

**CDI/CONCERT DANCE INC. RETURNS TO THE RAVINIA FESTIVAL
2009 RUTH PAGE FESTIVAL OF DANCE AT RAVINIA**

CHICAGO – The 2009 Ruth Page Festival of Dance at Ravinia continues the summer season with the return of one of Chicago’s leading contemporary dance companies, CDI/Concert Dance, Inc. to the Bennett • Gordon Hall stage September 10 and 11 at 8 p.m., 200 Ravinia Park Rd., Highland Park. The program features a world premiere by Artistic Director Venetia Stifler as part of the Lincoln Bicentennial at Ravinia, and a work-in-progress showing of a new work based on the company’s cultural exploration of China this past May, 2009. Also on the program will be a number of audience favorites. The completed dance will be premiered at the 2010 Ravinia Festival. Tickets are \$10 for reserved seats and no lawn tickets will be available. To purchase tickets to CDI/ Concert Dance, Inc.’s Ravina program visit www.ravinia.org or call 847.266.5100.

Ravinia’s Ruth Page Festival of Dance commemorates the 16th president with a commission for CDI’s artistic director Venetia Stifler and her company. This new work, “The Better Angels of Our Nature,” features the music of Lawrence Dillon and was inspired by Lincoln’s personal letters. The soundscape will also include spoken word narrated by Ravinia’s President and CEO Welz Kauffman. The Dillon score was one of three winners selected from Ravinia’s first composition competition, devised to spur the creation of fresh musical works that would be imbedded with the words of Lincoln. The Lincoln Trio, the piano trio that Ravinia has engaged to perform the competition winners works throughout the state of Illinois this past spring, will perform the piece live on stage with CDI.

“The movement explores both the commissioned work and Lincoln’s words,” explains Venetia Stifler. “The overriding inspiration was to find Lincoln – not just the president and statesman but the man – through his words. The music has three sections, which act as three short stories. The first gives us Lincoln’s response to political blackmail, the second section finds Lincoln laughing at his own foibles, and the third is Lincoln calling us to action by finding ‘the better angels of our nature.’ The dance explores the underlying context and imagery of his eloquent, sometimes humorous and often powerful words.”

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Also on the program will be a work-in-progress showing from The China Project, CDI's cultural exchange and exploration of China and the Chinese dance aesthetic. The China Project allowed CDI to perform and present its brand of American contemporary dance to an international audience. It also created the stepping-stones of an on-going cultural dialogue using dance as its language. Through travel logs of their experiences in China created by the dancers and artistic director, this new multi-media work will explore how the company's perceptions and realities were affected by a 3000 year-old culture that remains unbroken. The completed dance will be premiered Summer of 2010 as part of the Ruth Page Festival of Dance at Ravinia.

Recently celebrating its twenty-fifth year, CDI, is noted for its strong dancers, live music, original art and costumes, while exploring a wide range of choreographic themes. With vividly evocative and sometimes comic choreography, the dancers and musicians create emotionally charged performances. As the professional company in residence at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts, CDI also re-envision the work of Chicago dance icon, Ruth Page.

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