



30th Anniversary International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance Honoring **Norma Miller and Yvonne Daniel**

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LOS ANGELES, CA – The 30th Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance will descend on Los Angeles, California “**Honoring Legacies: Past, Present, and Future.**” **The Queen of Swing, Norma Miller and Professor Emerita of Dance and Afro-American Studies Yvonne Daniel** will be honored with the Association’s **Founder’s Award and Scholar Award** (respectively) at the conference’s Awards Luncheon. The conference and festival will take place January 23-28, 2018 at the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles Hotel, 6101 West Century Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Ms. Miller and Dr. Daniel will also appear on panels throughout the conference and festival.

NORMA MILLER, Founder’s Award



The **Founder’s Award** is a highly prestigious award presented annually to one distinguished individual who has made a major contribution in the field of Dance. The award is presented to an individual who is one of a kind, exemplifies the spirit and ideals of the founder of the organization, and has rendered selfless and distinguished service in our community. The Founder’s award recognizes exceptional choreography, performance, and uniqueness of the Dance Artists creative voice and their significant contributions. This award recipient has demonstrated a genuine commitment to the mission of IABD and

its philosophy which emphasizes the continued responsibility of “carrying the torch” by preserving and promoting dance by people of African ancestry or origin.

BIOGRAPHY

Norma Miller, known as the Queen of Swing, is an author, choreographer, dancer, comedian and actor. Discovered at the age of twelve, Ms. Miller’s career spans over seven decades and she continues to inspire all those who know her. In 2003, Norma was honored with a National Heritage Foundation Fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts for her role in creating and continuing to preserve “the acrobatic style swing dance, known as the Lindy Hop.” The author of several books, Ms. Miller’s latest book, *Swing Baby Swing*, chronicles the evolution of the swing culture into the 21st century. Ms. Miller’s biography, *Swingin’ at the Savoy: A Memoir of a Jazz Dancer*, recollects her youthful encounters with Ella Fitzgerald, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Ethel Waters and other jazz legends.

Ms. Miller has been the subject of many documentaries including National Geographic’s *Jitterbug* (1991) and the Smithsonian Jazz series on NPR. In Ken Burn’s documentary *Jazz* (2001), her recollections provide a first hand account of the Harlem music and dance scene in the 1930s and 40s. In 2006, Florida filmmaker John Biffar, completed a 72-minute documentary, *Queen of Swing*, that takes an inside look at Norma Miller’s influence in the globalization of America’s jazz culture and she and her fellow artist’s roles in racial integration. Featured interviews include Bill Cobbs, Bill Cosby, Phoebe Jacobs, Frankie Manning, and the late Leonard Reed.



Norma has appeared in the Marx Brother's *A Day at the Races* (1937) and *Hellzapoppin* (1941), Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* (1992), Debbie Allen's *Stompin' at the Savoy* (1992), and John Biffar's *Captiva* (1995). In the sixties, she began working with Redd Foxx at his comedy club and later joined him on the 1970's television series, *Sanford and Son*, serving as a stand up comic, actor and choreographer. At the young age of 97, Ms. Miller continues to travel throughout the year making appearances at a number of Swing Dance festivals and Jazz events around the world.

DR. YVONNE DANIEL, Scholar's Award



The **Scholar Award** is presented to an individual who demonstrates outstanding achievements and whose contributions in the academic and research areas of dance deserve acknowledgement. This award honors the scholarly artist's importance to the cultural fabric of the black dance community and the impact their research has on the dance field. The award recipient has proven to be committed to the mission of IABD and its philosophy which emphasized the continued responsibility of "carrying the torch" by preserving and promoting dance by people of African ancestry or origin.

BIOGRAPHY

Yvonne Daniel, Smith College Professor Emerita of Dance and Afro-American Studies, is a specialist in dance performance and circum-Caribbean societies. Her publications include: *Rumba: Dance and Social Change in Contemporary Cuba* (1995), *Dancing Wisdom: Embodied Knowledge in Haitian Vodou, Cuban Yoruba, and Bahian Candomblé* (2005), and *Caribbean and Atlantic Diaspora Dance: Igniting Citizenship* (2011). She has published over forty juried and solicited articles, encyclopedia entries, chapters, and edited four documentary videos on dance and Diaspora religions. Her book on sacred performance won the de la Torre Bueno prize 2006 and her last publication won a "Choice" award. She is a Ford and a Rockefeller Fellow, and has been a Visiting Scholar at Mills College and the Smithsonian Institution. She now lives in California and has four sons and ten grandchildren.

Expected attendance to the 30th Annual International Conference and Festival is over 500 registrants. The conference and festival is designed to meet the needs of professional, advanced, and student dancers as well as dance administrators, educators, and instructors with auditions, master classes, lecture demonstrations, panels, workshops, and performances.

In the organization's history, Lula Washington Dance Theatre has hosted the conference and festival three times in its 30-year history. The conference and festival headquarters is the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles, 6101 West Century Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

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About IABD

The International Association of Blacks in Dance preserves and promotes dance by people of African ancestry or origin, and assists and increases opportunities for artists in advocacy, audience development, education, funding, networking, performance, philosophical dialogue, and touring. IABD has become the Mecca for Blacks in Dance such as administrators, artists, choreographers, dance companies, directors, educators, scholars, and those interested in artistry, black dance issues, and performance presentations. The Association, founded in 1991, provides a network, formal newsletters, choreographers directory, published papers and is the *raison d'être* for the annual conference. The Association also responds to and initiates dialogue around issues that impact the Black Dance Community as well as the Dance community at large. IABD has developed national prominence and allowed the Black Dance Community to come together on issues important to them. www.iabdassociation.org



About LWDT

The Lula Washington Contemporary Dance Foundation is a 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit organization founded in 1980 by Lula and Erwin Washington to provide a creative outlet for minority dance artists in South Los Angeles. The founding mission is to build a world class contemporary modern dance company that travels worldwide with contemporary modern dance works that reflect African-American history and culture. Our education mission is to create a school in the inner city where young people can learn the art of dance, launch careers in dance, and where dance is used to motivate, educate, inspire, challenge and enrich the lives of young people so they can become successful, productive and competitive citizens. lulawashington.org