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<http://www.MondaviArts.org/pressroom>

For immediate release:

Israel's Top Dance Company Brings *Deca Dance* to Mondavi Center

September 18, 2006; Davis, California—**Batsheva**, hailed as “Israel’s foremost dance company” (*The New Yorker*) will visit the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts** at **UC Davis** to perform acclaimed choreographer **Ohad Naharin**’s *Deca Dance*, a masterful remix of his first decade of work. One of the most acclaimed and in-demand companies in the world, Batsheva has thrilled audiences and critics with *Deca Dance*, a work “full of that heady, visceral stuff of life—love, sex, violence, ambition, hanging on and letting go” (*The DanceView Times*).

There will be two performances, each beginning at 8 pm, on October 24 and 25 in Mondavi Center’s Jackson Hall on the UC Davis campus. Tickets are available from the Mondavi Center Ticket Office at 530.754.ARTS (2787) or online at MondaviArts.org. The event is presented as part of Mondavi Center’s Dance Series.

There will be a Pre-performance Lecture featuring **Della Davidson**, professor, UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance, at 7 pm on October 24 in the AGR Room of the **Buehler Alumni and Visitors Center** on the UC Davis campus. There will also be a Post-performance Q&A, in which audience members may interact with members of the company, following both performances.

With a distinctive style based on Artistic Director Naharin’s personal movement technique called “Gaga,” Batsheva has been drawing rave reviews. “With his athletic dancers and provocative choreography, Naharin carves out a world where madness waltzes with grace,” wrote *The Washington Post*. Calling Naharin “Israel’s leading choreographer,” *The New York Times* wrote that the “Batsheva dancers, mostly in their mid-20s but looking almost brazenly young, are all superb, and what Mr. Naharin asks of them brings out their inner, individual gifts. But those gifts remain focused by a seductive overall vision.”

Founded in 1964 by legendary American dancer and choreographer **Martha Graham** and **Baroness Batsheva De Rothschild**, Batsheva’s artistic integrity and innovation have earned the company its reputation as one of the most inspirational and sought-after companies—a true champion on the global map of performing arts. Batsheva operates throughout the year with its two companies and 40 dancers. With 250 annual performances in Israel and around the globe, the company is considered Israel’s leading cultural ambassador.

Born in 1952, Naharin began his training as a dancer at the age of 22 with Batsheva, then journeyed to New York at the invitation of Martha Graham to join her company and to make use of a scholarship to the **School of American Ballet**. After a year with Martha Graham, he continued his studies at **The Juilliard School of**

Music, then joined the **Maurice Bejart Company** in Brussels for one season. He made his choreographic debut in 1980 in the **Kazuko Hirabayashi** studio in New York. From 1980 to 1990 he performed and worked in New York, where he lived with his wife, the dancer **Mari Kajiwara**, who died of cancer in 2001. In 1990 he was appointed artistic director of Batsheva.

Naharin developed his distinctive “Gaga” style after suffering a serious back injury that caused him to reexamine his relationship to his body and the nature of movement. The technique, which has become the daily training of the Batsheva dancers, encourages and teaches multidimensional movement, efficiency of movement, the use of explosive power, texture of movement, the connection between pleasure and effort, quickness, the clarity of intention, stamina, recognizing one’s own movement habits and acquiring new ones, ways to reverse atrophy and weakness, and helps dancers to maximize their training and strengths.

Deca Dance includes parts of Naharin’s *Black Milk* (1985), *Mabul* (1992), *Sabotage Baby* (1997), *Zachacha* (1998), *Moshe* (1999), *Naharin’s Virus* (2001), and *Three* (2005) and is performed without intermission. Naharin has said that he relished the opportunity to reexamine these works and fit them together in new ways. “It teaches me a lot about composition and enables me to look at many elements in the works from a new angle,” said Naharin. “By doing it, some of the elements become even more interesting and strong than in the original form.”

Additional materials on Batsheva and *Deca Dance*, including video excerpts, are available on www.mondaviarts.org.

“We’re very excited about being able to present Batsheva, a company we consider to be at the very forefront of dance today,” said Mondavi Center Executive Director **Don Roth**. “This is an event that people who don’t think they like modern dance will enjoy, and one that those who already appreciate the art form will not want to miss.”

What: **Batsheva**
Deca Dance

When: Tuesday-Wednesday, October 24-25, 8 pm

Where: Jackson Hall
Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts
University of California, Davis

Admission: \$42/\$37/\$32 Adults • \$14/\$12/\$10 Students, Children

Tickets/Info: 530.754.ARTS (2787)
866.754.ARTS (toll-free)
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