

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Jennifer Muller/The Works Continuance Project Celebrating Jennifer's Legacy and 80th Birthday

Company: Jennifer Muller/The Works
Venue: The Joyce Theater
Location: New York, NY

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Jennifer Muller/The Works presents an evening of legacy, continuance, and...birthdays! On October 16th, 2024, JMTW will return to the Joyce Theater stage for one night only to celebrate our beloved Jennifer Muller's 80th Birthday. This is an evening of remembering our founder - her virtuosity, her highly faceted vision, and the legacy she leaves our company to continue. An ode to the magnificent choreography of our past, as well as a peek into JMTW's future...

This performance will feature a long-awaited announcement of The Works' new Artistic Director(s)!, a preview of the upcoming 50th Anniversary Season, and a celebration of the woman- and the work- that brought us together and kept us together- moving onward. Join us to wish Jennifer a Happy 80th Birthday...to wish JMTW an early Happy 50th Birthday, and our brilliant Artistic Directors a Happy First Birthday in this thrilling continuance project.

And ... come to enjoy some signature Muller movement: full-bodied, emotive, SMART, virtuosic dance- that makes you think and FEEL.

The celebration will feature repertory excerpts that represent a small fraction of Jennifer's illustrious career, including Speeds, City, 2-1=1, and Flowers, as well as historical footage of Jennifer dancing.

JMTW is self-producing this Celebration, and we are turning to our friends and long-time supporters for help. We ask for assistance as we take on theater crew expenses, dancer fees, as well as costs to present archival footage.

Join our family of dancers, alumni, collaborators, staff and friends in this celebration of old and new. Experience Jennifer's powerful legacy of work- brought forth by inspired new leaders and dancers of the company. It will be a night of history.

Please join us to support this essential continuance project- and to wish Jennifer a Happy 80th Birthday!

Tickets:

<https://www.joyce.org/pQ3YDFv/jennifer-muller---the-works-continuance-project--celebrating-jennifer-s-legacy>

Donate:

https://pentacle.formstack.com/forms/fia_1_donation_form_copy

The JMTW Continuance Project is fiscally sponsored by The Foundation for Independent Artists, Inc. Donations should be made out to: JMTW Continuance Project - FIA#5.

Additional assistance:

Jeff Croiter, lighting director

Jennifer Muller (October 16, 1944 - March 29, 2023) was a creative force in the modern dance world for over 50 years. She was known for her visionary approach and innovation in dance and theater, her multi-disciplinary productions incorporating both spoken word and live and commissioned music, artist-inspired decor, and unusual production elements.

Dance was Muller's passion and creative voice since childhood. Creating pieces since age 7, she began dancing professionally at age 15 as a member of the Pearl Lang Dance Company. These formative years were followed by 9 years as Principal Dancer with the José Limón Company- during which she graduated from the Juilliard School- and 7 years as Associate Artistic Director of the Louis Falco Dance Company. She founded Jennifer Muller/The Works in 1974 and served as Artistic Director until she passed away. For 45 years, she led the company to global recognition for its dynamic theatricality, virtuosity, and humanity. The company toured to 39 countries on four continents, including a State Department tour of South and Central America, performed in 30 states, and self-produced 28 seasons in New York City. Throughout her career, Muller created over 125 pieces, including seven full evening productions.

Muller was highly respected in her field. She was chosen as a founding member of the World Arts Council in 2003- selected as one of 30

artists across six disciplines and the only American drawn from the dance field. In 2009, Muller was awarded a commissioning grant from The Joyce Theater's 25@25 Initiative to create the piece, Bench. In 2010, she received the Trophy of Cultural Responsibility in recognition of her invaluable contributions to dance in South America. In 2011, she was awarded an "American Masterpieces: 3 Centuries of Artistic Genius Grant" to set her 1974 work Speeds on the UCSB Dance Company. The piece was accompanied by a scholarly conference, exhibit and publication entitled Transformation & Continuance: Jennifer Muller and the Reshaping of American Modern Dance, 1959-Present.

Muller was commissioned to create and re-stage dance works for 26 international repertory companies in nine countries. These included Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ohio Ballet (USA), Tanz-Forum (Germany), Ballet du Nord and Lyon Opera Ballet (France), Aterballetto (Italy), Bat Dor (Israel), Ballet Jazz de Montreal (Canada), Ballet Contemporaneo (Argentina) and Nederlands Dans Theater, NDT3, Krisztina de Chatel and, in 2019, Introdans (Netherlands), to name a few.

Internationally renowned as a consummate teacher and mentor of creative talent, Muller was one of the only choreographers of her generation to develop an original technique, based upon principles drawn from Eastern philosophy. TanzPlan Berlin's Center for Dance chose Muller Polarity Technique as one of seven unique, contemporary dance techniques for its publication/DVD Tanztechnik 2010. In addition to teaching Muller Polarity Technique worldwide, she headlined workshops in creativity, collaboration and choreography in France, England, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Argentina and the US. Additionally, she developed unique programs in creative thinking and non-verbal communication entitled Creative Mind Workshops for dancers and non-dancers alike. Inspired by Muller's technique and philosophical tenets, company alumni have gone on to faculty positions in universities, colleges and studios across the globe.

A dramatist as well as a movement artist, Muller was recognized as a "seminal influence on dance/theater" by choreographer and co-founder of Tanzform Köln, Jochen Ulrich. Muller choreographed productions for The Public Theater, 2nd Stage Theater, NY Stage & Film, Juilliard Opera Center and the New York City Opera, and in 2011, choreographed the new musical The Spiral Show in Beijing, China. She directed the Da Capo Players' production of Peter Maxwell Davis' Le Jongleur, authored scripts for NDT3 and JMTW, designed costumes, lights and decor under the designation Stageworks, and worked with directors Gail Edwards, Des McAnuff, Ken Elliot, Mark Linn-Baker and Christopher Mataliano.

Muller was also known for her history of notable collaborations: she worked with such artists as Keith Haring, Yoko Ono, Keith Jarrett, Tom Slaughter, Sandro Chia, and Julia Kent. Additionally, she established long-standing collaborative relationships with composers Burt Alcantara, Karen Small, and Marty Beller, Tony Award-winning lighting designer Jeff Croiter, photographer Roberto Dutesco, and designer William Katz.

Jennifer Muller believed passionately in the importance and power of live dance. She devoted her life to this art form, which she experienced and framed as a medium of communication with the capacity to reach people from all walks of life. She encouraged dancers, creatives, students, and audiences to trust their humanity, deepen their imagination, and ultimately to connect in a shared and potentially transformative experience. From this essential mission unfurled more than 50 years of extraordinarily productive creativity and a monumental body of work that has reached countless people around the world.

Jennifer Muller/The Works has electrified world audiences with its passionate work and superb dancers in 39 countries on four continents, 30 States in the USA and produced 28 NYC Seasons at City Center, the Joyce, Cedar Lake and New York Live Arts among others. JMTW has performed at major theaters and festivals worldwide, spanning hemispheres from Buenos Aires to Montreal and circumnavigating the globe from Shanghai to Moscow, with performances in Madrid, Rio de Janeiro, Bangkok, Tel Aviv, Rome and Amsterdam to name a few.

A byword for diversity since its inception in 1974, JMTW performs work that celebrates the human spirit with the belief that dance can promote cross-cultural understanding and act as a catalyst for positive change. JMTW presents exhilarating dances that showcase emotional authenticity and social consciousness. In the US, JMTW has appeared in venues such as Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Jacob's Pillow, Alice Tully Hall, Jacob Javits Center, the United Nations, Kaatsbaan International Dance Center and St. Louis' Spring to Dance Festival among many others. In New York City, festivals include Bryant and Battery Park, Hudson Valley, Fire Island, Summer in the Square and Central Park Summerstage.

Devoted to mentoring creativity in all its forms, educating youth and serving the community with vital outreach, JMTW's education programs - Faces of Wonder, Imagine That! and HATCH Presenting Series - have reached over 4,000 NYC youth and have mentored 50 emerging choreographers annually. JMTW conducts residencies throughout the US and abroad. Students have performed Muller's work at the University of Iowa, Long Island University (Brooklyn), Jacksonville University, UC Santa Barbara, Central Connecticut State University and LaGuardia Community College, with additional residencies in California, Virginia and Brazil. JMTW has developed numerous dance artists who have gone on to become directors and choreographers in their own right. These include Ronald K. Brown, Young Soon Kim, Pascal Rekoert, Michael Jahoda, Maria Naidu, Leda Meredith, Lana Carroll-Heylock, Mario Bermudez Gil, Ed Burgess and Christopher Pilafian.

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