



1111 16<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036

## PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:**

Betsy Lundgren  
Phone: 202.833.1717  
Email: blundgren@danceusa.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 30, 2010

### **Two Outstanding Dance Heroes to be Honored by Dance/USA**

*Carmen de Lavallade and Dick Caples to receive awards  
at Dance/USA 2010 Annual Conference in June*

**Washington, DC** – Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance, announces its two awardees for 2010, selecting the renowned dancer/performer **Carmen de Lavallade** to receive the **Dance/USA Honor** award, and long-time executive director of the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company **Richard J. (Dick) Caples** to receive the “**Ernie**” award, named for the late Ian “Ernie” Horvath. Both awards will be presented on **June 18, 2010** during the Dance/USA Honors Celebration, as part of the **Dance/USA Annual Conference** being held June 16-19 in Washington, DC.

Given annually by the **Dance/USA Board of Trustees**, the Honor and Ernie are awarded to leading members of the national dance community, following a nomination process open to Dance/USA’s membership.

**Carmen de Lavallade** will be recognized with the *Dance/USA Honor* for her extraordinary and lasting contributions to the field, including her performances with the Lester Horton Dance Theater and Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, as well as on film, television, and Broadway. Ms. De Lavallade will join an illustrious group of past Dance/USA **Honor recipients** including Alvin Ailey, Jeraldyne Blunden, William Christensen, Merce Cunningham, Alexandra Danilova, Dr. Charles “Chuck” Davis, Agnes de Mille, Katherine Dunham, Martha Graham, Anna Halprin, Judith Jamison, Robert Joffrey, Bella Lewitzky, Bruce Marks, Donald McKayle, Arthur Mitchell, Tina Ramirez, Charles Reinhart, Paul Taylor, Antony Tudor, and David White.

**Dick Caples** will receive the *Ernie*, a tribute to the unsung heroes of the dance field, for his extraordinary 26 years as executive director of the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, his dedicated service on several boards (including Dance/USA), and as a legal advisor for artists. Mr. Caples will take his place among fellow **Ernie recipients** Cora Cahan, Sage Cowles, Martha Hill Davies, Barbara Horgan, Ian Horvath, Deborah Jowitt, John Killacky, Sali Ann Kriegsman, Richard E. LeBlond, Jr, Madeline Nichols, Norton Owen, Bessie Schonberg, and Ivan Sygoda.

**(more)**

The **Dance/USA Honors Celebration** is cause for reflection upon an individual's contributions to dance in America and an acknowledgement of the roles they play in the national dance community. The Honors Celebration is included in the Annual Conference registration fee. Individuals not attending the Conference who wish to attend the Honors Celebration may purchase a \$65 ticket by contacting Dance/USA at 202.833.1717.

### **ABOUT THE AWARDEES**



Photo by Tom Caravaglia

**Carmen de Lavallade** began studying ballet at age 14 with Melissa Blake, and at age 16 was awarded a scholarship to study dance with Lester Horton. In 1949, Ms. de Lavallade became a member of Lester Horton Dance Theater, where from 1950 to 1954, she enjoyed the status of lead dancer. In 1954, Ms. de Lavallade made her Broadway debut in *House of Flowers*, and that same year Alvin Ailey moved to New York City to partner with her in that production. During that engagement in 1955, she met and married dancer and actor Geoffrey Holder. With Holder, she completed her signature solo, *Come Sunday*, set to black spirituals sung by Odetta Gordon. Ms. de Lavallade danced as the prima ballerina in several Metropolitan Opera performances, and by the early 1960s was a principal guest performer with the Alvin Ailey Dance Company. In 1970, Ms. de Lavallade joined the prestigious Yale School of Drama as a choreographer and performer-in-residence. She staged musicals, plays and operas, and later became a professor and member of the Yale Repertory Theater. Between 1990 and 1993, she returned to the Metropolitan Opera as choreographer for *Porgy and Bess* and *Die Meistersinger*. Ms. de Lavallade has received the Black History Month Lifetime Achievement Award, a Rosie Award, and a Bessie Award. She is the recipient of honorary degrees in Fine Arts from Adelphi University (1993), Boston Conservatory of Music (1994), and State University of New York at Purchase and Bloomfield College (both in 2006). The year 2010 marks the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of deLavallade's debut on the concert dance stage.



**Dick Caples** is the executive director (and also a member of the board) of the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company. In his 26 years as executive director of the company (one of the longest such tenures in dance), Mr. Caples has raised more than \$15 million, enabling Lubovitch to create more than 60 new dances for the company (as well as additional dances for other companies). During his tenure, the company has produced more than 1,000 performances, seen live by more than a million people in more than 20 foreign countries and 30 American states. He has served on panels of various national and regional arts organizations, and he currently serves on the board of Dance/USA (during 15 years of service at various times he has worked as vice chair, treasurer and secretary), as well as on the board of Doug Varone and Dancers. From 1981-84, he served on the board of Laura Dean Dancers & Musicians, and from 2002-05, he served on the board of the Artists Community Federal Credit Union. He was educated at Yale (B.A. with special honors), Johns Hopkins (M.A.), and Cornell (J.D.). After practicing law for six years in New York City, first with Donovan Leisure Newton & Irvine and then with Shearman & Sterling, he was appointed executive director of the Santa Fe Festival Theatre in 1983. In 1984, he returned to New York and joined the Lubovitch company in his present capacity. He has served on the copyright law and entertainment law committees of the New York City Bar Association, and, time permitting, he provides legal and other professional services to a variety of arts organizations and individual artists, including the 50 choreographers who participated in Pentacle's Help Desk program (for which he served as a mentor from 2000-06).

(more)

## **ABOUT THE 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Dance/USA's 2010 Annual Conference takes place in Washington, DC from Wednesday, June 16 through Saturday, June 19 at the Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City. ***DANCE Beyond Borders***, this year's conference theme, will examine the borders—*real or imagined*—that define the dance field.

With a special emphasis on **artistry, audience engagement, management, and international exchange**, Conference attendees will participate in four days of professional development sessions, advocacy on Capitol Hill, networking and information sharing, and in-depth discussions on important issues facing the field. Dance/USA members and non-members are invited and welcome to attend. Registration is available online at **[www.danceusa.org](http://www.danceusa.org)**.

## **ABOUT DANCE/USA**

Dance/USA is the national service organization for the professional dance field. We believe that dance is essential to a healthy society, demonstrating the infinite possibilities for human expression and potential, and facilitating communication within and across cultures. Dance/USA sustains and advances professional dance by addressing the needs, concerns, and interests of artists, administrators, and organizations. By providing services and national leadership, Dance/USA enhances the infrastructure for dance creation, education, and dissemination.

Established in 1982, Dance/USA is a membership organization serving a broad cross-section of professional dance (currently over 400 ballet, modern, ethnic, jazz, and tap companies, dance service and presenting organizations, individuals, and related organizations). With an informed understanding of local dance communities and an eagle-eye view of dance nationally, we occupy a unique position in the field. By working primarily in the interests of our membership, Dance/USA strengthens the dance field as a whole and the performing arts field in general. Dance/USA's priorities include **advocating** for dance, providing **information & research** on the field, **convening & networking**, and building **leadership** among dance professionals.

Learn more about Dance/USA and our branch offices by visiting our website, [www.danceusa.org](http://www.danceusa.org).

###