

For Immediate Release
April 20, 2006

Contact: David Ferguson, Producer
info@suddenlydance.ca
250 389 6049

suddenly dance theatre



P.O. Box 8184
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada V8W 3R8
TEL: (250) 389 - 6049
E: info@suddenlydance.ca
www.suddenlydance.ca

Victoria, British Columbia: Suddenly Dance Theatre Society is pleased to announce the BROADCAST TELEVISION PREMIERE of a new, original Canadian dance-film:

OPIUM (French version, 24min)
Wednesday, May 31st, 2006 @ 20:00hr
Friday, June 2, 2006 @ 06:00hr
Monday, June 5, 2006 @ 12:00hr
On ARTV (Quebec)

Suddenly Dance Theatre's dance drama **OPIUM** is inspired by a three-month episode in the life of artist **Jean Cocteau** (1889-1963). Originally written as a visual poem for the stage by Canadian author **Miles Lowry**, **OPIUM** imagines Cocteau's harrowing stay at a clinic near Paris in 1929, where he had hoped for a cure for his addiction to opium. Despite the challenges of withdrawal, physical pain, and severe writer's block, he battled to continue his creative path and wrote a diary of his own cure.

Choreographed and performed by Suddenly Dance Theatre's **David Ferguson**; Western Canada's rising dance star **Jung-ah Chung**; and Quebec's **Dominique Porte**, **OPIUM** observes the artist through fits of creative madness and addiction.

Grania Litwin of the Times-Colonist wrote that **OPIUM** is 'a tight, clever, troubling, moody and intense dance drama...' 'that starts out looking like a Masterpiece Theatre drama but soon moves into new territory'. Here, we encounter a Poet desperate to create, despite the disruptions of his rebellious Shadow, an armless Statue, waltzing Nurses, and a seductive Sphinx.

International audiences will remember the recent major Jean Cocteau retrospective exhibitions at **The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts** and at the **Centre Pompidou in Paris**, which exposed the French artist as one of the great multi-disciplinary artists of the 20th century.

Co-Directed by **Miles Lowry** and **David Ferguson**, **OPIUM** offers a new interpretation of Cocteau's multi-media dynamism in the realm of dance theatre. Featuring a mesmerizing original score by the LA-based **Eclipse Quartet**, **OPIUM** explores the collapse of the senses that is ultimately a triumph over addiction and suggests art as a means for survival.

Who we are:

Suddenly Dance Theatre Society is a Canadian non-profit dance theatre company based in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. We have created original productions for 15 years with a mandate to collaborate dance with all art forms. We are also producer of **Romp! A Festival of Independent Dance**.

Suddenly Dance Theatre's **OPIUM** originated as a 1993 Fringe Festival production on a budget of \$500 with a set made of cardboard, foam, and paint. **OPIUM** became the 'pick of the Fringe' and was an early success. Longtime collaborators **Ferguson/Lowry** recently formed **Suddenly Media Productions** to help Suddenly Dance Theatre produce **OPIUM** as a made-for-television dance film with of budget of \$100 000. The English language version of **OPIUM** recently premiered on **Bravo! Chum Television**.

For more information, web trailer, images and media inquiries please visit www.suddenlydance.ca or contact info@suddenlydance.ca

OPIUM was produced in association with BRAVO! Canada, a division of CHUM Limited; in collaboration with ARTV; with participation from The Canadian Television Fund; The British Columbia Arts Council; The Capital Region District. With exclusive accommodation by The Magnolia Hotel and Spa, Victoria, B.C. Special thanks to Comité Jean Cocteau, Paris.