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Photos available on request

**Wesleyan University Center for the Arts Presents
DanceMasters Weekend 2007**

Center for the Arts-produced weekend of dance classes and performances has become of the most eagerly anticipated annual dance events in the Northeast.

Middletown, Conn., January 19, 2007—On Saturday and Sunday, March 10 and 11, 2007 Wesleyan University hosts its eighth annual DanceMasters Weekend. This year's event consists of 15 master classes taught by some of the top dance artists in the world and a showcase performance featuring Jane Comfort and Company, Pilobolus and Nora Chipaumire.

In 2000, Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts partnered with Mariam McGlone who, after a dance career that spanned seventy years and included work with Hanya Holm, the Charles Weidman Company, Agnes de Mille and José Limon, had been organizing her own annual dance workshop on the Connecticut shore for over 10 years. Through the partnership, they were able to take McGlone's workshop with four or five classes and a showcase and transform it into a two-day intensive of fifteen classes with a performance. In regards to the success of DanceMasters, McGlone stated in an interview with *Dancer Magazine*, "The program has grown beyond anything I'd ever expected, but it is everything I ever wanted." In 2003, the Mariam McGlone Endowment Fund was established to support the event for years to come.

Since DanceMasters began eight years ago, it has been unparalleled in presenting a diverse selection of high-level artists from Nederlands Dans Theater to Garth Fagan Dance to the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. The annual showcase performance has sold out for the last seven years.

This year's **Dancemasters Showcase Performance** will take place Saturday, March 10 at 8pm in the CFA Theater. Showcase performance tickets are \$20 general and \$17 for seniors and students. The eighth anniversary showcase features dancers and choreography from three outstanding companies and artists. **Jane Comfort and Company**, under the direction of Artistic Director Jane Comfort, pushes the intersection of movement and language to a new form of theater. An extraordinary group of dancers, actors and singers whose multiple talents allow the company to realize deeply layered works utilizing a wide range of theatrical elements, the company performs excerpts from their newest work, *Fleeting Thoughts*. For more information visit: <http://www.janecomfortandcompany.org>

Pilobolus Dance Theatre uses the laws of physics to defy the laws of gravity. Its works are not drawn from the long traditions of codified movement but are invented, emerging from intense periods of improvisation and creative play. Their electrifying performances combine dance and contortion with ultra-dynamic moves. For more information visit: <http://www.pilobolus.com/>

Remarkable solo artist and choreographer **Nora Chipaumire** is this year's recipient of the Mariam McGlone Emerging Choreographer Award. Her work is transitional, unafraid and eager to burn cultural, creative and geographic boundaries, while often inspired by the artistic movements of her socially and politically war-torn native Zimbabwe. A self-exiled artist now based in New York, she has been a featured dancer with the world-renowned Urban Bush Women for three years. With a singular and unassailable voice speaking to her experiences as a woman from the African Diaspora, she is contributing to and furthering the new African contemporary dance movement emerging across the nation. She performed at Dancemasters Weekend 2006 with the Urban Bush Women. For more information visit:
http://www.pentacle.org/Artist_Roster_Nora_Chipaumire.htm

DanceMasters Master Classes take place Saturday, March 10 from 10:30am to 6pm and Sunday, March 11 from 11am to 4:30pm in the CFA's two dance studios. Master classes are \$95 for a weekend pass (six classes plus one ticket to the performance) or \$17 per class (\$15 each for four or more) with group discounts available. This year's 15 classes represent a variety of forms, including ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop and contemporary dance. Instructors include the legendary tap dancer Jimmy Slyde, as well as dancers from the showcase performance companies and teachers from American Ballet Theater, Battleworks, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, Séan Curran Company, Jane Comfort and Company, Limón Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Group, Pilobolus and the Urban Bush Women. In addition, Séan Curran will teach a choreography workshop.

More information about participating in DanceMasters Weekend, including master teacher and company bios, is available from the box office, 860-685-3355 or on the web at www.wesleyan.edu/cfa/dancemasters.

Quotes from Center for the Arts Director, Pamela Tatge:

“The mission of DanceMasters is to introduce dance students to contemporary techniques with the hope that they gain an understanding of the breadth and depth of what is out there in the dance world. We are also providing regional dance teachers an important professional development opportunity through contact with world-class master teachers.”

“For a dance student to find such a high concentration of classes by top-notch artists including many artistic directors of major companies, it would take them several days in New York and cost them a great deal of money—at DanceMasters, they can do it in two days for much less.”

DanceMasters is made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, Middletown Foundation for the Arts, Daphne Seybolt Culpeper Foundation, Mariam McGlone DanceMasters Endowment Fund and the Ensworth Charitable Foundation.

Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts (www.wesleyan.edu/cfa) is an 11-building complex on the Wesleyan campus that houses the departments of art and art history, film studies, music, theater and dance. It serves as a cultural center for the region, the state and New England. The CFA includes the 400-seat Theater, the 260-seat Cinema, the World Music Hall (a non-Western performance space), the 414-seat Crowell Concert Hall and the Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery. For more information about CFA performances and events, call (860) 685-3355, or visit www.wesleyan.edu/cfa.

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*Performers and schedule are subject to change.
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