



For Immediate Release

**DAVID PARKER AND MARIA HASSABI
PRESENT DRAMATICALLY DIFFERENT PREMIERES
AT DANCE THEATER WORKSHOP IN DECEMBER**

***PARKER'S "NUT/CRACKED" PLAYS DECEMBER 15–22;
MARIA HASSABI'S "DEAD IS DEAD" PREMIERES DECEMBER 9–11***

Traditions are traditionally—and easily—broken at Dance Theater Workshop, even at Christmas time. Witness “Nut/cracked,” David Parker’s vaudevillian take on the 19th century classic that plays at DTW December 15–22. Also scheduled is Maria Hassabi’s “Dead is Dead,” which plays December 9–11.

By combining tap dancing, traditional pointe work, booty shaking, singing and social dance forms, Parker wittily reveals a hilariously alternative way to look at “The Nutcracker.” It’s “Nut/cracked.” For music, the choreographer turns to pop versions of Tchaikovsky including Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller and Fred Waring, as well as the traditional orchestral suite. The 21-member cast is comprised of 11 teenage dancers as well as professional performers such as former Paul Taylor principal Mary Cochran and Jeff Kazin and David Parker, both of whom won critical kudos for their performance when sections of the dance were premiered last year at DTW.

Maria Hassabi’s “Dead is Dead,” a dramatically and emotionally intense work inspired by the darker, more violent side of city life, is also a reaction to the hyper-stimulation created by pop culture. Alternating between moments of chaos and serenity, the work is set to a collage of classical, ambient, electronic and rock music by contemporary composer Spencer Sweeney. The tri-part set, including a graffiti-covered wall, is integral to the choreography as is the bank of microphones, which does double duty as sound-maker and prop. The costumes are by the upcoming young fashion designers As Four.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Bang Group: The Bang Group, founded by David Parker in 1995, explores the percussive possibilities of the body through the use of rhythm, humor and theatrical dance. Performing regularly in New York City, the company has appeared at Dance Theater Workshop, Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church, Joe's Pub, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors and Joyce Soho, among other venues. The Bang Group also tours throughout the United States, with performances including: Dance Affiliates in Philadelphia; Summerstages Dance Festival in Massachusetts; Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center; Jacobs's Pillow Inside-Out; The Fire Island Dance Festival; and the American Dance Festival's Young Choreographers and Composers series. Internationally, the company has appeared in Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Germany and Monaco.

David Parker: David Parker began his dance training in tap and ballet as a teenager in Massachusetts. After studying modern dance at Bard College, he performed with several tap, folk and contemporary dance companies in New York City before beginning to create his own work. One of his first pieces, "Bang and Suck," was a 1994 finalist in the Fourth International Competition for Choreographers of Contemporary Dance in Groningen, Netherlands and received a special citation from the 2001 Kurt Joos Prize jury in Essen, Germany. In addition to the dances he creates for his own company, Parker has choreographed for the Verona Ballet in Italy and the Repertory Dance Theater of Utah. He created an industrial for Stolichnaya vodka that appeared simultaneously in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Parker teaches dance composition and improvisation at The Alvin Ailey School and is a guest professor throughout the United States and Europe. In 2002, Parker was recognized as a notable emerging artist by the jury of the Nijinsky Awards in Monte Carlo, Monaco, and his collaborative work with Dutch designers Melanie Rozema and Jeroen Teunissen received a 2002 Bessie Award for Design.

Maria Hassabi: Born in Cyprus, Maria Hassabi moved to New York in 1994 after earning a B.F.A. from California Institute of the Arts. Her dance studies included Cunningham and Alexander techniques, as well as improvisation. Hassabi has performed with choreographers Jeremy Nelson, Luis Lara and Wil Swanson, among others. In 1998, she joined ChameckiLerner Dance Company with whom she created five original works. Her own choreography has been presented by Dance Theater Workshop, Dixon Place, P.S. 122, The Kitchen, Danspace Project and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center. Internationally, Hassabi's work has been seen in Athens, Greece, as well as at the Sarajevo Biennale of Young Artists and at the Fringe Festival in Tomar, Portugal.

The evening curtains at Dance Theater Workshop are at 7:30pm. There are also 2pm matinees for David Parker and The Bang Group on December 18 & 19. David Parker and The Bang Group tickets cost \$25. Tickets to performances by Maria Hassabi are \$20. Discounts are available through DTW's 4 for 40% Club. All tickets may be purchased at the box office, by calling 212-924-0077 or online at www.dtw.org. Dance Theater Workshop is located at 219 West 19th Street, between 7th and 8th Avenues.

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