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## North Carolina Dance Theatre Announces 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season

### 2010-2011 Season Highlights:

- 13 Charlotte premieres
- Mark Godden's *Dracula* opens the season
- *Innovative Works* "goes green," with choreography inspired by environmental themes
- Resident Choreographer Dwight Rhoden creating world premiere inspired by the life and work of Charlotte-born artist Romare Bearden
- Series showcasing women choreographers includes work by dance icon Twyla Tharp

Charlotte, N.C. – North Carolina Dance Theatre President and Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux has announced the 2010-2011 Season. NC Dance Theatre, founded in 1970, celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this season with 13 Charlotte premieres.

"We're thrilled to be bringing our audience 13 new works this season," said Executive Director Doug Singleton. "The new economic realities have created challenges for our artistic leadership. Through partnership and collaboration we've found ways to produce new work for our audience."

The Season begins with the Charlotte-premiere of *Dracula* by choreographer Mark Godden, complete with lavish costumes and sets. In November, the popular *Innovative Works* series "goes green," with choreographers presenting works inspired by environmental themes. Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux put together a diverse evening of dance for *Director's Choice*, featuring Czechoslovakian choreographer Jiri Bubenicek and a **world premiere** by Resident Choreographer Dwight Rhoden, inspired by the life and work of Charlotte-born artist Romare Bearden. For the first time in its history, Dance Theatre is devoting a series to women choreographers, including a Company premiere of *The Golden Section* by legendary choreographer Twyla Tharp.

"This is an exciting season," said Bonnefoux, who joined Dance Theatre as artistic director in 1996 with his wife and fellow New York City ballet star, Patricia McBride. "This season brings so many new works to Charlotte. It is such a pleasure to research choreographers from all over the world and choose the ones I know our audience will enjoy."

*Nutcracker* will be performed at the Belk Theater, while all other performances will be at the Knight Theater in the Wells Fargo Cultural Campus. Dance Theatre offers season subscription packages starting as low as \$66 for a three show package. For more information about subscribing to Dance Theatre call 704.335.1010 or visit [ncdance.org](http://ncdance.org).

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## 2010-2011 Season Performances

### Dracula

Knight Theater

October 8-9 & 14-16, 2010

The 2010-2011 Season opens with Mark Godden's full-length **Dracula**. Set in England in the late 1800's, the ballet uses excerpts from Gustav Mahler's Symphonies No. 1, 2 and 9. *Dracula* was choreographed for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1998 and was Godden's first full-length ballet.

"One thing is for sure, its delicious vampires and crazed gargoyles were more erotic than anything you'll have trick or treating at your front door," wrote reviewer Ann Hicks. According to *Arts Today*, Godden's *Dracula* "combines wit, intelligence, theatricality and fine dancing in one very entertaining package."

Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux hopes *Dracula* will become a mainstay in the Company's repertoire. "The ballet *Dracula* is a tradition in many American cities, and I hope it becomes one in Charlotte as well," said Bonnefoux.

### Innovative Works

Knight Theater

November 11-13, 2010

The popular **Innovative Works** series "goes green." The annual series typically features contemporary choreography based on a variety of themes, but this year all of the works are inspired by environmental themes such as conservation, pollution and waste. Based on the Company's successful *Green Pieces* performed in Chautauqua, N.Y., in 2009, *Innovative Works* features works by NC Dance Theatre 2 Director Mark Diamond and dancer Sasha Janes, and also premieres by dancer David Ingram and Resident Choreographer Dwight Rhoden.

"When I was first approached about choreographing a ballet with environmental themes, my biggest reservation was how to choreograph a piece to raise people's awareness, without over politicizing it," said dancer and choreographer Sasha Janes, who will present two works, **Tree Hugger** and **Kinetic Energy**, at *Innovative Works*. "The answer was simple; choreograph a beautiful ballet that transcends political overtones and makes the audience think about the world around them."

### Nutcracker

Belk Theater

December 10-12 & 17-19, 2010

"If you want to see the full-blown *Nutcracker*, this is the one," wrote *Charlotte Observer* reviewer Steven Brown. **Nutcracker**, Charlotte's favorite holiday tradition, celebrates the sights and sounds of the holiday season with a cast of over 100 dancers, including children from the community. As the anchor of Dance Theatre's family-friendly Matinee Magic Series, *Nutcracker* is attended by over 10,000 each year.

The holiday classic, choreographed by Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, follows the young Clara who receives a magical Nutcracker doll from her mysterious uncle, Herr Drosselmeyer. After a ferocious battle with the Mouse King, the Nutcracker comes to life and takes Clara on a journey to the majestic Land of Snow and the delectable Land of Sweets, where she is greeted by the beautiful Sugar Plum Fairy.

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## Director's Choice: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Performance

Knight Theater

March 10-12, 2011

Dance Theatre celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with **Director's Choice**, an annual series in which Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux selects ballets and choreographers he feels are important to share with the audience. One of the ballets Bonnefoux chose is **Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux**, by legendary choreographer and Bonnefoux's teacher and mentor, George Balanchine. Set to a Tchaikovsky score originally used in Act III of *Swan Lake*, Bonnefoux said the ballet depicts the essence of Balanchine's musicality and sense of tradition.

Also on the program is **Satto (Wind Dance)** by former Dance Theatre Artistic Director Salvatore Aiello. *Satto*, premiered by Dance Theatre in 1983, represents an encounter between the wind and a leaf. With a distinctive Japanese style, the pas de deux is propelled by the music of Katsutoshi Nagasawa and Chip Davis.

Czechoslovakian dancer turned choreographer Jiri Bubenicek is working with Dance Theatre for the first time, staging his ballet **Le souffle de l'esprit (the breathe of the spirit)**. "Jiri Bubenicek is a rising star, and dance companies all over the world are beginning to show great interest in his choreography," said Bonnefoux. "Dance Theatre is proud to be the first American company, after New York City Ballet, to work with him."

Coordinating with the centennial celebration of visual artist and Charlotte native Romare Bearden, Resident Choreographer Dwight Rhoden will present a **world premiere** inspired by the life and work of Bearden. Bearden, whose work is displayed in Charlotte at The Mint Museum and Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, is known for textured collages depicting scenes of social customs in modern African American society. Rhoden will use Bearden's influence, blending both artists' vision and technique, to choreograph his world premiere.

## Spotlight: An Evening of Women Choreographers

Knight Theater

April 28-30, 2011

Dance Theatre's 2010-2011 Season culminates with **Spotlight**, a series focusing on women choreographers. Dance Theatre will perform Twyla Tharp's **The Golden Section** for the first time. *The New York Times* called Tharp "an American artist of the first order" and wrote that she has "famously broken down the barriers between ballet and modern dance, fusing them into a genre specifically her own." When describing *The Golden Section* Tharp said, "the dancers stormed the stage with a new, positive energy" and anything that wasn't sheer dancing "disappeared into a harmonious wash of light, costumes, music and movement."

Legendary choreographer Martha Graham's influence can be seen in **Requiem**, a piece by former Graham Company principal dancer Jacquelyn Buglisi. Set to Gabriel Faure's "Requiem," Buglisi uses five female dancers, costumed in long layered silk skirts by costumer A. Christina Giannini. According to Buglisi, who choreographed the ballet in 2001, the main themes of *Requiem* are man's vulnerabilities and peace.

North Carolina native and former NC Dance Theatre 2 dancer Emery LeCrone is creating a new work for **Spotlight**. LeCrone was born in Greensboro, N.C., and studied dance at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts before joining Dance Theatre. It was during her time at Dance Theatre when she began choreographing. Jennifer Dunning of *The New York Times* called LeCrone's choreography "...a delightful whole, exploring innovative partnering as well as the ways spinning full-throttle movement can echo and incorporate the planes of space around it."

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## 2010-2011 Matinee Magic Series

Dance Theatre remains committed to family-friendly programming through its Matinee Magic Series. Matinee Magic is an excellent and affordable way to introduce children to the wonderment of dance. With colorful sets and costumes, action packed adventures, and opportunities to meet the performers, Matinee Magic ballets are especially suited for the entire family.

This year's Matinee Magic Series includes choreographer Mark Diamond's ***Trick 'r Treat*** and ***Little Mermaid***, and Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux's ***Nutcracker***. Last year *Creative Loafing* reviewer Perry Tannenbaum wrote, "Diamond's humor and storytelling throughout are up to his usual high standard."

Matinee Magic subscriptions, including tickets to three ballets, start as low as \$25.50 for children. The subscription includes a post-performance reception with the cast after each Matinee Magic performance and an autographed poster. For more information about subscribing to Matinee Magic call 704.335.1010 or visit [ncdance.org](http://ncdance.org).

### Trick 'r Treat

Knight Theater  
October 16-17, 2010

From picking the perfect costume to amusing Halloween pranks, the spooky and silly *Trick 'r Treat* takes kids on a Halloween adventure. "I wanted to piggy-back onto the *Dracula* performance with a production for kids and families," said choreographer Mark Diamond. "I had thrilling Halloween experiences growing up! For this ballet I'm including humor, excitement and the wonder children experienced when trick 'r treating."

### Little Mermaid

Knight Theater  
March 12-13, 2011

Audiences will dive into the underwater world of choreographer Mark Diamond's *Little Mermaid* in March. The Hans Christian Anderson tale, last performed in 2008, is brought to life with colorful fish, sparkling seahorses, slithering eels and tumbling starfish. Children of all ages will enjoy following the Little Mermaid on her journey as she discovers a whole new world!

## About North Carolina Dance Theatre

NC Dance Theatre was founded in 1970 by Robert Lindgren, the dean of dance at Winston-Salem's University of North Carolina School of the Arts. The Company toured both internationally and nationally and received the National Endowment for the Arts distinction as the nation's highest rated touring company in 1982. Salvatore Aiello became Artistic Director in 1985 and moved the Company to Charlotte in 1990.

Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux took over as artistic director in 1996, with Patricia McBride as associate artistic director. Since then they have added new works to Dance Theatre's repertoire, attracted talented dancers from all over the world, grown the School of Dance and championed the effort to build a new facility for Dance Theatre. The Patricia McBride & Jean-Pierre Center for Dance opens in uptown Charlotte in June 2010. The Center will house the Company's rehearsal facilities, School of Dance, administrative offices and a performance venue.

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For more information visit [ncdance.org](http://ncdance.org).