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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2008

**MIRO DANCE THEATRE presents *Self-Portrait*, inspired by Frida Kahlo
Audiences offered a sneak-peak @ OPEN STUDIO SERIES event, April 17th
World Premiere of *Self-Portrait* @ Philadelphia Museum of Art, May 2nd**

WHEN: Thursday, April 17th, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

WHERE: Girard College, Mechanical School
2101 South College Ave. (at Girard Ave. & Corinthian Ave.)
Accessible by #15 & #33 buses; free and secure parking.

ADMISSION: FREE; light refreshments will be served.
For directions and more information, visit www.mirodancetheatre.org
or call (215) 962-4773.

Philadelphia's **Miro Dance Theatre** has been actively developing their newest work, *Self-Portrait*, and will showcase a preview of the production at the **Open Studio Series** event held at Miro's **Girard College** studio on **Thursday, April 17th** from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Commissioned by *Art After 5* in conjunction with the **Philadelphia Museum of Art's Frida Kahlo** retrospective, *Self-Portrait* is a solo dance work celebrating Kahlo's life and art. Audiences will have the rare opportunity to view the inner-workings of the production just weeks before experiencing the World Premiere at the Museum on **May 2nd**.

Self-Portrait is deeply inspired by Frida Kahlo's paintings and diaries, reflecting on both the artist's struggles with illness and her penchant for self-expression. Performed by Miro's co-Artistic Director **Amanda Miller**, the multi-dimensional "living performance sculpture" combines dance, live animation, elaborate set design, and video.

As part of this Open Studio guest artist **Julia Zagar** will lead an open discussion with audience members. Zagar, who recently presented a lecture series on The Folk Arts of Mexico at the Museum, is an art collector and owner of Philadelphia's Eyes Gallery.

A constant theme in the work of Frida Kahlo, the idea of self-portraiture (or "the self-portrait") is timeless and universal. The notion of constantly looking at oneself and continuously exploring ones identity, and the ways in which we reinvent and integrate our experiences has become of great interest to Miro Dance Theatre as a company.

"Our intention was to create a performance that, like Frida's paintings and writings, reaches well beyond the canvas and into the hearts of audience members," said Amanda Miller. "There is a great perseverance and rebelliousness in Frida's work, like a dogmatic positioning against the world, and I hope that *Self-Portrait* will resonate with and inspire viewers to ask their own questions about identity and history."

To create the visual design, **Tobin Rothlein**, Miro co-Artistic Director and video artist, used Kahlo's diaries as inspiration for the design elements incorporated into the performance.

"I looked closely at Frida's diaries and the way that the ink spreads itself across, and sometimes through, the page. There is that undeniable hand-made urgency present in the drawings," said Rothlein. "Through the use of projected imagery in the performance space and on the dancer's body, we create a multi-dimensional, living performance sculpture that is raw, melodic, and spiritual and captures the essence of Frida's life and work."

In May, the World Premiere of *Self-Portrait* will be presented at the Philadelphia Museum of Art as part of the *Art After 5* series. The one-night-only performance will take place on Friday, May 2nd at 6pm and 7:30pm in the Great Hall of the Museum, located at 26th Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia. For additional information about the Museum's Frida Kahlo exhibit and *Art After 5*, visit www.philamuseum.org.

Miro Dance Theatre's monthly Open Studio Series, which launched in December 2006, provides audiences with open access to the creative process and a chance to see and respond to new dance works in progress, as well as previous pieces from the Miro repertoire. All series events are held at Miro's Girard College studio where the company also serves as artists-in-residence and continues to oversee an outreach program with the school's students. Open Studio Series performances are free and open to the public.

Miro Dance Theatre and the Open Studio Series are supported by the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Independence Foundation, Advanta Foundation, Samuel S. Fels Fund, and Girard College.

About Miro Dance Theatre

Miro Dance Theatre ("Miro") creates and performs original work that explores the collaborative intersections of dance, video, and visual art. Miro uses classical technique as a departure point from which to explore new and challenging dance vocabularies, ideologies, performance disciplines, and the way media co-exist within the performance space. The company was founded in 2004 by dancer and choreographer Amanda Miller and video and visual artist Tobin Rothlein, following five years as Co-Artistic directors of Phrenic New Ballet. Miller, with ten years experience as a dancer with the Pennsylvania Ballet and choreographic studies in Europe under Siobhan Davies, is at the helm of Miro's choreographic exploration. Rothlein, whose work as video artist and visual designer for Rennie Harris Puremovement and others has garnered national and international accolades, oversees the company's work in combining dance, multi-media and visual arts.

About Girard College

Girard College is a private boarding school for academically capable students, grades 1 through 12, from families with limited financial resources, each headed by a single parent or guardian. All Girard students receive full scholarships to take part in the school's strong academic program and to live safely on its enclosed 43-acre campus in the Fairmount section of Philadelphia. Girard is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It holds membership in the National Association of Independent Schools, The Association of Boarding Schools, the Coalition for Residential Education, and the Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools. For information, visit www.girardcollege.com.

For more information, visit www.mirodancetheatre.org or call (215) 962-4773.

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To schedule interviews, request photos and additional information, please contact:

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