

STUDENTS FOR CUNNINGHAM

Monday, October 11, 2010

Students for Cunningham

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From Students for Cunningham:

The Merce Cunningham Trust will soon make a decision concerning the future of the Merce Cunningham Studio. We have strong reason to believe they are leaning towards closing it. Over the last year 25% of our classes have been cut and those of us in the professional training programs have been told that we will not have the chance to complete our course of study. In response, we are petitioning the Merce Cunningham Trust to establish the Merce Cunningham Center as the premier center for the study of Cunningham Technique and Repertory. We envision this center as encompassing the 11th floor of Westbeth and extending the current programs of the studio to include teacher training programs, educational outreach, a repertory ensemble, exhibition gallery and research institute.

We believe that in order for the Merce Cunningham Trust to truly fulfill their mission to "to promote education and artistic development in the field of modern dance through instruction and performance of works choreographed by Merce Cunningham" they need to take action now to create this center and secure the future of Merce Cunningham's full artistic legacy.

It will take the entire dance community, and our wider community of supporters, to help the Trust believe in our vision. Our goal is to gather 10,000 signatures on our petition and 500 letters of support. We want to show that there is overwhelming public support for this vision.

Please read and sign our petition at the Merce Cunningham Studio
or online at: <http://www.gopetition.com/petition/39431.html>

We also invite you to write a letter of support exploring:

1. Your relationship to Merce, his work, and (very importantly) his technique.
2. Why you believe the Merce Cunningham Center is necessary for keeping this artistic legacy alive.

You can return letters via email to: studentsforcunningham@gmail.com

or by mail to:

Students For Cunningham
c/o Christiana Axelsen
70 16th St. #3
Brooklyn, NY 11215

The petition and letters will be presented to the Trust at the Merce Cunningham Trust meeting on October 19th.
Letters and signatures gathered after this date will be given to the Trust at the following meeting which has yet to be scheduled.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. Please pass this on to anyone who you think would be interested in these issues.

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