



american dance festival

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YANG MEIQI, "MOTHER OF MODERN DANCE IN CHINA,"
TO RECEIVE THE AMERICAN DANCE FESTIVAL
2010 DISTINGUISHED TEACHING HONOR

Durham, N.C. – The American Dance Festival (ADF) will award the 2010
Balasaraswati/Joy Ann Dewey Beinecke Endowed Chair for Distinguished Teaching to
the "mother of modern dance in China," Yang Meiqi. A ceremony will occur on Sunday,
July 18th at 7:30pm in Griffith Theater on Duke University's West Campus. Acclaimed
choreographer, Shen Wei, will speak about his former teacher Yang Meiqi at the ceremony.

Established at the ADF in 1991, the Balasaraswati/Joy Ann Dewey Beinecke Endowed
Chair for Distinguished Teaching honors teachers who have made extraordinary
contributions to the field of dance. This award, endowed through a generous contribution
from Luise Elcaness Scripps and with additional support by Walter Beinecke, the daughters
of Joy Ann Dewey Beinecke, and the ADF, signifies the importance of honoring those who
act to preserve dance history and tradition as well as cultivating the future of the art form.

Yang Meiqi's brave and unrelenting pursuit to successfully build an unknown art form in
her home country unequivocally deems her the mother of modern dance in China. It was in
1986, when Ms. Yang participated in the ADF's International Choreographer's Residency
program that the idea of modern dance in China was born. With the help of the ADF, and
it's teachers, Ms. Yang returned to China and established the first modern dance program at
the Guangdong Dance Academy. She is responsible for the spread of Chinese Modern
Dance throughout the country and founded the first modern dance company, the Guangdong
Modern Dance Company. Ms. Yang's extraordinary accomplishments paved the way for
the first generation of modern dance professionals in China, including Shen Wei, who
would later found his company, Shen Wei Dance Arts, at the ADF in 2000.

Lauded internationally in the field of modern dance for her tireless efforts and contributions,
Ms. Yang has been included in the Roster of Chinese Dance History as one of the Most

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Outstanding Chinese Dance Educators. She was honored for her “Outstanding Contribution to the Art of Dance in China” from China’s Federation of Literature and the Chinese Dancer’s Association and also received a John D. Rockefeller III Award.

Ms. Yang served as Director of Teaching and Research and Principal, at the Guangdong Dance Academy and has held important positions at the Guangdong ATV Academy for Performing Arts, Beijing Dance Academy, College of Arts & Cultures in Guangdong Province, and the Shanghai Theater Academy. In addition, Ms. Yang has served two terms as Director of the Chinese Dancer’s Association, Vice Chair for the Dancer’s Association/Guangdong Province, and was appointed as a member of the Guangzhou Municipal Arts Educational Committee. Ms. Yang facilitated ADF/Shanghai and has served as a judge for the Tao Li Cup National Dance Competition and as a representative of the Jury of Education for the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation.

Past recipients of the Chair include Pearl Primus, Daniel Nagrin, Betty Jones, Bella Lewitzky, Anna Halprin, Donald McKayle, Bessie Schönberg, Matt Mattox, Pauline Kroner, Viola Farber, Mary Anthony, Walter Nicks, Jane Dudley, Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lang, Martha Myers, Carmen de Lavallade, Gus Solomons, jr., Gerri Houlihan, Dr. Charles “Chuck” Davis, Linda Tarnay, Douglas Nielsen, Dianne McIntyre, Carolyn Adams, Sharon Kinney, and Ruth Andrien.

Performances during the ADF’s 77th season, *What is Dance Theater?*, will be presented at the Durham Performing Arts Center and Duke University’s Reynolds Industries Theater from June 10 – July 24, 2010. For detailed information about the 2010 Festival, the ADF School, community programs, and ticketing, please visit www.americandancefestival.org. Individuals may learn more about the Festival by becoming a Fan on Facebook and/or Following the ADF on Twitter.

Founded in 1934 in Bennington, Vermont, the ADF remains an international magnet for choreographers, dancers, teachers, students, critics, musicians, and scholars to learn and create in a supportive environment. ADF’s wide range of programs includes performances, artist services, humanities projects, publications, community outreach, educational programs and classes, archives, media projects, and national and international projects. The ADF has been presenting the best in modern dance for 77 years. www.americandancefestival.org

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