

MHDF

MARTHA HILL
DANCE FUND
NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2008
ISSUE 1



Irwin Denis (1920-2004), first president of The Martha Hill Dance Fund, with Martha Hill (1900-1995)

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Our Gala 2008 will be held on December 1. The Lifetime Achievement Award will go to Ethel Winter for her continued and multi-faceted commitment to the dance field. Mid-Career Award will go to Janet Panetta for her dedication to dance and the dance artist.

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARD NEWS

Levi Marsman (2007 recipient) has joined the second company of The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Christopher Vo (2005 recipient) will be dancing with Lar Lubovitch for his 40th anniversary season. Congratulations!!

BOOK NEWS

The book *Ethel Winter and Her Choreography En Dolor*, by Karin Hermes, was published in 2007. It is available at www.amazon.com or by ordering through your local bookstore.

Elizabeth McPherson's book *The Contributions of Martha Hill to American Dance and Dance Education, 1900-1995* can now be purchased at: www.mellenpress.com or by contacting the Martha Hill Dance Fund for a discounted copy: info@marthahilldance.org or 212-717-6148

Janet Soares' book *Making a Place for American Dance: The Life of Martha Hill* has an expected date of publication

Spring 2009 with Wesleyan University Press: www.wesleyan.edu/wespress.

We congratulate all three authors on their contributions to dance scholarship.

PLEASE SEND YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS TO:

info@marthahilldance.org so that we may update our files.

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About Martha Hill

Martha Hill was born in East Palestine, Ohio on December 1, 1900. After graduating from the Battle Creek Normal School of Physical Education in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1920, Hill took over the position of dance instructor, teaching ballet and Swedish gymnastics. In 1923, she was hired as dance instructor at Kansas State Teachers College.

Moving to New York in 1926, she studied with various dance teachers including Martha Graham who would have a lasting impact on Hill. She moved to Oregon in 1927 to become Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Oregon where Bessie Schönberg was one of Hill's students.

In 1929, Hill moved back to New York. She joined the Martha Graham Dance Company, completed a BS degree from

Teachers College, Columbia University, and began teaching at the Lincoln School of Teachers College. She was hired to teach at New York University in the Physical Education Department in 1930, soon becoming Director of Dance. Hill reluctantly left the Martha Graham Dance Company in 1931 because of an increasing teaching schedule. In 1932, she was hired by the brand new Bennington College in Vermont as Chairman of the Dance Department. She held the positions at NYU and Bennington College simultaneously until 1951.

In the summer of 1934, Hill initiated a summer dance festival-- The Bennington School of the Dance, which ran until 1942. Doris Humphrey, Martha Graham, Charles Weidman, and Hanya Holm were key faculty members.

Hill received her Masters degree from NYU in 1941. In 1948 she formed a new

summer festival-- Connecticut College School of the Dance/American Dance Festival, employing many of the same faculty as the Bennington festival. Hill was a co-director of the festival until 1952. The festival name was later simplified to American Dance Festival and is currently housed at Duke University in North Carolina under the direction of Charles Reinhart.

In 1951, William Schuman, president of The Juilliard School, hired Hill to found a dance department. Schuman and Hill had the bold new concept of creating a training ground that would be equally split between ballet and modern dance. Hill remained the director of dance at Juilliard until 1985 when she was named Artistic Director Emeritus, having trained generations of dancers to the highest level of technique and artistry. She died on November 19, 1995.

Lifetime Achievement Award

2007 Pearl Lang 2004 Donald McKayle and Doris Rudko
2006 Mary Anthony 2003 Francis Mason
2005 Ruth Grauert 2002 Doris Hering and May O'Donnell (1906-2004)
2001 Alfredo Corvino (1916-2005)

Young Professional Award

2007 Levi Marsman 2006 Katie Dorn 2005 Christopher Vo 2004 Mollie Mae McGregor

Mid-Career Award

2007 David Dorfman
2006 Doug Elkins

Carl Wolz Award

2003 Mira Kim

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