



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

Gala 2012

As we look back to 2000, the year MHDF was formed, we have much to be proud of, foremost the list of remarkable honorees who have shaped the landscape of dance in our time. In looking forward, our pulse quickens and we are excited to announce that the Martha Hill Documentary will be completed in 2013! Funds have been secured for post-production, and it should all be finished by the summer. The premiere of *Miss Hill!* depends on the logistics and timing of film festivals. Most are from January to June and most don't present films that have had an official release. We might wait till next year for the official premiere of *Miss Hill!*, but, we certainly expect to share the final cut with our friends at Gala 2013.

Gala 2012 exceeded all previous records in the number of honorees and attendance. Coming just a few weeks after Hurricane Sandy, it was for many the first chance to greet friends and share stories. With hugs and good cheer we spoke of losses, hardships, as well as good luck, and we were all glad to feel that the city was at last back to its familiar rhythm. The evening flew by. The Manhattan Penthouse was as elegant as we remembered it from Gala 2011, the view of downtown Manhattan, felt more meaningful than ever.

We thank pianist Charles Weissman for his musical contribution to the reception. And, we are grateful to Kathleen Marshall, our Master of Ceremonies, for guiding us gracefully through the evening. Gemze De Lappe and Yuriko Kikuchi, two luminaries of the stage and studio for over half a century, each received the **Martha Hill Lifetime Achievement Award**. The honors were presented by Theodore Chapin, and Anna Kisselgoff respectively. The **Mid-Career Award** was presented to Dian Dong & H.T.Chen by Ming Cho Lee in a tribute to their artistry and commitment to the community. Celebrating the future, the **Young Professional Award** was presented to Lissa Nicole Smith by J.R. Glover, Director of The School at Jacob's Pillow. Lissa is member of Hubbard Street 2, Chicago.

In a fitting gesture to beloved master teacher, Kazuko Hirabayashi was honored with the first **Student Choice Award**. This new award was created to connect pre-professional dancers to the legacy of Martha Hill through social media by empowering them to nominate and vote for their teachers. Anthony Aiu, student at Purchase College, read his moving nomination letter and Stephanie Tooman, colleague and friend of Ms. Hirabayashi at Purchase, accepted on her behalf.

The crowning event of Gala 2012 was the much-awaited screening of the trailer of *Miss Hill!* The excerpt was a revelation to all, and it was enthusiastically received. The film possesses an enthralling narrative curve; Martha Hill's life, her work, and the history of modern dance are at times surprisingly and tellingly inseparable. Wonderful archival and contemporary footage enhance the narrative from the opening credits. Even at this rough-cut stage the film pulsates with the energy we so lovingly associate with Martha Hill.

We wouldn't have made it this far without the support of all our friends. Over the years the help

and encouragement we received from hundreds of individuals made our vision possible.

The documentary is almost exclusively funded by private contributions. We are grateful to all who made our Kickstarter campaign successful and to all who sent their donations directly to MHDF. We must continue to fund raise, distribution costs will need to be covered, but for a moment we can all take a break and simply be proud of the task accomplished. The long held desire of producing a documentary about Martha Hill, first expressed by Hortense Zera and Irwin Denis at a meeting in 2000, is soon to become reality. We could jump for joy!

Asked about distribution plans, director Greg Vander Veer said: "I think 2014 will be a productive year for *Miss Hill!* It would be great to premiere the film in January at Dance on Camera Festival at Lincoln Center, literally a few hundred feet away from Miss Hill's old office. From there, I hope it plays in several international film festivals around the world. I would also like to see it have a limited theatrical release, international and domestic broadcasts, and my favorite – be available for streaming on Netflix."

THANK YOU, MHDF BOARD

To view the trailer, make a contribution, and for more Gala photos, please visit our website at www.marthahilldance.org

A Conversation about the Making of *Equipose: The Life and Work of Alfredo Corvino*



At Dawn Lille's, February 16, 2013
Pictured from left to right:
Ernesta Corvino, daughter of Alfredo Corvino; Elizabeth McPherson; Dawn Lille (author); Andra Corvino, daughter of Alfredo Corvino.
Also present Ani Udovicki.

Transcribed and edited by Elizabeth McPherson

McPherson: How did the process of making the book begin?

E. Corvino: Well, for a number of years people were asking for a book, mainly on the topic of technique and training. But my father always said, "I don't believe in that. I believe in the imparting of the knowledge and the experience first hand from teachers, that books just don't cut it if you want to learn how to dance." I don't really think any of us thought about a biography until Nancy Allison suggested it. She was working for Rosen Publishing. And she asked David the author.

Lille: And I was thrilled to do it, but it was not easy in terms of interviewing, because Alfredo was a quiet and private person.

E. Corvino: He always said that he didn't like to think too much about the past, good or bad. He was always looking forward. And I think that was the secret to his longevity in his career.

A. Corvino: But I noticed the older he got, the more reminiscent he became, so he started to speak more about the past.

E. Corvino: And I think doing the book got him to think more about the past.

Lille: But it was like pulling teeth to get information from him in an interview, and you never knew when he might open up. I remember taking him to the Boathouse in Central Park for lunch, and he was so excited about it. He ordered his standard hamburger. It wasn't an interview. I was having lunch with him because I loved him

so, and then he started telling me stories. You should have seen me, writing on napkins, envelopes. It was hysterical! I am sure a lot more would have come out with time. Maybe as time went on he trusted me more. But he passed away while I was working on the book.

McPherson: Why was it important to write a book about Alfredo? What were his major contributions to the dance world that made this book so important?

E. Corvino: I think his far-reaching impact was not just ballet teaching. He taught ballet, and that is basically what he became known for, but he was not just a ballet teacher. It just crossed all borders. You can't go anywhere in the world to a dance studio and not find people who know about him or studied with him.

Lille: One of my greatest regrets is that I never studied ballet with him. I think it would have been a wonderful experience. But, to me it is because he was a humanist. To him, dance was a way of making other people aware of your humanism, and their relation to other people. And that was the end goal. If he turned out a dancer in his class, that was wonderful, but his aim was to turn out someone who knew who they were and could be happy and pleased with who they were.

E. Corvino: As the dancers in Pina Bausch's company always said, he was a philosopher.

McPherson: And a scientist. That was the one thing that connected to me so much. Suddenly, ballet made sense, and I understood how to do something and why you do it that way. He wasn't telling you those crazy things like "breath sideways or lift from the underneath part of your leg." He explained technique so that it made sense and used this incredible imagery.

E. Corvino: And studying with him was really studying, an endless wealth.

McPherson: An intellectual activity.

E. Corvino: You never came back into class saying, "Oh, not this again." It was always fresh because you were moving deeper and deeper.

A. Corvino: He made you responsible for yourself, which was also very unusual for a dance teacher. No "Svengali-ism" going on with Dad.

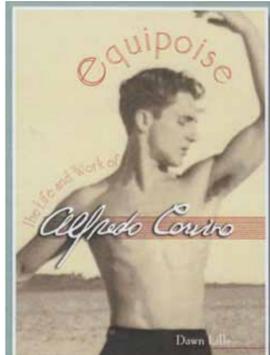
Udovicki: And you could take those principles to other situations.

E. Corvino: We have a woman who still studies with us who says, because of him, she became a rabbi.

A. Corvino: There was no elitism. You do the technique to the best of your ability.

McPherson: Where did the title for the book come from?

E. Corvino: Andra and I were talking with Dawn about a favorite expression that our Indian guru uses about being perfectly balanced physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. She likes to use the word "equipose." And we always said that is such a perfect word for how Dad taught, and how he lived his life. He is equipose.



Equipose: The Life and Work of Alfredo Corvino by Dawn Lille
The Rosen Publishing Group ('10)
Available in bookstores and on line.



Alfredo Corvino teaching in Paris, 1995

PLEASE NOTE THAT NO GALA WAS HELD AND NO AWARDS WERE GIVEN IN 2010 DUE TO FUND-RAISING EFFORTS FOR THE DOCUMENTARY **Lifetime Achievement Award** 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** 2012 Dian Dong & H.T. Chen, 2009 Virginia Johnson, 2008 Janet Panetta, 2007 David Dorfman, 2006 Doug Elkins **Young Professional Award** 2012 Lissa Nicole Smith, 2011 Patricia Carby, 2009 Jacqueline Green, 2008 Lilli-Anne Tai, 2007 Levi Marsman, 2006 Katie Dorn, 2005 Christopher Vo, 2004 Mollie Mae McGregor
Carl Wolz Award 2003 Mira Kim **Special Citation** 2009 Hortense Zera.

FLASH NEWS

Young Professional Honorees - In Their Own Words

Patricia Carby ('11) Greethings, I have been up to a lot. Right now I am in a small dance company called Asha. I have been on several auditions since I moved to NYC. Last week I auditioned for Garth Fagan and was requested to come back in the summer for the Intensive. After the Intensive I will be in the company. Garth Fagan gave me the biggest compliment. He told me that I have a great performance quality and presence on stage. I feel so humbled by his compliment, it keeps me motivated and determined!

Jacqueline Green ('09) Hi all! I am so thankful to the Martha Hill organization for helping me jump-start my professional dancing career. I am now in my dream company, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, performing some of my favorite works. Recently in our New York season at NY City Center, I had the privilege of performing esteemed works such as Ohad Naharin's *Minus 16*, Ronald K. Brown's *Grace*, Jiri Kylian's *Petit Mort*, Kyle Abraham's *Another Night*, Ulysses Dove's *Episodes* and Vespers, Rennie Harris' *Holy*, and of course a list of fabulous works by Alvin Ailey like *Memoria*, *Night Creature*, *Streams*, and the incomparable *Revelations*. I am now off with the company on our North American Tour.

Lissa Smith ('12) Post Martha Hill Awards Gala: I am still dancing with Hubbard Street 2 of Hubbard Street Dance, Chicago. Our touring season has begun, and we have traveled and performed in Bethesda, Maryland, Hilton Head, South Carolina, Tucson, Arizona, and Wheaton, Illinois. We will leave on February 18, 2013, for our two-week tour through Germany where we will perform in six different cities. Upon returning to Chicago at the beginning of March, we will immediately prepare for performances in Culver, Indiana and Batavia, Illinois. This promises to be a memorable and successful season!

Mira Kim ('03, Carl Wolz Memorial Award) I am from Seoul, South Korea. I came to the United States to study Laban Dance Description and Notation at The Ohio State University in 1999. After completing my M.A. at OSU, I started working at the Dance Notation Bureau. While working here, I began the Professional Notator Training program. In 2003, I was honored to receive the Martha Hill Dance Fund award as part of the PNT tuition. In January 2013, I became a professional

notator after completing Peter Quanz's *Kaleidoscope*, which premiered in New York by American Ballet Theatre in 2005. I am currently notating Martha Graham's *Ritual to the Sun* (a.k.a. *Helios*) from *Acts of Light*.

Molly Mae McGregor ('04). I am now a full-time dance teacher at a public elementary school in the NYC, and this is in my fourth season working with alex|xan: the Median Movement, the creative project of Doug Varone and Dancers', Alex Springer and Xan Burley. I have had the pleasure of dancing and performing with and for some lovely and amazing artists throughout the city. My own work has been presented at the Brooklyn Arts Exchange and Judson Church. During 2011 I acted as Movement Director for Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, directed by Ian R. Crawford and presented at Fordham University & Lincoln Center. Most recently I performed in a music video for Clay Wilson / Bangers and Ash. I also enjoy creating dances for the camera.

Christopher Vo ('05) I left Lar's company in the summer of 2011 to tour with Twyla Tharp's Sinatra show *Come Fly Away*. Last summer I was offered a recurring dance role on the hit NBC show *Smash*. This upcoming March, I will be dancing in Dallas as a guest artist for the Bruce Wood Dance Project. Bruce Wood is one of Lar's contemporaries. He was in Lar's company back when Doug Varone was still dancing with Lar. I'm very excited about the full-evening length, all male piece.

Ethel Winter Memorial
The MHDF and The Juilliard School
are pleased to announce
a reception honoring the memory of Ethel Winter
Thursday, April 4, 2013
The Juilliard School
The Glory Kaufman Dance Studio
RSVP by March 21 to Memorials@juilliard.edu

The Pauline Koner Centenary
Friday, May 17, 2013
12 noon at the 92nd Street Y

MHDF BOARD We welcome new board members Rebecca Stenn and Yasuko Tokunaga!
Vernon Scott - President, David K. Manion - Chairman, Hudas Liff - Vice President, Hortense Zera - Vice President, Andra Corvino - Correspondence Secretary, Elizabeth McPherson - Secretary, Ernesta Corvino - Treasurer, Henning Rübsum, Ani Udovicki, Lance Westergard, Megan Williams.