

Jacob's Pillow *Dance Festival*

Ted Shawn Theatre

August 10–15, 2004

Mark Morris Dance Group

Craig Biesecker, Joe Bowie, Charlton Boyd, Amber Darragh, Rita Donahue,
Marjorie Folkman, Lauren Grant, John Heginbotham, David Leventhal,
Bradon McDonald, Gregory Nuber, Maile Okamura, June Omura, Matthew Rose,
Noah Vinson*, Julie Worden, Michelle Yard

*apprentice

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Mark Morris
GENERAL DIRECTOR: Barry Alterman
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Nancy Umanoff

TANGLEWOOD MUSIC CENTER FELLOWS

Choreography by Mark Morris

MY PARTY

MUSIC: Jean Françaix, *Trio in C for violin, viola, and cello*

LIGHTING: Michael Chybowski

MUSICIANS: Carrie Kennedy, violin; Ryan Mooney, viola; Marieve Bock, cello;
Norman Fischer, Tanglewood Music Center Faculty Coach

DANCERS: Marjorie Folkman, Lauren Grant, David Leventhal, Bradon McDonald,
Gregory Nuber, Maile Okamura, Noah Vinson, Michelle Yard

Premiere: June 7, 1984 – Washington Hall Performance Gallery, Seattle, WA

–PAUSE–

A LAKE

MUSIC: Franz Joseph Haydn, *Horn Concerto No. 2 in D*

COSTUMES: Martin Pakledinaz

LIGHTING: James F. Ingalls

DANCERS: Joe Bowie, Charlton Boyd, Amber Darragh, Marjorie Folkman,
David Leventhal, Gregory Nuber, Maile Okamura, June Omura,
Matthew Rose, Julie Worden

Premiere: July 30, 1991 – White Oak Dance Project, Filene Center, Wolf Trap, Vienna, Virginia
Company Premiere: March 17, 1992 – Harbourfront, Premiere Dance Theatre, Toronto, Canada

–INTERMISSION–

A SPELL

MUSIC: John Wilson, *Where the Bee Sucks; Stay, O Stay; Do Not Fear to Put Thy Feet; Take, O Take Those Lips Away*

COSTUMES: Susan Ruddie

LIGHTING: Michael Chybowski

MUSICIANS: Eileen Clark, soprano; Rebecca Corruccini, violin; Oren Fader, guitar

DANCERS: Amber Darragh, Bradon McDonald, Matthew Rose

Premiere: August 17, 1993 – Meadowbank Centre, Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh, Scotland

–PAUSE–

V

MUSIC: Robert Schumann, *Quintet in E flat for piano and strings*, op. 44

Allegro brillante

In modo d'una Marcia. Un poco largamente – Agitato

Scherzo molto vivace

Allegro, ma non troppo

COSTUMES: Martin Pakledinaz

LIGHTING: Michael Chybowski

MUSICIANS: Annie Yano, violin; Rebecca Corruccini, violin; Miranda Sielaff, viola;

Christine Christensen, cello; Berenika Zakrzewski, piano (August 10-13);

Elizabeth Pridgen, piano (August 14-15); Claude Frank, Pamela Frank, and

Norman Fischer, Tanglewood Music Center Faculty Coaches

DANCERS: Joe Bowie, Charlton Boyd, Amber Darragh, Marjorie Folkman, Lauren Grant,

John Heginbotham, David Leventhal, Bradon McDonald, Gregory Nuber,

Maile Okamura, June Omura, Matthew Rose, Julie Worden, Michelle Yard

Dedicated to the City of New York.

Premiere: October 16, 2001 – Dance Umbrella, Sadler's Wells, London, England

MetLife Foundation is the official sponsor of the Mark Morris Dance Group's 2004 national tour. Major support for the Mark Morris Dance Group is provided by Altria Group, Inc., The Shubert Foundation, and Target Stores. The Mark Morris Dance Group New Works Fund is supported by The Howard Gilman Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, as well as The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation and The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation. The Mark Morris Dance Group's education and performance activities are supported by Independence Community Foundation. 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.

Program and casting subject to change.

The taking of photographs during performances is strictly prohibited.

This performance is made possible by
Jacob's Pillow Producers of the Week,
Neil & Kathleen Chrisman

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MARK MORRIS was born on August 29, 1956 in Seattle, Washington, where he studied as a young man with Verla Flowers and Perry Brunson. In the early years of his career, he performed with Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1980, and has since created more than 100 works for the company. From 1988–1991, he was Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the national opera house of Belgium. Among the works created during his tenure were three evening-length dances: *The Hard Nut*, *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, and *Dido and Aeneas*. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Mr. Morris is also in demand as a ballet choreographer. He has created four works for the San Francisco Ballet since 1994 and received commissions from such companies as American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, and the Paris Opera Ballet. His work is in the repertory of the Geneva Ballet, New Zealand Ballet, English National Ballet, and The Royal Ballet, Covent Garden. He has worked extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for the New York City Opera, English National Opera, and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Mr. Morris was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991. He has received honorary doctorates from The Boston Conservatory of Music, The Juilliard School, Long Island University, Pratt Institute, and Bowdoin College. Mr. Morris is the subject of a biography by Joan Acocella (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). In 2001, Marlowe & Company published *Mark Morris' L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato: A Celebration*, a volume of photographs and critical essays.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP (MMDG) was formed in 1980 and gave its first concert that year in New York City. The company's touring schedule steadily expanded to include cities both in the U.S. and in Europe, and in 1986 it made its first national television program for the PBS series *Dance in America*. In 1988, the Dance Group was invited to become the national dance company of Belgium, and spent three years in residence at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels. 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. It has maintained and strengthened its ties to several cities around the world, most notably Berkeley, CA, where Cal Performances presents the company in two annual seasons, including engagements of *The Hard Nut* each December. It appears regularly in Boston, MA; Fairfax, VA; Seattle, WA; Urbana-Champaign, IL; and at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, MA. It made its debut at the Mostly Mozart Festival in 2002 and at the Tanglewood Music Festival in 2003. The company's London seasons have garnered two Laurence Olivier Awards. MMDG is noted for its commitment to live music, a feature of every performance on its full international touring

schedule since 1996. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma has frequently collaborated with the Dance Group; their projects include the 1997 Emmy Award-winning film *Falling Down Stairs*, using Bach's *Third Suite for Unaccompanied Cello*, and the 2002 dance *Kolam*, created for The Silk Road Project in collaboration with Indian composer Zakir Hussain and jazz pianist Ethan Iverson of The Bad Plus. MMDG's film and television projects include *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Hard Nut*, and two documentaries for the U.K.'s *South Bank Show*. In 2001, the Mark Morris Dance Center opened in Brooklyn, New York. The 30,000-square foot facility features three studios and a school for dance students of all ages.

MMDG MUSIC ENSEMBLE was formed in 1996 and since that time has joined the Mark Morris Dance Group on tour throughout the U.S., U.K., Australia, and Japan. The Ensemble's repertory ranges from 17th-century works by John Wilson and Henry Purcell to more recent scores by Lou Harrison and Henry Cowell. In addition, the Ensemble presents concerts at the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn and other venues, and participates in the Mark Morris Dance, Music, and Literacy program in the New York City public school system. The Ensemble is currently under the direction of Wolfram Koessel.

CRAIG BIESECKER (Dancer) from Waynesboro, Pennsylvania received a B.S. in music education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania. While teaching music in Philadelphia, he studied ballet with John White, Margarita de Saa, and Bryan Koulman, and worked with choreographers Tim and Lina Early. In New York City, he has worked with Pascal Rioult, Carolyn Dorfman, New York Theater Ballet, Mark Dendy, and Gerald Casel. Craig joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2003.

MARIEVE BOCK (Cello) of Montréal was awarded First Prize at the Canadian Music Competition and at the "Jeunes Artistes" Competition in 2000. She was also invited to play for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra's "Matinées Symphoniques" and later created new Canadian works for Espace Music Society. During the summers of 2000 and 2001, Ms. Bock went to the Music Academy of the West. In 2002 she performed for the Montreal Chamber Music Festival and with the McGill Chamber Orchestra. She completed her bachelor's degree at the Montreal Conservatory, where she studied with Mr. Denis Brott and received the "Prix avec grande distinction" (2002). Ms. Bock is currently pursuing a master's degree at Rice University, where she studies with Norman Fischer.

JOE BOWIE (Dancer), born in Lansing, Michigan, 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, Ulysses Dove, and danced with The Paul Taylor Dance Company for two years before going to Belgium to work with Mark Morris in 1989.

CHARLTON BOYD (Dancer) 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 Limón Dance Company. He appears in the "José Limón Technique Video, Volume 1," and other music videos. He first appeared with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1989 and became a company member in 1994.

CHRISTINE CHRISTENSEN (Cello) was born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1981. She started studying the cello at the age of seven with Asger Lund Christiansen and at fifteen was admitted to the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen, where she studied with Morten Zeuthen. In the summer of 1999, Christine attended the Britten-Pears Masterclass in Aldeburgh, England, where she met Zara Nelsova. Thereafter she traveled to New York to begin private instruction with Ms. Nelsova, and in September 2000 continued her studies under Ms. Nelsova as a student at Rutgers University in New Jersey. From 2001-2002, she studied at the Real Conservatorio Superior de Musica de Madrid in Spain. She is currently attending the Manhattan School of Music in New York, where she studies with Marion Feldman, and will continue there in the fall.

EILEEN CLARK (Soprano) has sung with the Mark Morris Dance Group for seven years in works of Monteverdi, Purcell, Bach, Brahms, and old Broadway. She has sung Queen of the Night (*The Magic Flute*) and Naiad (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) with Syracuse Opera, Adina (*Elixir of Love*) with Commonwealth Opera, and the baroque dance role Galatea (*Pygmalion*) with Concert Royal. Eileen has also enjoyed singing for the dancers of José Limón Dance Company, Anita Feldman Tap, Toby Twining Music, and at Kaatsbaan and Jacob's Pillow. This year Eileen is a winner of a JPF record award for her CD *Lemons Descending* with cellist Matt Haimovitz (Oxingale Records).

REBECCA CORRUCINI (Violin) is originally from Davis, CA. This past May, she received her Bachelor of Music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she was a student of William Preucil. Ms. Corruccini was named CIM's 2003-2004 Presser Scholar for outstanding artistic and academic achievement. Last fall, she performed Alban Berg's Violinkonzert with the CIM Orchestra after winning the school's concerto competition. Ms. Corruccini has participated in the Aspen, Sarasota, Kent/Blossom, and the New York String Orchestra Seminar festivals. This fall, Ms. Corruccini will attend Rice University's Shepherd School of Music where she will work toward a master's degree while studying with Kathleen Winkler. This is Ms. Corruccini's second summer with the Tanglewood Music Center.

AMBER DARRAGH (Dancer) began her dance training with Nancy Mittleman in Newport, Oregon. She received her B.F.A. from the Juilliard School in 1999 and went on to dance with the Limón Dance Company for two years. She is a recipient of the 2001 Princess

Grace Award and has presented her own choreography in various venues, including Alice Tully Hall and the Joyce Soho. Amber joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2001.

RITA DONAHUE (Dancer) was born and raised in Fairfax, Virginia. She graduated with honors with a B.F.A. in dance and a B.A. in English from George Mason University in 2002 and joined bopi's black sheep, dances by Kraig Patterson. Rita began working with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2003.

OREN FADER (Guitar) is an active performer of classical guitar repertoire, both traditional and contemporary. Reviewing his solo New York recital, Guitar Review magazine stated: "His scholarship, technique, and intelligent musicianship are plainly evident and the beauty of his tone is consistently compelling." He has performed in London, Tokyo, Munich, Amsterdam, Montreal, Maui, Russia, Mexico, and throughout the United States, and can be heard on more than 20 recordings. Recently completed recording projects include a new recording of an arrangement of *The Rite of Spring* performed with the Fireworks ensemble. Mr. Fader's solo CD became available in the spring of 2003. Since 1994 Mr. Fader has been on the guitar faculty and directed the Guitar Chamber Music program at the Manhattan School of Music. For more information, please visit www.orenfader.com.

MARJORIE FOLKMAN (Dancer) began dancing for Mark Morris in 1996. She graduated summa cum laude from Barnard College and has attended Columbia University's Graduate Program in American studies. She has also danced with Amy Spencer and Richard Colton, Kraig Patterson, Neta Pulvermacher, Sally Hess, Ellen Cornfield, the Repertory Understudy Group for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, and Sara Rudner.

LAUREN GRANT (Dancer) was born in Highland Park, Illinois, and began dancing at age three. She continued training, primarily in classical ballet, through high school. At New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, Lauren received her modern dance training and graduated with a B.F.A. Lauren joined MMDG in 1998.

JOHN HEGINBOTHAM (Dancer) is from Anchorage, Alaska, and graduated from the Juilliard School in 1993. He has performed with artists including Susan Marshall and Company, John Jasperse, Ben Munisteri, and as a guest artist with Pilobolus Dance Theater. John's choreography is featured in the music video "Emerge," as well as in the performances of recording artists Fischerspooner. He joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1998.

CARRIE KENNEDY (Violin) from Houston, TX, is currently pursuing an Artist Diploma at the Colburn School of Performing Arts in Los Angeles where she studies with Robert Lipsett. She has a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Southern California. Ms. Kennedy has won numerous awards, including first place in the National Federation of Music Clubs Young Artists Competition with two years of concert engagements and first place in the American

String Teachers Association Competition. She has had the opportunity to solo with many orchestras including the San Antonio, Richardson, University of Southern California, Torrance, Suburban, Brevard Festival, Clear Lake, Westchester, and Solano Symphonies. In the past two years, she has given 19 recitals in 12 states. In the summer of 2003, Ms. Kennedy was invited to attend the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival as a member of the featured young artist quartet, as well as the International Holland Music Sessions.

DAVID LEVENTHAL (Dancer), raised in Newton, Massachusetts, has danced with the Mark Morris Dance Group since 1997. Previously, he worked with José Mateo's Ballet Theatre and the companies of Marcus Schulkind, Amy Spencer/Richard Colton, Ben Munisteri, and Zvi Gotheiner. He graduated from Brown University in 1995 with honors in English literature.

BRADON MCDONALD (Dancer) received his B.F.A. from the Juilliard School in 1997. He danced with the Limón Dance Company for three years and was the recipient of the 1998 Princess Grace Award. He has choreographed and presented his own works internationally, served as choreographer for seven Juilliard Opera Company productions under director Frank Corsaro, and was the choreographic assistant to Donald McKayle at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Bradon joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2000.

RYAN MOONEY (Viola) started studying at the age of three with Margaret and Maybeth Pressley. He has attended numerous music festivals such as the Winter Institute for String Quartets, the Colorado College Summer Festival, Icicle Creek, and Roundtop. He has performed in master classes with Robert Mann, Norman Fischer, Joel Krosnick, Sadao Harada, Eugene Drucker, Kim Kashkashian, and Ronald Copes, and has played with artists such as Robert Mann, Jorja Fleezanis, Paul Hersh, Bernard Greenhouse, Bonny Hampton, and Jean-Michel Fonteneu. Mr. Mooney had the honor of being a finalist in the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's concerto competition and also competed in the Corpus Christi International String Competition. Mr. Mooney is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree under the direction of Jodi Levitz and Mark Sokol at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

GREGORY NUBER (Dancer) began working with MMDG in 1998 and became a company member in 2001. He was a member of Pascal Rioult Dance Theatre for three years, has appeared as a guest artist with New York City Opera, Cleveland Opera, and Tennessee Repertory Theatre, and has worked with numerous New York-based choreographers. Gregory is a graduate of Arizona State University where he studied acting and dance.

MAILE OKAMURA (Dancer) was born and raised in San Diego, California. She was a member of Boston Ballet II and Ballet Arizona before moving to New York in 1996. Since then she has had the pleasure of dancing with Neta Pulvermacher, Zvi Gotheiner, Gerald Casel, and

many others. Maile began working with MMDG in 1998 and became a company member in 2001.

JUNE OMURA (Dancer) spent her first six years in New York City, then grew up in Birmingham, Alabama. She returned to New York to attend Barnard College, graduating in 1986 with honors in dance and English, and has been dancing for Mark Morris since 1988. She is the proud mother of twin girls, born in July 2003, and is indebted to her husband, her family, and MMDG for their love and support.

ELIZABETH PRIDGEN (Piano) is highly regarded as a sensitive solo and chamber musician. Her recent engagements include concerts at Alice Tully Hall and the Kosciuszko Foundation in New York, the DACOR Bacon House in Washington D.C., and recitals in Atlanta and Curacao, Netherlands Antilles. Ms. Pridgen has participated in the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival and has attended IMS Prussia Cove, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Conservatoire Americain in Fontainebleau, France. Ms. Pridgen recently earned a master's degree from the Juilliard School where she studied with Joseph Kalichstein. She received her bachelor's degree from the Peabody Conservatory of Music as a student of Ann Schein. A native of Atlanta, Georgia, she currently resides in New York City.

MATTHEW ROSE (Dancer) received his B.F.A. from the University of Michigan. He has appeared with the Martha Graham Dance Company, Pascal Rioult Dance Theater, and Ann Arbor Dance Works. Matthew began working with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1997 and became a company member in 1999.

MIRANDA SIELAFF (Viola) received her Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School in 2003 where she studied with Karen Tuttle. Since then she has pursued a performing and teaching career in New York City, appearing in concerts at Bargemusic, Weill Hall, and the Parlor Entertainment Jazz Concert Series in Harlem. While at Juilliard she was in residence at P.S. 166 as a teaching artist, as part of the Morse Fellowship program. As part of this program, she organized and performed in an interactive concert of George Crumb's *Black Angels* for 125 children. An article she wrote about the experience of this concert appeared in the *Juilliard Journal*. Ms. Sielaff's performing experience also includes premieres of several commissions for her viola/baritone duo with Ryan Dohoney, appearances in audio/visual pieces by Jay King and Mario Diaz de Leon, and performances with the New York City Ballet Dance Project of a new string quartet by Justine Chen. She has maintained a private teaching studio at the Larchmont Music Academy for the past two years, and assists with the chamber music and string orchestra program at Collegiate School. Ms. Sielaff graduated magna cum laude from Rice University in 2001, where she was a student of Karen Ritscher.

NOAH VINSON (Dancer) received his B.A. in dance from Columbia College Chicago, where he worked with Shirley Mordine, Jan Erkert, and Brian Jeffrey. In New York he has

danced with Teri and Oliver Steele and the Kevin Wynn Collection. He became an apprentice with MMDG in 2003.

JULIE WORDEN (Dancer), from Naples, Florida, is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts. She worked with Chicago choreographers Bob Eisen, Jan Erkert, and Sheldon B. Smith. She has been dancing with Mark Morris since 1994.

ANNIE YANO (Violin) studied for five years with Kenneth Goldsmith of the Rice University Shepherd School of Music. She then moved back to Tokyo, Japan where she studied for seven years with Tsugio Tokunaga, concertmaster of the Nippon Hosso Kyokai Symphony. She attended the Toho School of Music and continued her studies in New York City at the Juilliard Pre College Division. She recently received her bachelor's degree from The Juilliard School. She has also attended the Aspen Music Festival and School, Saito Kinen Chamber Music for the Youth and the New York String Seminar. She currently studies with Naoko Tanaka.

MICHELLE YARD (Dancer) was born in Brooklyn, New York. She began her professional dance training at the New York City High School of Performing Arts. Upon graduation she received the Helen Tamiris and B'nai Brith awards. For three years she was also a scholarship student at The Alvin Ailey Dance Center. She attended New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. Michelle began dancing with the Dance Group in 1997.

BERENIKA ZAKRZEWSKI (Piano) is currently studying at Harvard University where she is the recipient of the prestigious Arthur W. Foote Award of the Harvard Musical Association. In 1998 she won the Nakamichi Piano Competition at the Aspen Music Festival and last summer Ms. Zakrzewski toured South America as a soloist with the Youth Orchestra of the Americas performing in major concert halls, including Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires. She has performed with many orchestras, including the Aspen Sinfonia, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra of Canada, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Varsovia, the Penderecki Festival Orchestra, and many others. She made a live recording of the Beethoven *Piano Concerto No. 3* with Sinfonietta Cracovia, distributed by Universal Music Group and is currently doing endorsement work for CASIO, Tokyo, Japan. Ms. Zakrzewski has performed at multiple festivals, including The Rock Hotel International Pianofest in New York, the Aspen Music Festival, Sarasota Music Festival, the 6th Beethoven Easter Festival in Krakow and at the Verbier Festival, Switzerland. She was a featured performer on New York radio station WQXR's McGraw Hill Young Artist Showcase, hosted by Robert Sherman, and her recitals have been broadcast by MDR in Germany, and live by the CBC in Toronto. She has appeared in a front page article titled "From Curtain Calls to Ivy Halls" in The New York Times Metro Section. Berenika Zakrzewski gave her first orchestral

performance at the age of nine. She graduated from the Professional Children's School in New York City and completed a four-year program at The Juilliard School. Berenika currently works with Robert Levin.

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP STAFF PRODUCTION

Technical Director: Johan Henckens
Music Director: Wolfram Koessel
Assistant Technical Director: A.J. Jackson
Lighting Supervisor: Nicole Pearce
Wardrobe Supervisor: Katherine McDowell

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Director of Foundation and Corporate Relations: Rob Handel
Director of Membership and Special Events: Alex Pacheco

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Marketing Assistant: Laura Wall

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Studio Manager: Karyn La Scala
Administrative Assistant: Kathleen Cannucci
Facility Manager: José Suarez
Maintenance: Luis Mandry
Office Assistant: Jay Selinger
Receptionist: Marc Castelli

EDUCATION

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School Administrator: Diane Ogunusi

FINANCE

Fiscal Administrator: Lynn Wichern
Finance Manager: Elizabeth Fox

Booking Representation: Michael Mushalla
(Double M Arts & Events)

Legal Counsel: Mark Selinger (McDermott, Will & Emery)
Accountant: Kathryn Lundquist, CPA
Orthopedist: David S. Weiss, M.D.
(NYU-HJD Department of Orthopaedic Surgery)

Thanks to Maxine Morris.

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

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PillowNotes

by Maura Keefe

The PillowNotes series is comprised of essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.

In 1992, Mark Morris's dancers crawled out the wings of the stage at the Manhattan Center Grand Ballroom. Mark Morris Dance Group was back in the United States after three years as the resident company of the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium. Michael Feldman was there, conducting the Orchestra of Saint Luke's and the singers of the New York Virtuoso Singers. A lot of critics were there; ready to witness the new maturity of the artist who had been in exile and in ecstasy in Europe. And there was a large audience of dance lovers and Morris fans. It was an unusual theatre for a major company to perform in, as audience members climbed several flights of stairs to enter the lushly appointed ballroom. The organization of the undertaking, the sheer number of performers, and the anticipation of the event, caused a frisson in the air. And Morris delivered.

To the magnificent sound of Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria in D*, the dancers crawled, rose to their feet, lifted themselves slightly higher by linking their fingers between their legs and then returned to the floor. In a gloriously awkward manner, the dancers seem to evolve and yet feel no remorse about returning to the crawl in the primordial ooze. This was not the first time the dancers had performed *Gloria*. It premiered in 1981, and was revised in 1984. Nor would it be the last time it was performed; in fact, for a long time it was considered Morris's signature work. Rather, this episode of dancers crawling, standing, lifting, and crawling again serves as a metaphor. This one moment in the performance, that one day in April, can be seen as a part that sums up the whole. This section of the dance, like Morris's choreography at large, is at once unwieldy and graceful, sacred and profane, reverent and repellent. In this movement phrase, as in so many of Mark Morris's dances, the dancers launch from and are bound to the earth, in a beautiful struggle explicitly and profoundly human. Morris's choreography nourishes and sustains us, just as it startles, antagonizes, and steals our breath.

When Mark Morris choreographed *Gloria*, he displayed his rich understanding of structure, both musical and choreographic, his sense of movement invention, and a demonstration of the beauty that can be displayed in form. This dance served notice, foreshadowing dances to come like *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* (1988), *Mosaic and United* (1993), and the recent masterpiece, *V* (2001).

For a long time, Morris's charismatic off-stage personality and bold dance works led dance writers to refer to him as "the bad boy of modern dance." These days, Morris is no less relentless in his assertive presence, both on and off the stage, but audiences and critics alike have recognized that this man's intelligence and corporeality are anything but boyish. This imagined fertile soil in which the dancers toiled during that brief season in the Grand Ballroom represents the richness of choreographic investigation that continues to imbue Morris's work.

Morris himself began dancing after being inspired by a José Greco performance at the age of eight. After studying Spanish dance and ballet, he joined the Koleda Folk Ensemble, a Balkan folk dance group. Trace elements of the work of early modern dance pioneers and folk dance styles appear in some of Morris's works, demonstrating a respect for tradition and a concern with form. In certain pieces like *Grand Duo* (1993) and *The Office* (1994), the influence of the Balkan folk dancing is apparent in the floor patterns and rhythmic footwork. In his newest solo made for himself, *Serenade* (2003), specters of Spanish traditional dance, filtered through Morris's prodigious creative rigor, emerge and disappear.

No matter what movement styles Morris investigates, he is a singular choreographic voice. Inspiration, for Morris, comes from multiple sources. There is no limit to what becomes source material for a dance – essays by French literary theorist Roland Barthes (*Mythologies*, 1986), American square dancing (*Going Away Party*, 1990), a remote-

controlled car (*Deck of Cards*, 1983), poetry by Milton and illustrations by Blake (*L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, 1988) – all of these have merited Morris's choreographic attention.

Mostly Morris is influenced by music. He has an insatiable appetite for music, with incredibly wide-ranging taste. His approach to choreography is often called "musical visualization." He has made more than 100 dances for his company to the music of The Violent Femmes (*Lovey*, 1985), Harry Partch (*Greek to Me*, 1998), Zakir Hussain (*Kolam*, 2003), Henry Purcell (*Dido and Aeneas*, 1989), Franz Schubert (*Bedtime*, 1992), Erik Satie (*Peccadilloes*, 2000), and Stephen Foster (*Someone's Coming to See Me Tonight*, 1995), among many, many others. He demonstrates a rich appreciation for and facility with the more familiar Mozart to the more esoteric Lou Harrison. The company is rare among modern dance companies in that they tour and perform with live musical accompaniment. Morris often choreographs with a score in hand (although he says that he is a terrible musician). However, his understanding of music makes him able to present a kinesthetic interpretation of the rhythmic structure, the overall form, and relationships between melody and harmony. He knows the music and in turn, he teaches us to see it, feel it and hear it, as we never have before.

In an article for *The New Yorker*, Joan Acocella, dance writer and author of a biography titled *Mark Morris*, wrote: "It has always been something of a mystery how Morris, who is a very sophisticated artist, and largely an abstractionist, became such a favorite with the public." Acocella goes on to suggest two reasons for Morris's popularity – one, his sense of humor and, two, his clarity as a choreographer. On any given evening with the Mark Morris Dance Group, the dancers gesture and posture in ways that feel like the ways we move. Morris is not interested in presenting images of otherworldly creatures; these dancers are deeply real in their humanity. We hear and see the feet measuring out complex rhythms with simple walking and running patterns. The dancers give in to gravity and then challenge it. They leap into the air, decorating the space with precisely articulating feet. In partnering sections, Morris allows different pairs to perform the same material with variations that come from their individuality. Unlike ballet, which often works to erase the differences between dancers, Morris finds those differences intriguing. Dancers emerge from the wings, perform an exquisite leap or turning sequence and return to the wings. One wonders how much happens off the stage. No matter how abstract the dance, they move and we are moved.

Morris himself wrote last year in *The New York Times*: "All dances are made for the viewer and for the listener and for the participants and for the hell of it." For us, what remains constant in Morris's work is a celebration of the human body performing unexpected rhythms with lusty physicality. For the hell of it, indeed.

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