MHDF
MARTHA HILL DANCE FUND NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2024 ISSUE 17

Martha Hill (1900-1995)
Educator, administrator, artistic director,
and visionary for dance as a performing art.

MARTHA HILL DANCE FUND LIMITED WAS ESTABLISHED TO HONOR, PERPETUATE, AND REWARD MARTHA HILL'S COMMITMENT TO DANCE EDUCATION AND PERFORMANCE INTERNATIONALLY.

GALA 2024

Photo: Steven Speliotis/Reiko Yanagi

Ernesta Corvino

2024 Gala Reflection

by Megan Williams

'Community' is defined by the shared attributes of the people within it and the strength of the connections among them. The ever expanding and evolving Martha Hill Dance Fund community came together on February 26th, 2024, to celebrate legacy, to lift up an extraordinary roster of honorees, and to relish in the power of the dance arts to transform and transcend.

The Manhattan Penthouse continues to be a warm and scenic venue for our gathering. After a boisterous cocktail hour, we moved into the dinner and awards space decorated with flowers by Christopher Batenhorst, and surrounded by beautiful views of the NYC downtown skyline. Gala Co-Chair Liz Gerring Radke's welcoming remarks settled down the vibrant energy of the at-capacity crowd as she introduced our guest host for the evening, Norton Owen (Jacob's Pillow Director of Preservation and MHDF 2017 Lifetime Achievement Honoree), whose wealth of knowledge and ease at the podium got our awards event underway and helped keep us on schedule throughout the night.

Liz Gerring Radke

Norton Owen

Photos: Steven Speliotis/Reiko Yanagi

This year's Mid -Career Awards were presented before the main dinner course, and we were grateful to have filmmaker Daniel Madoff with us again sharing his excellent documentary videos for each honoree. The inspiring dance footage and warm testimonials of colleagues and friends helped us understand not only what each honoree has given and continues to give to the dance field, but HOW they have contributed: with intelligence, innovation and care.

Arcell Cabuag

Ronald K. Brown

Photos: Steven Speliotis/Reiko Yanagi

Our first award, to Ronald K. Brown, was presented by Arcell Cabuag, Associate Artistic Director of EVIDENCE, A Dance Company. Mr. Brown's rich career as performer, choreographer and mentor spans many decades. As founder of EVIDENCE, whose mission in part is to promote the understanding of human experience in the African Diaspora and provide sensory connections to history and tradition through dance and storytelling, Mr. Brown has created movement landscapes that remind audiences how faith can unite and heal.

Photo: Steven Speliotis/Reiko Yanagi

Terese Capucilli, Jacqulyn Buglisi and Chanel DaSilva

The second award, to Jacqulyn Buglisi, was presented by her dear friend and collaborator Terese Capucilli. Ms. Buglisi's expansive dance life includes 12 years as a principal dancer with Martha Graham, and over 100 dramatic and poignant choreographic works for her own company, Buglisi Dance Theatre. *The Table of Silence Project*, a call to action for peace, has been noted as "uniting the global community through dance." She is a master teacher with international reach, and is dedicated to arts in education.

Both honorees gave moving acceptance speeches that elicited the first of many rousing standing ovations.

After dinner, Vernon Scott, MHDF Board President, gave his annual address and brought our attention to the two tables of invited students from a variety of NYC area dance programs. The bridge between generations is one of the most compelling aspects of the MHDF gala, and we continue to nurture these relationships by showing young artists, in real time, aspects of dance history and current creation that they may never have experienced outside of school or on the internet. Vernon read an inspiring quote from queer artist and writer Alok that rang true : *"To be an artist is to continually outgrow the story of yourself and is to continually implode that awful sentence 'I am...' I have to liberate myself from the weight of where you want me, and ask myself- where am I curious about where I want to go…."*

Photos: Steven Speliotis/Reiko

Jim May and Daniel Lewis

Exemplifying this sentiment were our two Lifetime Achievement Award Honorees. Daniel Lewis (MHDF 2011 Lifetime Achievement Honoree) presented the first award to Jim May, founding director of Sokolow Theater/Dance Ensemble. His breathtaking and powerful contributions as dancer/actor in the works of José Limón and Anna Sokolow have left a permanent imprint on our collective dance memory. He gave a brief and disarming acceptance speech, giving us a taste of the ease and clarity of his performance skills. His commitment as an educator was on display as he humbly made the rounds at the student tables earlier in the evening, introducing himself and sharing insights.

Photo: Steven Speliotis/Reiko Yanagi

Joan Myers Brown and Vernon Scott

Our final award of the night was presented to Joan Myers Brown by Robert Garland (Artistic Director of Dance Theatre of Harlem and MHDF 2017 Mid-Career Honoree). Ms. Brown, affectionately known to many as "Aunt Joan", is a true dance pioneer, founding Philadelphia School of the Arts in 1960 and PHILADANCO in 1970 with deep roots in the Black community. Her generosity, artistry and leadership in choreography, training and mentoring dancers and emerging artists has helped shape American dance for over six decades. Ms. Brown accepted her award, one of many in her life, with humor and grace.

Photos: Steven Speliotis/Reiko

From left to right Brianna Barclay and Leslie Ramsey from Hunter College, Deya Allen from DT10H, Mia Ortega, Priscilla Tom and Shloka Porwal from NYU Tisch, Georgia Greene and Brianna Keingatti1 from Juilliard

Much gratitude was given to the entire Gala Committee, especially the tireless efforts of Co-Chair Ernesta Corvino, and to all the friends who donated their services and assistance in making the night a special one. There were many first time attendees, many new connections made. The talent, passion and rich history in the room was palpable. The MHDF Gala is proof that we are indeed stronger when we come together.

Photo: Steven Speliotis/Reiko Yanagi

MHDF Chairman David K. Manion

Georgia Green (YoungArts winner and Juilliard student) Georgia's reflection on the Gala: "I was truly honored to be in the same room with so many artists and dancers/teachers whom we have been learning about in our dance history class and throughout the course of my first year here at Juilliard. I was so inspired listening to the award winners speak and watching the amazing footage of them from the past. The immense support and love everyone expressed for the artists who were receiving the awards was not only encouraging but also gave me a sense of hope moving forward as I begin my career as a young dancer. I am also so grateful to have had the opportunity to speak with so many artists who I look up to and will carry these connections made with me throughout my career.

I want to thank you again for reaching out and inviting myself and fellow first-year Young Arts winners to attend, as it is a night I will always cherish."

The Martha Hill Dance Fund is excited to launch our inaugural **MESH** Fellowship!
Mentor | Educate | Support | Hone

Following in the footsteps of Martha Hill who championed dance education, choreography, and performance, our objective is to nurture and assist the transition of recent bachelor's degree graduates into the professional dance field, enhancing their prior education.

Our MESH Fellows will be supported in identifying professional goals, working towards those goals, and reflecting on their progress and achievement. With the partnership of well-known artists and dance institutions in our community, we believe that our fellows will emerge from the MESH Fellowship more supported, connected, and activated in the field of Dance.

More details and official application coming soon!

Interview with Board Member REBECCA LAZIER
By Barrie Raffel May 2024

Rebecca Lazier graduated from Juilliard in 1990 and has been on faculty at Princeton University for 22 years. She is currently a Professor of the Practice and Associate Director of the dance program. She has been a dancemaker most of her life and has been named a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation for 2024. Rebecca's newest

work, *Noli Timere,* will premiere in February of 2025. She joined the MHDF board in 2019.

Where are you from?

I grew up in Halifax, Nova Scotia. My father was an oceanographer and my mother a biochemist.

How did you begin dancing and when did you know you wanted to study it seriously?

My mother tells the story that she had always wanted to dance but her feet were too big, so she became a scientist. She put my sister and me into classes at a young age; my sister didn't stick with it, but I kept asking for more and more classes.

By the time I was eight, I was going to three different studios in Halifax because each studio only had a few classes each week. At ten, a new teacher, Clare Bader, came to town, she was originally from Halifax and had just returned after dancing with Roland Petit in France for a decade.

She was eccentric, consumed by dance. She told fabulous stories of performing and touring, brought in old videos and exposed us to all sorts of ballet. Her ballet classes were four hours long -- some single exercise took 30 minutes due to the number of repetitions. She believed a two-hour barre was better than taking multiple classes a day. We danced 7 days a week. There was no question in my mind about committing to that kind of dedication; she modeled effort and passion. We would work all year on preparing for one performance. It was great but brutal as the hours were long and my schoolwork suffered because I would get home so late.

She exposed us to new teachers, bringing in guests from the National Ballet School in Toronto, and arranged several trips to New York, where I trained at the Joffrey, and saw ABT and NYCB. One summer she took us to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Summer program. I was enthralled by the jazz classes and took modern with Helen McGehee, my first Gra-

Photo: Jonathan Sweeney

Rebecca Lazier

time but didn't call it choreography, I called it dancing. I didn't know the word choreography. Typically, choreography isn't a person's first encounter with dance, dancing is. In visual arts, young artists think of themselves as creators from the start, but in dance, there is a range of experiences of dancers who choreograph and those who don't.

I think the larger world still struggles with naming choreography as an art form. For example, it is very difficult to find out who choreographed Madonna's recent show and Jesse Green's recent review of *Illinoise*, primarily a dance show, didn't talk about the choreography, only about Justin Peck's directing it (Gia Kourlas subsequently wrote a dance review). I often ask my students, can you name 5 choreographers? Not usually. Choreography per se rarely makes its way into the collective conversation even though it's a booming industry in commercial work and Broadway. Advocating for choreography and choreographers in all aspects of the form will help the field.

Can you tell us about your interest in the intersections between choreography and teaching, curriculum and creativity?

ham class. They had a year-long professional school, and after missing the audition cut off, I asked if I could join. They accepted me, so I moved there at fourteen and stayed for four years. I was very committed and in the first two years they were very supportive but then began to suggest I 'explore other options.'

Fortunately, Sandra Neels began teaching modern, she had been with Merce Cunningham, and taught a choreography class. At sixteen, Sandra suggested I go to a summer program at Jacob's Pillow, which turned out to be the Post-Modern dance workshop led by Sally Banes. It changed my world; we had improvisation and choreography from different guest faculty every day, including Ishmael Houston Jones, Wendy Perron, and Liz Lerman. Banes led daily dance history classes about Judson and Grand Union; we watched videos, it was my first exposure to dance history. One of my favorite things was learning these wild-fire combinations from Stephen Petronio and when I went back to Winnipeg for my final year, I was practicing them on the sidelines during *Swan Lake* rehearsals.

How did you end up at Juilliard and what was your experience there?

In my last year at Royal Winnipeg Ballet, there was a new artistic director and the company repertory and ethos went from being very eclectic with choreographers like Jiri Kylian and Nils Christie, to staging full-length classical ballets. I wasn't offered a place to continue. I didn't know what to do after graduation. That last year, Rebecca Stenn came to RWB. She had always wanted to go to Juilliard and suggested I go with her to the audition. I had never heard of Juilliard. Fortunately, we both got in and enrolled. I was so grateful for a place to go. At that point my idea of myself was somewhere between "failed ballerina" and "there are these other things, but I don't really know what they are or where to find them…."

Juilliard was a transformative place for me, but not in the traditional sense. In my second year I herniated two discs and broke three vertebrae. A doctor recommended I pick a different career. Alfredo Corvino said, "You were trained

My interest in these intersections is informed by witnessing my parents' careers in science. I couldn't have imagined that a dance career would provide similar structures – teaching opportunities, a laboratory for choreographic research, the ability to devise curriculum and pedagogy – and experience how the intersections between these facets drives creativity.

I am grateful to be at a liberal arts institution where students are working at the intersection of diverse disciplines and fields of study as they think about and create dance. It allows me to understand how dance as a culture, a way of thinking, and a practice can influence and be applicable to all realms of research and life. As an example of transferable or connecting skills, I am currently the Chair of a university-wide committee, Council of Teaching and Learning, which is made up of faculty from across all divisions of the university (Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Engineering and Applied Science). This year we are tasked by the Dean of the College to address the urgent need for policy around Generative AI. When asked to chair this committee, I initially balked, because I know nothing about AI. The Dean countered: "you know how to run a rehearsal room and gather people around an idea." I couldn't recognize the skills I have honed for three decades. Recently in a meeting, a professor began discussing 'prompt engineering' and how all faculty and students will need these tools. As she described it, I realized prompt engineering is exactly what a choreographer does. We're working with a group of students or professionals to get closer and closer to what the piece wants to be. Whether manipulating phrase material or guiding an improvisation, you're layering prompts and changing directives based on what you see collaborating dancers creating. It was such a great corollary. You're engineering your words according to where you envision something to go, welcoming collaborators to do the same. I never would have thought of these structural comparisons and what we don't realize about what we're doing. And now I have a new tool to offer students in choreography class.

so well but so wrong." Faculty member Laura Glenn, saw me and invited me to her summer festival. There I began studying Bartenieff Fundamentals, Anatomy, Laban Movement Analysis, and began to find a new way of thinking about movement and dance and harkened back to the improvisation experience I had at Jacob's Pillow. I found a path forward. When I returned to NYC, I continued to study somatic approaches to supplement my return to Juilliard including Feldenkrais, Body Mind Centering with Martha Eddy and working with Irene Dowd.

Back at Juilliard, I went to Director Muriel Topaz and said that I could only take certain classes to stay healthy and told her I decided to take the year off from performing and focus on healing. This became a major turning point, as opportunities to be on the other side of the studio presented themselves. Laura Glenn asked me to be her assistant to re-stage José Limón's *Danse Macabre*. I staged projects for Labanotation classes. I started choreographing and did some mentoring for the first-year students in the Corvino ballet classes. Suddenly, in this other role I found a voice, I found questions, I found new passions. Ultimately in my senior year, I was thrilled to perform in Ann Hutchison Guest's restaging of Nijinski's *L'après midi d'un faune*, and be the mother in Doris Humphrey's *Day on Earth*.

For senior year, I choreographed a quartet for Senior Production, which I created in collaboration with the performers (which included John Heginbotham, Stanley Love, Trevor Carlson and Kristina Isabelle) and we worked for months through improvisational methods. Martha Hill asked me to come to her office after and I was astounded to hear her generous feedback.

How does your experience at Juilliard influence what you find yourself teaching/emphasizing in your dance teaching at Princeton University now?

Curricularly, I'm always thinking about the flexibility of programming vs rigidity of sequence. What happens when a student has agency over what and when they engage in dance? How do they prioritize those decisions every semester? Dance is a minor at Princeton, students decide how much they are dancing each semester as they balance requirements for their major, other minors, student dance companies, and changing interests. Across the university there is so much to choose from, so if they want to dance or choreograph, they must prioritize dance among all of the options. It is very powerful to be in a classroom with students who are deciding to be there every day. I think this task of prioritizing is a life skill that serves them long after college.

I'm curious how a course can both expose students to the range of methodologies in dance and provide an in-depth experience. For example, I've developed the courses "Approaches to Contemporary Dance and Movement Practices" and "Building Physical Literacies: Practices in Contemporary Dance." Over the semester in these courses, we invite 6 choreographers/dancers to be guests for 3 days to create conversations about the intersection between practices. This year we hosted Tamisha Guy; Mina Nimasura and Kota Yamazaki; Soles of Duende: Amanda Castro, Arielle Rosales, and Brinda Guha; Hollis Bartlett and Nattie Trogdon; Roderick George; and Baye and Asa. In the past we have included techniques such as: Flying Low/Passing Through David Zambrano, Fighting Monkey, Axis Syllabus, Forsythe's Improvisational Technologies, and Yin Yue's FoCo technique. The students are completely transformed by the end of the semester, as they collectively analyze the content and pedagogy of each guest and then create and teach a class together as the final project. It is a model that was inspired

My experiences led me to question how to create a program that allows people to change. How can we design a curriculum that can adapt and support people to discover themselves through and with the form? There are so many students who start on one path and end up on another. In a fixed program, institutions are generally unable to alter a program to suit a student's need.

Curricularly, I feel that is an important question that relates to my experience at Juilliard. Maybe that's not the job for a college program but then I think, is it true that we are only going to be dancers? No. To be part of the dance community is to be part of all of it. How can we expand people's experience and understanding of the range of the field to invite more access and opportunity? This is the world now; people wear many, many hats, and have many, overlapping careers.

What are you finding is important to investigate more about today's dance world?

The dance field is desperate for administrators, technical teams, producers, funders, curators, and so much more. The field needs people who are passionate about the transformative role of dance and able to advocate for the field. My understanding of jobs that are the scaffolding of artistic production only came from producing my own work, it was not threaded through my education. Yes, you can be a company manager, choreograph, write grants, dance, create budgets, advocate for your work, teach - all the things, a choreography of life. I did so many things in those first years, including personal training and event planning. I think about how we can expand what we define as success in the field?

When I was young I made up dances all the by how Comparative Literature is structured as a field of study. We read many, many books and compare them. Let's do this in dance. This structure welcomes dancers of all levels and backgrounds; they each excel in different forms and the classroom becomes a space of support and community. I'm so curious to create dialogues between different lineages and languages of dance.

I'm fascinated by the history of choreographic process and methodologies. There is so little written about dance in general, and even less about how dances are made. We have these beliefs and stories that the legends in dance worked a certain way but I have always craved a deeper history of process. It is difficult to find a book that tells you exactly how choreographers made work, and how their processes changed over the course of someone's career. I'm reading Deborah Jowitt's *Errand into the Maze* about Martha Graham. It is incredible to learn how many reviewers described the dances she was creating, but there is scant information on Graham's creative process.

In my choreographic work, I seek to change my process with each piece. It takes me 4-5 years to create and produce a new work, in part because I have a full time academic job, but also because for me, the questions take that long to ask in dance. *There Might Be Others*, which premiered at New York Live Arts in 2016, was a 4 year process that culminated in 15 dancers from 4 countries, and 12 percussionists. My upcoming project, *Noli Timere* (Latin for 'be not afraid') is a collaboration with visual artist Janet Echelman which began in 2019, it will receive a preview performance at the Center for Contemporary Performance, PS21, in Chatham, New York, June 22, 2024. The premiere will be next February 7th and 8th at the Princeton McCarter Theater Center.

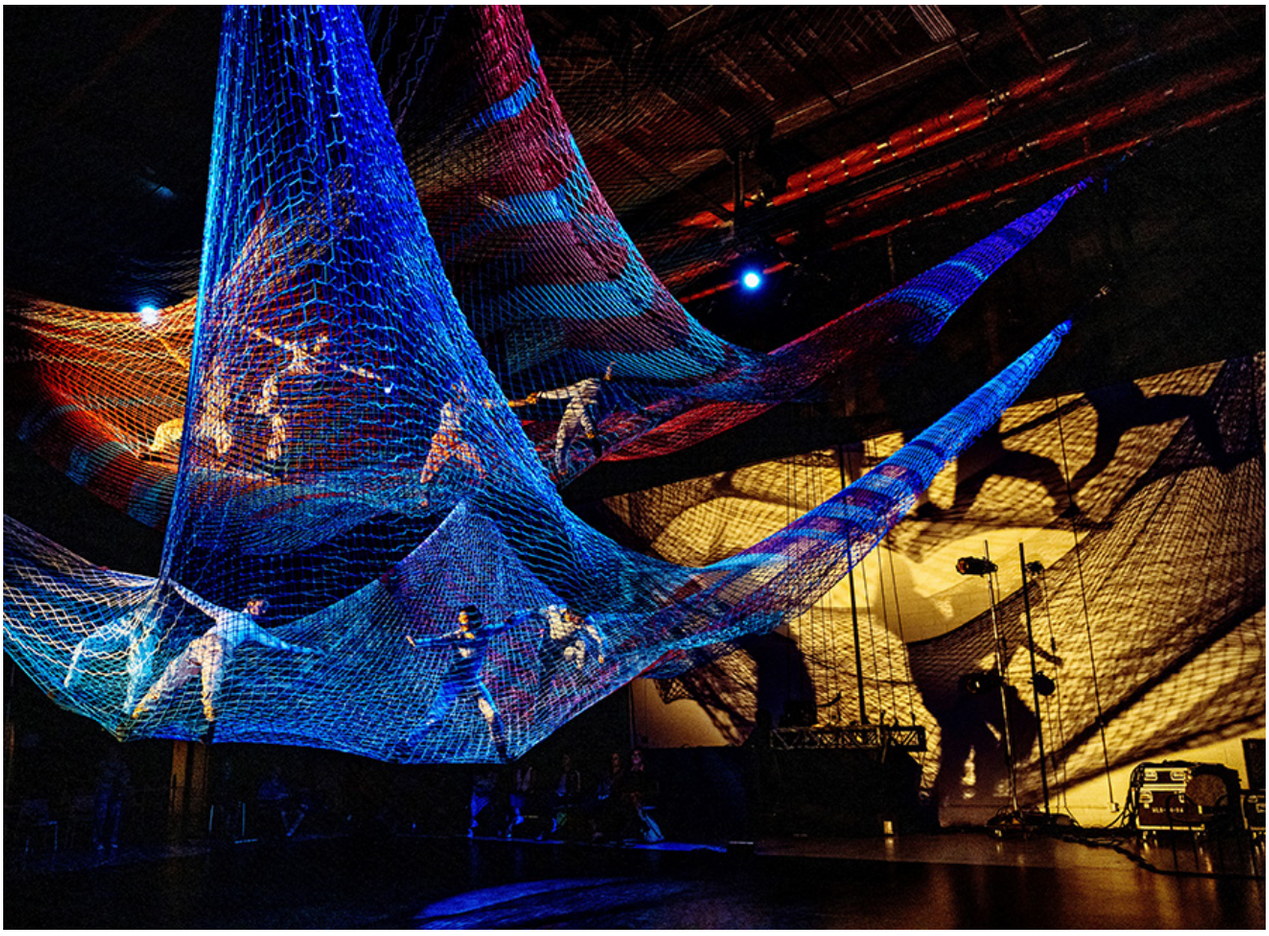


Photo: Lois Greenfield

Rebecca Lazier's *Noli Temere* in preview

Please note that due to fund-raising efforts for the documentary no awards were given in **2010** and in **2013** only the young professional award was given. In **2017**, **2018**, **2019** and **2023** no Young Professional Award was given, instead ten students were invited to attend the Gala. In lieu of awards in **2020,** COVID -19 Relief Grants were given to 23 young dancers and choreographers.

Lifetime Achievement Award 2024 Joan Myers Brown and Jim May, **2023** Diana Byer and Dianne McIntyre, **2021** Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, **2019** Carolyn Adams, Stuart Hodes, Betty Jones, **2018** Sylvia Waters, **2017** Norton Owen and Alice Teirstein, **2016** Ann Hutchinson Guest and Deborah Jowitt, **2015** Murray Louis and Carla Maxwell, **2014** Mary Hinkson and Martha Myers, **2012** Gemze De Lappe and Yuriko Kikuchi, **2011** Daniel Lewis, **2009** Beverly Blossom, **2008** Ethel Winter, **2007** Pearl Lang, **2006** Mary Anthony, **2005** Ruth Grauert, **2004** Donald McKayle and Doris Rudko, **2003** Francis Mason, **2002** Doris Hering and May O'Donnell, **2001** Alfredo Corvino

Mid-Career Award 2024 Ronald K. Brown and Jacqulyn Buglisi, **2023** Deborah Damast, **2021** Heidi Latsky, **2019** Seán Curran, Nigel Campbell and Chanel DaSilva, **2018** Jessica Lang and David Leventhal, **2017** Robert Garland and Denise Roberts Hurlin, **2016** Fredrick Earl Mosley, **2015** Mark DeGarmo, **2014** John-Mario Sevilla, **2012** Dian Dong & H.T. Chen, **2009** Virginia Johnson, **2008** Janet Panetta, **2007** David Dorfman, **2006** Doug Elkins

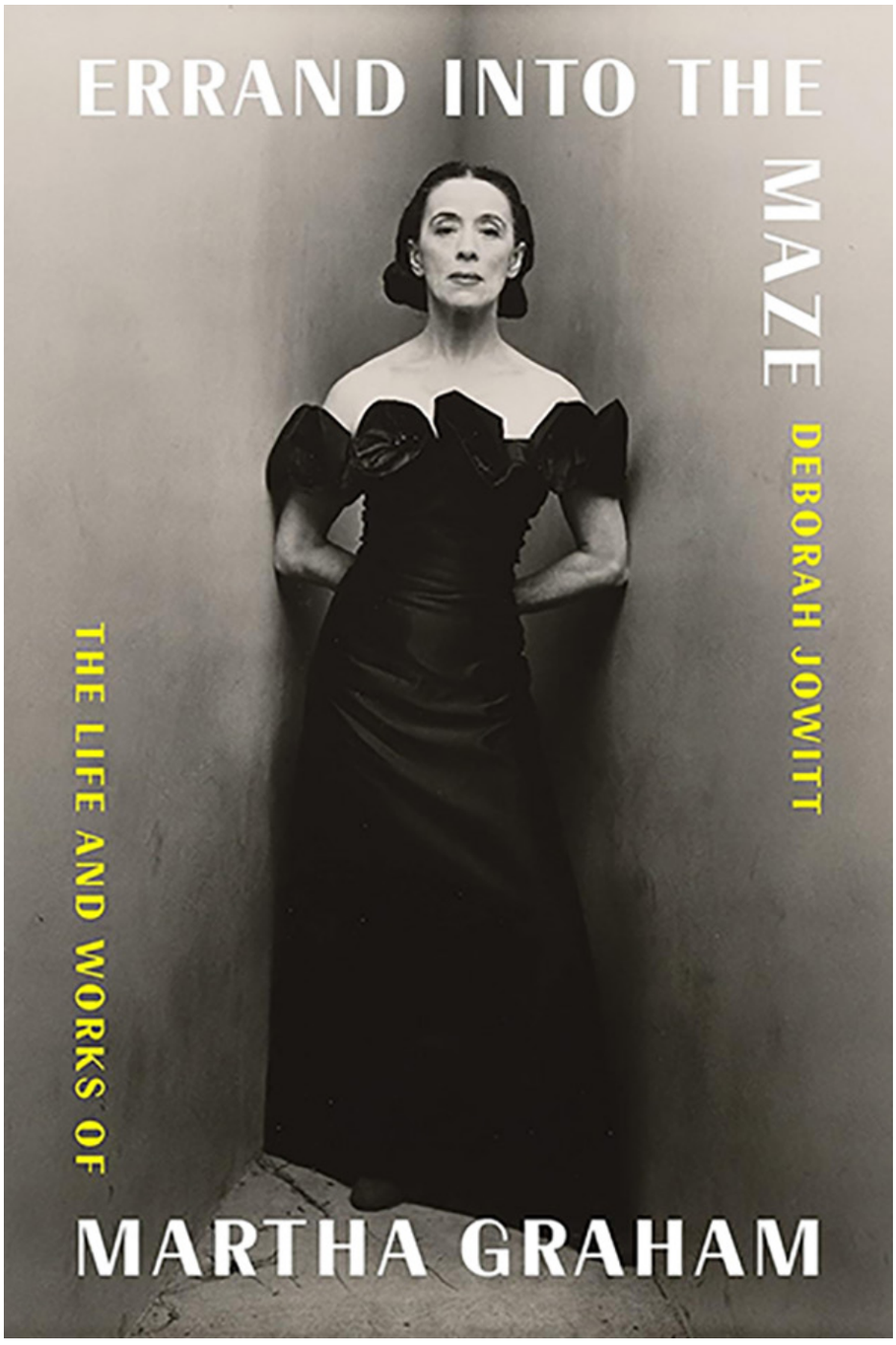
Young Professional Award 2016 Eric Parra, **2015** Jacoby Pruitt, **2014** Danielle Robin Reinstein, **2013** Christian Griggs-Drane, **2012** Lissa Nicole Smith, **2011** Patricia Carby, **2009** Jacqueline Green, **2008** Lilli-Anne Tai, **2007** Levi Marsman, **2006** Katie Dorn, **2005** Christopher Vo, **2004** Molly Mae MacGregor

Special Citation 2016 Reed Hansen **Special Citation 2015** Dance Notation Bureau **2013 Recognition of Founding Board Members:** Carolyn Adams, Irwin Denis **(1920-2002)**, Hudas Liff **(1926-2018)**, David K. Manion, Janet Mansfield Soares, Ethel Winter **(1924-2012)**, Carl Wolz **(1920-2002)**, Hortense Lieberthal Zera **(1916-2014)** **Special Citation 2009** Hortense Zera

OUT NOW

Congratulations to Deborah Jowitt, MHDF 2016 Lifetime Achievement Honoree.

From the legendary dance critic Deborah Jowitt, *Errand into the Maze* is the definitive biography of the visionary dancer and choreographer Martha Graham - Macmillan: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, January 2024.



A New Yorker Best Book of the Year
A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice
A Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Month

"Deborah Jowitt chronicles a life passionately, artfully lived. An essential read about a true legend." —Mikhail Baryshnikov

"A study in balance and grace." —The New York Times Book Review

"As a dancer and choreographer herself, and as a revered chronicler of the ethos of dance for over six decades, Deborah Jowitt takes us into the life and art of Martha Graham from an unmatchable perspective. Jowitt's embodied understanding of Graham's radical movement vocabulary, coupled with her deep and inimitable knowledge of the art form, offers us eye-opening access to the mysteries of the Graham legacy. This lyrical, readable biography brings to life the personal journey of a genius destined to revolutionize American art in the twentieth century and invites us inside the ephemeral masterpieces with which she changed the world."
—Janet Eilber, Artistic Director of the Martha Graham Dance Company

BRIEF NEWS

SEÁN CURRAN (Mid-Career Honoree 2019) Sean has stepped down as Chair of NYU Tisch Dance after 9 years and he is back teaching contemporary dance technique and composition. He is about to head off to San Antonio Opera to direct and choreograph *The Pirates of Penzance*. He will bring the production to Glimmerglass Opera Festival in July. In May and June he choreographed new productions of *Julius Cesar*, *Galileo Galilei* and *La Boheme* at Opera Theater of St Louis. On September 6 and 7 he will present an evening of new solos with his former duet partner and Jones/Zance Company colleague Amy Pivar at NYU Tisch Dance. Next year Seán Curran Company will have a NYC Season at Skirball Hall where he will present a premiere and a revival of *Everywhere All The Time* which premiered at BAM Next Wave Festival in 2018.

MOLLY MAE MACGREGOR (Young Professional Honoree 2004) Molly continues working at her wellness studio and collaborating with health providers in her area. She has started to expand into corporate wellness but is mostly still doing one on one work. If you would like to join her monthly newsletter, please, write to her at molly@hugpilatesandwellness.com.

REBECCA LAZIER (MHDF Board Member) Rebecca has been named a 2024 Guggenheim Fellow in Choreography. She was in residence with her project, *Noli Timere*, a collaboration with sculptor Janet Echelman at PS21 the Center for Contemporary Performance May 18-June 23, with preview performances on June 21 and 22.

SAVE THE DATE! Excited to announce that *Noli Timere* will receive its premiere at the McCarter Theater Center, Princeton, New Jersey, February 7th and 8th, 2025. For more information and a video clip, please visit www.rebeccalazier.com/nolitimere.

ELIZABETH MCPHERSON (MHDF Board Member) Elizabeth will be presenting a paper titled "Helen Tamiris' Tour to Central and South America in 1922" at the Dance Studies Association conference in Buenos Aires in July 2024.

ERIC PARRA (MHDF Board Member) Eric will be having his Broadway debut as a vacation swing for the Tony Award winning musical *Hell's Kitchen* in August 2024. Additonally, he will be performing as a soloist with the Limón Dance Company at the Joyce Theater, November 5-10, 2024.

VERNON SCOTT (President of the MHDF Board) Vernon has taken on a new role as Producing Director for A.I.M by Kyle Abraham. The role involves working closely with Kyle and fundraising for major initiatives such as new commissions, a documentary film and a permanent home for the company.

LUCIA TOZZI (Covid Relief Grantee) Lucia has been dancing with NW Dance Project, Oregon, for the past year. After her final performances in May she has moved back to NYC where she will continue dancing and teaching in the Fall. In July she is going to South Dakota to work with the company Headlights Theater.

For the review of the last season of NW Dance Project, please visit
https://www.orartswatch.org/dance-review-nw-dance-project-secret-stories/

SYLVIA WATERS (Lifetime Achievement Honoree 2018) Sylvia has worn many hats at Ailey, company dancer, Artistic Director of Ailey II, archivist. Now she brings her decades of experience to Portrait of Ailey, a seven-part documentary on Alvin Ailey's life to share his legacy with the next generations.

Please visit the Ailey blog for an interview with Sylvia Waters where she discusses this monumental project as well as Ailey II's founding, the company's early performances in colleges and prisons, and her own journey as an AILEY archivist.

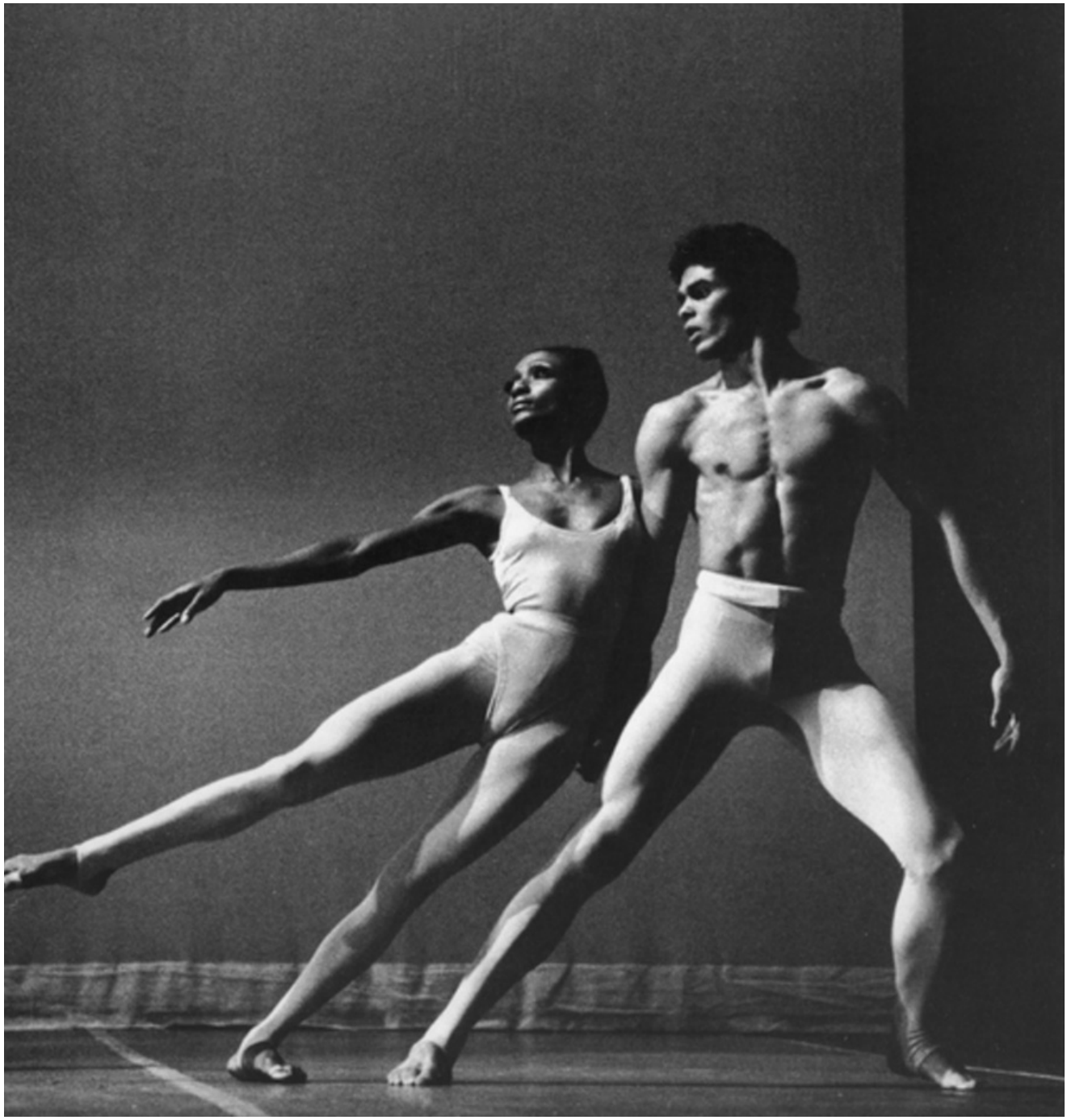


Photo: Rosemary Winckley
Courtesy of Christopher Zunner, Director of Public Relations at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Sylvia Waters and Hector Mercado in Alvin Ailey's *Streams*

In Memoriam – JANET PANETTA (1948-2023)

by Ernesta Corvino

Photo: Andrea Mohin

Janet Panetta teaching in New York City

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to our 2008 Mid-Career Honoree, Janet Panetta, who passed away on December 2nd, just short of her 75th birthday.

Janet was a long-time friend and colleague of mine. We met in our teens while studying at the Metropolitan Opera Ballet School. A couple of years older than I, she was someone I admired greatly from her beautiful arabesque to her zany personality and her free-spirited take on life.

We went on to dance together with the Maryland Ballet. Our trips together on the bus down to Baltimore were a gas. We would prank people by taking on different characters. One time, everyone thought we were gypsies. Only Janet could pull that off. Janet went on to dance with American Ballet Theater as well as with choreographers Paul Sanasardo, Neil Greenberg and Susan Salinger. She really came into her own when she began to teach. As well as having her own studios in New York City, she taught in Europe at PARTS in Brussels, ImPulzTanz in Vienna and with Tanztheater Wuppertal/Pina Bausch. Having studied ballet with Margaret Craske and Alfredo Corvino, her teaching was classical yet popular with contemporary dancers.

The last time I saw Janet was at a political rally. There she was in her pink hat holding a banner that said "Woman Power", and I thought, "Yes! Janet was always a powerful woman!"

So rest in power, Janet. We can still hear your deep, throaty laugh.

Photo: Betriz Schiller

Janet Panetta in Neil Greenberg's *Amnesty* (1985)

MHDF BOARD
We welcome new board members Chanel DaSilva and Eric Parra!
Vernon Scott - President, David K. Manion - Chairman, Ani Udovicki - Vice President, Elizabeth McPherson - Secretary,
Ernesta Corvino - Treasurer, Andra Corvino - Correspondence Secretary, Rebecca Lazier, Elizabeth Gerring Radke,
Barrie Raffel, Megan Williams.

Newsletter designed and edited by Ani Udovicki