



ADF expanding outreach to local schools, online video

: From staff reports
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DURHAM -- The American Dance Festival will implement some new community-based programs to celebrate its 32nd year in Durham.

These programs are designed to reach a broad cross-section of the Durham community. New projects include outreach at local schools and community centers, an online video blog, site-specific works, and Pre-Performance Discussions.

Other community programs from years past will again make an appearance, including ADF Project Dance, ADF Community Tours, Post Performance Discussions, and ADF Community Day.

Under the auspices of the ADF, former Pilobolus dancer Gaspard Louis has been working with area youth since January. Most recently, Louis choreographed a piece for the Walltown Children's Theatre. Over the next nine weeks, he will also teach and create with middle school children at the Hayti Heritage Center and Rogers-Herr Middle School.

Throughout the summer, Louis will work with the Durham Parks and Recreation Department. Projects at the Hayti Heritage Center, Rogers-Herr Middle School and with the Durham Parks and Recreation Department will focus on creative movement and choreography. Finally, Louis will conduct a series of community master classes that are free and open to the public.

The ADF will for the first time partner with El Centro Hispano in downtown Durham by offering dance classes taught by ADF faculty as part of the center's two weeklong summer camps for children. Meeting four times per week, children ages 5-10 will participate in classes that focus on creative movement, including elements of composition and improvisation.

New York dance and theatre artist Mark Dendy will emphasize the diversity of events that take place during the festival via an online video blog. "May we have this CyberDance?" will highlight ADF classes, rehearsals, performances, and other events, as well as feature interviews with artists, students and community members on various dance related topics. New videos will be posted every day on the ADF's website: www.americandancefestival.org. This new multimedia venture will share the incredible range of ADF activities and programs that occur each year.

Dendy will also choreograph two site-specific works to be presented during the 2009 festival. "Could you please restate your answer in the form of a question?" will send the audience on a treasure hunt for dances small and large at the Durham Performing Arts Center immediately prior to the 8 p.m. performances by Shen Wei Dance

Arts June 18-20. This piece explores the audience's proximity to the dancers without the typical proscenium.

A second piece, Golden Belt, will utilize a stunning top floor space in the newly renovated warehouse with repeating performances July 17 and 18 at 7 p.m. and 2 p.m. respectively. Golden Belt will be free and open to the public.

New to the ADF this season, Critic-in-Residence Suzanne Carbonneau will lead a pre-performance discussion before every performance. Carbonneau leads the ADF's NEA Arts Journalism Institute for Dance and is on faculty at George Mason University.

The ADF will continue to offer other community-based programs from years past, including ADF Community Tours, a sneak peek behind the scenes for festival visitors; and post-performance discussions, talk-backs which take place with the artists after selected evening performances.

ADF Community Day will take place at the Nasher Museum of Art July 11.

All of these events are free and open to the public. For more information on these programs, visit the ADF Web site: www.americandancefestival.org.



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