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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF DANCE

OSU DEPARTMENT OF DANCE 2006-2007
YEAR IN REVIEW
Vera “Vickie” Blaine has always had faith in Ohio State. She came to the university to study dance in 1952, long before it even had a Department of Dance. Vickie earned her Bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Ohio State and joined the dance faculty in 1958. Appointed Helen P. Alkire to teach technique and choreography, she also choreographed for concerts, hosted the dance education program, directed the University Dance Company for 15 years and was awarded the university’s Alumni Distinguished Teaching Award before following Helen in becoming the second chair of the Department of Dance at Ohio State in 1983.

Over the years, colleagues have praised Vickie for her commitment and as a result, put Ohio State on the map as one of the country’s leading dance programs and as a result, put Ohio State on the map as one of the country’s leading dance programs.

Many people are passionate about Ohio State and about their work here, but only a handful of alumni, retired faculty and administrators who have forged connections with the university truly stand out. It is because of outstanding individuals like Vickie Blaine that university trustees established the Distinguished Service Award in 1952 to honor those who have shown exceptional service to the university. In Autumn, Vickie was awarded the prestigious Distinguished Service Award for which she was honored at the Commencement Ceremony on December 10, 2006. Professor Donald Harris, former arts dean, and Vickie’s work made it clear to all that there was an important center for dance in the nation that was not located on the East or West Coasts but was situated here in the nation’s heartland.

Vickie spearheaded a successful effort to bring dance education into Ohio’s public school curriculum. She secured support for K-12 dance teacher certification in Ohio and led the Department of Dance in offering the state’s inaugural K-12 dance teacher education program. The program became a model for dance certification programs across the country.

Over the years, colleagues have praised Vickie for her commitment to making dance a priority in elementary and high schools, for her tireless efforts to bring diversity to the Department of Dance and to the larger university and for putting Ohio State on the dance world’s radar. Since coming to OSU, she has inspired and mentored many artists and continues to do so today as faculty emerita since 1999 by teaching graduate and undergraduate composition, and Generally offering another set of eyes to student choreographic projects.

New this year to the Department of Dance are two-year visiting faculty members, Abigail Yager and Ming-Lung Yang. Both Abby and Ming were members of Dance Theatre of Harlem Dance Company; Abby danced with the company from 1993-2002 and Ming was with the company from 1994-1999. Abby and Ming come to OSU with extensive experience in dance. Abby holds a B.A. in Compositional Studies from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Dance from Hofstra University/ American Dance Festival. She has traveled throughout North America, Europe and Asia performing, teaching and lecturing, and has danced with Dance Utrecht, Nong- Sun An, Emma Diamond and JoAnna Mendl Shaw. She has served as guest faculty at Taipei National University of the Arts (Taichung, Taiwan), Korean National University of Arts (Seoul, Korea), University of Washington (Seattle) and P.A.R.T.S. (Brussels). She is a returning member of the faculty at the American Dance Festival since 2001 where she founded the Chin Lo American Dance Festival Scholarship Program. Over the years, she has assisted in several restagings of Trisha Brown’s choreography including, Seer, (2004), (2007) for the Lyon Opera Ballet and L’Oro for La Monnaie National Opera of Belgium. She has directed the Seer and Restless projects at Taipei National University of the Arts and at the Five College Dance Department as a way to create unique versions of Trisha Brown’s original seminal work Seer and Restless (1993). Abby worked with 11 students at OSU on her third version of Seer and Restless Rest which was performed at Dance Downtown Rockville in May. While at OSU, Abby is teaching modern dance technique and improvisation. Greatly influenced by her studies of Klein Technique, Yoga, the Alexander Technique and Qi Gong, Abby draws on elements from such to inform her practice.

Ming-Lung Yang earned a B.A. in Dance from Chinese Cultural University and an M.F.A. in Dance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ming has danced with Wally Chin, Hillary Easton, Henry Yu and Ming Shen. In 2000, Ming returned to his native Taiwan and became resident choreographer at Dance Forum Taipei until 2005. His choreography has been presented across Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States. He works Holistic, a collaboration with The Poper & Luis Deaule Theatre, and Eastern Current and White Sky, both collaborations with Kao Guang Chinese Opera Theatre; were and named one of the “Top Ten Performances of the Year” by the Tuomi Arts and Culture Foundation. Ming has served on the faculty at Taipei National University of the Arts and the Korean National University of Arts, and the University of Washington/ American Dance Festival. He joins Abby as a returning member of the faculty at the American Dance Festival since 2000, Ming returned to his native Taiwan in 2005. His choreography has been presented across Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States. Ming has served on the faculty at Taipei National University of the Arts, the Korean National University of Arts, and the American Dance Festival Scholarship Program. Over the years, he has assisted in several restagings of Trisha Brown’s choreography including, Seer, (2004), (2007) for the Lyon Opera Ballet and L’Oro for La Monnaie National Opera of Belgium. He has directed the Seer and Restless projects at Taipei National University of the Arts and at the Five College Dance Department as a way to create unique versions of Trisha Brown’s original seminal work Seer and Restless (1993). Abby worked with 11 students at OSU on her third version of Seer and Restless Rest which was performed at Dance Downtown Rockville in May. While at OSU, Abby is teaching modern dance technique and improvisation. Greatly influenced by her studies of Klein Technique, Yoga, the Alexander Technique and Qi Gong, Abby draws on elements from such to inform her practice.

Abigail Yager & Ming-Lung Yang