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**Bates Dance Festival presents 25th Anniversary Gala Concert
July 28, 2007**

LEWISTON, Maine – Highlighting the 2007 Festival will be the **25th Anniversary Gala Concert**, featuring performances by renowned intergenerational dance pioneer, Liz Lerman, winner of the MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Fellowship; hip hop legend, Rennie Harris, voted one of the most influential people in the last one hundred years in Philadelphia; Obie Award winning choreographer, Doug Varone, acclaimed for his work in theatre, opera, television and film; four time "Bessie" award winner, Bebe Miller, known for her virtuosic works exploring the human condition; Barrymore award winner, David Dorfman, recognized for his collaborative community projects; acclaimed theatre, opera and dance choreographer and former STOMP cast member, Seán Curran; and jazz master and Broadway veteran, Danny Buraczeski. Capping the night will be community/site artists, PearsonWidrig DanceTheater, performing an excerpt from their moving portrait, *Katrina Katrina: Love Letter to New Orleans*. The festival presents the 25th Anniversary Gala Concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, July 28, in the Lewiston Middle School Auditorium, 75 Russell St. in Lewiston.

Over the past twenty-five years these seminal artists have graced the stage of the Bates Dance Festival showcasing visionary works, many of which have been developed at the Festival. For this special occasion each artist will perform a new or re-staged solo work in celebration of our 25th anniversary.

Liz Lerman has been described by the *Washington Post* as "the source of an epochal revolution in the scope and purposes of dance art," her dance/theater works have been seen throughout the United States and

abroad. Her aesthetic approach spans the range from abstract to personal to political, while her working process emphasizes research, translation between artistic media, and intensive collaboration with dancers and communities. She founded Liz Lerman Dance Exchange in 1976 and has cultivated the company's unique multi-generational ensemble, with dancers from 25 to 72 into a leading force in contemporary dance.

In 1992 Rennie Harris founded Rennie Harris Puremovement, a hip-hop dance company dedicated to preserving and disseminating hip-hop culture through workshops, residencies, and public performances. He has brought these "social" dances to the "concert" stage, creating a cohesive dance style that finds a cogent voice in the theater. He has been compared to twentieth-century dance legends Alvin Ailey and Bob Fosse. Harris has been recognized with three "Bessies" (New York Dance and Performance Awards), two Alvin Ailey Black Choreographers awards, an Ethnic Dance Award and the Alpert Award in the Arts for choreography and was nominated for an Lawrence Olivier Award (UK).

Doug Varone creates dances for the concert stage, as well as opera, Broadway, regional theater, film and television. He founded Doug Varone and Dancers in 1986 to explore and process his particular choreographic vision. He is the recipient of numerous honors including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a "Bessie" (New York Dance and Performance Award) for Sustained Achievement in Choreography and, most recently, a 2006 OBIE Award. His work has been singled out for its extraordinary physical daring, vivid musicality, and genius for capturing through movement the nuances of true human interaction. The company has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe, South America and Asia, performing regularly at preeminent venues and festivals.

Bebe Miller has been making dances for over 20 years and formed Bebe Miller Company in 1985. Known for a mix of virtuosic, athletic speed and fundamental humanity, the company has been produced at major dance centers throughout the US and abroad. In addition to her ongoing work with her ensemble, Miller has received commissions from Boston Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theater, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company and Philadanco, among other groups across the country and abroad. She has collaborated with artists in film and digital media work and has received a John Simon

Guggenheim Fellowship, and four "Bessie" New York Dance and Performance Awards for choreography.

David Dorfman founded his company, David Dorfman Dance in 1985 and has performed extensively in New York City and throughout North and South America, Great Britain, and Europe. His work has been commissioned widely in the U.S. and in Europe and in 2003 he won a Barrymore Award for best choreography at the Prince Music Theater (Philadelphia) for the original musical *Green Violin*. He has been honored with four fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, three from the New York Foundation for the Arts, an American Choreographer's Award, a 1996 "Bessie" (New York Dance & Performance Award) for his community-based project *Familiar Movements (The Family Project)*, and most recently received a Guggenheim fellowship for his work on "underground".

After a career on Broadway appearing in such musicals as "Mame" with Angela Lansbury and "The Act" with Liza Minnelli, Danny Buraczeski formed the original New York City-based JAZZDANCE in 1979. Based in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul since 1992, the company performed at leading concert halls and festivals in more than 40 states, in Europe, Russia and the Caribbean. In April of 2005, JAZZDANCE closed its doors with a twenty-five year retrospective concert at the Southern Theater in Minneapolis. Many of Buraczeski's works for JAZZDANCE were commissioned by presenters around the country including the Library of Congress, whose 1997 support of "Among These Cares" was this institution's first dance commission in more than 50 years. He was named Artist of the Year by the Minneapolis Star Tribune in 2000.

Seán Curran first made his mark on the dance world as a leading dancer with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. He was an original member of the New York City cast of the Off-Broadway percussion extravaganza "Stomp," performing in the show for four years. Seán Curran Company, founded in 1997, has toured throughout the United States and performed in festivals in France and Germany. Curran has also choreographed for the New York City Opera and Metropolitan Opera, Playwrights Horizons, and the Shakespeare in the Park and for

Broadway in James Joyce's "The Dead". Irish American Magazine selected Curran as one of its "Top 100" in the year 2000.

Sara Pearson and Patrik Widrig, artistic directors of PEARSONWIDRIG DANCETHEATER, have gained an international following for dance theater work that transforms the familiar into the mysterious, the subversive, and the intimate. Presenting "dance theater at its funniest and most compelling" (NZZ, Switzerland), they have been touring extensively throughout the US, Europe, Latin America, India, Korea, Japan, and New Zealand since 1987. In addition to their concert stage work, their site installations and community performance residencies combining dance, music, text, and video have taken them from rowboats in New York City's Central Park to the Great Lawn at Jacob's Pillow, to the Eiu-In Buddhist temple in Kyoto, Japan.

In addition to main stage performances, the festival offers a selection of free and low-cost events. Complete information is available at the website.

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