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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE KAPLAN NEW WORKS SERIES
DEMONSTRATES DANCERS' POWER**

*New and returning dancers work with choreographers to move in new ways,
challenging themselves and inspiring audiences*

Cincinnati Ballet opens its 2011-12 season with the vibrant, energetic contemporary series *The Kaplan New Works Series*. Audiences get the thrilling experience of seeing new dance right where it was created – at Cincinnati Ballet studios. This season, *New Works* features four world premieres and one exciting regional premiere. The series opens **September 8 and runs through September 18** in the **Mickey Jarson Kaplan Theater** at **Cincinnati Ballet Center Studios**.

“*New Works* is our chance to play with ideas, get messy, try new things, dream, imagine, explore, get our dancers moving in challenging, exciting, innovative and undiscovered ways,” says **Victoria Morgan**, Cincinnati Ballet CEO and Artistic Director. “I’m always asking, ‘what do we need to do that will push us, pull us, challenge us, inspire us?’ If the dancers are inspired, the audience is too.”

This season’s *New Works* features work by beloved local and internationally renowned choreographers **Heather Britt, Adam Hougland, James Kudelka, Johanna Bernstein Wilt, Andrew Hubbard** and **Missy Lay Zimmer**, as well as live spoken word from **JaHipster**, music by **John Adams, Peter Adams, Johnny Cash, Dianne Dunkelman, Rick Sowash** and more.

This annual series of new commissions brings the athletic artistry so near to the audience that patrons can hear the dancers breathe and feel the buoyancy of their leaps and footfalls. Five extraordinary new dancers are joining Cincinnati Ballet for the 2011-12 season, and audiences will have the opportunity to see how these new dancers interact with established company members.

Post-Performance Q&A

Audiences are invited to stay following each performance for a post-show question-and-answer Session with dancers, choreographers, musicians and other *New Works* performers.

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ARTISTS

Heather Britt with JaHipster

“The reason I love New Works so much is that it provides a space for artists to take risks and try things that maybe haven’t been done before, and take a classical art form, make it more contemporary, push the limits and see what the audience thinks,” says **Heather Britt**, regional director of the popular Rhythm & Motion class and a choreographers for *New Works* for her third season. Britt is collaborating with spoken-word artist **JaHipster** on a new piece. “Her passion is her poetry,” says Morgan. “Her work is as much revealing as it is confrontational. We wanted to bring in a voice that spoke to the African American experience, and I’ve wanted the power of her words motivating our dancers.” Music for this piece is by Gabriel Gaffney Smith and Peter Adams.

Adam Houglan

Resident choreographer **Adam Houglan** has worked with Cincinnati Ballet dancers for four seasons, choreographing *Mozart’s Requiem* and *The Firebird*, as well as selections for *New Works* in 2008. Houglan’s *New Works* contribution will be more playful than his more serious recent work. “I want to look at different sides of the artists of the company,” he says. “I don’t want them to always be portraying the same color, or the same kind of character or the same presence in my work. It’s about finding different ways of pushing them and pushing myself.” Houglan is using John Adams’ composition *The Chairman Dances*.

James Kudelka

Internationally renowned choreographer **James Kudelka** first premiered his work *The Man in Black*, presented in cowboy boots to music by Johnny Cash for Columbus BalletMet in April 2010. Morgan saw the piece and fell in love: “There is an intimacy about it, so I wanted it to premiere in Cincinnati in our smaller studio theatre. It is poignant without being athletic. It is brilliant without being showy. It has precision without technical fireworks,” she says. “Kudelka is a master choreographer whose life experience, combined with years in the studio, creating movement to explore truth and address brave unspoken ideas and emotions, inform his work and drive its intensity and unexpected punch.”

Johanna Bernstein Wilt

Cincinnati Ballet Principal Ballet Mistress **Johanna Wilt** got her start with the company in 1982 as a Corps de Ballet dancer. She remained with the company as Ballet Mistress and has continued as Cincinnati Ballet’s Principal Ballet Mistress. “She has exceptional maturity and confidence,” says Morgan. “I really count on her in the studio. She has a perceptive eye and is very generous and nurturing.” Wilt has decided to dedicate her choreography to memory of visionary Cincinnati Ballet Artistic Director **Richard Collins** on the 20th anniversary of his untimely death. “As I reflect on Richard’s life, I have been inspired by how we touch people’s lives, how we support each other, how we influence each other,” Wilt says. She will be choreographing to music by Rick Sowash, an internationally renowned musician who lives in Cincinnati.

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Missy Lay Zimmer and Andrew Hubbard

The husband-and-wife duo Missy Lay Zimmer and Andrew Hubbard co-founded Exhale Dance Tribe. They have presented original choreography to music by Over The Rhine for *New Works* 2009 and 2010, and for the full-length *Infamous Love Songs* earlier this year. They bring their signature emotional, narrative style to **Dianne Dunkelman**'s original composition, to be performed live at every performance. Dunkelman, a Cincinnati entrepreneur and philanthropist-about-town, surprised Morgan when she began to play one of her compositions at a friend's house. "I had no idea Dianne could play the piano. It sounded like *The Moonlight Sonata*, and I asked if it was Beethoven. She told me, 'No, it's me.'"

PERFORMANCE DATES AND INFORMATION

- WHO:** Cincinnati Ballet
Choreography: Heather Britt, Adam Houglan, James Kudelka, Johanna Bernstein Wilt, Andrew Hubbard and Missy Lay Zimmer
Spoken word: JaHipster
Music: John Adams, Peter Adams, Johnny Cash, Dianne Dunkelman, Gabriel Gaffney Smith and Rick Sowash
- WHAT:** *The Kaplan New Works Series*
[FOUR WORLD PREMIERES, ONE REGIONAL PREMIERE]
The Kaplan New Works Series is Cincinnati Ballet's annual contribution to the world of dance. This season-opening production consistently brings audacious new artistic movement to the studio stage. "For die-hard arts lovers, it rarely gets more exhilarating than this," wrote *Cincinnati Enquirer*'s David Lyman about *New Works 2010*.
- WHEN:** Thursday, September 8, 8 pm
Friday, September 9, 8 pm
Saturday, September 10, 2 pm
Saturday, September 10, 8 pm
Wednesday, September 14, 8 pm
Thursday, September 15, 8 pm
Friday, September 16, 8 pm
Saturday, September 17, 2 pm
Saturday, September 17, 8 pm
Sunday, September 18, 2 pm
- WHERE:** Mickey Jarson Kaplan Performance Studio
Cincinnati Ballet Center
1555 Central Parkway, Cincinnati, Ohio 45214
- HOW:** Call 513-621-5282 or visit cballet.org to purchase tickets.
\$30 - \$70 at the Cincinnati Ballet Box Office

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About Cincinnati Ballet

Since 1963, Cincinnati Ballet has been the cornerstone professional ballet company of the region, presenting a mix of important classical full-length ballets and an adventurous, vibrant mix of repertory ballets, regularly with live orchestral accompaniment. Cincinnati Ballet's mission is to inspire hope and joy in our community and beyond through the power and passion of dance. Our mantra is "Everybody dances." To that end, Cincinnati Ballet presents exhilarating performances, extensive education outreach programs (including professional lecture-demos, residencies, scholarship programs and student matinees), and offers top level professional ballet training at Cincinnati Ballet Otto M. Budig Academy, which enjoys an enrollment of more than a thousand participants in multi-level programs across two studio campuses.

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The Kaplan New Works Series Sponsors:

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