



DANCE CELEBRATION

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FRÄULEIN MARIA,
DOUG ELKINS & FRIENDS' UPROARIOUS SPOOF ON
THE SOUND OF MUSIC
MAKES PHILADELPHIA DEBUT NOVEMBER 12-14, 2009

Philadelphia, PA – Doug Elkins & Friends' *FRÄULEIN MARIA*, a belly-laughing, gender-bending, full-length send-up of the beloved film classic, *The Sound of Music*, makes its Philadelphia premiere **November 12-14 as part of the Dance Celebration Series at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA.**

Conceived and choreographed by Doug Elkins, two-time Bessie award-winning choreographer and B-Boy maven, *FRÄULEIN MARIA* was inspired by the iconic 1965 movie *The Sound of Music*, starring Julie Andrews. Elkins became inspired while watching the *Sound of Music* with his children after a huge creative slump following the birth of his son – and this piece drug him out of the doldrums. Set to the film's famous score by Richard Rodgers with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein, Elkins' version features 13 talented dancers in 11 vignettes, and is co-directed by Barbara Karger and Michael Preston. *The New York Times* has exclaimed, "Mr. Elkins's ceaselessly brilliant and often hilarious take on *The Sound of Music* is a fount of unending movement ideas and about as much visceral pleasure as it's possible to have in a theater."

Set to the entire soundtrack (though in a different order), *FRÄULEIN MARIA* showcases no less than three Marias, cross-dressing nuns and an inventive, unforgettable hip-hop solo, performed by Elkins dressed in a hoodie and basketball shorts to "*Climb Ev'ry Mountain*." A seductive duet of "*Sixteen Going on Seventeen*," features a man in drag in a chair being enticed by a voguing paramour. Ensemble sections such as "*Do-Re-Mi*" and "*The Lonely Goatherd*" feature Elkins' irrepressible style—a unique mix of club, hip-hop, dance theater and contemporary vocabularies, as well as his tongue-in-cheek references to acclaimed dance makers Paul Taylor, José Limon and George Balanchine. *Dance Magazine* sums it up: "Many vignettes had the audience chuckling, laughing and guffawing."

A zany production filled with surprises, complete with performers entering from off-stage and an audience sing-along, *FRÄULEIN MARIA*'s talented cast of downtown New York performers includes Devin Buchanan, Cindy Chung Camins, Carolyn Cryer, Doug Elkins, Kevin Fitzgerald Ferguson, Gui Greene, Krista Jansen, Deborah Lohse, Scott Lowe (who also performs with Philadelphia's Miro Dance Theatre), Meghan Merrill, Lisa Niedermeyer, Donnell Turner Oakley and Michael Preston.

Under the artistic direction of Randy Swartz, **Dance Celebration presented by Dance Affiliates and Penn Presents**, maintains the tradition of bringing the world's best contemporary touring dance companies to Philadelphia. This season's **The Magic of Movement** pays tribute to American dance, showcasing its diversity of styles including tap, Broadway, jazz, contemporary, hip-hop, multimedia and dance theater. Mr. Swartz notes (about *Fräulein Maria*) "We are thrilled to present to Philadelphia audiences this production lauded by the *New York Times* as one of the "ten best productions in 2008."

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In 1988, **Doug Elkins Dance Company** was founded by Elkins with Lisa Nicks and Jane Weiner and performed nationally and internationally for 15 years. Elkins is a recipient of choreographic commissions and awards from the NEA, National Performance Network, Jerome Foundation, Choo-San Goh & H. Robert Magee Foundation, Dance Magazine Foundation, Metropolitan Life/American Dance Festival, Hartford Foundation, Arts International, The Greenwall Foundation and The Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts. In 1994, he received a Brandeis University Creative Arts Medal. In 2006, Elkins was honored in New York City with the Martha Hill Award for Career Achievement. He has taught and choreographed in the US and Europe and has created original works for Batsheva Dance Company, Flying Karamazov Brothers, MaggioDanza, Pennsylvania Ballet, Union Dance and CanDoCo. His theater work includes collaborations with Joanne Akalaitis and Philip Glass, Robert Woodruff, Pavel Dubrusky, Annie Hamburger, Molly Smith, Craig Lucas, David Henry Hwang, Michael Preston and Barbara Karger.

In addition to performances, Doug Elkins & Friends will offer outreach activities including two master classes as part of the *Artist to Artist Series* and a special school performances as part of the Annenberg Center's *Student Discovery Series*. For more information about the *Artist to Artist Series* call 215-636-9000 ext.110 or visit www.danceaffiliates.org. For more information about the *Student Discovery Series*, call 215-898-6789 or visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org/studentdiscovery.

Performances will take place on Thursday, November 12 at 7:30 pm; Friday, November 13 at 8:00 pm and Saturday, November 14 at 2:00 pm and 8:00 pm. Ticket prices are \$28 - \$48 (evening) and \$24 - \$44 (matinee). Tickets may be purchased by calling the Annenberg Center Box Office at 215-898-3900 or by visiting www.AnnenbergCenter.org

For more information on the upcoming production of **Doug Elkins & Friends** and Dance Celebration's 28th season or for press tickets and/or interview requests, please call Nina Zucker Associates at 610.667.0706 or email nzapr@aol.com. For more information on the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, please contact Lauren Saul at **215-573-8537** or visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org.

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