

**For Immediate Release**

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**Media contacts: Alison Wales, 614 688-3261 or [awales@wexarts.org](mailto:awales@wexarts.org); Karen Simonian, 614 292-9923 or [ksimonian@wexarts.org](mailto:ksimonian@wexarts.org)**

**EXCLUSIVE U.S. APPEARANCE OF LES BALLETS C. DE LA B.  
VANGUARD GROUP PERFORMS LATEST WORK AT WEXNER CENTER**

**“The cast are extraordinary, reckless and compelling....cuts disturbingly close to the bones of our current situation.”—The Guardian (UK)**

Belgian dance theater ensemble **Les Ballets C. de la B.** returns to the Wexner Center’s Mershon Auditorium **May 21 at 8 pm** for the only U.S. performance of their latest work, *Foi* (“faith”). This vanguard company made its U.S. debut at the Wexner Center in 1996 with the haunting *La Tristeza Complice*, which featured 10 accordionists onstage—and which remains one of the most talked-about dance events in the Wexner Center’s history.

Directed by Moroccan/Belgian choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and performed to a live score by noted early music ensemble Capilla Flamenca, *Foi* explores the roles of faith and myth in times of conflict, while shedding light on the clash and fusion of the old and the contemporary through dance, music, songs, and words. Bringing together trained dancers and street performers of all ages, Les Ballets C. de la B. creates sweeping vistas of rough-and-tumble everyday life in contemporary Europe. The company has referred to *Foi* as a “medieval/contemporary opera.”

The live score features medieval music from the 14th century, including religious ceremony music, motets, courtly songs, and dances juxtaposed with the oral tradition of old village songs. This polyphonic (multi-voiced) approach in music mirrors the spectrum of personas represented by the diverse, 18-member cast of Les Ballets C. de la B.

The performance contains nudity and adult language.

## **LES BALLETS C. DE LA B.**

Les Ballets C. de la B. (pronounced *say duh la bay*) is an abbreviation derived from the imaginary name Les Ballets Contemporains de la Belgique; however, the company's aesthetic is decidedly anti-ballet. The name is a satiric twist on the generic names typically adopted by state-sponsored dance companies in Europe and, in particular, on the farcical notion that a state-sponsored ensemble in Belgium could have a name openly associated with the marginalized French-speaking minority there. The Ghent-based company was formed in 1984 and functions as an artistic collective based on a large artistic core, with several company members alternating as artistic directors.

*Foi* is the second full-evening work by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, which follows up on his breakthrough work *Rien de Rien*, set in a mosque.

## **EVENT SUPPORT**

Major support for the Wexner Center's 2002–03 performing arts season is provided by **Bank One** and the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**.

Additional season support is provided by the **Ohio Arts Council** and the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center** Foundation.

*Foi* is coproduced by **Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz Berlin, Théâtre de la Ville Paris, Monaco Dance Forum, Holland Festival Oude Muziek Utrecht & Springdance/works, Utrecht, Vooruit Arts Centre Gent, Stedelijke Concertzaal De Bijloke Gent, South Bank Centre London, Tanzquartier Wien, PACT Zollverein, and Essen/Choreographisches Zentrum NRW.**

## **CALENDAR INFORMATION FOR LES BALLETS C. DE LA B.**

**Description:** Exclusive U.S. performance of *Foi* by vanguard Belgian dance theater ensemble.

**Date and time:** Wednesday, May 21 at 8 pm.

**Running time:** 120 minutes.

**Location:** Wexner Center's Mershon Auditorium, 1871 N. High St. at 15th Avenue on the campus of The Ohio State University.

**Tickets:** \$25, \$21 general public; \$21, \$17 Wexner Center Members; \$12 OSU students.

**Ticket outlets:** Wexner Center, 614/292-3535; Ticketmaster outlets, 614/431-3600.

**Public information:** [www.wexarts.org/pa/](http://www.wexarts.org/pa/) or 614/292-3535.

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**Images available upon request.**

**WEXNER CENTER**

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and educational programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance understanding of the art of our time. In its programs, the Wexner Center balances a commitment to experimentation with a commitment to traditions of innovation and affirms the university's mission of education, research, and community service.

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