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**CityDance's upcoming in-studio concert *Crush* premieres
a new work about the Iraqi refugee community**

The company performs a dance based on Artistic Director Paul Gordon Emerson and dancer Kathryn Pilkington's recent trip to the Middle East, plus works by Meisha Bosma, Christopher K. Morgan, and Alex Neoral

Washington, DC—Featuring a new work that tells a story of the Iraqi refugee community, **CityDance Ensemble** presents the in-studio concert *Crush* this December at the Music Center at Strathmore. Paired with dances by **Meisha Bosma, Christopher K. Morgan, and Alex Neoral**, this concert offers a poignant look at human connection to each other and the world around us.

The concert takes place **Friday, December 4 at 8pm** and **Saturday, December 5 at 8pm** in **Room 405** at the **Music Center at Strathmore**, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, Maryland. Tickets are priced at \$20 and seating is general admission. Tickets are available in person at the **Music Center at Strathmore Ticket Office** (5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, MD), online at www.strathmore.org, or by phone at **301.581.5100**. Seating is limited, so audience members are encouraged to purchase tickets early.

Making its premiere in this concert is *Wishes of the Sailor*, a collaborative work by the company based on the experiences of **Artistic Director Paul Gordon Emerson** and company member **Kathryn Pilkington** working with the Iraqi refugee community in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Emerson and Pilkington traveled to the Middle East in October 2009 with the **Iraqi Voices Amplification Project**, an initiative of the New York-based nonprofit **Intersections International**. The project sent a delegation of creative artists to meet with Iraqi refugees and various humanitarian agencies to obtain a more complete understanding of the refugee crisis. These artists were then charged with crafting an artistic presentation about the experience upon their return to the United States.

“There really are no words to describe the experience we had listening to the stories of these Iraqi refugees,” reflects Emerson. “We are deeply humbled to be sharing these stories through movement. The dancers have truly immersed themselves in this experience and are committing

(more)

100% of their minds, bodies, and souls into the interpretation of this immense tragedy. It's an enormously important – and often unspoken – humanitarian crisis.”

The program also includes *Dance Magazine 2007* “Top 25 To Watch” honoree **Meisha Bosma’s** *Souvenirs*, which CityDance remounts after its world premiere in 2007. This female quintet explores the mysterious nature of souvenirs as they are pulled out of hiding to make us remember what we often forget.

Also featured in the concert is rehearsal director and choreographer-in-residence **Christopher K. Morgan’s** *Unusable Signal*. An introspective dance for three men, *Unusable Signal* examines the use of electronic devices as a way to tune out unwanted stimuli, questioning whether this is done to avoid experiencing emotions.

Finally, the program is rounded out by a special appearance from the pre-professional students of the **CityDance Conservatory**. An intensive training program for serious teen dancers at **CityDance Center at Strathmore**, the Conservatory emphasizes performance opportunities as a critical component to dance education. The students will perform a new work by Brazilian choreographer **Alex Neoral**, who recently set a piece on CityDance Ensemble as well.

About CityDance Ensemble, Inc.

CityDance Ensemble, Inc. is the parent organization to **CityDance Ensemble**, a professional contemporary dance company that performs locally and around the world; **CityDance Early Arts**, an outreach program that provides free dance classes and performances to children in underserved neighborhoods; **CityDance Center at Strathmore**, a dance school for youth and adults with a pre-professional training program for teens; and **CityDance FilmWORKS**, a creator of original dance-on-camera productions. The mission of CityDance Ensemble, Inc. is to advance the appreciation for and participation in the art of dance through excellence in performance, education, film, and artistic innovation.

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