

For Immediate Release: January 26, 2004

Media contacts: Erik Pepple, 614 688-3261 or epepple@wexarts.org

Karen Simonian, 614 292-9923 or ksimonian@wexarts.org

DYNAMIC ISRAELI DANCE COMPANY BATSHEVA HIGHLIGHTS A DECADE OF WORK AT THE WEXNER CENTER

**“Expanding dance’s expressive powers...this Israeli ensemble pulses with energy.”—
*Washington Post***

Batsheva Dance Company, Israel’s finest contemporary dance company, returns with its celebratory program *Deca Dance* at the Wexner Center Thursday, **March 4 at 8 pm**. This choreographic medley remixes key passages from the first decade of lauded Artistic Director Ohad Naharin’s work. *The New York Times* has praised Batsheva’s vibrant dancers, noting that their “ceaseless originality fuses with eye-riveting energy,” and describing the company as “a whirlpool of movement and emotion.” Winner of last year’s prestigious Bessie Award for best choreography, Naharin is known for dynamic productions with striking imagery that have put him on a par with such other international talents as Jirí Kylián and William Forsythe.

Before the performance, dance historian Karen Eliot, a former member of Merce Cunningham’s dance company and an associate professor in Ohio State’s Department of Dance, discusses Batsheva’s *Deca Dance* and the choreography of Ohad Naharin. This **preperformance talk** is scheduled for 7 pm in the Wexner Center Performance Space.

Batsheva is presented by the Wexner Center in association with BalletMet Columbus.

ABOUT BATSHEVA

Based in Tel Aviv, Batsheva was founded in 1964 by Martha Graham and Baroness Batsheva de Rothschild. Over the years the company has been invited to perform in many prestigious theaters and festivals, with more than 200 performances a year in Israel and internationally. The award-winning Ohad Naharin was appointed artistic director of Batsheva in 1990. A star international choreographer, Naharin creates alliances with artists outside of the dance world, and has called upon artists of many disciplines to contribute to his productions. This was evidenced in the company’s past performance at the Wexner Center in 1998, introducing the area to the company’s

selected repertoire, including excerpts from its work *Kyr*. In September, Naharin announced his plans to step down as artistic director, but he remains the house choreographer.

RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES

While at the Wexner Center, company members of Batsheva will conduct a technique masterclass for students of Ohio State's top-rated Department of Dance. This session contributes to the Wexner Center's goal of bringing artists into classrooms on campus and enhancing the educational opportunities for future arts professionals.

CALENDAR INFORMATION for BATSHEVA / DECA DANCE

Description: Acclaimed Israeli dance group Batsheva Dance Company returns to the Wexner Center to perform the celebratory *Deca Dance*, featuring excerpts from works from the past decade.

Date and time: Thursday, March 4 / 8 pm

Location: Wexner Center Mershon Auditorium, 1871 N. High Street

Tickets: \$29, \$23, \$17 general public, \$25, \$19, \$14 members and BalletMet subscribers, \$10 OSU students, \$5 High Five tickets are available for students ages 13 to 18; call 614 292-3535 for more details.

Ticket outlets: Wexner Center Ticket Office (614 292-3535) and Ticketmaster outlets (614 431-3600).

Public information: 614 292-3535 and wexarts.org.

Digital images for press are available upon request; call Erik Pepple at 614 688-3261.

EVENT SUPPORT

Batsheva is presented by the Wexner Center in association with BalletMet Columbus.

This concert is presented with support from Joyce and Charles Shenk, Huntington Bank, and the Heartland Arts Fund, a program of Arts Midwest funded by the National Endowment for the Arts with additional contributions from General Mills Foundation, Land O'Lakes Foundation, Sprint Corporation, and the Ohio Arts Council.

Major support for the Wexner Center's 2003–04 performing arts season is provided by 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.

Promotional support is provided by WBNS 10TV.

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.

###30###