

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jessica Fogel: [jkfogel@umich.edu](mailto:jkfogel@umich.edu)  
(734) 657-8788**

**ANN ARBOR DANCE WORKS 30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON: A FEAST OF DANCES**

In celebration of its 30th anniversary season, **Ann Arbor Dance Works** proudly presents “**A Feast of Dances**” featuring exciting new works and revivals by University of Michigan Dance faculty choreographers **Missy Beck, Amy Chavasse, Bill DeYoung, Jessica Fogel, Peter Sparling, Sandra Torijano, and Robin Wilson**. Also on the program will be an excerpt from **Gay Delanghe’s** exuberant work to the music of Fats Waller, *Dancin’ Fats*, performed in 1985 on the company’s inaugural concert. Audiences are invited to travel through the Museum spaces to savor a rich array of dance delicacies. The evening will conclude with a dessert reception--with real cake--to enjoy and celebrate this festive occasion. Performances will take place on **Thursday, June 18 and Friday, June 19, at 7:30 PM at the University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor 48109. The performances are free of charge.** Seating is limited. Tickets are required to secure a seat and can be reserved through the Michigan Union Ticket Office (MUTO), located on the ground floor of the Michigan Union, 530 S. State Street, Ann Arbor, (734) 763-8587. Tickets can also be gotten online at [www.mutotix.com](http://www.mutotix.com). Remaining tickets will be distributed at the door on the day of the performance, beginning at 6:30 PM.

- For further information, please visit the **Ann Arbor Dance Works website:** <http://annarbordanceworks.com>
- Follow us on Facebook and Twitter, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ann-Arbor-Dance-Works/116357105065295> and [@AADanceWorks](https://twitter.com/AADanceWorks).

**MORE ABOUT “A FEAST OF DANCES”:**

The variety of short dances will be performed throughout the museum spaces. Greeting the audience upon their arrival will be a new group work by **Missy Beck**, performed in the outdoor plaza of the museum’s State Street entrance. Beck’s dancers will provide both point and counterpoint to the architecture of the museum, taking inspiration from the natural and manmade elements of the plaza setting. Inside the museum, the performance continues with an immersive, "hors d'oeuvres" section, during which the audience will be led through the museum to various locations to view brief 5-6 minute dances. Within this "hors d'oeuvres" section, the following works will be presented:

- **Peter Sparling**, a founding member of Ann Arbor Dance Works and Rudolf Arnheim Distinguished University Professor of Dance, reimagines for the screen a poem by Benjamin Landry entitled "The Snowy Owl". While a student in UM's MFA Program in Creative Writing, Landry approached Sparling with his idea to write a suite of poems inspired by films of famous dancers. "The Snowy Owl" resulted from his viewing a 1954 black & white film of Martha Graham's masterwork, "Night Journey". Sparling, in turn, embodied Landry's surreal poem in a movement soliloquy that was videotaped against greenscreen then edited into a black void alongside Landry's text. In *The Snowy Owl*, a befuddled middle-aged man in pajamas--caught in a web of domestic uncertainty--negotiates a bizarre terrain. Sparling’s screen dance will be viewed in the Helmut Stern Auditorium of the museum.

- Inspired by the museum setting, **Jessica Fogel** will revive excerpts from three of her former solos inspired by visual artists, to create a new collage for a trio of women. Prints and paintings of Mary Cassatt, Jan Vermeer, and Nora Venturelli provide a springboard for the dance, which will be performed on staircases and open areas bridging the old and new wings of the museum. Performers are Yoshiko Iwai, Jillian Hopper and Patty Solórzano. Fogel will also choreograph a procession that provides a segue from the “main course” section of the evening in the museum apse, to the dessert reception—with real cake-- in the museum Forum space. Fogel is a founding member and artistic director of the company.
- **Amy Chavasse**, Associate Professor of Dance, will present a new solo created in collaboration with and performed by dancer Noie Porat in the “vertical space” of the museum’s new wing. The solo is inspired by the vertical heights of the space, as well as by a structural installation by designer Kasia Mrozewska that frames the dancer. Chavasse describes her works as follows: “My dances are deceptively sweet, rambunctious monsters. With love and mischief in their eyes, they sideswipe the conventions of proper comportment and expectation, landing with a soft thump, at a bright new threshold, each time they come out to play.”

The “hors d’oeuvres” are followed by a "main course" section of the evening, taking place in the museum apse, where audience members will be seated in the round at balcony and ground levels. In this section of the evening, the audience will view the following short works:

- In **Robin Wilson’s** haunting duet *Blues/Crossroads* (1996), dancer Jennifer Harge reprises Wilson’s original role as a woman at the crossroads of her life. There she encounters another being from another realm that helps her to discover her own path. Wilson, Associate Professor of Dance, performs in this work as well.
- **Sandra Torijano**, Associate Professor of Dance presents *El perfume de un beso*, (the perfume of a kiss). Dancer KC Shonk will perform this engaging solo set to a song by Aristides Baltodano and Manuel Rodríguez. Performed by Costa Rican singer Arnolando Castillo, the song tells the story of a broken-hearted lover.
- Founding company member and Professor of Dance **Bill DeYoung** presents a new version of his 1975 work *At Last Departs* created at the Harvard Dance Center where he was on faculty and also one of the featured choreographers. This engaging duet was selected for presentation on the annual NYC Dance Theatre Workshop’s "Young Choreographers Showcase" in 1977. It will be performed by Jimi Nyugen and Kasia Reilly.
- Concluding the “main course” section of the evening will be an excerpt from *Dancin’ Fats*, choreographed by founding member **Gay Delanghe** (1940-2006) to the exuberant music of Fats Waller, and performed on the company’s inaugural concert in 1985. Described by *The NY Times*, commenting on the company’s NY premiere season as a “bright, inventive work for six dancers and six chairs,” the dance will be performed by a double cast of some of the original members of the cast (DeYoung, Fogel and Sparling) joined by alumni and other dancers.

Following the “main course” the audience will be led by dancers to the museum forum space in *Have your cake...*, choreographed by **Jessica Fogel**. Audience members will be invited to enjoy a dessert reception—with real cake—to celebrate this festive occasion.

The concerts have been generously sponsored and funded by University of Michigan Gay Delanghe Endowment; University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance Faculty Research Fund; University of Michigan Department of Dance, and University of Michigan Museum of Art.

### **ABOUT ANN ARBOR DANCE WORKS:**

Formed in 1985, **Ann Arbor Dance Works** is the resident professional dance company of the University of Michigan Department of Dance. The company shares a wide-ranging repertory with audiences in an annual spring season and in community performances. In addition to producing works by resident faculty choreographers, the company hosts guest artists from the US and abroad. Designers, poets, videographers, visual artists, musicians and composers collaborate with company members, contributing to the creation of innovative and multi-layered works of resonance, depth, and beauty. Performers include faculty, guest artists, alumni, and current Dance students. Since its inception, Ann Arbor Dance Works has produced choreography to critical and popular acclaim in New York City, throughout the Midwest, and internationally. The company has also presented several large-scale site-specific dances with a variety of Ann Arbor community partners. Artistic Director for the company is Jessica Fogel.

"Audience members could feel an intimate connection with all the performers. [The program's works] were exhilarating.... evocative.... glowing.... radiantly danced" Kate O'Neill, *Dance Magazine*

"wonderful dancing,...clever choreography, smart and witty, artful and artless, ...evocative...beautiful" Susan Nisbett, [annarbor.com](http://annarbor.com)

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