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**German Arts Festival Commissions
Alonzo King's LINES Ballet**

**World Premiere in Wolfsburg,
Sponsored by Volkswagen**

About the World Premiere and the Festival

Alonzo King's LINES Ballet will perform a World Premiere, commissioned by the Movimentos Arts Festival in Wolfsburg, Germany. The only US Company to be invited, LINES Ballet has the additional honor of opening the month-long festival. The annual Movimentos festival is sponsored by Volkswagen, and includes music, readings, theater, as well as dance performances by companies such as Nacho Duato's Compañía Nacional de Danza and the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève. In a rotating program (April 27-May 1), LINES Ballet will perform the World Premiere and two pieces from repertory. The repertory pieces will be *The Moroccan Project* and *Following the Subtle Current Upstream* which will have it's company premiere in San Francisco on April 13, 2006.

The new piece by Alonzo King, titled, *The Hierarchical Migration of Birds and Mammals*, is set to a collaborative score by three musicians. Pharoah Sanders, legendary jazz saxophonist, has been commissioned to play live, in conjunction with experimental music by two noted Bay Area composers, Leslie Stuck and Miguel Frasconi. This piece explores the awakening of complex bodies, and the beauty of their constant evolution into new forms. A breath stirs in the body; a tiny crack appears in the shell; the dance begins with the moment of emergence. A fossil is made because time, writing on bodies, turns them into stone. Yet the stone is made from the same substance as the eggshell, the snail's shell, and the seashell. Alonzo King evokes the feeling of home that is born into us, the one that guides us wordlessly back to our wondrous origins.

About the Arts: the Story of Wolfsburg

The town of Wolfsburg offers an illuminating example of support for the arts against heavy odds. Wolfsburg itself was created as a factory town for Volkswagen, and until the year 2000, guidebooks discouraged travelers from visiting a place with no cultural or artistic attractions. In the past few years, however, the cutting-edge science museum Phaeno has opened, in a building designed by Zaha Hadid; the Movimentos dance and performing arts festival was created; and Wolfsburg has gradually become an artistic destination.

Two months ago, the BBC reported that Volkswagen was in financial trouble, and undertaking drastic measures to cut costs. The company announced that 20,000 workers would be fired, a proposal that incensed the German unions. It seemed to be the obvious moment to slash funding for a festival whose opening night was dedicated to worker-only performances. Who needed dance when jobs were being threatened? Why would Europe's largest auto manufacturer support an arts festival at a time like this?

Volkswagen decided to produce the Movimentos festival anyway, even broadening its program choices. The budget to commission new works was secured, and the artistic director began to select the companies he wanted to feature. The enormous factory buildings were once again readied for stages and sound equipment, and journalists all over Europe were notified that, in fact, they should not miss this year's festival in Wolfsburg, showcasing exciting new works in the performing arts.

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