

ONSTAGE

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT PENN STATE

The John Scofield and Joe Lovano Quartet



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**CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
AT PENN STATE**

presents

**The John Scofield
and Joe Lovano
Quartet**

**Matt Penman, bass
Bill Stewart, drums**

**7:30 p.m. Thursday, January 27, 2011
Schwab Auditorium**

The concert is presented without intermission.



This tour engagement of Joe Lovano and John Scofield is funded through the Mid Atlantic Tours program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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THE JOHN SCOFIELD AND JOE LOVANO QUARTET

Guitarist/composer John Scofield and the equally lauded, Grammy-winning saxophonist/composer Joe Lovano are together again in the public eye. The two musicians have kept their mutual fans waiting nearly twenty years for the next merger. These stellar musicians have (with the exception of a brief pairing in the powerhouse group ScoLo-HoFo with bassist Dave Holland and drummer Al Foster) spent little time performing together in public. Audiences are enjoying the next level in their partnership—the sum of their years of experience, creativity, and technique presented with intensity, skill, and fun.

Born in Ohio in 1951, **JOHN SCOFIELD** is considered one of the “big three” of current jazz guitarists—along with Pat Metheny and Bill Frisell. His influence began in the late 1970s and is going strong. Possessor of a distinctive sound and stylistic diversity, Scofield is a masterful jazz improviser whose music generally falls somewhere between post-bop, funk-edged jazz, and R&B. He has prominently led his own groups in the international jazz scene, recorded more than thirty-five albums as a leader (many already classics), and collaborated with contemporary favorites and jazz legends like Miles Davis; Metheny; Charlie Haden; Eddie Harris; Medeski, Martin, and Wood; Frisell; Brad Mehldau; Mavis Staples; Government Mule; Jack DeJohnette; Lovano; Herbie Hancock; Joe Henderson; Holland; and Phil Lesh. Throughout his career, Scofield has punctuated his traditional jazz offerings with funk-oriented electric music. All along the guitarist has kept an open musical



Nick Suttile

John Scofield

mind and a variety of audiences in the jazz, rock, and classical realms. Touring the world approximately 200 days per year with his own groups, he is an adjunct professor of music at New York University, a husband, and father of two.

JOE LOVANO was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1952 and began playing saxophone as a child. Known for both small and large group ensembles, Lovano stands out as one of the most successful saxophonists in jazz today. He has distinguished himself for some three decades as a precocious and pathfinding force in the arena of creative music. From his recent work with Gunther Schul-

ler—*Streams of Expression*—to his work as Gary Burton Chair of Jazz Performance at Berklee College of Music, Lovano continually challenges and pushes conceptual and thematic choices in his quest for new modes of artistic expression and new definitions of the jazz idiom. He has released eighteen celebrated albums on the Blue Note label, including 2007's Grammy-nominated *Kids*, a duet recording with the late iconic pianist Hank Jones. Lovano is married to singer Judi Silvano.

New Zealand native **MATT PENMAN** was born in November 1974 and relocated to New York City in 1995. Classically and jazz trained, Penman has spent the last several years traveling the world like a minstrel with his double bass. He has played with San Francisco Jazz Collective, Scofield, Kenny Werner, Wolfgang Muthspiel, Nneena Freelon, Kurt Rosenwinkel, David Berkman, Guillermo Klein, Mika Pohjola, Peter Bernstein, and Sam Yahel, among others. Penman is in demand as a sideman and is also developing his reputation as a leader.

BILL STEWART was guitarist for Scofield's band from 1990 to 1995. Self-taught on drums, Stewart is also a capable pianist, the instrument on which he composes. He enrolled at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, playing in the jazz and marching bands, as well as the orchestra. He then transferred to college in Wayne, New Jersey, where he studied with Dave Samuels, Rufus Reid, and Harold Mabern. It was there he met Lovano. While still in college, Stewart made his recording debut with saxophonist Scott Kreitzer and recorded two further collections with pianist Armen Donelian. After graduation in 1988, he moved to Brooklyn, New York. There he began the slow process of establishing his reputation by



Joe Lovano

regular appearances at jam sessions and by word of mouth, leading to his first gigs with the Larry Goldings trio. At one of their regular sessions at Augie's Club in Manhattan, Maceo Parker attended and invited him to contribute to a forthcoming recording date (for *Roots Revisited*). Afterward, Stewart was invited to join Scofield's band, which also included Lovano, who has been featured on both of Stewart's solo albums. *Think Before You Think* was issued on the Jazz City label and featured Dave Holland on bass and Marc Copland on piano. *Snide Remarks* featured pianist Bill Carrothers, trumpeter Eddie Henderson, and bassist Larry Grenadier. The album featured nine Stewart compositions, highlighting a compositional technique Lovano said was "a melody player within the concept of rhythm."

Merce Cunningham Dance Company performs at Penn State as part of final tour

By John Mark Rafac

Merce Cunningham, who died at age 90 in 2009, was a giant figure in American modern dance—both as a choreographer and, for much of his life, as a dancer.

“Over a career of nearly seven decades, Mr. Cunningham went on posing ‘But’ and ‘What if?’ questions, making people rethink the essence of dance and choreography,” wrote Alastair Macaulay in the *New York Times* Cunningham obituary. “... Mr. Cunningham ranks among the foremost figures of artistic modernism and among the few who have transformed the nature and status of dance theater, visionaries like Isadora Duncan, Serge Diaghilev, Martha Graham, and George Balanchine.”

The Merce Cunningham Dance Company’s final, two-year world tour showcases seminal works from throughout Cunningham’s career. The Legacy Tour, which visits State College and more than three dozen other cities, provides the last chance to see Cunningham’s choreography performed by the company he trained.

Like Pascal Rioult, the choreographer and artistic director who brought his company to the Center for the Performing Arts in October, Cunningham first made a name for himself as a member



Richard Rutledge

Above: Merce Cunningham in 1958.
Opposite: Cunningham in 2009.

of the Martha Graham Dance Company.

The scheduled program for the February 12 Merce Cunningham Dance Company performance at Eisenhower Auditorium includes *Duets*, *Second Hand*, and *Sound-dance*.

Duets, which debuted in 1980 in New York City, moves to John Cage’s score of electronic manipulations of percussion music by Mel Mercier and Peadar.

“Merce Cunningham demonstrated that two can be very pleasant company when the Merce Cunningham Dance Company presented the season’s first performance of *Duets ...*,” the *New York Times*’ Jack Anderson wrote after seeing a 1982 performance.

“A set of charming dance for six couples, *Duets* was performed with all the vivacity it deserved.”

During each of the duets, another couple makes a short traversal of the stage. At the end, all six couples dance together.

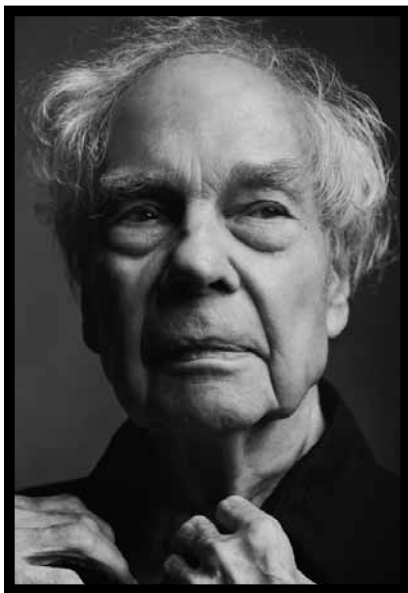
“Technically, *Duets* occasionally seemed indebted to classical ballet,” Anderson observed, “and yet it could never be mistaken for *Swan Lake* or even an abstraction by George Balanchine.”

Second Hand, with music by Cage and costume design by painter Jasper Johns, was first performed in 1970 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The three-movement work includes a male solo, a male-female duet, and a group dance.

Cunningham had hoped to set the work to a Cage piano arrangement of Erik Satie’s *Socrate*, which had been composed for small orchestra and four sopranos. But Satie’s estate refused permission for the use of *Socrate* both in its original form and in a Cage arrangement. So Cage composed music based on the structure and phraseology of Satie’s composition. Cage titled his music *Cheap Imitation*, which inspired Cunningham’s choice of *Second Hand* for the dance title.

The title of *Sounddance*, first performed in 1975 in Detroit, comes from a line in James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. After spending nine weeks in France choreographing a work with the Ballet of the Paris Opera, Cunningham returned to the United States wanting to create a high-energy dance for his own troupe.

“I felt like doing something vigorous, fast, complex,” he said.



Mark Seliger

The work, set to music by David Tudor, features ten dancers. “The general impression,” Cunningham said, “is of a space observed under a microscope.”

The Legacy Tour culminates in New York City—the troupe’s home since it was founded in 1953—with performances on December 29 through 31, 2011. The company closes following the New Year’s Eve performance.

The Penn State International Dance Ensemble Endowment underwrites dance presentations at the Center for the Performing Arts. Artistic Viewpoints, an informal moderated discussion featuring David Vaughan, Merce Cunningham Dance Company archivist, is offered in Eisenhower one hour before the performance and is free for ticket holders.

For tickets or information, visit www.cpa.psu.edu or phone 814-863-0255. Outside the local calling area, dial 1-800-ARTS-TIX.

John Mark Rafacz is the editorial manager of the Center for the Performing Arts.



Montreal's Cirque Éloize combines physical feats and urban culture in *ID*

By John Mark Rafacz

In its new production *ID*, Montreal's Cirque Éloize (*serk El-waz*) embraces urban culture with playful energy, uncanny physical feats, and the gentle poetry that has become synonymous with the contemporary circus company.

ID, which comes to Penn State at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 15, in Eisenhower Auditorium, features sixteen artists, thirteen circus disciplines, hip-hop and rock music, dancing, and projected video.

"I imagined this show at the heart of a futuristic city, where the omnipresence of image causes us to lose our reference points," notes *ID* Director Jeannot Painchaud. "I sought to create an aesthetic at the crossroads of comic books, science-fiction movies, and the rich universe of graffiti."

The focal point of *ID* is a gathering place in which discovery, friendship, love, and conflict unfold.

"In the middle of this surreal megalopolis exists a public place," Painchaud points out. "A public place, as a spot where one can seek refuge and escape anonymity, to express one's individuality and affirm one's identity, in order to reclaim possession of public space."

ID benefits from being created and performed by artists of several nationalities.

Cirque Éloize, which was formed in 1993, has performed several family-friendly productions at the Center for the Performing Arts. The company last appeared at Eisenhower in a February 2006 performance of *Rain*, a watery show that also had a run on Broadway.



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The Village at Penn State Life Care Retirement Community sponsors the presentation. WTaj Your News Leader and 95.3 3WZ are the media sponsors. Audio description, which is especially helpful to patrons with sight loss, is available for this performance at no extra charge to ticket holders. Artistic Viewpoints, an informal moderated discussion featuring Cirque Éloize Tour Manager Alice Kop, is offered in Eisenhower one hour before the performance and is free for ticket holders. Artistic Viewpoints regularly fills to capacity. Seating is available on a first-arrival basis.

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Musical version of *THE COLOR PURPLE* complements award-winning novel and motion picture

By Jennifer Pencek

THE *COLOR PURPLE* chronicles the forty-year journey of lead character Celie as she evolves from a victim of sexual and emotional abuse to a woman who finds strength in herself. The powerful story resonates in Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, Steven Spielberg's film adaptation starring Whoopi Goldberg, and Broadway's musical interpretation that earned a Tony Award for LaChanze plus ten more nominations.

Following in the footsteps of Goldberg and LaChanze's portrayals of Celie is Dayna Jaræ Dantzler, who performs in the national tour of *THE COLOR PURPLE* musical. The Center for the Performing Arts presents the show at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 22 and 23, in Eisenhower Auditorium.

"I think people are curious as to how they'll take such a story and make it a musical, and of course it's a classic," says Dantzler, speaking by phone from a tour stop in Albuquerque, New Mexico. "I think what draws people is it's a beautiful story. It's wonderful how [Celie's] able to transform herself and overcome adversity. It's something everyone can relate to."

Set in rural Georgia from 1909 to 1949, the characters in *THE COLOR PURPLE* struggle with racism and male-female relationships in an evolving African American community. The musical has moments of happiness and humor amid a Grammy-nominated score of gospel, jazz, and blues songs.



Photo by Scott Suchman

Left to right: Dayna Jaræ Dantzler (Celie) and Traci Allen (Nettie)

The cast digs deep into the characters and tries to stay true to Walker's story, Dantzler says.

"It's just an honor to be one of the Celies, to be a part of this legacy in the first place," she says. "I just try to play each moment as honestly and truthfully as I can. ... We all realize we have been blessed with this wonderful opportunity to tell this incredible story. We do our best to tell it as clear and as truthfully as we can so that maybe someone can walk away and share love the way that we are sharing love with them."

THE COLOR PURPLE cast has been touring the country since February 2010 and shares the love with audiences through June 2011.

African Americans have been particularly supportive of the production throughout its run, especially in cities where the community is predomi-

nantly Black, says Allyson Kay Daniel, a Penn State Musical Theatre graduate in the musical's ensemble.

"One of those things that make it so appealing to African Americans is it's a solely African American cast, and there aren't many shows that are an African American cast," says Daniel, also speaking from Albuquerque.

Still, Daniel's quick to point out, the story of *A COLOR PURPLE* appeals to audiences of all races.

"We have good turnouts no matter where we are," she says. "It's a testament to the strength of the story and to how well Alice Walker wrote it that so many people learn something from the story and have a connection to it."

For many in the audience, Daniel says, they are seeing the last piece of *THE COLOR PURPLE* puzzle.

"I would say 89 percent of the audience is people who have read the book and seen the movie, or read the book, or just read the book or seen the movie," she says. "We very rarely have people who have never read the book or seen the movie, and they're coming because they already have high expectations, which is really good for us. If you get all three of them, it's like a good last piece of the puzzle."

To help create that connection each night, Daniel partly relies on the training she received from the Penn State Musical Theatre program. She has found steady acting work since graduating in 2008, including performing on Disney Cruise Line.

While other actors struggle to find work, Daniel is thankful for her success.

"I can only attribute that to not only my own talent, but really what I learned at school," she says. "We had good audition techniques and training, so I was able to use all of that."

Part of her achievement may also be from the support of fellow

cast members. Telling the dramatic stories of *THE COLOR PURPLE* can be tiresome night after night, especially trying to differentiate from the memorable portrayals by film and Broadway stars.

"We try hard not to be like anyone else, particularly like any characters from the movie," she says. "No one's trying to be Oprah. No one's trying to be Danny Glover. None of us watched the movie until three to four months in just so we wouldn't have that anywhere in our minds. We can tell when we're tired, and we can tell when we're kind of getting into a rut and not bringing it every night. We kind of pick each other up, and support each other, and get through that. And that's what helps keep all the individuality and keep it fresh."

TIAA-CREF sponsors the presentations. WJAC-TV is the media sponsor. AT&T underwrites Broadway presentations at the Center for the Performing Arts. Audio description, which is especially helpful to patrons with sight loss, is available for the March 23 performance at no extra charge to ticket holders. Artistic Viewpoints, an informal moderated discussion featuring a visiting artist or local expert, is offered in Eisenhower one hour before each performance and is free for ticket holders. Artistic Viewpoints regularly fills to capacity. Seating is available on a first-arrival basis.

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Jennifer Pencek is the associate editor of the Center for the Performing Arts.