

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DOUG VARONE AND DANCERS PERFORM
THREE PHILADELPHIA PREMIERES
ON THE DANCE CELEBRATION SERIES, DECEMBER 4-6, 2008**

PHILADELPHIA, PA – Praised as “nothing short of astonishing” (The Cleveland Plain Dealer), Doug Varone and Dancers debuts three works December 4-6 at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA. Choreographed by 2006 OBIE awardee and Guggenheim Fellow Doug Varone (artistic director/founder), the Philadelphia premieres include Varone’s Bessie award-winning masterpiece *Boats Leaving* (2006) music by Arvo Part, the explosive *Lux* (2006) to Philip Glass’s “The Light” and the humorous duet *Polonaise #44* to Frederick Chopin’s, “Polonaise Opus 44” (2000).

Varone’s choreography is recognized for its emotional range, kinetic musicality, technical prowess and exceptional fluidity. Newsday notes, “This is a company of master dancers performing masterly choreography.” Varone’s use of gesture, stunning group lifts and intricate partnerings are apparent by his desire to explore the extremes. Varone notes “I love choreographing in extremes - doing something small, tiny and still, and then doing something enormous and explosive.”

Performances will take place on Thursday, December 4 at 7:30 pm; Friday, December 5 at 8 pm; and Saturday, December 6 at 2 pm and 8 pm. Ticket prices are \$48, \$42 and \$38 (evening) and \$42, \$36, \$32 (matinee). Tickets may be purchased by calling the Annenberg Center Box Office at 215-898-3900 or by visiting www.pennpresents.org. **Dance Celebration is presented by Dance Affiliates and Penn Presents. Its 27th season under the artistic direction of Randy Swartz salutes *The Dancemaker*.**

In *Boats Leaving*, Arvo Part’s “Te Deum” features choral voices rising and falling providing the eight dancers with glorious music to create stunning and at times haunting images of man’s journey. The dancers support and push one another, evoking urban violence, a war zone, or people leaving their homeland, as well as a lifeline for humanity. Jane Cox’s lighting design and Liz Prince’s costume design intensify Varone’s notions of mankind caught between darkness and light, an endless life cycle. Veteran dancer

Eddie Taketa opens *Lux* (2006) with a series of circular runs and soft jumps as the moon slowly rises in the background. The ensemble in Prince's elegant black costumes joins in pairs, trios, and ensemble sections with arms swinging and torsos flailing to the thunderous crescendos of Glass's minimalist score. New York Times calls *Polonaise 44* "crazily imaginative." This whimsical duet was built on studio improvisations by Varone and longtime dancer/collaborator Gwen Welliver, and will be performed by Daniel Charon and Doug Varone. The program also includes *Home* (1988), an hilarious, poignant theatrical duet featuring dancers Ryan Corrison and Natalie Desch, with two chairs.

Doug Varone works in dance, theater, opera, film, television and fashion. Varone was awarded a 2006 OBIE for his direction and choreography of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Orpheus and Euridice* at Lincoln Center. For New York's Metropolitan Opera, Varone has choreographed new productions of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, *Les Troyens*, *Salome*, and the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *An American Tragedy*. Other opera choreography includes *Die Walküre* (Washington Opera); *Il Viaggio a Reims* (New York City Opera); and the American premieres of George Antheil's *Transatlantic* and Ricky Ian Gordon's debut production of *Grapes of Wrath* (Minnesota Opera). He has choreographed for Broadway, Baltimore's Center Stage, Yale Repertory Theatre, Walnut Street Theatre, Princeton's McCarter Theater, Music Theater Group, The Vineyard Theatre, Via Theater and the Patrick Swayze film, *One Last Dance*. Varone has created works for the Bern Ballet (Switzerland), Rambert Dance Company (London), Dancemakers (Canada), Batsheva Dance Company (Israel), Uppercut Danse (Denmark), An Creative (Japan), Chicago's Hubbard Street, The Limón Company, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Colorado Ballet, and Alvin Ailey. His work has been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts since 1988.

In addition to the performances, the company will conduct a free master class, Friday, December 5 at 1pm and Student Discovery Series Performance for Schools Friday, December 5 at 10:30 am. For Dance Celebration Outreach information, contact Dance Affiliates 215-636-9000 ext.110 or visit www.danceaffiliates.org

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