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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF DANCE

THE ARTIST

OSU DEPARTMENT
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YEAR IN REVIEW

Vera “Vickie” Blaine

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 by Helen P. Alkire to teach technique and choreography, she also choreographed for concerts and headed the dance education program. Vickie 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.

Ever since she joined the faculty at OSU, Vickie has been a central figure to the department’s recognition within the university setting and throughout the nation. When she served as chair, Vickie made it a point to make connections to the larger university and as a result, put Ohio State on the map as one of the country’s leading programs in dance. During the 1980s, while serving as Vice President, then President of OhioDance, the statewide dance service organization, 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 1995 by teaching graduate and undergraduate composition, and generously offering another set of eyes to student choreographic projects.

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, said 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.” We congratulate Vickie on her achievements and thank her for her passion and devotion to dance that has made OSU’s Department of Dance what it is today.

Abigail Yager & Ming-Lung Yang

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 the Trisha Brown Dance Company; Abby danced with the company from 1995-2002 and Ming was with the company from 1994-1999. Abby and Ming come to OSU with extensive careers in dance. Abby holds a B.A. in Compositional Studies from Mount Holyoke College and an M.F.A. in Dance from Hollins University/American Dance Festival. She has traveled throughout North America, Europe and Asia performing, teaching and lecturing, and has danced with Donna Uchizono, Sungsoo Ahn, Emma Diamond and JoAnna Mendl Shaw. She has served as guest faculty at Taipei National University of the Arts (Taipei, 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 2003 where she founded the Chin Lin/American Dance Festival Scholarship Program. Over the years, she has assisted in several restagings of Trisha Brown’s choreography including, *Newark (Niweeorce)* (1987) for the Lyon Opera Ballet and *L’Orfeo* for La Monnaie National Opera of Belgium. She has directed the *Set and Reset/Reset* 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 *Set and Reset* (1983). Abby worked with 11 students at OSU on her third version of *Set and Reset/Reset* which was performed at *Dance Downtown Rocks!* 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 each to inform her practice.

Ming-Lung Yang earned a B.A. in Dance from Chinese Culture University and an M.F.A. in Dance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ming has danced with Wally Cardona, Hillary Easton, Henry Yu and Ming-Shen Ku. In 2000, Ming returned to his native Taiwan and became resident choreographer at Dance Forum Taipei, and later served as its Artistic Director until 2005. His choreography has been presented across Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States. His works *Spiderina*, a collaboration with The Puppet & Its Double Theater, and *Eastern Current* and *White Water Sky*, both collaborations with Kuo Guang Chinese Opera Theater, were each named one of the “Top Ten Performances of the Year” by the Taishin Art and Culture Foundation. Ming has served on the faculty at Taipei National University of the Arts, and the Korean National University of Arts. He joins Abby as a returning member of the faculty at the American Dance Festival since 2000. While serving as two-year faculty at OSU, Ming is teaching various levels of modern dance technique, contact improvisation, composition and repertory. We welcome Abby and Ming to OSU and can already see the impact that they are having on their students!