

CAL PERFORMANCES



Stagebill
March 1997



c o n t e n t s March 1997

Acclaimed cellist Yo-Yo Ma, above right, plays Bach for the Mark Morris Dance Group, left, at Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall this month. See story, page 44.

9 The Program

20 Heavenly Sound

Sounds of Blackness searches the song trunk of the African-American experience to create its own style: a blend of gospel, R&B, blues, and funk. As Cal Performances presents the ensemble's soaring voices on March 21, **Lee Hildebrand** listens in.

28 Trio con Brio

The Eroica Trio's appearance for San Francisco Performances at Herbst Theatre on March 22, coming on the heels of a wildly successful European tour, should cause quite a stir stateside. **Marcia Young** talks to the three women about their travels and triumphs.

44 Bach Together

The Bay Area welcomes back the Mark Morris Dance Group this month for a remarkable series of concerts. First up is *Falling Down Stairs*, the company's collaboration with America's premier cellist, Yo-Yo Ma. **Stephanie von Buchau** reports.



96/97^S e a s o n

Cal Performances

The Only Place To Be

March 1997

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Cal Performances

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY

From the Director



From music to dance to theater and in every possible combination of the three, Cal Performances is committed to working with the greatest performing artists alive today. Nothing illustrates our dedication to this mission better than the events of the coming weeks.

We are delighted to bring Lee Breuer and Bob Telson's remarkable *The Gospel at Colonus* back to the Bay Area, with much of the original cast. By blending contemporary gospel music with ancient Greek tragedy, Breuer and Telson brought new relevance to Sophocles' tale of redemption, and in the process, created a uniquely American form of classical theater.

As *The Gospel at Colonus* leaves the stage, Mark Morris and his exceptional company arrive for a two-week residency. Our ongoing collaboration with this brilliant choreographer has brought us such productions as *L'Allegro il penseroso ed il moderato* in 1994, *Dido and Aeneas* in 1995, and *The Hard Nut* this past holiday season. As a result of our deepening relationship with Morris, an amazing confluence of dancers and musicians will gather in Zellerbach Hall during these two weeks. For the first four performances, the troupe dances the exclusive world stage premiere of *Falling Down Stairs*, Morris' new work

set to Bach's Suite No. 3 for unaccompanied cello—performed live by the incomparable Yo-Yo Ma. Also on the program is the world premiere of a Cal Performances commission, *Rhymes with Silver*, set to music written especially for the occasion by acclaimed Bay Area composer Lou Harrison, and the Bay Area premiere of *The Office*, set to Dvorak's Five Bagatelles for String Trio and Harmonium. Both pieces will also be performed by an ensemble of stellar artists, including Yo-Yo Ma.

Morris' second set of performances is devoted to four of his best-loved works, performed together with some of the Bay Area's finest musical artists, including Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, UC Chamber Chorus, the Sausalito String Quartet, and others. This program, which highlights Morris' profound affinity for classical music, will feature the Bay Area premiere of *A Spell*, set to English lute songs by John Wilson.

Outreach is a vital part of Cal Performances' mission, and one of the tremendous benefits of a residency like Morris' is the opportunity to have visiting artists participate in our many educational programs which reach thousands of students throughout the Bay Area. Long-term residencies also give artists the chance to work closely with the students and faculty of UC Berkeley's Department of Music and the Center for Theater Arts (encompassing both dance and theater), as well as many other departments on campus.

I'm sure you also won't want to miss the rich variety of cultural experiences coming up later this spring, from the unique sounds of the National Traditional Orchestra of China, to the Russian Village Festival, to a lively look at street dancing in *Jam on the Groove*, among many others. I hope you'll return soon to join us on our continuing quest to discover the finest artistic experiences the world can offer.

Robert W. Cole
Director, Cal Performances



Mark Morris' Gloria

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

March 6-16, 1997
Zellerbach Hall

Joe Bowie	Charlton Boyd	Ruth Davidson	Tina Fehlandt
Shawn Gannon	Dan Joyce	Victoria Lundell	Marianne Moore
Rachel Murray	June Omura	Kraig Patterson	Mireille Radwan-Dana
Guillermo Resto	William Wagner	Megan Williams*	Julie Worden

Artistic Director
Mark Morris

General Director
Barry Alterman

Managing Director
Nancy Umanoff

** on leave*

*Major support for the Mark Morris Dance Group is provided by
the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Lila Wallace Theater Fund.*

*The Mark Morris Dance Group's performances are made possible with public funds from the National
Endowment for the Arts Dance Program and the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.*

Philip Morris Companies Inc. is the sponsor of the Mark Morris Dance Group New Works Fund.

*Cal Performances is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts,
a federal agency that supports the visual, literary and performing arts to benefit all Americans,
and by the California Arts Council, a state agency.*

*Cal Performances would like to thank
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for their generous support.*



Photo: Tom Brazil

Mark Morris' The Office

Thursday through Saturday, March 6-8 at 8 pm
Saturday, March 8 at 2 pm

Mark Morris Dance Group and Yo-Yo Ma, *cello*

with

Ian Swensen, *violin*; Nicholas Lozovsky, *violin*; Geraldine Walther, *viola*
William Winant, *percussion*; Linda Dowdell, *harmonium*

Choreography by Mark Morris

PROGRAM

Falling Down Stairs

(World Stage Premiere)*

Music: Johann Sebastian Bach (Third Suite for Unaccompanied Cello)
Michael Chybowski, lighting; Isaac Mizrahi, costumes

Yo-Yo Ma, *cello*

Joe Bowie, Charlton Boyd, Ruth Davidson, Tina Fehlandt, Shawn Gannon,
Dan Joyce, Victoria Lundell, Marianne Moore, Rachel Murray, June Omura,
Kraig Patterson, Mireille Radwan-Dana, Guillermo Resto,
William Wagner, Julie Worden

**created for film in 1994*

PAUSE

Programs

The Office

(1994)

Music: Antonin Dvořák (Five Bagatelles for String Trio and Harmonium, Op. 47)

Michael Chybowski, *lighting*

June Omura, *costumes*

Ian Swensen, *violin*; Nicholas Lozovsky, *violin*

Yo-Yo Ma, *cello*; Linda Dowdell, *harmonium*

Tina Fehlandt, Victoria Lundell, Mark Morris, Rachel Murray,

Mireille Radwan-Dana, Guillermo Resto, William Wagner

Originally commissioned by Zivili—Dances and Music of the Southern Slavic Nations

INTERMISSION

Rhymes With Silver

(World Premiere)

Music: Lou Harrison

Prelude, Allegro, Scherzo, Ductia, Gigue and Musette, Chromatic Rhapsody, Romantic Waltz,
Fox Trot, Threnody, In Honor of Prince Kantemir, 5-Tone Kit, Round Dance

Howard Hodgkin, *set design*

Michael Chybowski, *lighting*

Martin Pakledinaz, *costumes*

Ian Swensen, *violin*; Geraldine Walther, *viola*; Yo-Yo Ma, *cello*

William Winant, *percussion*; Linda Dowdell, *piano*

Joe Bowie, Charlton Boyd, Ruth Davidson, Tina Fehlandt, Shawn Gannon, Dan Joyce,

Victoria Lundell, Marianne Moore, Rachel Murray, June Omura, Kraig Patterson,

Mireille Radwan-Dana, Guillermo Resto, William Wagner, Julie Worden

Cal Performances, University of California, Berkeley, has co-commissioned Rhymes With Silver.

The composer and choreographer commission fees for this collaboration were made possible by a grant from Meet The Composer's Composer/Choreographer Project, a national program funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Helen W. Buckner Trust.

Additional support for this commissioning project was provided by the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust.

This work was created under the auspices of the Mark Morris Dance Group New Works Fund, sponsored by Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

<p><i>Bank of America is the Corporate Sponsor of this world exclusive engagement.</i></p>
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Photo: Tom Brazil

Mark Morris' *A Lake*

Thursday through Saturday, March 13-15 at 8 pm
Sunday, March 16 at 3 pm

Mark Morris Dance Group

with

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

UC Chamber Chorus; John Butt, *director*

Sausalito String Quartet

Nicholas Lozovsky, *violin*; Luigi Peracchia, *violin*;

Paul Nahhas, *viola*; Matthew Lavin, *cello*

Linda Dowdell, *music director and conductor*

Soloists

William Klingelhofer, *natural horn*; David Tayler, *lute*

Susan Rode Morris, *soprano*; Catherine Robbin, *mezzo-soprano*

Choreography by Mark Morris

PROGRAM

A Lake

(1991)

Music: Franz Joseph Haydn (Horn Concerto No. 2 in D Major)

James F. Ingalls, *lighting*; Martin Pakledinaz, *costumes*

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

Linda Dowdell, *conductor*

William Klingelhofer, *natural horn*

Joe Bowie, Tina Fehlandt, Dan Joyce, Victoria Lundell, Marianne Moore, June Omura,
Kraig Patterson, Mireille Radwan-Dana, William Wagner, Julie Worden

Programs

A Spell

(1993)

Music: John Wilson ("Where the Bee Sucks," "Stay, O Stay,"
"Do Not Fear to Put Thy Feet," "Take, O Take Those Lips Away")

Michael Chybowski, *lighting*

Susan Ruddie, *costumes*

David Tayler, *lute*

Catherine Robbin, *mezzo-soprano*

Ruth Davidson, Mark Morris, Guillermo Resto

INTERMISSION

Mosaic and United

(1993)

Music: Henry Cowell

(String Quartet No. 3, *Mosaic*, I-II-III-IV-V-III-I
and String Quartet No. 4, *United*, I-II-III-IV-V)

Michael Chybowski, *lighting*

Isaac Mizrahi, *costumes*

Sausalito String Quartet

Nicholas Lozovsky, *violin*; Luigi Peracchia, *violin*

Paul Nahhas, *viola*; Matthew Lavin, *cello*

Tina Fehlandt, Dan Joyce, Marianne Moore,

Guillermo Resto, William Wagner

INTERMISSION

Gloria

(1981, revised 1984)

Music: Antonio Vivaldi (*Gloria* in D Major)

Michael Chybowski, *lighting*

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

Linda Dowdell, *conductor*

UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus

Susan Rode Morris, *soprano*

Catherine Robbin, *mezzo-soprano*

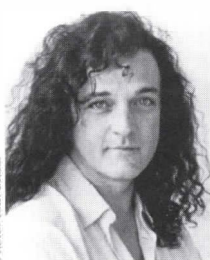
Joe Bowie, Ruth Davidson, Tina Fehlandt, Shawn Gannon,

Marianne Moore, June Omura, Kraig Patterson,

Mireille Radwan-Dana, Guillermo Resto, William Wagner

*Cal Performances extends its gratitude to Peet's Coffee & Tea,
sponsor in part of these performances of the Mark Morris Dance Group
with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra.*

Photo: Tom Brazil



Mark Morris was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, where he studied with Verla Flowers and Perry Brunson. He performed with an eclectic array of companies in the early years of his career,

including the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, Hannah Kahn Dance Company, Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians, Eliot Feld Ballet and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1980. Mr. Morris has since created over 90 works for the Dance Group, as well as choreographing dances for many ballet companies, including the San Francisco Ballet, the Paris Opera Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. From 1988-1991, he was Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the national opera house of Belgium. During his tenure there, he created 12 pieces, including three evening-length works—*The Hard Nut* (his comicbook-inspired version of *The Nutcracker*); *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*; and *Dido and Aeneas*—and founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Mr. Morris is noted for his musicality—he has been described as “undeviating in his devotion to music”—and for his “ability to conjure so many contradictory styles and emotions.” He has worked extensively in opera as both a choreographer and a director. Most recently, he directed and choreographed a production of Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice*, and he will direct and choreograph a Royal Opera, Covent Garden production of Rameau’s *Platée*, which will premiere at the Edinburgh International Festival later this year. Mr. Morris was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991, and he is the subject of a biography by Joan Acocella (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

Mark Morris Dance Group was formed in 1980 and gave its first concert that year in New York City. In the following years, the company’s touring schedule steadily expanded to include cities both in the United States and in Europe and, in 1986, the

Dance Group made its first national television program for the PBS *Dance in America* series. In 1988, the Mark Morris Dance Group was invited to become the national dance company of Belgium. During its three years as resident company of the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Dance Group was the subject of several television programs, including the U.K.’s *South Bank Show*. The company returned to the United States in 1991 as one of the world’s leading dance companies, performing across the U.S. and at major international festivals. The Dance Group has maintained and strengthened its ties to several cities around the world—audiences have become accustomed to the Group’s regular and frequent appearances in Boston, MA; Berkeley, CA; and at the Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival and the Edinburgh International Festival. In addition to a full international touring schedule, the Dance Group has recently completed two film projects: a collaboration with cellist Yo-Yo Ma entitled *Falling Down Stairs* using Bach’s Third Suite for Unaccompanied Cello, and a film version of Mr. Morris’ *Dido and Aeneas*, both scheduled to air around the world during the current season.

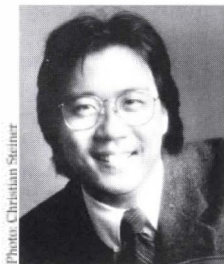


Photo: Christian Steinert

Yo-Yo Ma (cello) was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age four and soon moved with his family to New York, where he spent most of his formative years. Later, his principle teacher was Leonard Rose at the Juilliard School.

J.S. Bach’s Suites for Unaccompanied Cello—one of the cornerstones of the cello repertoire—have been part of Mr. Ma’s musical life from an early age. He has performed them often in recital, and recorded them early in his career. Over the past few years, stimulated by Albert Schweitzer’s description of the pictorial element in Bach’s works, Mr. Ma has been exploring this music alongside creative artists from a variety of disciplines. The artists involved are simultaneously interpreting Bach’s

About the Artists

music and responding to one another's imagination and creativity in a way that transcends any single art form. The results are being captured in a series of films—one for each suite—entitled "Inspired by Bach." Three of the pieces are seen through the perspective of dance and movement, exemplified by the work of choreographer Mark Morris, Kabuki artist Tamasaburo, and ice dancers Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean. The architecture of Piranesi, through the eyes of filmmaker François Girard, is the starting point for Bach's Second Cello Suite. Mr. Ma's other partners in this project include the garden designer Julie Moir Messervy and the Canadian director Atom Egoyan.

While returning often to the standard concerto repertoire, Yo-Yo Ma has been working to expand that repertoire through both performances of lesser-known music of the 20th century and the commissioning of new concertos (as well as recital pieces). He is also committed to contemporary American music, premiering works by a diverse group of composers, ranging from Stephen Albert to Peter Lieberson to John Williams.

Mr. Ma is an exclusive SONY Classical artist, and his discography of more than 45 albums (including 10 Grammy Award winners) reflects his wide-ranging interests. In addition to the standard concerto repertoire, Mr. Ma has recorded many of the works he has commissioned or premiered. He has also made several successful "crossover" recordings that defy categorization, among them *Hush* with Bobby McFerrin and *Appalachia Waltz* with Mark O'Connor and Edgar Meyer. His upcoming projects include recording a new work by Tan Dun, commissioned for the occasion of the reunification of China and Hong Kong, and a Piazzolla album, for which Mr. Ma will collaborate in a variety of configurations.

Yo-Yo Ma is strongly committed to educational programs that not only bring young audiences into contact with new music but allow them to participate in the creation of music. While he has worked with student musicians at Tanglewood, Marlboro and Interlochen (among other programs), his primary teaching and out-

reach activities are an extension of his regular performing schedule.

Mr. Ma plays two instruments—a 1733 Montagnana cello from Venice and the 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius. He and his wife, Jill, have two children, Nicholas and Emily.

Ian Swensen (*violin*) is one of the few musicians to have been awarded top prize at both the International Violin Competition and the Chamber Music Competition (as first violinist of the Meliora String Quartet) of the Walter W. Naumberg Foundation. Since then, he has performed as a soloist and chamber artist in many prestigious concert halls, including Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, Symphony Hall in Boston, and at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He has also performed at the country's leading festivals, including the Spoleto, Santa Fe, Aspen, Marlboro and Chamber Music West festivals.

A native of New York, Mr. Swensen has been on the faculty at the Eastman School of Music, Florida State University and Oberlin Conservatory; he now teaches at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he has students from over 10 different countries. He recently toured with the Santa Fe Music Festival and with the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra.

Nicholas Lozovsky (*violin*) studied at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory in 1988 and received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of British Columbia in 1993, where he studied with Andrew Dawes. He recently completed the graduate studies program at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he worked with Ian Swensen. Mr. Lozovsky has performed frequently in the United States and Canada as both a soloist and chamber musician.

Geraldine Walther (*viola*) studied viola at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Manhattan School of Music. She has been Principal Violist of the San Francisco Symphony since the 1976-77 season, having previously served as assistant principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Miami Philharmonic, and the Baltimore Symphony. Winner of the First Prize at the

William Primrose International Viola Competition in 1979, she appears frequently as a soloist with Bay Area orchestras and chamber music ensembles. Among the works she has performed as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony are Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*; Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*; Hindemith's *Kammermusiken* Nos. 5 and 6; the viola concertos of William Walton, Walter Piston,

Thea Musgrave, Alfred Schnittke, Bartók and Penderecki; and Telemann's Concerto in G Major. She performed the United States premiere of Toro Takemitsu's *A String Around Autumn* in the winter of 1990, and has recorded Hindemith's *Trauermusik* and *Der Schwanendreher* for London records with the San Francisco Symphony. Ms. Walther was selected by Sir Georg Solti as a member of his "Musicians of the World Orchestra," which performed in Geneva, Switzerland, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations in July of 1995.

William Winant (*percussion*) has collaborated with a diverse range of musicians, including John Cage, Iannis Xenakis, Frederic Rzewski, Anthony Braxton, Alvin Curran, Terry Riley, Cecil Taylor, Steve Reich and Musicians, and the Kronos String Quartet. Most recently, he has recorded and toured with Mr. Bungle (*Disco Volante* on Warner Bros. Records), as well as with John Zorn and Oingo Boingo. He has made over 70 recordings, covering a wide variety of genres. Some upcoming releases include music from Earle Brown, John Zorn, Morton Feldman, Gordon Mumma and the Glenn Spearman Double Trio. His recording of Lou Harrison's *La Koro Sutro* (New Albion) was the *New York Times* Critic's Choice for best contemporary recording of 1988. He is currently principal percussionist with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Mr. Winant has performed



Yo-Yo Ma and Mark Morris

as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the direction of Pierre Boulez; the Berkeley Symphony; the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra; as well as at many major festivals and recitals throughout the world. He teaches at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and is Artist-in-Residence with the Abel-Steinberg-Winant Trio at Mills College.

Linda Dowdell (*Mark Morris Dance Group musical director*) made her debut with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1987 in Vienna, and has worked closely with the company ever since. In 1990-91, she was the original pianist and musical director for Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project, with whom she toured the United States. Also a composer, she has written music for a variety of ensembles, premiered by groups including the Banff Big Band, the Gregg Smith Singers and Schola Cantorum of Edinburgh.

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, since its founding in 1981, has become "an ensemble for early music on authentic instruments as fine as any in the world today" (Alan Rich, *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*). Under the leadership of Nicholas McGegan, its music director since 1985, the San Francisco-based ensemble performs music from the Baroque and Classical eras both during a Bay Area subscription season and on tour throughout California and nation-

About the Artists

wide. As "the country's leading early-music orchestra" (*New York Times*), Philharmonia frequently collaborates with other major ensembles. Most recently, the Orchestra was featured in performances of French Baroque music under the direction of Jordi Savall at the Berkeley Festival in June of 1994; in collaboration with the Mark Morris Dance Group in Handel's *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* at Zellerbach Hall in the fall of 1994; and in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in October of 1995.

Philharmonia has made 20 highly praised recordings for the Harmonia Mundi label. The Orchestra's live recording of Handel's *Susanna* received a Grammy nomination in 1990 and a *Gramophone* magazine award for Best Baroque Vocal Recording in 1991. Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* was released in September 1994, and a recording of instrumental suites from Rameau's *Naïs* and *Le Temple de la gloire* was released in March 1995. A recording of Mozart piano concertos with Melvyn Tan was released in February 1996. Nicholas McGegan conducts Philharmonia on all of its recordings.

The UC Chamber Chorus has, over the last 10 years, become a group with a considerable public profile. It has sung regularly with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra (participating in four of their recordings of Handel oratorios with Nicholas McGegan), sung regularly at the Berkeley Festival, and toured in the U.S., Germany and England. Under its three recent directors—Philip Brett, John Butt and Marika Kuzma—it has also produced recordings of Feldman, Gibbons and Russian church music. This summer, the Chorus will make a tour of Scotland with John Butt.

John Butt (*chorus director*) held the office of organ scholar at King's College as an undergraduate at Cambridge University. As a graduate student, he studied the music of Bach. He was subsequently a lecturer at the University of Aberdeen and a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and joined the faculty at UC Berkeley in 1989 as University Organist and Assistant Professor in Music (Associate Professor since 1992). Prof. Butt has continued to be active

as a performer, directing several choirs in Cambridge and appearing as a solo organist, harpsichordist and director in Britain, the United States and Germany. He has recently released seven recordings on organ, harpsichord and clavichord on Harmonia Mundi (Pachelbel, Cabanilles, Bach, Purcell, Kuhnau and Frescobaldi). As director of the UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus (1991-94, 1996-97), he has participated in many concerts and recordings with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and its director, Nicholas McGegan; he is now director of the newly-formed Philharmonia Chorale. Prof. Butt has also been a guest conductor and a regular soloist with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. In October 1997, he will return to England to take up a post on the faculty at the University of Cambridge as Director of Musical Studies at King's College.

Susan Rode Morris' (*soprano*) accomplishments encompass a wide range of repertoire and musical styles. She is internationally known for her performances as the singer for Ensemble Alcatraz, with whom she has made two recordings on the Nonesuch label. She has performed an eclectic variety of operatic roles ranging from Haydn and Mozart to Menotti and Argento. She has demonstrated an ability to perform in all periods and styles of vocal chamber music, in many recitals and guest appearances that have included engagements with, among others, Sequentia of Cologne, the Women's Philharmonic, Earplay, Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, the San Francisco Bach Choir, Concerto Amabile and the Mendocino Music Festival. She has also sung the premieres of a number of works by Bay Area composers. A recording of songs by Henry Purcell, *Ohhh . . . Henry!*, was released in June 1992 on the Donsuemor label.

Catherine Robbin (*mezzo-soprano*) has performed and recorded with John Eliot Gardiner, Trevor Pinnock and Christopher Hogwood. Her interests include not only Baroque music, but also a broad repertoire from Brahms to Britten, Berlioz, Elgar and Schoenberg, with conductors John Nelson, Edo de Waart, Mario Bernardi and Simon

Rattle, among others. Ms. Robbin has performed recitals extensively across Canada since 1981, and sings regularly with The Aldeburgh Connection. The Marquis label recently released a recording of her 1996 recital at North York's Ford Centre for the Performing Arts with British early keyboard specialist Paul Nicholson. This season, Ms. Robbin sings with the Vancouver Bach Choir, Edmonton Symphony, Tafelmusik, National Arts Centre Orchestra and Les Violons du Roy. She also appears at Washington's National Gallery of Art, the Baldwin-Wallace and Carmel Bach Festivals, and for the CBC at the Hotel Vancouver Ballroom and the Glenn Gould Studio.

William Klingelhofer (*natural horn*) plays Principal Horn with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and is also a member of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra. He began his career at the age of 19 in the Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra and has performed with the opera companies of Chicago, Houston and Santa Fe. A San Francisco Bay Area resident since 1980, he occasionally plays solos and chamber music with local organizations and teaches horn at San Francisco State University. He was a performer and lecturer at the International Brassfests in 1995 and 1996, and will be teaching and playing with the Summit Brass Ensemble at the Rafael Mendez Brass Institute at Arizona State University in June of 1997. Past performances with Philharmonia Baroque have included symphonies by Mozart and Handel's *L'Allegro*.

David Tayler (*lute*) received his BA in music and interdisciplinary studies from Hunter College and his PhD in musicology from UC Berkeley. He is a member of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and a founding member of the Arcadian Academy, as well as Ensemble Pandore and Capriole Baroque Dance Ensemble. Mr. Tayler has appeared with American Bach Soloists, the San Francisco Symphony, the Dallas Bach Society, the Oregon Bach Festival, Tafelmusik and the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, among others. He has recorded over 40 discs for Harmonia Mundi USA, Koch International, SONY, Arabesque and

Teldec, with the Arcadians twice winning the *Diapason D'Or* and a nomination for a *Gramophone* award. In addition to directing the Collegium Musicum and the Baroque Orchestra at UC Berkeley, Mr. Tayler is Assistant Director of the Amherst Early Music Festival.

The Sausalito String Quartet gained immediate recognition by winning First Prize in both the 1995 Fischhoff and 1995 Coleman National Chamber Music Competitions. Chosen as the quartet-in-residence at the 1996 Tanglewood Music Center, the ensemble performed at Tanglewood's Seiji Ozawa Hall and for the Cape Cod and the Islands Chamber Music Festival.

During the 1996-1997 season, the Bay Area-based ensemble will make its San Francisco debut at the Palace of Fine Arts. The Quartet will also present a series of concerts at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music while preparing for several international music festivals during 1997. The Sausalito String Quartet has performed throughout western North America as well as New Zealand and Australia. In addition to Tanglewood, the musicians have attended the Banff Centre for the Arts and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. The ensemble has coached with members of the Juilliard and Concord String Quartets, as well as Bonnie Hampton, Paul Hersh, Ian Swensen, and Peter Oundjian.

Nicholas Lozovsky (*violin*) is first violinist of the Sausalito String Quartet. His biography appears on p. 14A. **Luigi Peracchia** (*violin*) received his master's degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with Donald Weilerstein and David Updegraff. While an undergraduate, he received BA degrees in both natural science and music (*cum laude*) from Case Western Reserve University. Mr. Peracchia was the first violinist of the Del Sol String Quartet. **Paul Nahhas** (*viola*) received his BM degree from the University of British Columbia, where he studied with Gerald Stanick. He has attended the Banff Centre of the Arts and the Tanglewood Music Festivals. Mr. Nahhas received the Canada Council Arts Grant in 1995, and went on to complete his graduate studies at the San Francisco Conservatory of Mu-

About the Artists

sic. **Matthew Lavin** (*cello*) received his BM degree in cello performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Irene Sharp. He has attended the Aspen, Banff, and Tanglewood summer music festivals and toured Europe as a member of the All-American College Orchestra.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

Joe Bowie (*performer*) was born in Lansing, Michigan, and began dancing while attending Brown University. After graduating with honors in English and American literature, he moved to New York and performed in the works of Robert Wilson and Ulysses Dove. He danced with The Paul Taylor Dance Company for two years before going to Belgium to work with Mark Morris.

Charlton Boyd (*performer*) was born in New Jersey, where he studied and performed with Inner City Ensemble Theater & Dance Company. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School and has danced with the Limon Dance Company and in the musical *The Ebony Games*. He appears in the José Limon Technique Video, Volume 1, and other music videos.

Ruth Davidson (*performer*), a native New Yorker, began her serious dance training at the High School of Performing Arts, where she was a recipient of the coveted Helen Tamiris Award. After attaining her BFA from SUNY College at Purchase, she began her professional career with the Hannah Kahn Dance Company. Ms. Davidson later joined the Don Redlich Dance Company, where she also had the honor of working with dance master Hanya Holm. She appears in *Hanya: Portrait of a Dance Pioneer*, a biographical film on the career of Ms. Holm. She has been with the Mark Morris Dance Group since 1980. Ms. Davidson has consistently studied with Jocelyn Lorenz since 1979.

Tina Fehlandt (*performer*) grew up in Wilmington, Delaware, and has been a member of the Mark Morris Dance Group since its inception in 1980. She has staged Mr. Morris' work on Repertory Dance

Company of Canada, Concert Dance Company of Boston, New York University Tisch School of the Arts, University of Minnesota and San Francisco Ballet, and assisted him on his work with the Boston Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. Ms. Fehlandt has also appeared with the White Oak Dance Project.

Shawn Gannon (*performer*) is from Dover, New Jersey. He has danced with Lee Theodore's American Dance Machine, the Nina Wiener Dance Company, Mark Dendy's Dendy Dance, Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians and Jane Comfort and Company.

Dan Joyce (*performer*) is from Stuart, Virginia, and began his professional dance training at the North Carolina School of the Arts, where he received his BFA degree in 1983. He danced for one season with the Maryland Dance Theater before joining Concert Dance Company of Boston for four years. He joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1988.

Victoria Lundell (*performer*) was born in Berkeley, and later moved to Detroit, where she studied dance with Rose Marie Floyd and Dolores Allison. She danced professionally with Harbinger Dance Company, guested with Utopia Dance Theatre in Mexico City, and then completed her BFA in dance from the University of Michigan in 1989. She danced with The Parsons Dance Company for four years, and joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1994.

Marianne Moore (*performer*) was born in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and studied dance at North Carolina School of the Arts. She has also danced with the White Oak Dance Project.

Rachel Murray (*performer*) began her dance training at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, B.C. She went on to perform with Betty Jones' Dances We Dance Company in Honolulu and in Senta Driver's "Harry" in New York City. She joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1988.

Continued on p. 33

Sounds of Blackness searches the song trunk of the African-American experience to create its own style: a blend of gospel, R&B, blues, and funk. As the choir soars into Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall on March 21, LEE HILDEBRAND listens in.



Heavenly SOUND

African-based music has always been about healing," says Sounds of Blackness director Gary Hines, "healing the spirit, mind, body, and soul. People of all backgrounds can experience that healing through the music. That may sound like a lofty goal, but that's what we're about."

Although Sounds of Blackness, the Minneapolis-based vocal and instrumental ensemble, sometimes sings in praise of Jesus Christ and finds some of its recordings in regular rotation on religious radio programs, Hines insists that the group isn't a gospel choir. Yes, they perform some contemporary gospel selections, but their repertoire cuts too broad a swath across the musical riches of the African diaspora to fit into a simple category. Reggae, ragtime, rap, gospel, jazz, blues, soul, funk, spirituals, work songs, and melodies and polyrhythms from the mother continent itself segue in and out of the ensemble's albums and concert performances, creating a vivid tapestry of African-rooted sound.

Formed in 1969 as the Macalester College Black Choir, the group initial-

Above: the
Sounds of
Blackness
tour group

ly specialized in freedom and black-awareness songs. Hines, a jazz drummer from Yonkers, New York, was studying sociology at the Saint Paul, Minnesota, college when he was asked to become the choir's director in 1971. Over the next 26 years Hines has shepherded the group's transition from a small liberal arts college chorus to an internationally acclaimed recording and touring ensemble. Besides widening the repertoire, Hines invited students from other campuses and non-students from surrounding African-American communities to join the ensemble, necessitating a new name. "Sounds of Blackness" was the members' overwhelming choice.

"Gospel, rhythm and blues, and jazz

are all members of the same family," explains Hines. "They have much more in common than they have differences, and they emanate from the same tradition and the same experience. Our name means that those different styles of music are each a sound of blackness, and collectively the sounds of blackness. So, true to that tradition—all of the music in African-based theology emanates from God and from the Spirit—whether or not it has a label of gospel,

it's all God-inspired."

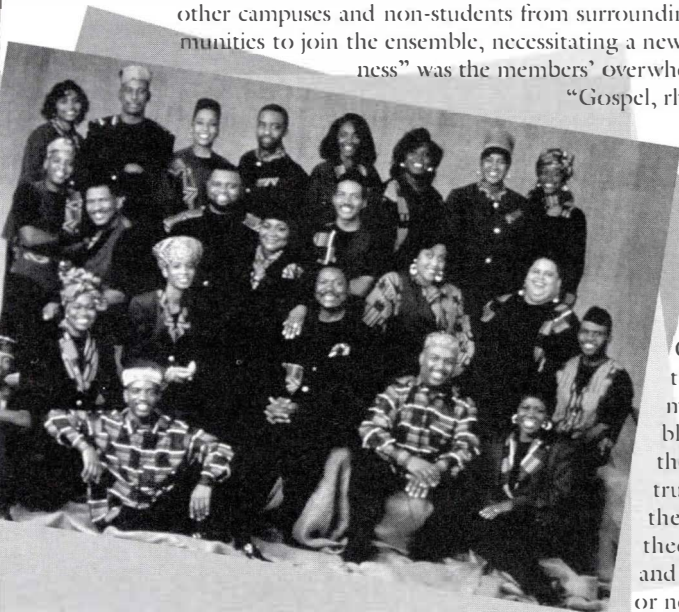
Throughout the 1970s and '80s, Sounds of Blackness performed at least once a week in the Twin Cities area, made occasional tours of the Midwest, and once traveled as far as San Francisco, where it appeared at a National Urban League convention. It also recorded three albums, sold primarily at concerts. Major record labels began courting Sounds of Blackness as early as 1978, but negotiations always broke down. Some companies wanted the group to limit its repertoire to either R&B or gospel; others insisted it change its name. "Both of those conditions were unacceptable," Hines explains.

By the late 1980s, Minneapolis had become a major recording center for African-American pop music, thanks to the success of Prince and the production team of Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. Formerly of The Time, a Prince-produced funk band, Jam and Lewis went on to produce Janet Jackson's smash 1986 album, *Control*, which ushered in the "New Jack swing" era in black pop through their use of highly syncopated, hip-hop-derived, machine-driven drum rhythms.

Jam and Lewis had known Sounds of Blackness for some years, and in 1988 they hired the ensemble to back soul singer Alexander O'Neal, himself a former Sounds of Blackness member, on a Christmas album. That led to Sounds of Blackness becoming the first act signed to Jam and Lewis' new A&M-distributed Perspective label.

continued on page 26

Sounds of Blackness:
recording the
riches of the
African diaspora.





Holy choir: the full Sounds of Blackness contingent, circa 1994.

SANDY MAY

The Evolution of Gospel, Sounds of Blackness' debut CD for the company, was issued in 1991 and produced the hit R&B single "Optimistic." *The Night Before Christmas—A Musical Fantasy* came out the next year and was followed in 1994 by *Africa to America—The Journey of the Drum*. All three CDs feature Jam and Lewis' trademark production, as well as the soaring Aretha Franklin-inspired pipes of mezzo-soprano Ann Nesby.

During the three years between *Africa to America* and the ensemble's forthcoming CD, *Time for Healing* (slated for release on March 18), Nesby signed a solo deal with Perspective and left Sounds of Blackness to perform on her own. "One of our longtime goals has been to help to launch solo careers," Hines states. "Ann has been the first to do that, and we're very proud of her for that. We trust that down the road we'll do a reunion album or tour."

Hines did not try to find a replacement for Nesby on the new album. "Because we've been blessed with so much vocal talent, we wanted to distribute that more," he says. "You'll hear a number of new voices on the CD and at the concerts."

For recordings, Sounds of Blackness consists of 30 vocalists and a 10-piece orchestra. The touring group is smaller, comprising nine vocalists and eight instrumentalists. Unlike the ensemble's recordings, which make liberal use of drum machines and samples, all of the group's concert music is played by live musicians, currently under the direction of former Prince guitarist Levi Seacer, Jr.

Material from the *Time for Healing* CD, which includes guest appearances by rappers Salt-N-Pepa, poet Maya Angelou, and jazz organist Jack McDuff, among others, is the focus of Sounds of Blackness' current tour. "We're working in a finite period of time as a lot of things around us deteriorate—everything from relations between people to the ecology," Hines says of the album's concept. "It is truly time for healing internally and externally, among and within and across peoples of all backgrounds."

Lee Hildebrand is the author of Stars of Soul and Rhythm & Blues (Billboard Books, 1994) and co-producer of the Legends of Gospel reissue series on Specialty Records.

June Omura (*performer*) received her early dance training at the University of Alabama in Birmingham and then attended Barnard College, graduating in 1986 with honors in dance and English. She has danced for Mark Morris since 1988, previously performing in New York with Kenneth King, Sally Silvers, Richard Bull, Peter Healey and Hannah Kahn.



Mark Morris' A Spell

Kraig Patterson (*performer*) was born in Trenton, New Jersey, and received his BFA in 1986 from the Juilliard School. He began dancing with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1987.

Mireille Radwan-Dana (*performer*) was born in Beirut, but grew up in Rome, where she attended Tersicore from 1978-1986. She then moved to Brussels to attend the Mudra School from 1986-1988. She joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1988.

Guillermo Resto (*performer*) dances with Mark Morris.

William Wagner (*performer*) is from Larchmont, New York. He studied at the Martha Graham School of Dance and is an English graduate from the State University of New York at Purchase. Mr. Wagner joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1988.

Julie Worden (*performer*), graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, has danced with Chicago choreographers Bob Eisen, Jan Erkert and Sheldon B. Smith.

Mark Morris Dance Group Staff

Johan Henckens, *technical director*
Michael Osso, *development director*
Eva Nichols, *executive administrator*
Lynn Wichern, *fiscal administrator*
Lesley Berson, *development associate*
Michael Chybowski, *lighting supervisor*
Linda Dowdell, *musical director*
Patricia White, *wardrobe supervisor*
Ronnie Thomson, *sound supervisor*
Mark Selinger (Kaye, Scholer, Fierman, Hays & Handler), *legal counsel*
David S. Weiss, M.D., *orthopaedist*
Kathryn Lundquist, CPA, *accountant*

Thanks to Maxine Morris and god.

Sincerest thanks to all the dancers for their dedication, support and incalculable contribution to the work.

For information contact:

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Tel: (212) 219-3660
Fax: (212) 219-3960

String Quartet No. 4 (*United*) by Henry Cowell, used by arrangement with C.F. Peters Corporation, publisher and copyright holder.

About the Artists

Additional funding has been received from the AT&T Foundation, Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, Consolidated Edison, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Cowles Charitable Trust, Dance Ink, Dover Fund, The Eleanor Naylor Dana Charitable Trust, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation Inc., Fund for U.S. Artists at International Festivals, Howard Gilman Foundation, Harkness Foundations for Dance, Sydney & Francis Lewis Foundation, Meet

the Composer, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation, National Dance Residency Program—a grant program underwritten by The Pew Charitable Trusts and administered at The New York Foundation for the Arts, Philip Morris Companies Inc., The Shubert Foundation, Inc., Vogue, Lila Wallace Theater Fund and the Friends of the Mark Morris Dance Group.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Set construction and painting by Scenic Art Studios.
Rhymes With Silver costumes constructed by Studio Rouge.
Dyeing by Gene Mignola, Inc.

Members of the UC Berkeley Chamber Chorus

Soprano

Jennifer Ashworth
Erica Barton
Tami Chuang
Cecily Graburn
Nalini Gwynne
Barbara Hjalsted
Tania Johnson
Caroline Ju
May Kuo
Tracy Hart
Lila Patton
Michelle Ritchie
Ingrid Spreiter

Alto

Siri Björner
Ann Chen
Françoise Debreu
Rebekah Ekberg
Stephanie Pan
Kim Rankin
Lindasusan Ulrich
Celeste Winant

Tenor

David Code
Michel Eisenberg
Ian Kirk
Nathaniel G. Lew
Jonathan S. Nadel
Jude Navari
Ulf Reinitzer
Trevor Weston
John Boyer
David Stuligross

Bass

John Kendall Bailey
Paul Choung
Andrew Chung
Lee Escandon
Carson Mah
Jamie Pommersheim
Joel Slotkin
Tom Swartz
Gerry Wiener
Alexander Arbeiter
Daniel Ratner
Felix Wu

Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

The Players and Their Instruments

VIOLIN

Katherine Kyme, *concertmaster*
Joseph Gaffino, Paris, c.1769

Kate Button
Anonymous, Germany, 18th century,
after Bergonzi

Jeanne Clausen
Jacobus Stainer, Absam, Tyrol, 1656

Emily Davidson
Pieter Rombouts, Amsterdam,
Holland, 1706

Lisa Grodin
Carlo Giuseppe Testore, Cremona,
Italy, 1736

Mary Manning
David van Zandt, New York, NY, 1989;
after Jacobus Stainer

Anthony Martin
Desiderio Quercetani, Parma, Italy, 1993;
after Antonio Stradivari, Cremona, Italy

Ingrid Matthews
Hendrick Jacobs, Amsterdam,
Holland, 1703

Carla Moore
Johann Georg Thir, Vienna, Austria, 1754

Maxine Nemerovski
Nicholas Morlot, Mirecourt, France, c.1820

Michael Sand
Anonymous, Italy, 18th century

David Wilson
Giovanni Paolo Maggini, Brescia,
Italy, c.1620

VIOLA

Maria Caswell
Anonymous, Germany, 18th century

Meg Eldridge
Michael Kosman, Mendocino, CA, 1980;
after G.P. Maggini

Carelton Lee

Johannes Albrecht, Germany, 1950;
after A Stradivari

Stephani Railsback
Tetsuo Matsuda, Chicago, IL, 1992;
after Guarneri del Gesu, Cremona, Italy

VIOLINCELLO

David Morris*
John Morrison, London, c.1780

Sara Fiene
Anonymous, Belgium, c.1800

BASS

Kristin Zoernig*
Anonymous, Germany

OBOE

Lani Spahr*
Harry van Dias, Decatur, GA, 1990;
after T. Stanesby, London, England, c.1710

TRUMPET

Fred Holmgren*
Keavy & Vanryne, London, 1989;
after various 18th century models

NATURAL HORN

William Klingelhoffer
Lowell Greer, 1987

ORGAN

Rodney Gerhke*
Jürgen Ahrend, Germany, 1975

HARPSICHORD

Katherine Shao*
John Phillips, Berkeley, 1995;
after Franco-Flemish by
Ruckers 1646-Taskin 1680

* principals

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Mark Morris Dance Group and Yo-Yo Ma

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February

Shenyang Peking Opera Company

SAT, FEB 15, 2 PM & 8 PM

AND SUN, FEB 16, 3 PM

ZH: \$18, \$24, \$32

Baaba Maal

THU, FEB 20, 8 PM

ZH: \$14, \$20, \$26

Vellinger String Quartet

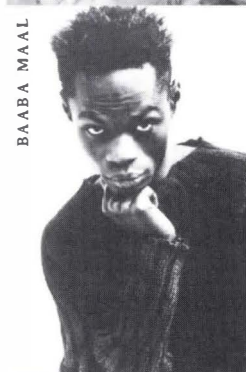
SUN, FEB 23, 3 PM

HH: \$26

The Gospel at Colonus with Clarence Fountain & the Blind Boys of Alabama

TUE-FRI, FEB 25-28, 8 PM

ZH: \$22, \$30, \$38



BAABA MAAL

March

The Gospel at Colonus with Clarence Fountain & the Blind Boys of Alabama

MAR 1, 2 PM & 8 PM

AND SUN, MAR 2, 3 PM

ZH: \$22, \$30, \$38

Mark Morris Dance Group & Yo-Yo Ma

THU & FRI, MAR 6 & 7, 8 PM

AND SAT, MAR 8, 2 PM & 8 PM

ZH: \$32, \$48, \$68

Mark Morris Dance Group with members of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

THU-SAT, MAR 13-15, 8 PM

AND SUN, MAR 16, 3 PM

ZH: \$24, \$36, \$48

Auryn Quartet with Martin Lovett, *cello* SUN, MAR 16, 3 PM, HH: \$26

National Traditional Orchestra of China

TUE, MAR 18, 8 PM

ZH: \$14, \$20, \$26

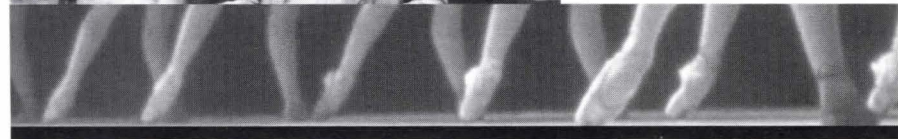
Sounds of Blackness

FRI, MAR 21, 8 PM

ZH: \$18, \$24, \$30



THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS



April

Huelgas Ensemble

SAT, APR 5, 8 PM
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András Schiff, *piano*

SUN, APR 6, 3 PM
HH; SOLD OUT!

Dawn Upshaw, *soprano*

SUN, APR 13, 3 PM
HH; SOLD OUT!

Russian Village Festival

THU, APR 17, 8 PM
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James Galway, *flute*

Phillip Moll, *piano*

SUN, APR 20, 3 PM
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Key

FCC First Congregational Church
HH Hertz Hall
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Jam on the Groove The Hip-Hop Musical

WED, APR 30, 8 PM
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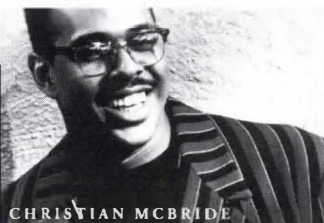
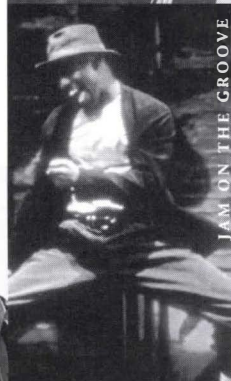
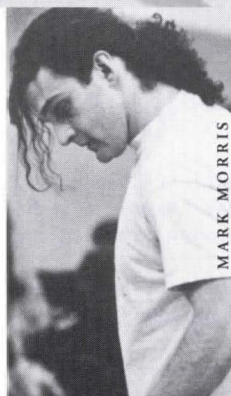
May

Jam on the Groove The Hip-Hop Musical

THU-FRI, MAY 1 & 2, 8 PM
SAT, MAY 3, 2 PM & 8 PM
AND SUN, MAY 4, 3 PM
ZH; \$14, \$20, \$26

Hesperion XX Jordi Savall, *director* and *viola da gamba* Montserrat Figueras, *soprano* Andrew Lawrence-King, *harp* Pedro Estevan, *percussion*

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welcomes the

**Mark Morris
Dance Group**

back to the Bay Area this
month for a remarkable
series of concerts. First up
is *Falling Down Stairs*, a
collaboration with
America's premier cellist
Yo-Yo Ma,
who provides live
accompaniment.

STEPHANIE VON BUCHAU

reports.



Bach Together

Seeing Yo-Yo Ma and Mark Morris together, one has to laugh. The cellist, born in Paris to Chinese parents, has the glowing energy of a baseball-loving, all-American kid, while the Seattle-born Morris, with his luxuriant locks, flashing eyes, and campy speech patterns, seems as exotic as an Ouled-Nail dancer. Nevertheless, this odd couple of extraordinary performers recently collaborated on a 30-minute piece that was filmed at the Jacob's Pillow dance festival. The work—*Falling Down Stairs*, an ensemble dance set to J.S. Bach's Suite in C major for Unaccompanied Cello—receives its stage premiere at Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall, March 6–8, courtesy of Cal Performances. And the rest of the the Mark Morris Dance Group's program, March 13–15, is thrilling: it includes another world premiere and the Bay Area debut of two other pieces.

The idea for the collaboration was originally Yo-Yo Ma's. His inspiration was to take the six Unaccompanied Cello Suites of Bach—a sort of Mount Everest of cello music—and film them, each with a different collaborator. The only constant would be Ma himself, playing the cello. Each hour-long film consists of a documentary section, followed by a film of the actual work. Ma's other collaborators include a landscape artist, an architect, the Kabuki actor Tomasaburo Bando, the ice dancers Torvill and Dean, and Canadian avant-garde filmmaker Atom Egoyan.

Ma offered Morris first choice of the suites. "No contest," says the choreographer. "I've known the Third Suite in C major for years, and it's my favorite of the six." The entire project is scheduled to be released by Sony Classical video in 1998.

In the meantime, Morris and Ma set about translating *Falling Down Stairs* from its celluloid form to a live performance—with the cellist onstage. "This is the first dance I ever choreographed directly for film. It's not adapted from a stage work like *The Hard Nut*," Morris says, referring to his zany version of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, seen at Cal Performances last December. "To put it on stage, I have to refocus it from 360 degrees [for the cameras] to viewing it from the front, for an audience."

The set consists of a large, shallow Busby Berkeley-style staircase upstage center. Morris claims the genesis of the dance was an anxiety dream about one of his dancers hurting himself on a staircase, so *Falling Down Stairs* may be something of an exorcism. But while a dream may have been his inspiration, Morris' great strength lies not in merely rendering dreams and common experiences unchanged in his art, but in his ability to filter and alter common experiences through the finest of musical sensibilities.

In the filmed version, Ma sits onstage directly opposite the staircase with his back to the audience. Because the cameras constantly move, they are able to catch his facial expressions as well as record his flying fingers. One of the

Up the Down Staircase: the Mark Morris Dance Group (opposite page) in *Falling Down Stairs*, originally made as a film. The world premiere of the stage version occurs this month in Berkeley, featuring Ma (below, left) playing a Bach cello suite onstage as Morris (below, right) leads his distinctive troupe through its paces.



CYLLA VON TIEDEMANN

most important challenges Morris will face in the live staging of *Falling Down Stairs* is the repositioning of the cellist. On film, a great deal of the intimacy of the work, despite its cast of 14 dancers, is the expression on Ma's face when something in the music or dance delights him.

Morris has difficulty talking about his choreography. If he could speak eloquently about how he makes dances, he might not be compelled to choreograph at all. He stutters, waves his arms, curses in frustration when stuck for verbal expression. His humility is touching. "At first," he says, "I didn't want to do it at all. I'd seen so many horrible dances to this music. It's just so fabulous, it's so perfect—I didn't want to screw it up."

Ma laughs at Morris' doubts. "I can't possibly do it justice, either, but I keep trying," he says. "How do you add dance to a perfectly made piece of music? Mark has put a layer on top of the existing score, not illustrating it, but adding to it—like the segment where his soloists, in alphabetical order, dance exactly five bars each against Bach's phrasing. Nobody but Mark Morris' dancers could do this."

The individual numbers in the Third Cello Suite are based on traditional French dance forms. In the "Prelude," dancers in rust, black, burgundy, and dark green velvet choir robes designed by Isaac Mizrahi (some of them irreverently short), literally fall down a set of stairs. Other dances in the suite are a lively "Allemande," a "Courante," the devotional "Sarabande" that Ma plays with passionate identification, a "Bourée" that begins with stationary dancers on the stairs making odd semaphore-like hand gestures, and the vigorous, concluding "Gigue."

Ma first approached the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1992. Morris' company manager Barry Alterman recalls: "Ma saw us dance and sent a letter saying, 'I'm a giant fan and we must work together.'" (Critics who still don't "get" Mark Morris should note that musicians always do.) In the modern dance world, where money is scarce even when you are an international star like Morris, having a heavy-hitting fundraiser like Yo-Yo Ma come aboard is like winning the lottery. "Yo-Yo is a fabulous [box office] draw," Alterman says, "but more importantly, he is a fabulous musician."

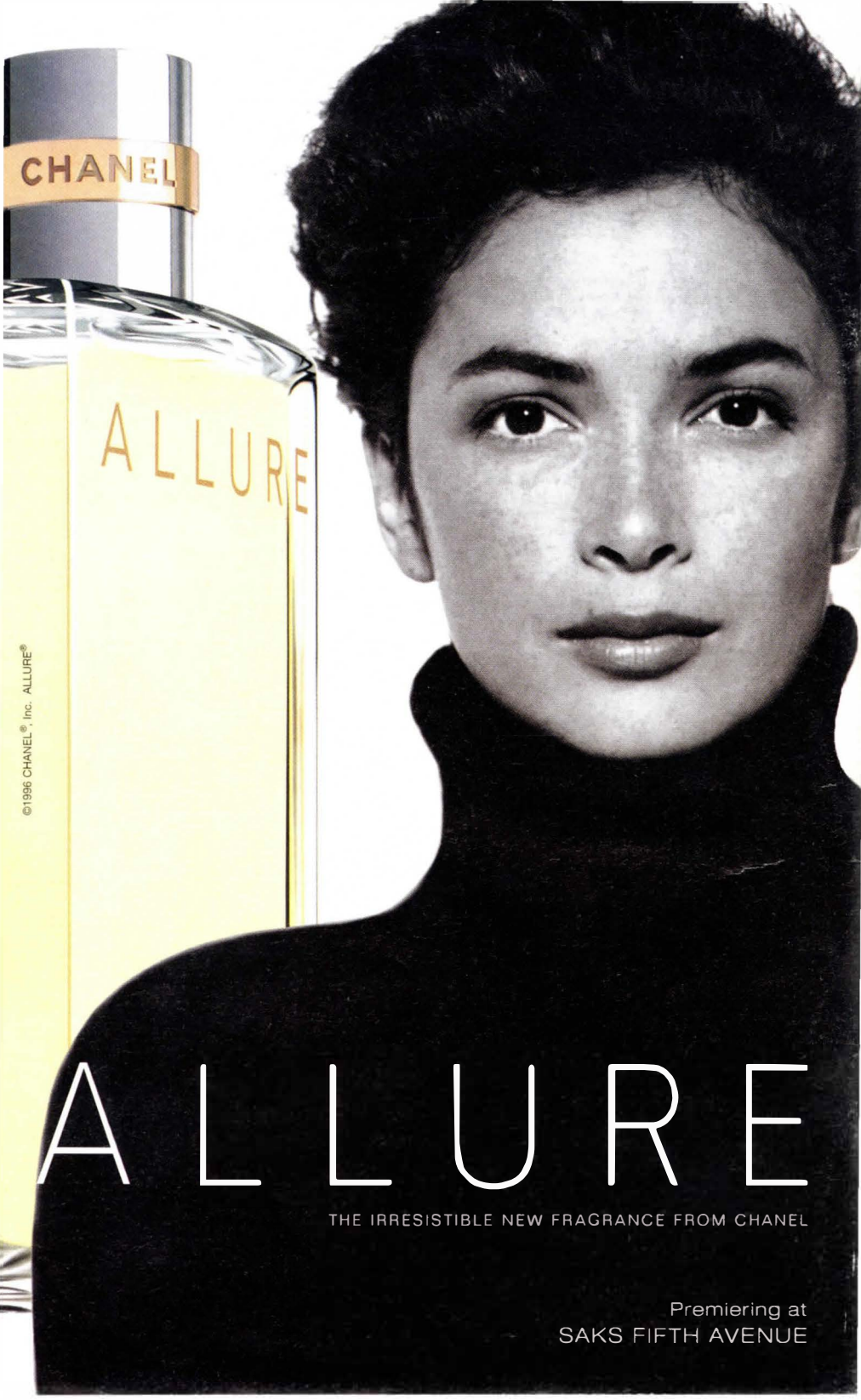
Since Ma was "hanging around to perform the Bach," as Morris puts it, they decided he might as well play the entire first program. (The second week of dances will be accompanied by the Philadelphia Baroque Orchestra.) The other works set to cello are Morris' most controversial recent piece, *The Office* (to Dvořák's *Bagatelles for String Trio and Harmonium*), and *Rhymes with Silver*, another world premiere commissioned by Morris and Cal Performances, set to a piece composed by Lou Harrison for cello, violin, viola, piano, and percussion.

Morris says the collaboration with Ma has been such a success because of their shared musicality. The music, Morris says, is the basis for all his creations. "I think music is more interesting than dancing," he says. "Dancing should allow people to hear the music."

Desk set:
Morris'
company in
The Office, set
to Dvořák. It
receives its
Bay Area
premiere this
month.



Stephanie von Buchau is a San Francisco correspondent for Opera News and writes frequently for many Bay Area publications.



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