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**Strathmore and CityDance present CityDance Ensemble in *The Songwriters*,
a collection of dances centered around America's great songwriters**

*The concert at the Music Center at Strathmore includes an American Masterpiece by choreographer Sophie Maslow,
a spirited dance by Paul Gordon Emerson set to the music of Bruce Springsteen, and more*

N. Bethesda, MD—In a tribute to some of America's greatest songwriters, Strathmore and CityDance present **CityDance Ensemble** at the **Music Center at Strathmore** on **Friday, June 13** dancing to the music of **Woody Guthrie, Sonny Terry, and Bruce Springsteen**. Complementing the music with choreography by **Sophie Maslow, Jane Dudley**, and CityDance Artistic Director **Paul Gordon Emerson**, CityDance delivers its 2007-2008 season finale concert with a selection of dances ranging from the early days of modern dance to the contemporary interpretations of movement and meaning. Completing the program is **Brenda Way's *On a Train Heading South***, a daring piece that bravely addresses global warming.

The Songwriters takes place **Friday, June 13 at 8pm** in the Concert Hall at the **Music Center at Strathmore**, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, MD. Tickets are priced at \$25 & \$35 and are available in person at the Strathmore Ticket Office (5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, MD), online at www.strathmore.org, or by phone at **301.581.5100**. VIP tickets are also available for \$100, providing the best seats in the house and an opportunity to mingle with the artists at a post-concert reception. The concert is co-presented by Strathmore and CityDance Ensemble.

Opening the program is Sophie Maslow's legendary 1942 work *Folksay*, for which CityDance was awarded an **American Masterpieces: Dance** award, the dance component of a major initiative of the **National Endowment for the Arts** administered by **New England Foundation for the Arts**. This grant, given to only ten dance companies each year, is designed to support the reconstruction and restaging of historically significant American dance work that will tour nationally. *Folksay* is a 26-minute work for eight dancers that features two guitarists who play the traditional folk songs of **Woody Guthrie** and recite **Carl Sandburg's** poem *The People, Yes*.

"CityDance is honored to have received the American Masterpieces grant to reconstruct *Folksay*," notes Mr. Emerson. "Presenting great works from the pioneers of modern dance is an important

(more)

part of CityDance’s mission, as it allows us to keep this part of our history alive while demonstrating the continuing relevance of the art form.”

CityDance continues its commitment to reviving great works of modern dance with Jane Dudley’s *Harmonica Breakdown*, created in 1938 as a tribute to the challenges and accomplishments of the common man during the Depression. Reconstructed for CityDance by **Sheron Wray**, *Harmonica Breakdown* demonstrates the simple, clean, and exceptionally clear aesthetic that made modern dance both significant and sustainable. Ms. Dudley created *Harmonica Breakdown* after hearing blues harmonica player Sonny Terry perform live at Carnegie Hall, marking one of the first times an African American had performed on that stage.

Paul Gordon Emerson’s *Born to Run* celebrates the iconic music and legendary lyrics of Bruce Springsteen as it reflects the spirit of youth, adventure, and growing up in America. The *Born to Run* suite features live accompaniment by renowned harmonicist **Frédéric Yonnet** as well as recordings from Springsteen’s celebrated 1975 release.

“Springsteen’s music defined rock and roll for several generations,” comments Mr. Emerson. “The opportunity to stage dance to that music is both a privilege and a challenge, and I can’t think of any better music to accompany our season finale performance at the Music Center at Strathmore.”

Closing the program is *On a Train Heading South*, a vigorous ensemble piece choreographed in 2005 by Brenda Way, Artistic Director of the dance company ODC/San Francisco. Inspired by the crisis brought about by the melting of the polar ice caps, *On a Train Heading South* explores human complacency and collective denial in the face of global warming and its implications. Developed in collaboration with composer **Jack Perla** and stage and light designer **Alexander V. Nichols**, the choreography is accented by the melting of 12 giant ice blocks hovering above the stage.

Ms. Way and the entire 10-member company of ODC/San Francisco spent a week in Washington, D.C. teaching and rehearsing the 27-minute piece with the members of CityDance Ensemble. This collaboration marked the first time that Ms. Way licensed one of her works to another dance company.

A blog of about the creative process leading up to this concert can be viewed at powerpassionpurpose.blogspot.com.

About CityDance Ensemble, Inc.

CityDance Ensemble, Inc. is the parent organization to **CityDance Ensemble**, an award-winning contemporary repertory dance company; **Early Arts**, an arts outreach program for youth serving more than 15,000 students each year; **CityDance Education Centers**, facilities committed to excellence in dance training for youth and adults; and **FilmWORKS**, a creator and presenter of dance-on-camera. The mission of CityDance is to advance the appreciation for and participation in the art of dance through excellence in performance, education, film, and artistic innovation.

About Strathmore

Strathmore, a 24-year old established arts presenter and cultural destination, nurtures art, artists and community through creative and diverse programming of the highest quality and is home to the Music Center at Strathmore, a 1,976-seat concert hall and education complex. The Music Center at Strathmore, located at 5301 Tuckerman Lane in North Bethesda, MD, is immediately adjacent to the Grosvenor-Strathmore station on Metro’s Red Line and a half-mile from the Capital Beltway. For those attending a ticketed performance at the Music Center at Strathmore, parking in the Metro garage is complimentary with your ticket. For further information or tickets, call (301) 581-5100 or visit www.strathmore.org.

Strathmore is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. An agency of the Department of Business & Economic Development, the MSAC provides financial support and technical assistance to non profit organizations, units of government, colleges and universities for arts activities. Strathmore is also supported in part by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County.

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