



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE nEW FESTIVAL KICKS OFF ITS 5TH
SEASON THROUGH
COMMUNITY CLASSES AND PERFORMANCES**

Winter Festival Runs from January 7-20, 2008

(PHILADELPHIA) – The dance-driven artist-fueled nEW Festival produced by Melanie Stewart Dance Theatre kicks off its 5th season by presenting community classes and performances open to the public from January 7- 20 at the University of the Arts School of Dance. The winter festival program will include daily community classes taught by Melanie Stewart, Megan Mazarick and Myra Bazell, Monday – Friday, from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., January 7-18, 2008 at the University of the Arts Terra Building, 211 South Broad Street. Single Class Passes are available at the door for \$10 or “what you can pay” for professional dance community members.

This year’s performance schedule features two programs; the premiere of Megan Mzarick’s Roadkill and Dancehouse, from January 18-20 at the University of the Arts Dance Theatre at the Drake, 1512 Spruce Street, Philadelphia.. This year’s Dancehouse features work by incoming 2008 nEW Artists; Charles Anderson/Dancetheatrex, Eun Jung Choi-Gonzalez, Jeffrey Gunshol, Jaamil Kosoko PerFORMance, Olive Prince Dance, Gabrielle Revlock and Melanie Stewart Dance Theatre.

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Megan Mazarick's Roadkill will be presented on Friday January 18 at 7PM and Saturday January 19 at 9PM. Dancehouse will be presented on Friday January 18 at 9PM, Saturday January 19th at 7PM and Sunday January 20th at 3PM

All performances will be held at the University of the Arts Dance Theatre at the Drake, 1512 Spruce Street (side entrance)

Tickets for Roadkill are \$15, general admission. Tickets for Dancehouse are \$10, general admission. A \$2 Ticket Discount is available for Students, Seniors and DanceUSA/Philadelphia Dance Pass holders. In addition, \$18 and \$20 combination packages available. For more information go to www.newfestival.net.

Since 2003, the nEW Festival has emerged as a distinct creative laboratory for emerging dance theater in Philadelphia. The nEW festival embraces the idea of cooperative and collaborative art-making, establishing a forum for creative exchange between artists, and feeding the cultural community with relentless innovation.

The nEW Festival is made possible by a generous grant from the William Penn Foundation, as well as support from Advanta Foundation, Independence Foundation, The Greater Philadelphia Cultural Fund, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and The Samuel S. Fels Fund. Residency support is provided by The University of the Arts School of Dance.

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through

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efforts that foster rich cultural expression, strengthen children's futures, and deepen connections to nature and community. In partnership with others, the Foundation works to advance a vital, just, and caring community. Learn more about the Foundation by visiting www.willampennfoundation.org.

Tickets for all scheduled events go on sale December 15th and can be purchased online at www.nEWfestival.net or by calling (215) 359-7775.

nEW Festival 2008 Scheduled Events:

nEW Community Classes: taught by Myra Bazell, Megan Mazarick and Melanie Stewart- open to the public
Monday-Friday (except June 23). 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
UArts School of Dance, Terra Building, 211 South Broad Street. \$10 or "What you can pay" for professional dancers

nEW 2008 Festival Performances:

Megan Mazarick's Roadkill:

Friday January 18 at 7PM, Saturday January 19 at 9PM
Uarts Dance Theatre at the Drake, 1512 Spruce Street (side entrance)
Tickets \$15, \$2 discount for Students, Seniors and Dance/USA Philadelphia Dance Pass

DanceHouse: *showcasing the work of incoming 2008 artists; Charles Anderson/Dancetheatre, Eun Jung Choi-Gonzalez, Jeffrey Gunshol, Jaamil Kosoko PerFORMANCE, Olive Prince Dance, Gabrielle Revlock and Melanie Stewart Dance Theatre.*

Friday January 18 at 9PM, Saturday January 19th at 7PM & Sunday January 20th at 3PM
Uarts Dance Theatre at the Drake, 1512 Spruce Street (side entrance)
Tickets \$10, \$2 discount for Seniors, Students and Dance/USA Philadelphia Dance Pass

nEW 2008 Show Descriptions:

Megan Mazarick/Roadkill (Premiere) (50:00)

What happens when you put abstract dance into a truck stop? Glorifying the tedium of human existence, Roadkill layers dance theater with bizarre circumstance to expose the complicated world of trucker culture. Based on a beastly truckers' pas de deux but weaving a world of prostitutes, hapless passengers, and steel-haired waitresses into the mix, images unfold to reveal a morbid comedy amidst athletic dancing.

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While detailed character studies move dancers around the stage with patterned precision, lapses into the surreal add fantastic flights of post-modern fancy. Get caught in the pattering engine of a Mack Truck but keep in mind America's open road is a haven for a flattened carcasses. A diverse cast of Philadelphia's best dancers brings truck stops to life in a performance that gives viewers more than a quick bite to eat and a diesel fuel-up.

Dancehouse: Preview Performances of nEW 2008 Artists (70:00)

Charles Anderson/DanceTheatreX will preview an excerpt of **Hush**. The work is invested in working in a global/international context: collaborating with indigenous non-western contemporary dance artists to expand the creative range of possibilities in his kinetic storytelling approach to choreography and to further evolve dtX's choreographic mission of exploring global identities through fusions of movement traditions. The excerpt performed in silence, with text, and with percussion is inspired by a Yoruba folktale about the orisha (god) Eshu.

Eun Jung Choi-Gonzalez discovers a story and its movements in the preview of **Blue Print (2008)**, resulting from a layering, mapping and decaying process. Instead of departing from a set story or scenario, **Blue Print** draws a story out of pure physical approaches to its movements, without imposing any emotional element, yet Choi-Gonzalez strives to evoke emotional reaction from her audience.

Jeffrey Gunshol is a storyteller who thrives on narrative. He loves television and movies and looks to them for insight into structure and how to maintain people's attention span. As a Rite of Passage many choreographers create a **Rite of Spring** and thinks this just might be his year. He wonders what commercials would air and what kind of sound track an HBO **Rite of Spring** drama would have in his exploration of pop culture meets classic drama.

Jaamil Kosoko/PerFORMance investigates movement forms and improvisation structures as they relate to his most recent work **TRACE/maneuver**. Set to the accompaniment of hardcore rap, punk, heavy metal, electronic music and original contemporary poetry, **TRACE/maneuver** is a multimedia movement-based installation that explores the life, history and lineage of the body as it exists addicted to electricity and technology in the 21st century.

Olive Prince Dance

*Is creating **Old Girl, New**, a group dance piece that brings Virginia Woolf's life, questions, and ultimate death to the forefront. A literary icon that questioned her role in society, took her own life when she filled her dress with rocks and walked bravely into the ocean. Olive Prince Dance explores the question; what would happen if she took a gasp of air, emerged from the water, and it was 2007?*

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Gabrielle Revlock will preview a piece entitled **Zizi and Snowy** with dancer, Karin Bookbinder and musician, Peter Leonard. She has a strong interest in new music, and exploring character, dramatics and storytelling. Essential to her work are the elements of rhythm particularly as it relates to humor, subtlety and attention to detail.

Melanie Stewart Dance Theatre is collaborating with Obie Award winning writer John Clancy to create a parody of the popular TV Dance Shows “Dancing with the Stars” and “So You Think You Can Dance”. The preview titled **Time to Dance**, explores the roles of the judges, the designated experts whose role is to identify weakness, instruct, demonstrate and correct the contestants who are “dancing for their lives.”

*****ARTSITS BIOGRAPHIES AND IMAGES OF ALL ARTISTS ARE AVAILABLE
UPON REQUEST*****

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