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**WORLD CLASS ABORIGINAL DANCE TROUPE  
DESCENDS UPON BALTIMORE**

*Public is Invited to Three Free Performances May 21 at the Harborplace Amphitheater*

Baltimore. May 12, 2006 – The National Aquarium in Baltimore welcomes Descendance, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dance Theatre, as they bring their “shake a leg” dance style to Baltimore’s Inner Harbor for three free performances on May 21. Currently on an international tour, the indigenous Australian troupe of eight comes to Maryland to celebrate the National Aquarium in Baltimore’s newest exhibition *Animal Planet Australia: Wild Extremes*.

**The world-renowned dance troupe will perform on Sunday, May 21, at 2, 3, and 4 p.m. at the Harborplace Amphitheater. Sponsored by the National Aquarium in Baltimore, performances are free and open to the public.**

Descendance is part of the Aquarium’s Cultural Connections initiative, a program designed to celebrate the opening year of *Animal Planet Australia: Wild Extremes*, with a focus on the rich and varied culture of the land Down Under, both ancient and contemporary. Partnerships have been formed with the Embassy of Australia, the Fells Point Corner Theatre, Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, and Current Gallery to expand community understanding of this island continent half a world away.

Descendance has been showcased across Europe, Asia, and the Americas, and was featured at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, and at the Rugby Union World Cup in 2003. In 2004, the company earned the Dance/Peace Prize at UNESCO’s first cultural Olympics in Seoul, Korea.

Originally formed in 1933 as the Ngaru Aboriginal Dance Company, Descendance preserves the culture of Australia’s indigenous people. At the same time, it is developing a new genre of contemporary performance based in world music – a fusion style that works cross culturally in both dance and live music.

The National Aquarium in Baltimore, a non-profit organization, is Maryland’s most exciting and popular cultural attraction, as well as one of the region’s leading conservation and education resources, hosting more than 1.6 million visitors per year. The Aquarium’s mission is to connect people with aquatic life in order to create a better world for both. It is dedicated to education and conservation through more than a dozen programs that serve the environment and the community.