

For Immediate Release

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**CEDAR LAKE CONTEMPORARY BALLET PERFORMANCE  
AT CHAPEL HILL MEMORIAL HALL TO FEATURE  
WORLD AND US PREMIERES BY EKMAN & SHECHTER**

UNC Performance to present new works by Sweden's Alexander Ekman,  
London-Based Hofesh Shechter -- And a repertory favorite by Jo Strømngren

New York, N.Y., September 30, 2010 – Benoit-Swan Pouffer, Artistic Director of Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, has scheduled works by three European-based choreographers for the New York City based company's Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> performance at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

The new works and their creators are "Hubbub," (World Premiere) by Sweden's Alexander Ekman; "The Fools," (US Premiere) by London-based Hofesh Shechter and repertory favorite; "Sunday, Again," by Norway's Jo Strømngren .

Under Pouffer's direction, Cedar Lake has become known for commissioning new works by the world's most sought-after choreographers. Through their daring, athletic movement and integration of ballet into contemporary and popular forms, the dancers of Cedar Lake take audiences on a choreographic journey that explores the infinite possibilities of movement and multimedia.

**"Hubbub," by Sweden's Alexander Ekman**

Alexander Ekman's "Hubbub" is a full-company work for all 15 Cedar Lake dancers, performed to a score created by the choreographer which includes the music of Bach and Xavier Cugat as well as an audio soundscape. "Hubbub will have it's World Premiere October 7 at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, it's New York Premiere will take place on October 26, Opening Night of Cedar Lake's two-week season at Chelsea's Joyce Theater.

The 26-year-old Ekman has already established himself as one of the most interesting Nordic choreographers in contemporary dance. "I like his youthfulness," comments Artistic Director Pouffer. "It gives Alexander a fearless sense of discovery. I was also drawn to his quick changes of mood, tone and atmosphere, often incongruous but always emotionally arresting. I believe his tone is right for now -- upbeat, lively, with a sense of humor."

Ekman asserts that "Hubbub" is very much a personal statement on his experiences and his reaction to contemporary art criticism. It incorporates recorded spoken text written by him and fellow dancer Spencer Theberge. According to Ekman, "'Hubbub' began as an installation piece I created at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm entitled 'Art Fart.'"

Alexander Ekman was born in Stockholm, trained at the Royal Swedish Ballet School, and later joined its parent company. From 2002 until 2005 he danced with Nederlands Dans Theater II. Ekman created his first choreographies in Stockholm, following with works for NDT I and II and the Cullberg Ballet. Innovative ideas, original sound scores and humorous solutions characterize his dance pieces.

**"The Fools," by Hofesh Shechter**

Hofesh Shechter, 34, is an Israeli-born choreographer headquartered in London, where he heads the resident dance company of the Brighton Dome, one of the UK's busiest venues for contemporary performance. Cedar Lake will give Shechter's "The Fools" its US Premiere on October 8 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and its New York Premiere on November 2 at the Joyce.

According to Shechter, "The Fools' is about survival in a world full of dark shadows. In the end the fools always survive." Although similar to the 2008 original, which he created for eight dancers of the Bern Ballet, this version of "Fools" is unique to Cedar Lake. Fourteen dancers portray seven characters and their shadows.

The score was created by the choreographer in collaboration with Nell Catchpole. Shechter spent his early years performing as a drummer in his own Israeli band, The Human Beings. The choreographer compiles what he calls a "library of sounds" which includes electronically manipulated noise, percussion, spoken word, and traditionally orchestrated music. The score of "The Fools" is based on Domenico Scarlatti's piano Sonata in B minor, K. 87: Andante, with explosions of Brazilian samba.

"My scores are very full-on," says Shechter. "But there has to be a place in my music for the dance to breathe. It is easy to get carried away with music that is wonderful on its own but doesn't leave enough space for the dance. There has to be co-existence." Shechter's movement pulses with controlled energy, climaxing with wit and provocation. His dance language throbs with savage rhythms and physical invention. He is widely acknowledged as one of the most inventive of contemporary choreographers.

Born in Jerusalem, Hofesh Shechter trained at the Jerusalem Academy for Dance and Music before spending four years as a member of the Batsheva Dance Company. Shechter arrived in the UK in 2002 and joined the Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company. He has created dance works for The Place, the Southbank Centre, Sadler's Wells, The Royal Court Theatre and The National Theatre.

### **"Sunday, Again" by Jo Strømngren**

Jo Strømngren's "Sunday, Again" had its World Premiere by Cedar Lake in Oslo, Norway in 2008 and has since become an audience favorite during the company's tours of the US and Europe. The full-company work has not been seen in New York City since a brief run at the company's 200-seat Chelsea theater in June 2008.

"Leisure time is not good for certain types of relationships," says Strømngren, creator of this work for eight couples. "There is always the irritating and inevitable Sunday, which forces couples to test their ability to coexist." With badminton as metaphor, the couples dash, dart, come together and disintegrate in a lively battle of the sexes, set to Bach's "Jesu, meine Freude."

"In 'Sunday, Again' I tried first of all to reflect the diversity in Bach's music," Strømngren says. "I wove abstract movement patterns together in fugal ways, not unlike the Baroque technique of assembling melodic phrases and ornamentations. Secondly, I take as a theme today's domestic jungle -- luxury overload and gender frictions."

Born in 1970, Strømngren began studies at Norway's National College of Ballet and Dance at the age of 20. Four years later, Bergen's Carte Blanca Dance Company engaged him to choreograph and dance a varied repertory. Artistic recognition came suddenly with the self-financed "Schizoid Stories," a 75-

minute, one-man show that combines distinctive body language with absurd humor and dark psychology.

Jo Strømngren Kompani is based in Oslo. "The Experiment," the choreographer's most recent work, premiered in Rakvere, Estonia and toured the Baltics, Belarus, Russia and Poland before receiving its Norwegian premiere in June, during the Bergen International Festival.

Strømngren's choreographic commissions have included works for Ballet de l'Opéra National du Rhin, the Royal Danish Ballet, Ballett Nürnberg, Iceland Dance Company, Cloud Gate (Taiwan), IT Dansa Barcelona, Stadttheater Bern Ballett and Skånes Danseteater, to name a few.

Besides choreography and theatre direction, Strømngren is involved in music composition, set design, costume design and lighting design. In 2003, he made his debut as a feature film director with colleague Runar Hodne.

**PERFORMANCE INFORMATION:**

Friday, October 8, 2010 - 8:00 PM  
Carolina Performing Arts  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Memorial Hall  
Cameron Avenue, CB#3276  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3276

**TICKET INFORMATION:**

Single: \$85/\$60/\$40/\$30

Student Single: \$10

[www.carolinaperformingarts.org/tickets](http://www.carolinaperformingarts.org/tickets)

919.843.3333

In Person: Memorial Hall Box Office, Cameron Avenue