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Contact:

Suzanne Westfall
610-330-5249
westfals@lafayette.edu

**LAFAYETTE COLLEGE APPOINTS
HOLLIS ASHBY DIRECTOR OF THE PERFORMANCE SERIES
AT THE WILLIAMS CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

**Formerly Associate Director of Cal Performances at UC Berkeley,
Ashby will assume leadership of the 31-year-old performing arts presenting,
producing and commissioning program at Lafayette College**

EASTON, PA, August 28, 2014 — **Suzanne Westfall**, Director of the Arts at Lafayette College, today announced the appointment of **Hollis Ashby** as **Director** of the Performance Series at the **Williams Center for the Arts**, effective September 2, 2014. Ms. Ashby served as Associate Director of Cal Performances from 1995 to 2012, the largest campus-based performing arts presenter on the West Coast; and previously held management positions at the San Francisco Symphony and American Conservatory Theater, in addition to maintaining an arts consultancy with an extensive portfolio of clients. She succeeds Ellis Finger, who founded the Lafayette College Performance Series in 1983 with the opening of the Williams Center for the Arts, and who retired from that celebrated career on June 30.

From its beginnings, the Lafayette College Performance Series has been committed to presenting the highest quality classical music, and has grown into a diverse series comprising

world music, dance and jazz, as well as classical and contemporary music. The series is known for its venture and its strong impact with audience development, both at the college and in the Leigh Valley region. Under the leadership of former director Ellis Finger, the high standards and acknowledged accomplishments of its programs earned the Dawson Award for Programmatic Excellence from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (2002) and the Presenter Award from the North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents association (2005). A hallmark of the Performance Series has been its long-term association with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. The Williams Center for the Performing Arts is home to a 400-seat multi-form theater and concert hall with superb acoustics and state-of-the-art lighting and stage equipment; and a versatile art gallery, a 100-seat black box theater, and classrooms and studios for music and art.

"After a highly competitive search, we are fortunate to have identified an accomplished artistic leader in Hollis Ashby for the directorship of the Performance Series at Lafayette College," commented **Suzanne Westfall**, Director of the Arts. "Ms. Ashby's expertise and enthusiasm for all the arts is genuine and ambitious. Throughout her career, Hollis has demonstrated a keen understanding of the important role that the arts play in our society and in the education of the college student. Her appointment comes during a period of tremendous growth in the arts at Lafayette with the opening of the new Williams Arts Campus, which will contribute to the cultural offerings in the greater Lehigh Valley, and which underscore the significant place that the arts and humanities hold at Lafayette College."

“I consider myself extremely fortunate to be joining the Lafayette community at this time, when the arts are expanding and deepening with profound relevance. The Williams Center Performance Series is an eminent program in the world of the performing arts—and in the field of liberal arts education—and it is one of the things that makes Lafayette College a special place,” remarked **Ms. Ashby**. “Clearly, the Williams Center audiences embrace dynamic, innovative programming of the highest artistic caliber. There is an eagerness here to experience the best that the performing arts have to offer, and that eagerness contributes to an environment where arts and ideas can flourish. It’s deeply gratifying to be entrusted with the remarkable legacy established by Ellis Finger, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Professor Westfall and the members of the search committee for providing me with this extraordinary privilege.”

As Director of the Performances Series at the Williams Center for the Arts, Ms. Ashby is responsible for the overall artistic vision and executive leadership of the visiting performing arts program, encompassing the fields of chamber music, early music, new music, vocal and instrumental recitals, classical and modern dance, jazz, world stage, and theater. The performing arts season at Lafayette College runs September to May, presenting some 20 different events in the Performance Series, in addition to dozens of concerts by the faculty and students of Lafayette’s distinguished Department of Music, as well as theater and dance performances by the Department of Theatre. Ms. Ashby will also be charged with initiating and commissioning new artistic and educational ventures, including those in association with Lehigh Valley arts and culture organizations, as well as presenting series nationwide; and with supporting the educational and research mission of the college.

HOLLIS ASHBY

Hollis Ashby has worked professionally in the performing arts for 27 years, most recently serving as Associate Director of Cal Performances at UC Berkeley, one of the largest performing arts presenters in California, and one of the most influential arts institutions in the world. There she presented premieres and debuts by Pina Bausch, the Berliner Ensemble, Bill T. Jones, Robert Lepage, Laurie Anderson, the Gate Theater of Dublin, Druid Ireland, Takács and Kronos quartets, Tallis Scholars, Philippe Jaroussky, Keith Jarrett, Martin Hayes, and David Sedaris, among many others; and created, programmed and launched new education and festival ventures which have become models for programming nationwide. Ms. Ashby co-chaired that organization's first (2001) and second (2007) long-range planning processes, which resulted in a successful \$15 million capital campaign, and the receipt of a Wallace Foundation LEAP grant to develop and disseminate innovative cultural participation practices. She has held managerial positions in public relations at American Conservatory Theater (San Francisco) and the San Francisco Symphony; and has served as a professional and volunteer consultant for a wide-range of cultural institutions, including California Jazz Conservatory, Pacific Mozart Ensemble, San Francisco Open Studios, and Craneway Pavilion, among others. As a panelist and participant in numerous professional conferences, she has most enjoyed work with the California Arts Council, Association of Performing Arts Presenters' Classical Music Think Tank, AWAKE: Art, Buddhism and the Dimensions of Consciousness, INTIX-International Ticketing Association, and Wallace, Hewlett, and San Francisco foundations and Walter & Elise Haas Fund industry leadership assemblies. Ms. Ashby holds a BA in English Literature from St. Lawrence University and an MA in Dramatic Art from UC Davis, with an emphasis in theater history, literature and practice; and for many years studied piano and modern dance.

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Williams Center for the Arts / Lafayette College / 317 Hamilton St., Easton, PA 18042 / Tel: (610) 330-5010 /