Quartet, and freelanced with Jim Hall, Phil Woods, Art Farmer, Gary Burton, Art Pepper, John Scofield, Bob Brookmeyer and Toots Thielemans.

In 1978, Joe was asked to join Bill Evans in what was to become a landmark trio. Along with bassist Marc Johnson, the trio grew over a two-year period to become one of Evans's finest. After Bill's untimely death in 1980, Joe joined pop singer Tony Bennett.

Currently residing in Los Angeles, Joe is on the faculty at California Institute for the Arts and John Clayton's Jazz Workshop in Port Townsend, Washington. In California he performs with his own quintet as well as sideman duties for Conte Candoli, Bud Shank, Bill Perkins, Lanny Morgan and Alan Broadbent. On the international scene, he records and tours with "Bassline" (a group with Hein Van de Geyn and John Ambercrombie), Kenny Wheeler, J.M.O.G. (a cooperative group with brother Pat La Barbera), and numerous projects with the W.D.R. Big Band in Cologne.

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### **About Cornish College of the Arts**

Cornish College of the Arts, founded by Nellie Cornish in 1914, provides aspiring artists with the educational opportunities to become professionals in their fields. The College offers Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Art, Dance, Design, Performance Production and Theater, and a Bachelor of Music degree. It is one of three private colleges in the United States focusing on both the performing and visual arts, and the only college of its kind in the Northwest. The College is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design.

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