FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 1, 2004

WHAT: Axis Dance Company
WHEN: Thursday, October 7, 2004 at 7:30pm
WHERE: Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets
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MULTI-ABLED DANCERS GIVE NEW MEANING TO RANGE AND EXCELLENCE

"If you think you know what virtuosity is, go take in Axis Dance Company - it'll redefine the term for you in no time flat"

Rita Felciano, SF Bay Guardian

Since 1987, AXIS Dance Company has created an exciting body of work developed by dancers with and without disabilities. They are in the forefront of paving the way for a powerful and inclusive dance form, “physically integrated dance”. The company performs at the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall On Thursday, October 7 at 7:30pm. The company will also be in residence for a week working with a variety of community groups and performing for area school children through Performances Plus! The curtain call and Talkback with the artists will be ASL interpreted.

AXIS has performed in theaters and dance spaces at its home base in the Bay Area, on tour throughout the U.S., as well as in Germany and Siberia. Described as a "visual and physical discovery, creating fascinating works of movement art, " the Company has become internationally known for its high artistic and educational standards and innovative movement vocabulary. Under the Artistic Direction of Judith Smith, their stellar repertory includes works by AXIS choreographers, Stephen Petronio, Bill T. Jones, Joe Goode, Joanna Haigood, Sonya Delwaide, and Victoria Marks.
The Company has created over thirty repertory works, two evening length works and two works for young audiences. AXIS has been commissioned to create works for the San Francisco Exploratorium and the CAL Performances and UAM/PFA's Off the Wall series. They were featured in WNET’s nationally broadcast production of "People In Motion" and a documentary video, "Dancing From the Inside Out," which won over a dozen awards including Dance On Camera in New York and the National Educational Film and Video Festival.

AXIS dancers have also served as consultants and models for the creation of Life Forms choreography software used to introduce disabled students to dance and choreography. Among the Company’s most notable performances are the Olympic Arts Festival, Salt Lake City; Dance Umbrella’s International Festival of Aerial Dance in Boston; and Central Park Summer stage, New York to name a few. In collaboration with Dance Umbrella, AXIS planned and curated the International Festival of Wheelchair Dance in June 1997. This was the first event ever of this magnitude and prestige in the history of this relatively new dance form.

AXIS Dance Company has been supported through grants from the National Endowment for the Arts; Rockefeller Foundation's MAP Fund; William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; Creative Work Fund; Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation; Walter and Elise Haas Fund; San Francisco Foundation; Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation and Zellerbach Family Fund, to name a few.

Axis Dance Company will perform at Fine Arts Center Concert Hall, Wednesday, October 7 at 7:30pm. Tickets are $30, $25, and $15; 17 and under are $10 and Five College student tickets are $15, $10 and $7. For tickets and information, call the Fine Arts Center Box office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or go online to www.fineartscenter.com/centerseries.

Residency events open to the public include a video presentation and lecture held at the Forum (building C) at Holyoke Community College on Wednesday, October 6 from 11AM – 12PM. This event will be ASL interpreted; theatre is wheelchair accessible. Area K – 12 teachers are invited to attend a teacher workshop with AXIS on Tuesday, October 5 from 3:45PM – 6PM at the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall. The theatre is wheelchair accessible, ASL services upon advanced request. Professional Development Points available. Advanced registration is required by calling the Daily Hampshire Gazette’s NIE Program at 413-585-5289.
Funded in part by the Expeditions program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, which receives major support from the National Endowment for the Arts with additional support from the state arts agencies of New England and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Support for the Axis Dance Company residency provided by the Nan and Matilda Heydt Fund administered by Fleet National Bank through the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. Also sponsored by the Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation and the Ride-Away Handicap Equipment Corp. Special thanks to the Office for Students with Disabilities and Deaf Services at Holyoke Community College for providing ASL interpreter services. The performance is locally sponsored by WFCR 88.5FM, Upton Massamont Realtors Group, Greenfield Savings Bank and Finck & Perras Insurance.

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