Paul Taylor Dance Company will perform "Promethean Fire," originally commissioned by the ADF in 2002.

COURTESY OF LOIS GREENFIELD

LET THE DANCE BEGIN

As his last ADF gets under way, the longtime director still revels in the boundless nature of modern choreography

ABOUT ADF

- The precursor of today's festival began in 1954 at Bennington College in Vermont. Pioneers of modern dance including Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey came together to teach technique and create works. The festival was at Connecticut College in New London, Conn., from 1948 to 1977.
- ADF takes in more than 400 students each year from around the world, taught by a faculty of more than 50.
- In 1984, ADF began offering international courses, workshops and performances through mini-ADFs, which have been held in Japan, Korea, India and Russia. Since 1987, ADF has formed collaborative projects with dance institutions in Central and South America, Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa.

China's TAO Dance Theater, founded in 2008, makes its U.S. debut.

COURTESY OF JIN HAI

These four are among a dozen choreographers' companies specially selected to mark Reinhart's retirement this season. The festival, titled "Something New, Something Treasured," opens Thursday with a one-night gala honoring Reinhart, then brings 6 ½ weeks of

SEE DANCE, PAGE 5D
performances featuring some of Reinhart’s favorite works, which he asked companies to reprise for him.

One of these is Donald McKayle’s “Rainbow ’Round My Shoulder,” a vivid depiction of the hardships of black men on a chain gang, set to stirring folk music. Reinhart still remembers a particularly affecting performance by the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (which also dances it this summer) on a 1989 ADF program in Moscow.

“At the end, there was no reaction from the audience,” Reinhart remembered, “no applause, nothing. At intermission, I had an interpreter ask audience members how they felt about the piece. They said they couldn’t applaud because what they saw was so much like their own lives.”

Additional choices Reinhart will see again run from Bill T. Jones’ “D-Man in the Waters,” an exhilarating piece about the resiliency of the human spirit, to the primordial mystery of Eiko & Koma’s “River,” an evocation of creation and rebirth performed in the pond at Sarah P. Duke Gardens. Reinhart also has chosen Pilobolus’ quirky, humorous “Untitled” and Paul Taylor’s dazzling, virtuosic “Promethean Fire.”

Premieres abound

True to Reinhart’s vision and zeal, this season offers eight world premieres, five U.S. premieres and five company debuts, including China’s TAO Dance Theater. In its first U.S. appearance, the company offers an intriguing mix of traditional style and freewheeling exploration of movement. ADF co-director Jodee Nimerichter, who takes over the festival next year, is especially eager to see how audiences react.

“We rarely select a company without seeing them live,” Nimerichter said, “but we watched a video of TAO’s performances and were wowed.”

Both Reinhart and Nimerichter also are happy to finally snag Rosas, a company headed by influential Belgian choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, who receives this year’s prestigious Samuel H. Scripps Award for lifetime achievement. Her company opens the festival proper on June 10 with “Rosas dans Rosas,” a piece that explores the conflict between uniformity and individuality, performed to a score created as the dancers move.

Into the future

Since taking over in 1968, Reinhart has brought 337 commissioned works and 484 premieres to the festival. As he leaves his post, he has high hopes for ADF’s future.

“I want Jodee to blow it up and put it all back together in her own way, seeking out young, potentially great talent while finding a way to preserve the jewels of modern dance,” he said.

In the meantime, Reinhart knows that the companies on his final season will continue to keep modern dance indefinable.
American Dance Festival

Schedule of ticketed performances

Cost: $22-$51

Contact: 680-2787 (DPAC) or 684-4444 (Reynolds Industries Theater & Duke Gardens); www.americandancefestival.org

Durham Performing Arts Center (8 p.m. unless noted)

June 9: Gala honoring Charles Reinhart (7 p.m.)

June 16-18: Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company

June 23-25: Evidence, A Dance Company and Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (children’s matinee at 1 p.m. June 25)

June 30-July 2: Pilobolus (children’s matinee, 1 p.m.)

July 7-9: Emanuel Gat Dance

July 14-16: Shen Wei Dance Arts

July 21-23: Paul Taylor Dance Company (children’s matinee, 1 p.m.)

Reynolds Industries Theater, Duke (8 p.m. unless noted)

June 10-12: Rosas

June 14-15: Yossi Berg & Oded Graf (also 2 p.m. June 15)

June 20-22: TAO Dance Theater

June 27-29: Rosie Herrera

July 3: ADF Musicians Concert

July 8: ADF Faculty Concert (also 2 p.m. July 9)

July 11-13: Doug Varone and Dancers

July 18-20: Past/Forward (works by Martha Clark, Twyla Tharp, Bulareyaung Pagarlava)

Sarah P. Duke Gardens (Culberson Asiatic Arboretum Pond)

July 5-6: Eiko & Koma (9:15 p.m.)

Free events (684-6402; americandancefestival.org)

■ Wednesday Wine-tastings (for ticket holders): June 15, 22, 29, July 13 and 20: 7 p.m. at Bryan Center, Duke.

■ ADF behind the scenes tours of classes and rehearsals: June 20-July 15 (10:30 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday). Reservations required.

■ Community Day: June 25, Nasher Museum of Art, 2-4:30 p.m.


■ MFA Students Performances: July 22-23, Reynolds Theater, 8 p.m.

■ Check the ADF website for additional activities, including audience memory workshops, panel discussions, art exhibits, award ceremonies.

Online: In addition to the ADF website, the festival is on Facebook and Twitter