**Martha Graham Dance Company Begins Sixtieth Anniversary Celebration With Two World Premiers And Nine Revivals At City Center, May 27-June 15**

When the curtain rises on the Martha Graham Dance Company’s opening night at City Center, May 27, the event will signal a momentous occasion in American cultural history. The Graham Company’s three-week New York season, through June 15, heralds the beginning of the dance troupe’s 60th anniversary celebration. There will be two world premieres by Martha Graham, a series of unprecedented homages to Miss Graham’s past, and performances of dances dating back to her choreographic debut in 1926. The news was announced by Miss Graham at a press conference held April 17, on the eve f the anniversary of her Company’s performance, April 18, 1926 at New York’s 48th Street Theater.

For the first time in the Company’s history it will present Denishawn dances including Ted Shawn’s “Serenata Morisca,” in which Miss Graham made her professional performing debut in 1921. (It is also the only dance to have been performed by both Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey). Paying further tribute to Miss Graham’s Denishawn days, the season will include “Incense” (1906), choreographed and performed by Ruth St. Denis, whose theatricality and spirituality had a profound influence on Miss Graham. “Tanagra,” presented in the Graham Company’s 1926 debut program, “Lamentation” choreographed in 1930 and “Frontier,” created in 1935 are among the other classic solos to be performed during the season.

Two world premiers—one choreographed to Bella Bartok’s “Suite for Dance” and the other to Norwegian composer Klaus Egge’s Piano Concerto No. 2 will further highlight the season. In addition to Miss Graham’s most recent dances—“Acts of Light” (1981), “The Rite of Spring” (1984), “Song” (1985)—the season offers a revival of “Plain of Prayer” created in 1986 and last seen in New York in 1977; “Part Real-Part Dream” created in 1965 and last seen in New York in 1969; “Every Soul Is A Circus” created in 1939 and last seen in New York in 1970; and “Heretic” created in 1929 and last seen in New York in 1931, as well as performances of such classics as “Appalachian Spring” (1944), “Cave of the Heart” (1946), “Diversion of Angels” (1948), “El Penitente” (1940) and “Seraphic Dialogue” (1955).

The Graham Company will leave on a European tour the day after it closes at City Center. The first stop will be in Spain where it will perform in Pamplona, Barcelona and Granada, after which it will be seen in Florence and Reggio Emilia in Italy and then in Frankfurt, Germany.

The Company begins a domestic tour in the fall with performances in Lafayette, Indiana (September 29-October 5); Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska (October 6-19); Colorado Springs, Colorado (October 27-November 2); San Diego, California (November 5-7); Los Angeles, California (November 8 and 9); Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (November 10-16). In November the Company will perform in Winston-Salem, Raleigh and Boone, North Carolina; Chattanooga, Tennessee; and St. Louis, Missouri. In December it will appear in Asheville, North Carolina; Jacksonville, Ft. Myers, Sarasota and Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

In the past year Miss Graham received numerous awards, most importantly the National Medal of Arts from President Reagan, La Grande Medaille de Vermeil de Paris and the Arnold Gingrich Memorial Award from the Arts and Business Council.

Performances for the Graham Company’s City Center season are at 8pm except for opening night, which is at 7:30pm. Saturday matinees are at 2pm and Sunday performances are at 3pm. Tickets range from $12 to $30 and can be reserved by calling 212-246-8989. City Center is located at 131 West 55th Street.

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