



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2004

CORNISH DANCE THEATER SPRING 2004 CONCERT

Friday, April 9 at 8 pm; Saturday, April 10 at 2 pm & 8 pm

Choreography by Tonya Lockyer, Wade Madsen, Gerard Théorêt and Donald Byrd

Broadway Performance Hall, 1625 Broadway Avenue, Seattle

Produced in collaboration with the Performance Production Department.

Tickets: \$8 general, \$4 students and seniors & Cornish College alumni.

Tickets can be purchased through Ticket Window at 206.325.6500 or www.ticketwindowonline.com

For information, please call 206.726.5011.

SEATTLE, WA – Cornish Dance Theater, the performing ensemble of the Dance Department at Cornish College of the Arts, is pleased to present its Spring 2004 concert. With works ranging from the classical to the contemporary, the concert includes work by faculty choreographers Wade Madsen and Gérard Théorêt, and guest choreographers Donald Byrd and Tonya Lockyer.

This spring, **Donald Byrd** has created a new work for an ensemble cast of 12 Cornish College student dancers. Byrd became Artistic Director of Seattle's Spectrum Dance Theater in 2002. Prior to this, he was the Artistic Director of Donald Byrd/The Group, a contemporary dance company that toured extensively nationally and internationally. He has also created work for many major modern dance companies including Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Philadelphia Dance Company, Cleo Parker Robinson, and Dallas Black Dance Theater, and for classical companies including Pacific Northwest Ballet, Concordanse (Paris), MaggioDanza di Frieze, and Oregon Ballet Theater, among others. Donald Byrd currently serves on the Board of Trustees for Dance Theater Workshop in New York and the Seattle Arts Commission through the Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Faculty choreographer **Wade Madsen** presents "Fire," the final work in his series on the four elements. Inspired by the dynamic, feverish "funness" of fire, the work carries a spirit of excitement, and culminates in a parade of puppets, a Chinese dragon, and other fantastical participants. A former member of the Bill Evans Dance Company and Tandy Beal & Company, Madsen has received choreographic grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts; Washington State, King County, and Seattle Arts Commissions; Artist Trust; and Allied Arts. His work has been produced in Seattle by the Allegro! Dance Festival, On the Boards, Bumpshoot, Rockhopper Dance, and Composer/Choreographer. He has also performed with various dance groups in Seattle, including Spectrum Dance Theater, d-9 Dance Collective, DanceWorks Northwest, and Co-Motion Dance. A Cornish College of the Arts faculty member since 1985, Madsen received the Dance Department's Outstanding Teacher of the Year award in 2002.

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A new ballet by faculty choreographer **Gérard Théorêt** is inspired by the music of Bernard Hermann. The work is fast-paced, irreverent, and technically challenging. A former soloist with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Théorêt trained at The Drama Studio in London, and has acted on stage and for film and television. In Seattle, he has performed with Spectrum Dance Theater and choreographed for ARC Dance Productions, and the Festival of Men Dancing. He received his BFA in Dance from Cornish College of the Arts, and holds a Teaching Diploma from the Canadian College of Dance in Toronto.

In her work for Cornish Dance Theater, choreographer **Tonya Lockyer** draws inspiration from the early works and revolutionary philosophies of John Cage, while seeking to simultaneously disrupt and deconstruct his compositional structures. In a compelling link to Seattle arts history, the piece uses an early prepared piano piece created by John Cage for a Cornish student performance in the 1930s. According to oral histories of Cage's time at Cornish, he originally wanted to use a large percussion ensemble, but found that the stage space was too small. Instead, he modified the Cornish piano, resulting in a typically unique Cage score. In 1999, Tonya Lockyer founded VIA, a Dance/Theater company dedicated to collaborating with artists from diverse cultural and artistic backgrounds. She has performed her work at venues and festivals in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Russia and received numerous awards, including two residencies at Banff Centre for The Arts, and grants from Arts International, The Canada Council, and the Seattle Arts Commission, among others. She has also choreographed for dance and opera companies and colleges in the United States and abroad.

Images available upon request.

ABOUT CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Cornish College of the Arts is the premier, accredited arts college in the Northwest, inspiring the highest standards of artistic and academic excellence. Founded in 1914 by Nellie Cornish, Cornish College is the only private, accredited college in the region offering baccalaureate degrees in visual and performing arts. Cornish College offers a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in art, dance, design, theater and performance production. Uniquely, Cornish College provides a rigorous educational environment for the cultivation of technical mastery, artistic integrity and practical knowledge. The faculty at Cornish is comprised of practicing master artists and professional educators, renowned in their respective fields. The college maintains a low student to faculty ratio, allowing for individualized teaching and mentoring. Cornish College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design.

Over the years, Cornish has hosted a parade of important artists in the roles of students, teachers or as visiting artists-in-residence, including John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, Ping Chong, Kenny Werner, Obo Addy, Mark Morris, Meredith Monk, Rinde Eckert, Bebe Miller, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Robin Holcomb, Chet Huntley, Syvilla Fort, Ralph Towner, Thornton Wilder, Lou Harrison, Bill Frisell, Morris Graves, Jane Ira Bloom, Kraig Patterson, Musicians Accord, Bun Ching Lam, Brendan Fraser, Myra Melford, Sharon Isbin, Joanne Brackeen, Oliver Lake, California Ear Unit, Colorado Quartet, and Gary Peacock, among others.

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