



MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
NORTH MIAMI

FOR RELEASE

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## LEGENDARY CHOREOGRAPHER MERCE CUNNINGHAM SELECTS MIAMI ARTIST DANIEL ARSHAM FOR NEW COLLABORATION

**Creative Collaboration between Merce Cunningham, Daniel Arsham, and Composer David Behrman to be Focus of Museum of Contemporary Art Exhibition and Performances at Miami Performing Arts Center, Spring 2007**

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(May 10, 2006 - North Miami, FL) Legendary avant-garde choreographer Merce Cunningham has selected Miami artist Daniel Arsham for his first-ever collaboration in Miami. The dance, visual art, and music collaboration by Merce Cunningham, Daniel Arsham and composer David Behrman, will have its world premiere at **Miami Performing Arts Center** as part of its *Merce in Miami* celebration during 2007, and will be the subject of a major two-part exhibition project organized by the **Museum of Contemporary Art** titled, *Merce Cunningham: Dancing on the Cutting Edge*, that will document Cunningham's vital role in contemporary art.

Arsham, 25, was selected by Cunningham from a field of four young Miami artists recommended by Bonnie Clearwater, Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art. Throughout his more than 50-year career, Cunningham, 87, has teamed with such renowned visual artists as Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Frank Stella and Andy Warhol, to create dynamic stage sets and costumes for his productions.

"The selection process was not an easy one as all the artists recommended had qualities that were promising for this project," said Trevor Carlson, Executive Director of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. "Daniel Arsham emerged as a young artist who is far advanced in his technique and personal vision. Merce Cunningham is very excited to collaborate with him. Incorporating Daniel's work is going to be an interesting and exciting challenge."

Bonnie Clearwater noted, "This is an extraordinary opportunity for Daniel Arsham. Merce Cunningham generally only creates one new major production a year and it is exciting that he has chosen to work with a young Miami artist for 2007. This work will have its world premiere at the new Miami Performing Arts Center. It will then go on view at MOCA's satellite gallery, MOCA at Goldman Warehouse. As part of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company repertory, it will be performed worldwide."

Justin Macdonnell, Artistic Director of Miami Performing Arts Center stated, "It is wonderfully appropriate that Daniel Arsham has been selected as a collaborator in Miami Performing Art Center's *Merce in Miami* project. Daniel Arsham and Merce Cunningham share an intellectual companionship, an interest in the ephemeral that is destined to yield superb, thought-provoking and meaningful work."

## MERCE IN MIAMI

The *Merce in Miami* celebration, commissioned by Miami Performing Arts Center, showcases the life and work of legendary choreographer Merce Cunningham through creative collaborations with the Museum of Contemporary Art, New World School of the Arts, Florida Dance Association, Miami Dade College, and South Florida Composers Alliance. Scheduled to take place in spring 2007, *Merce in Miami* will include the world premiere of a commissioned piece, a restaging of Cunningham's mammoth *Ocean*, major works from the Merce Cunningham Dance Company repertoire, a festival of his music collaborators, workshops, master classes, and various other creative endeavors illustrating the impact of Merce Cunningham on the arts world. **Two landmark exhibitions of Cunningham's visual arts collaborations will be presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art.**

## EXHIBITIONS

- The Museum of Contemporary Art (770 NE 125th Street, North Miami, FL) will present the exhibition ***Merce Cunningham: Dancing on the Cutting Edge*** from **January 25 – April 29, 2007**. This is the first exhibition to focus on the pioneering choreographer's collaborations with visual artists from 1998 to the present, featuring a series of installations that present the actual sets and costumes created by artists such as Ernesto Neto, Charles Long, and Christian Marclay. The exhibition is organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art and curated by Bonnie Clearwater.
- **The Museum of Contemporary Art's satellite gallery, MOCA at Goldman Warehouse (404 NW 26th Street, Miami, FL) will feature the set, costumes, and drawings for the collaboration by Daniel Arsham, Merce Cunningham, and David Behrman in *Merce Cunningham: Dancing on the Cutting Edge: Part 2* from April 21 through June 25, 2007. The exhibition is organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art and curated by Bonnie Clearwater.**

## DANIEL ARSHAM

Daniel Arsham reworks the architectural and natural forms of our everyday experience into malleable and movable models with surreal and uncanny effects. Arsham was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1979 and received his B.A. in Fine Art from The Cooper Union in 2003. Arsham's work is included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami and it has been featured there in the exhibitions *MOCA and Miami*, 2005; *The House at MOCA*, 2001; and *In Situ: Selections from the Permanent Collection*, 2004. Selected group exhibitions include: *Miami in Transition*, the Miami Art Museum; *Fresh*, The Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA; *Greater New York*, P.S.1 Museum of Modern Art, New York; *Miami Nice*, Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris, France; *Ten Time the Space Between Night and Day*, Guild and Greyskul, New York; and *Time in Space*, The House, Miami, FL. Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin in Miami will present an exhibition of Arsham's work in the exhibition, *Next Miami: The Schmuiliding Building*, from June 10 – July 15, 2006. Arsham is a co-founder of Miami's Placemaker Gallery and the Miami alternative art space, The House.

## MERCE CUNNINGHAM

Merce Cunningham, born in Centralia, Washington, received his first formal dance and theater training at the Cornish School (now Cornish College of the Arts) in Seattle. From 1939 to 1945, he was a soloist in the company of Martha Graham. He presented his first New York solo concert with John Cage in April 1944. Merce Cunningham Dance Company was formed at Black Mountain College in the summer of 1953. Since that time Cunningham has choreographed nearly 200 works for his company.

Cunningham has worked extensively in film and video, in collaboration first with Charles Atlas and later with Elliot Caplan. His interest in contemporary technology has also led him to work with the computer program DanceForms, which he has used in making all his dances since *Trackers* (1991). In 1997 he began work in motion capture with Paul Kaiser and Shelley Eshkar of

Riverbed Media to develop the decor for BIPED, with music by Gavin Bryars, first performed in 1999. Another major work, Interscape, first given in 2000, reunited Cunningham with his early collaborator Robert Rauschenberg, who designed both décor and costumes for the dance, which has music by John Cage.

In August 2001 Merce Cunningham returned to the stage in the first theatrical presentation of John Cage's *An Alphabet*, at the Edinburgh Festival. In the revival of *How to Pass, Kick, Fall and Run* (1965), first performed in the 2002 Lincoln Center Festival at the New York State Theater, Merce Cunningham read the accompanying stories by John Cage, together with David Vaughan.

In October 2005 Merce Cunningham received the Praemium Imperiale in Tokyo. Cunningham was also a recipient of the National Medal of Arts in 1990 and the Kennedy Center Honors in 1985, in which year he also received a Laurence Olivier Award in London and a MacArthur Fellowship. In France, he was made Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters in 1982 and first Chevalier (1989) and then Officier (2004) of the Légion d'Honneur,

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For information about the Museum of Contemporary Art, please call 305.893.6211 or visit [www.mocanomi.org](http://www.mocanomi.org)

For information about Miami Performing Arts Center, please call 305.372.7611 or visit [www.pacmiami.org](http://www.pacmiami.org).

For information about the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, please call 212.255.8240 or visit [www.merce.org](http://www.merce.org).

### **Museum of Contemporary Art**

The Museum of Contemporary Art opened its Joan Lehman Building (770 NE 125th Street) in North Miami in 1996. The museum was designed by the internationally acclaimed architect Charles Gwathmey of Gwathmey-Siegel, New York, who worked in conjunction with the Miami firm of Gelabert-Navia to create an exquisite space in which to experience art. The museum is a site for discovering new artists, contemplating our living cultural heritage, and is known for its provocative and innovative exhibitions and public and educational programming. Its current Main Gallery exhibition, metro pictures part II, features multi-media works by artists depicting the urban experience. MOCA's permanent collection reflects significant artistic developments in contemporary art by emerging and established artists from the U.S. and abroad. In December 2005, the museum opened its new satellite exhibition and art warehouse space, MOCA at Goldman Warehouse, in the Wynwood Arts and Entertainment District of Miami (404 NW 26th Street). Donated to MOCA by Tony Goldman and Joey Goldman through the year 2009, MOCA at Goldman Warehouse doubles the museum's current gallery space and provides 4,000 square feet of art storage for the museum.

Exhibitions and programs at MOCA are made possible through grants from the City of North Miami, the Florida Arts Council, the Department of State, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners. The Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami is accredited by the American Association of Museums

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### **Miami Performing Arts Center (MPAC)**

Opening in downtown Miami October 2006, Miami Performing Arts Center is Miami-Dade County's largest ever public/private-sector partnership, comprised of an \$85 million private capital campaign conducted by the Miami Performing Arts Center Foundation and public funding drawn primarily from the County's Convention Development Tax revenues, as well as the City of Miami Omni Redevelopment District Community Redevelopment Agency. Designed by world-renowned architect Cesar Pelli of Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects, MPAC will include the 2,400-seat Sanford and Dolores Ziff Ballet Opera House, the 2,200-seat Carnival Concert Hall, a 200-seat black box Studio Theater, the Peacock Education Center, a restored Art Deco Tower, and a Plaza for the Arts that will unite the Center building across Biscayne Boulevard, providing a magnificent setting for outdoor entertainment and informal gatherings. MPAC will be a Miami venue not only for its

four resident companies (Concert Association of South Florida, Florida Grand Opera, Miami City Ballet, and New World Symphony), but also for many smaller South Florida arts organizations that will perform in its theaters on a regular basis, as well as for the finest popular and classical performance facilities in Miami for the first time.

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**More MOCA as MOCA turns 10!**