

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**KANSAS CITY BALLET SEASON
CONTINUES WITH ECLECTIC WINTER PROGRAM**

*World Premiere of Whitener's Jaywalk and Company Premiere
of Nault's La Fille mal gardée Highlight February Program*

KANSAS CITY, MO (January 23, 2006) – Kansas City Ballet is set to open its Winter season of ballets, assembling a varied program that highlights a world premiere by Artistic Director William Whitener, a stunningly lyrical work for four men and closing with one of the oldest story ballets still being performed today.

Kansas City Ballet's Winter Program, February 23 through 26 at the Lyric Theatre, will feature a company premiere of a truly charming ballet, Fernand Nault's *La Fille mal gardée*, an encore presentation of David Berkey's haunting *Sentinel*, and will close with a world premiere of our very own Artistic Director William Whitener's *Jaywalk*.

La Fille mal gardée (The Poorly Guarded Daughter), choreographed by French Canadian Fernand Nault, tells a charming country tale of young love, fraught with mischief, misadventures and misunderstandings and an overprotective mother's best intentions gone awry. This ballet, first produced in its original form prior to the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789, is a classic and an audience favorite that has stood the test of time around the world. The story of young Lisette, her beau Colas, his unfortunate and hapless rival Alain and her mother the Widow Simone (performed en traveste) provides more charm and chuckles than you will usually find on a February winter night! This production is a Kansas City premiere and it is heartily recommended for everyone in the family.

Sentinel, a ballet for four men by the late David Berkey to Johannes Brahm's Concerto in D Major, is a tour de force of male lyrical movement. This lyrical theme is poetic as it tells (through the metaphor of dance) the passing down of wisdom and life lessons well learned from

generation to generation. The splendid camaraderie of these four young men suggests a “changing of the guard” ritual. The William T. Kemper Foundation, Commerce Bank, trustee, is a partner in the production of *Sentinel*.

Closing the Winter Program will be a world premiere of Artistic Director William Whitener’s *Jaywalk*. Jaywalk is a new dance that contains pieces of two previous works of Whitener: *Blue in Green*, which was originally created for Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal in the early 1990s and *Beat*, originally created for the University of Kansas in 2005. The dance draws upon jazz and modern dance technique, social dancing, ballet pointe work and tap dancing. The title makes reference to the counterculture movement akin to walking across the street without regard for the rules that began in earnest with the Beat Generation and continued with the “hot” and “cool” hipsters. *Jaywalk* will feature the unforgettable music of Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Anoushka Shankar, Aphex Twin, Dizzy Gillespie and other jazz musicians. The Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts, Commerce Bank, trustee, is supporting *Jaywalk*.

The Winter Program will be February 23-26 at the Lyric Theatre (1029 Central) in downtown Kansas City, Missouri. Performance days and times are Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Friday at 8:00, Saturday at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. Contact the Kansas City Ballet Box Office at 816.931.2232 x375 to reserve the best seats today or visit our web site at www.kcballet.org.

Founded in 1957, Kansas City Ballet is a 25-member professional ballet company under the direction of William Whitener and Jeffrey J. Bentley. The company’s mission is to offer our community, region and dance profession, dance experiences of the highest quality. In this process, we seek to nurture and develop our artists, audiences and students in the creativity, diversity and joy of dance.

Bios: Bios of all choreographers and composers can be found on our website at www.kcballet.org.

Students/Seniors RUSH: Arrive at the Lyric box office one to two hours prior to Fall, Winter or Spring performances, and get any available seat for just \$10 with a valid I.D.

Kansas City Ballet BARRE, Art You Can Party With: Kansas City Ballet Barre is a group of young professionals supporting the ballet and sponsoring various events throughout the year to have fun, attend performances, and other related events as well. Interested in joining BARRE? Contact the box office at 816.931.2232 x375 today!

Footnotes: Join Artistic Director William Whitener for a free, informal presentation one-hour prior to the Winter performance. Visiting choreographers often join Mr. Whitener in these informative previews, and it's a rare chance to capture the history and anecdotes behind each dance. Audience members are invited to gather on the mezzanine level of the Lyric Theatre one-hour prior to show time.

Many thanks to our 2005-2006 sponsors: Hotel Phillips is the Host Hotel and Restaurant, The Villa is the Official Caterer and Midwest Airlines is the Official Airline of Kansas City Ballet.

Winter Performance

February 23-26, 2006
Lyric Theatre
1029 Central

Thursday	7:30 p.m.
Friday	8:00 p.m.
Saturday	2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Sunday	2:00 p.m.

La Fille mal gardée	Fernand Nault/Wilhelm Hertel
Sentinel	David Berkey/Johannes Brahms
Jaywalk	William Whitener/Miles Davis and others

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Please direct all media inquiries to: Ellen McDonald at 816.444.0052.