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Purchase College  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College presents

# **DANCE MASTERS**

## **MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP**

March 19, 2010



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## Mark Morris Dance Group

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Craig Biesecker	Lauren Grant	Amber Star Merkens
Samuel Black	John Heginbotham	Maile Okamura
Joe Bowie	David Leventhal	Noah Vinson
Elisa Clark	Laurel Lynch	Jenn Weddel
Rita Donahue	Bradon McDonald	Julie Worden
Domingo Estrada, Jr.	Dallas McMurray	Michelle Yard

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## MMDG Music Ensemble

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Colin Fowler	Georgy Valtchev	James Wilson
Jessica Troy	Michi Wiancko	

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**Mark Morris**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**Nancy Umanoff**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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MetLife Foundation is the Mark Morris Dance Group's Official Tour Sponsor.

Major support for the Mark Morris Dance Group is provided by Brooklyn Community Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, The Howard Gilman Foundation, William Randolph Hearst Foundation, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Jane Stine and R.L. Stine and Trust for Mutual Understanding.

The Mark Morris Dance Group New Works Fund is supported by The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Meyer Sound/Helen and John Meyer, The PARC Foundation and Poss Family Foundation.

The Mark Morris Dance Group's performances are made possible with public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency; and National Endowment for the Arts Dance Program.

# PROGRAM

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## Visitation

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Ludwig van Beethoven—

*Cello Sonata No. 4 in*

*C major, Op. 102, No. 1*

MUSIC

Elizabeth Kurtzman

COSTUME DESIGN

James Wilson

CELLO

Nicole Pearce

LIGHTING DESIGN

Colin Fowler

PIANO

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Maile Okamura

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I. *Andante—Allegro vivace*

Craig Biesecker, Joe Bowie, Rita Donahue, Michelle Yard

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II. *Adagio—Tempo d'andante—Allegro vivace*

Craig Biesecker, Joe Bowie, Rita Donahue, John Heginbotham, Noah Vinson,  
Jenn Weddel, Julie Worden, Michelle Yard

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Commissioned in part by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

Premiere: August 5, 2009 – Seiji Ozawa Hall, Tanglewood Music Center, Lenox, MA

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## Pause

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### Candleflowerdance

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Igor Stravinsky—

*Serenade in A*

MUSIC

Katherine M. Patterson

COSTUME DESIGN

Colin Fowler

PIANO

Nicole Pearce

LIGHTING DESIGN

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Craig Biesecker, Rita Donahue, Lauren Grant, John Heginbotham,  
Bradon McDonald, Julie Worden

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For Susan Sontag

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Commissioned in part by Cal Performances, Berkeley

Premiere: September 22, 2005 – Cal Performances, Zellerbach Hall, Berkeley, CA

Music by arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner.

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## Pause

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### Excursions

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Samuel Barber—  
*Excursions for the Piano*  
(Op. 20, IV, III, II, I)  
MUSIC

Katherine M. Patterson  
COSTUME DESIGN

Nicole Pearce  
LIGHTING DESIGN

Colin Fowler  
PIANO

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Craig Biesecker, Elisa Clark, David Leventhal, Laurel Lynch,  
Dallas McMurray, Michelle Yard

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Commissioned in part by the Tanglewood Music Center of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Premiere: June 26, 2008 – Seiji Ozawa Hall, Tanglewood Music Center, Lenox, MA

Music by arrangement with G. Schirmer, Inc., publisher and copyright owner.

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### Intermission

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## V

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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*  
MUSIC

Martin Pakledinaz  
COSTUME DESIGN

Michael Chybowski  
LIGHTING DESIGN

Michi Wiancko  
VIOLIN

Georgy Valtchev  
VIOLIN

Jessica Troy  
VIOLA

James Wilson  
CELLO

Colin Fowler  
PIANO

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Craig Biesecker, Elisa Clark, Rita Donahue, Domingo Estrada Jr.,  
Lauren Grant, John Heginbotham, David Leventhal, Bradon McDonald,  
Dallas McMurray, Amber Star Merckens, Maile Okamura, Noah Vinson,  
Julie Worden, Michelle Yard

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Premiere: October 16, 2001 – Sadler's Wells, London, United Kingdom





### Mark Morris

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 120 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. Morris is also much in demand as a ballet choreographer. He has created seven works for the San Francisco Ballet since 1994 and received commissions from American Ballet Theatre, and the Boston Ballet, among others. His work is also in the repertory of the Pacific Northwest Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, New Zealand

Ballet, Houston Ballet, English National Ballet, and The Royal Ballet. Morris is noted for his musicality and has been described as “undeviating in his devotion to music.” He has worked extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, English National Opera, and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Morris was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991. He has received nine honorary doctorates to date. In 2006, Morris received the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Mayor’s Award for Arts & Culture and a WQXR Gramophone Special Recognition Award. He is the subject of a biography by Joan Acocella (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and Marlowe & Company published a volume of photographs and critical essays entitled *Mark Morris’ L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato: A Celebration*. Morris is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. In 2007, he received the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival lifetime achievement award.

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## Mark Morris Dance Group

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The Mark Morris Dance Group 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, MMDG 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. Based in Brooklyn, NY, the company has maintained and strengthened its ties to several cities around the world, most notably its West Coast home, Cal Performances in Berkeley, CA, and its Midwest home, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts in Urbana, IL. MMDG also appears regularly in New York City, NY; Boston, MA; Fairfax, VA; Seattle, WA; and at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, MA. MMDG made its debut at the Mostly Mozart Festival in 2002 and at the Tanglewood Music Festival in 2003 and has since been invited to both festivals annually. 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. MMDG collaborates with leading orchestras, opera companies, and musicians including cellist Yo-Yo Ma in the Emmy Award-winning film *Falling*

*Down Stairs* (1997); Indian composer Zakir Hussain, Mr. Ma and jazz pianist Ethan Iverson in *Kolam* (2002); The Bad Plus in *Violet Cavern* (2004); pianists Emanuel Ax, Garrick Ohlsson and Yoko Nozaki for *Mozart Dances* (2006); and with the English National Opera in *Four Saints in Three Acts* (2000) and *King Arthur* (2006), among others. MMDG's film and television projects also include *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Hard Nut*, and two documentaries for the U.K.'s *South Bank Show*. In the fall of 2001, MMDG opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, NY, housing rehearsal space for the dance community, outreach programs for local children, as well as a school offering dance classes to students of all ages. For more information, visit [www.mmdg.org](http://www.mmdg.org).

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## The MMDG Music Ensemble

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The MMDG Music Ensemble formed in 1996, performs with the Dance Group at home and on tour and has become integral to the company's creative life. The core group, supplemented by musicians from a large roster of regular guests, has helped the Dance Group achieve an unprecedented streak of close to eight hundred performances with live music. 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. The Ensemble also presents concerts at the Mark Morris Dance Center and other venues, and participates in the Mark Morris Dance, Music and Literacy Project in the New York City public school system.



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### **Craig Biesecker**

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Craig Biesecker, from Waynesboro, PA, 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 MMDG in 2003.

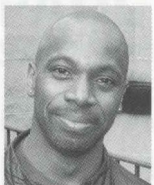


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### **Samuel Black**

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Samuel Black is originally from Berkeley, CA, where he began studying tap at the age of 9 with Katie Maltsberger. He received his B.F.A. in Dance from SUNY Purchase, and also studied at the Rotterdamse Dansacademie in Holland. He has performed in New York with David Parker, Takehiro Ueyama, and Nelly van Bommel. Sam first appeared with MMDG in 2005, and became a company member in 2007.



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### **Joe Bowie**

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Joe Bowie was born in Lansing, MI, and began dancing while attending Brown University where he graduated with honors in English and American

Literature. In New York he has performed in the works of Robert Wilson and Ulysses Dove and also danced with the Paul Taylor Dance Company for two years before going to Belgium to work with Mark Morris in 1989.



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### **Elisa Clark**

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Elisa Clark received her early training from the Maryland Youth Ballet, and her B.F.A. from The Juilliard School, under the direction of Benjamin Harkavy. She danced with the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, the Nederlands Dans Theater, and Battleworks Dance Company, before joining MMDG in 2006. Ms. Clark has also worked with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, as assistant to Robert Battle. She has been on faculty at the American Dance Festival and teaches for MMDG. She is a 2008-2009 Princess Grace Modern Dance Honorarium Award Winner.



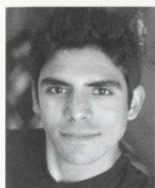
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### **Rita Donahue**

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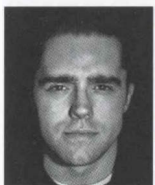
Rita Donahue was born and raised in Fairfax, VA, and attended George Mason University, where she graduated with honors in Dance and English in 2002. She danced with bopi's black sheep/dances by kraig patterson and joined MMDG in 2003.





**Domingo Estrada, Jr.**

Domingo Estrada, Jr., a native of Victoria, TX, has recently acquired a B.F.A. in Ballet and Modern Dance at Texas Christian University. Currently, he also works with choreographers Leslie Scott, BODYart Dance; Mary Seidman, Mary Seidman & Dancers; and Christian von Howard, Von Howard Project. He made his debut with the Mark Morris Dance Group during *The Hard Nut* at Cal Performances, Berkeley, in 2007 and became a company member in 2009. Domingo would like to thank God, his family and all who support his passion!



**Colin Fowler**

Colin Fowler (piano) hails from Kansas City, KS and began studying piano at the age of five. After attending Interlochen Arts Academy, he received his Bachelors and Masters Degrees at The Julliard School, where he studied organ with Gerre Hancock and piano with Abbey Simon. He has played and directed music across the country, at venues including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and The Library of Congress. Colin has also performed with the American Brass Quintet, Deborah Voight, James Galway, and at many of the churches and synagogues in New York. Broadway credits include the recent revival of

42nd Street and the current production of The Tony Award winning musical, *Jersey Boys*. Colin is the Chair of the Theory and Ear Training department at Nyack College, where he is a full-time professor and conductor of the Nyack College Chorale. He has played with the MMDG Music Ensemble since 2006.



**Lauren Grant**

Lauren Grant, born and raised in Highland Park, IL, has danced with the Mark Morris Dance Group since 1996. Appearing in over 40 of Mark Morris' works, she performs leading roles in *The Hard Nut* and *Mozart Dances*. Ms. Grant has been featured in *Time Out New York*, *Dance Magazine*, the book *Meet the Dancers*, and is the subject of a photograph by Annie Leibovitz. She graduated with a B.F.A. from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Ms. Grant is on faculty at MMDG's school and also teaches dance internationally. She is married to fellow dancer David Leventhal.



**John Heginbotham**

John Heginbotham is from Anchorage, AK. He is a graduate of The Julliard School (BFA '93) and has danced in the companies of Susan Marshall, Pilobolus Dance Theater (guest artist), John Jasperse, and Ben Munisteri. His choreography is featured in the work of

recording artists Fischerspooner, and in *Champ: A Space Opera* (New York International Fringe Festival). As a teacher, John works regularly with members of the Brooklyn Parkinson Group. He joined the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1998.



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### David Leventhal

David Leventhal has danced with MMDG since 1997. He performs principal roles in *The Hard Nut*, *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, on *Motifs of Shakespeare*. He is a faculty member of the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, and teaches technique and repertory at schools and universities. He is one of the founding teachers of MMDG's Dance for PD program, and leads classes around the world for people with Parkinson's disease. Raised in Newton, MA, he received his early training from Boston Ballet School, and graduated from Brown University with honors in English Literature. He is married to fellow dancer Lauren Grant.



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### Laurel Lynch

Laurel Lynch began her dance training in Petaluma, CA. After a few too many Nutcrackers she moved to New York to attend The Juilliard School where she performed works by Robert Battle, Margie Gillis, José Limón, and

Ohad Naharin. Since graduation in May 2003, Laurel has danced for Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre, Sue Bernhard Danceworks, Pat Catterson, Stephan Koplowitz, and T.E.A. (Transpersonal Education and Art). She performed at the Festival Oltre Passo in Lecce, Italy and appeared as a guest artist with Petaluma City Ballet. Laurel performed with MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.



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### Bradon McDonald

Bradon McDonald 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 MMDG in 2000.



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### Dallas McMurray

Dallas McMurray, from El Cerrito, CA, began dancing at age 4, studying jazz, tap, and acrobatics with Katie Maltsberger, and ballet with Yukiko Sakakura. He received a B.F.A. in dance from the California Institute of the

Arts. Dallas performed with the Limón Dance Company in addition to works by Jiri Kylian, Alonzo King, Robert Moses, and Colin Connor. Dallas joined MMDG performed with MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.



### **Amber Star Merkens**

Amber Star Merkens is originally from Newport, OR, where she began her dance training with Nancy Mittleman. She received her B.F.A. from The Juilliard School in 1999 and then danced with the Limón Dance Company for two years. She is a recipient of the 2001 Princess Grace Award and has presented her own choreography both in New York and abroad. Amber joined MMDG in 2001.



### **Maile Okamura**

Maile Okamura is originally from San Diego, CA. She was a member of Boston Ballet II in 1992-93 and Ballet Arizona in 1993-96. She has danced with choreographers Neta Pulvermacher, Zvi Gotheiner, and Gerald Casel, among others. Maile began working with MMDG in 1998 and became a company member in 2001.



### **Jessica Troy**

Jessica Troy (viola), a native New Yorker, has played with the Mark Morris Dance Group Music Ensemble since 1998. She wears a wide variety of freelance hats; a member of the Brooklyn Philharmonic, she has recently performed with Sequitur, the new music ensemble, on baroque viola with Renee Fleming on the David Letterman Show, and everything in between. She has participated at many illustrious chamber music festivals, including Prussia Cove and Marlboro-- she can be heard on the latter's 50th anniversary CD. She is a proud resident of MMDG's own Fort Greene neighborhood in Brooklyn.



### **Georgy Valtchev**

Georgy Valtchev (violin) was born in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, began his violin studies at the age of six and gave his first performance with orchestra six years later at the Music Academy of his native city. He received his basic music education first at the Plovdiv Music School, and then at the State Music School "Lubomir Pipkov", Sofia as a student of Boyanka Shopova, Vlado Vladigerov, Mitcho Dimitrov and Prof. Dora Ivanova. At age sixteen, he won the Grand Prize and the Special Prize at the "Kocian" International Competition in the then Czechoslovakia. Georgy Valtchev came to the United States



as a scholarship student of Dorothy Delay and Masao Kawasaki at the Juilliard School in New York, where he earned his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees. Mr. Valtchev has recorded a CD for the Gega label featuring solo and chamber music works by composer Victoria Bond. He has made numerous recordings for the Bulgarian National Radio and has appeared in live broadcasts of the Bulgarian National Radio and Television and WFMT Chicago.

Danceworks, Vencil Dance Trio, Rocha Dance Theater, TEA Dance Company and with various choreographers including Alan Danielson and Ella Ben-Aharon. Ms. Weddel performed with MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.



**Noah Vinson**

Noah Vinson 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 began working with MMDG in 2002 and became a company member in 2004.



**Michi Wiancko**

Michi Wiancko (violin) has performed with orchestras including the New York Philharmonic and Los Angeles Philharmonic, and in recital and chamber appearances across the nation. Michi made her New York solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall after winning the 2002 Concert Artists Guild International Competition. She was featured as an "Artist to Watch" on the cover of the January 2007 issue of *SYMPHONY* Magazine. She has toured extensively throughout the country as soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician, and has appeared in venues such as the Kennedy Center, Sydney Opera House, Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Gallery, Library of Congress, New York Town Hall, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and numerous others. Michi has toured with Musicians from Marlboro as well as the Los Angeles Piano Quartet. In March 2007 she gave the world premiere of a concerto written for her by Margaret Brouwer, which she performed with Cleveland's CityMusic Orchestra. Michi is also the singer and songwriter for her project called Kono Michi, comprised of string quartet, up-



**Jenn Weddel**

Jenn Weddel received her early training from Boulder Ballet Company near where she grew up in Longmont, CO. She holds a B.F.A. from Southern Methodist University and also studied at Boston Conservatory, Colorado University and The Laban Center, London. Since moving to New York in 2001, Ms. Weddel has created and performed with RedWall Dance Theater, Sue Bernhard



right bass and drums. Kono Michi has performed in Merkin Hall, Symphony Space's Thalia Theater, Brooklyn's BAM Café and Barbes, and the World Café Live in Philadelphia. Her self-produced debut album of original music called "*9 Death Haiku*" has recently been released. A native of Southern California, Michi began her violin studies at the age of 3. She studied with Donald Weilerstein at the Cleveland Institute of Music, and completed her Master's degree at The Juilliard School, working with Robert Mann.



**James Wilson**

James Wilson (cello) has consistently performed to the delight of audiences throughout the world, from small towns to the world's most illustrious venues, for the past fifteen years. He has appeared in America's Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall and Kennedy Center, Casal's Hall in Tokyo, and the Sydney Opera House. As recitalist and chamber musician, he has performed at music festivals around the world such as the Hong Kong Arts Festival, the City of London Festival, the Deutches Mozartfest in Bavaria, the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York and the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado. Wilson has collaborated with such diverse artists as violinist Joshua Bell, flutist Eugenia Zukerman, pianist Christopher O'Reily, guitarist Eliot Fisk, actress Claire Bloom, and the Tokyo String Quartet. He has performed with many ensembles including the Orpheus Chamber Orches-

tra, the Richardson Chamber Players, the Music of the Spheres Society, and the Alliance Players. A former member of the Shanghai and Chester String Quartets, he recorded and toured extensively worldwide with both groups. Championing musical works from all periods, Mr. Wilson's performs on Baroque as well as modern cello, in repertoire ranging from the seventeenth century to new works written especially for him. He is currently the Artistic Director of the Richmond Festival of Music in Virginia and is on the faculty at Columbia University in New York.



**Julie Worden**

Julie Worden graduated from the North Carolina School of the Arts and joined MMDG in 1994.



**Michelle Yard**

Michelle Yard was born in Brooklyn, NY, and began her professional dance training at the New York City High School of the Performing Arts. Upon graduation she received the Helen Tamiris and B'nai Brith awards. For three years she was a scholarship student at the Alvin Ailey Dance Center, and attended New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, where she graduated with a B.F.A. Michelle joined MMDG in 1997. Mom, thank you.

## **Mark Morris Dance Group Staff**

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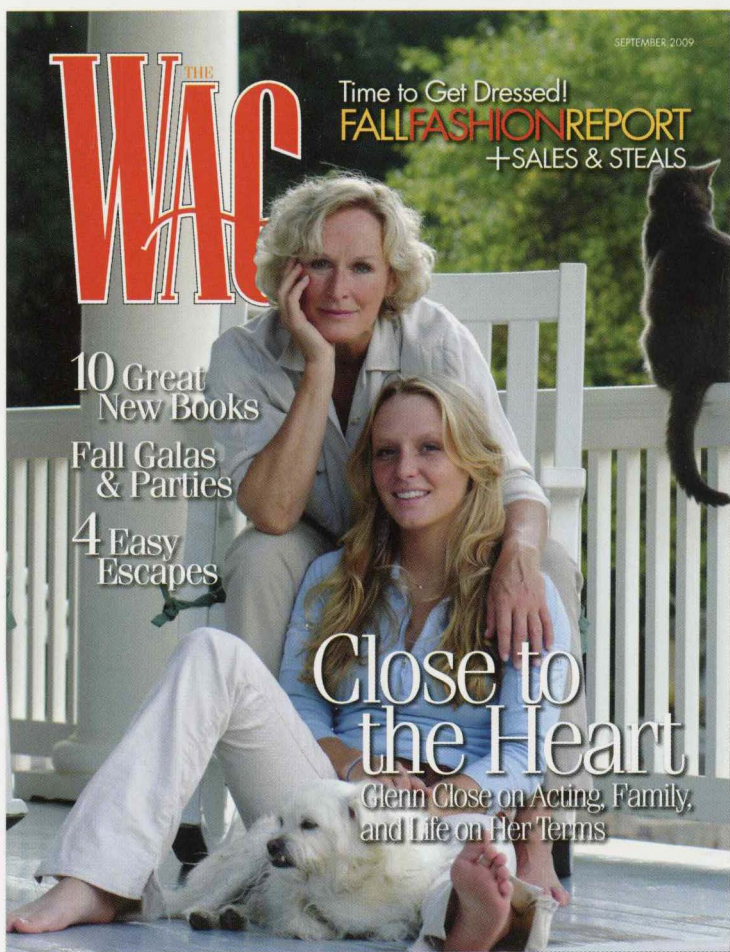
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