

For Immediate Release
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TWO ARTISTIC VISIONARIES UNITE

Choreographer Alonzo King and Jazz pianist Jason Moran come together to create a world premiere work

“Opposites attract—and never more so than in the contemporary classicism of Alonzo King. Start with the juxtaposition in a dancer's body of passionate, whirlwind arms with the sharply articulated legwork and formal step-vocabulary of academic ballet...it makes nearly every other kind of modern ballet look old-fashioned or simplistic.” –Lewis Segal, The Los Angeles Times

“The jazz pianist Jason Moran has developed such an aptitude for the curious juxtaposition of idioms - jostling jazz against opera, stride piano, film music, pop, the music of human speech patterns.” –Ben Ratliff, The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—May 27, 2009—Alonzo King's LINES Ballet, the celebrated San Francisco-based contemporary ballet company, announces a new collaboration with New York-based jazz pianist Jason Moran.

This highly-anticipated new work will have its world premiere at the Novellus Theater at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, CA as part of Alonzo King's LINES Ballet's Home Season, from October 23-November 1, 2009. The work will feature Alonzo King's LINES Ballet's world-class dance troupe, with Moran performing live on opening weekend. The work will also tour to the August Wilson Center for the Arts and Duke University in early 2010.

Both visionaries in their fields, King creates ballets that stretch and renew the traditions of western dance, and Moran creates avant-garde compositions, experimenting within the jazz idiom.

King's work combines ballet with classical music, jazz, spoken word, modern compositions, kung fu arts, and more. He is celebrated for his unique collaborations – often times with artists not associated with classical ballet. Previous collaborators include legendary jazz saxophonist Pharoah Sanders; tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain; actor Danny Glover; Nubian oud master Hamza El Din; the BaAka Pygmies of the Central African Republic; and the Shaolin Monks of China. He is also currently working on a new commission for Monaco's Ballet Russe's Centennial Festival in December 2009.

“Moran is like no other pianist at work”, wrote Jazz critic and writer Gary

Giddins. His technical virtuosity is paired with a modern, cutting-edge approach to jazz music. This is Moran's first composition for dance.

Both King and Moran have received countless awards and accolades for their work: King, who founded Alonzo King's LINES Ballet in 1982, was recently honored with the Jacob's Pillow Creativity Award and a prestigious USA Fellowship. Moran, also the recipient of a USA Fellowship, was recognized as one of the "37 Under 36: America's Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences" by *Smithsonian* magazine.

About Alonzo King's LINES Ballet

Alonzo King's LINES Ballet is a celebrated contemporary ballet company that has been guided for 26 years by its uniquely global artistic vision. Collaborating with noted composers, musicians, and visual artists, Alonzo King creates works that draw on a diverse set of deeply rooted cultural traditions and imbue classical ballet with new expressive potential.

Both Alonzo King and the LINES dancers have been recognized for their extraordinary vision; in 2006, the newly formed United States Artists organization recognized 50 outstanding living artists in America: Alonzo King was honored with one of the four Fellowships in Dance nationwide, and the only one given in California. The USA Fellowship is the fourth major award bestowed upon Alonzo King in the past three years, following the Bessie Award for Choreographer/Creator in 2005, the Jacob's Pillow Creativity Award in June 2008, and the Mayor's Art Award in October 2008. He has also been the recipient of the NEA Choreographer's Fellowship, the Irvine Dance Fellowship, five Isadora Duncan awards, two honorary doctorates, and the 2007 Community Leadership Award. Last fall, dancer Meredith Webster won the Princess Grace Award, becoming the fifth company member to receive that honor. Six years ago, the LINES Ballet School was established, in order to develop the potential of young dancers, and in 2006, LINES Ballet joined with Dominican University of California to create a unique Joint BFA program in Dance.

LINES Ballet has collaborated with legendary jazz saxophonist Pharoah Sanders; India's national treasure, tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain; Bernice Johnson Reagon, founder of *Sweet Honey in the Rock*; actor Danny Glover; Japanese classical composer Somei Satoh; celebrated Polish composer Pavel Syzmanski; and Nubian *oud* master Hamza El Din. One of the Company's great successes was bringing sixteen musicians and dancers from the Lobaye Forest of Central African Republic—the BaAka—for the People of the Forest project. Recently, LINES Ballet has been receiving accolades for its collaborative project with the Shaolin monks, an unprecedented synthesis of Eastern and Western classical forms that intertwines martial arts and ballet. The Company is also enjoying tremendous success abroad at venues such as the Venice Biennale and the Maison de la Dance in Lyon. LINES Ballet has been featured at several prestigious festivals, including Montpellier Danse, the Wolfsburg Festival, the Holland Dance Festival,

and the 50th anniversary of the Spoleto Festival.

About Jason Moran

Jason Moran is a prolific jazz pianist, composer, bandleader and recording artist. He was recently named one of 2007's United States Artist Fellows and was honored as one of the "37 Under 36: America's Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences" by *Smithsonian* magazine.

The composition "In My Mind: Monk at Town Hall, 1959" for jazz big band was performed at Duke University, Chicago Symphony Center, the San Francisco Jazz Festival and the Washington Performing Arts Society in 2007. Moran was the youngest honoree of the New Work Commission by the San Francisco Jazz Festival. Moran collaborated with video/performance artist Joan Jonas on "The Shape, the Scent, the Feel of Things," performed at Dia Beacon. His 2005 composition for jazz sextet, "RAIN," was commissioned by Jazz @ Lincoln Center. "Milestone: A Jazz Reality in 2 Acts for jazz quartet and soprano was commissioned by The Walker Art Center in 2005.

Moran has performed as a sideman with such artists as Greg Osby, Cassandra Wilson, Joe Lovano, Don Byron, Steve Coleman, Lee Konitz, Von Freeman, Ravi Coltrane, and Stefon Harris. He made his professional recording debut on Osby's 1997 Blue Note CD, *Further Ado*, which brought him to the attention of Blue Note executives who signed the pianist to his own record deal shortly thereafter. The association with Blue Note is fitting, placing Moran in the lineage of innovative pianist/composers whose career beginnings were nurtured by the veteran jazz label.

In 2000, Moran's first album with his jazz trio The Bandwagon (with bassist Tarus Mateen and drummer Nasheet Waits) was declared "an instant classic" by *JazzTimes* Magazine. In 2002, Moran released his universally acclaimed solo piano disc "Modernistic." 2003's "The Bandwagon," culled from the trio's six-day stint at New York's Village Vanguard, earned the team of Moran-Mateen-Waits a title as "the best new rhythm section in jazz" (*The New York Times*) and caused Rolling Stone to proclaim Moran "the most provocative thinker in current jazz." He has been awarded a grant from Chamber Music America's "New Works: Creation and Presentation" program, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Moran has appeared on the cover of *JazzTimes* with Joe Lovano and on the cover of *Down Beat* with his mentor Andrew Hill.

LINES Ballet Fall Home Season

World Premiere collaboration with jazz pianist Jason Moran

October 23 – November 1, 2009

Novellus Theater at YBCA
700 Howard Street at 3rd Street, San Francisco

Visit www.linesballet.org for more information on Alonzo King's LINES Ballet.

Visit www.jasonmoran.com for more information on Jason Moran.