

WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL

JUNE 7, 2007
By: Ken Keuffel

Season to mark director's last Festival



PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY *Promethean Fire*

Photo by Lois Greenfield

Charles Reinhart never danced professionally. But he has done just about everything else in dance, from managing the renowned Paul Taylor Dance Company to producing major dance events in New York.

He also has directed or co-directed the American Dance Festival in Durham since 1969. This summer marks his last at ADF, the premier dance showcase of its kind in the United States. After he retires, Jodee Nimerichter, the festival's co-director, will become the festival's director, completing a transition that began several years ago.

Reinhart, who turned 80 in September, sounded ready to step down after this year's festival, which runs from Thursday to July 23.

"I am ready to give it up," he said. "I'm sure there's always a little sadness involved. We change as we age. We certainly do physically on the outside. A lot of us change on the inside. It's time now to look for the small happinesses."

Reinhart perked up when he reflected on what ADF has accomplished over the years.

"We're about the choreographer," he said. "How can we help the choreographer make work which, hopefully, will be a part of our cultural heritage?"

The answer has entailed not only commissioning work but also training dancers, engaging them in performances and, whenever possible, helping choreographers revive masterworks at festivals.

Paul Taylor has brought his company to ADF for many years. He is creating "The Uncommitted," in Reinhart's honor; the work will receive its world premiere at the festival July 21-23.

"ADF is the most stalwart supporter of my company," Taylor said by email. "Charles Reinhart was the first manager of my company many years ago and has always been a great commissioner of my new works."

Reinhart said that there's "nothing more exciting" than finding and helping a talented choreographer. Through the years, ADF has developed satellite programs all over the world to nurture budding masters and bring them to ADF.

"Modern dance is now taught in over 100 institutions in China, for example," he said. "How about that? They're starting to turn out some very interesting talent. We're bringing one who's never been here before this summer." That would be Tao Ye, the creative force behind Tao Dance Theater (June 20-22). Tao joins Shen Wei (July 14-16), another Chinese talent nurtured at ADF.

"This art form has spread internationally," he said. "It doesn't copy one another; that's what thrills me."