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**PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY'S BETTIE DE JONG
TO RECEIVE THE 2019 AMERICAN DANCE FESTIVAL
DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD**

Durham, NC, February 14, 2019—The American Dance Festival (ADF) will award the **2019 Balasaraswati/Joy Anne Dewey Beinecke Endowed Chair for Distinguished Teaching** to longtime Paul Taylor Dance Company rehearsal director **Bettie de Jong**. A ceremony will take place on **Thursday, June 27, 2019** in Reynolds Industries Theater at the opening night performance of the Paul Taylor Dance Company.

"If ever there was a person indispensable to Paul Taylor it was Bettie de Jong, who for more than fifty years has dedicated her life to preserving his work and cultivating his dancers. Her insights, humor, passion, and unflinching loyalty give us all the tools we need to grow as artists and as people. She is a teacher in the truest sense of the word—one who inspires, instructs, and imparts wisdom so that others can grow and succeed. She is responsible for making us the Taylor dancers we are, and our institution would not be where it is today without her guidance, love, and support," said Michael Novak, Artistic Director of Paul Taylor Dance Foundation.

ADF Dean Leah Cox added, "Honoring Bettie de Jong reflects ADF's commitment to giving visibility to the many ways teaching occurs in our field. As someone who danced in a company for many years, I know how essential the rehearsal director is to a company and what a deft balancing act they maintain. They must know, nurture, and honor the choreographer, the work, and the dancers. Bettie de Jong is a rarity among rehearsal directors, having helped realize Paul Taylor's work for decades. I'm so pleased we will honor her."

Bettie de Jong was born in Sumatra, Indonesia, and in 1946 moved to Holland, where she continued her early training in dance and mime. Her first professional engagement was with the Netherlands Pantomime Company. After coming to New York City to study at the Martha Graham School, she performed with the Graham Company, the Pearl Lang Company, and John Butler and Lucas Hoving, and was seen on CBS-TV with Rudolf Nureyev in a duet choreographed by Paul Taylor. Ms. de Jong joined the Taylor Company in 1962. Noted for her strong stage presence and long line, she was Mr. Taylor's favorite dancing partner and, as rehearsal director, was his surrogate in the studio and on tour for more than 40 years.

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Past recipients of the Chair include Pearl Primus, Daniel Nagrin, Betty Jones, Bella Lewitzky, Ethel Butler, Anna Halprin, Donald McKayle, Bessie Schönberg, Matt Mattox, Pauline Koner, Viola Farber, Mary Anthony, Walter Nicks, Jane Dudley, Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lang, Martha Myers, Carmen De Lavallade, Gus Solomons jr, Gerri Houlihan, Dr. Charles “Chuck” Davis, Linda Tarnay, Douglas Nielsen, Dianne McIntyre, Carolyn Adams, Sharon Kinney, Ruth Andrien, Yang Meiqi, Donna Faye Burchfield, Ana Marie Forsythe, Phyllis Lamhut, Irene Dowd, Zvi Gotheiner, James Sutton, Jaclynn Villamil, Anne Green Gilbert, Liz Lerman, Gabriel “Kwikstep” Dionisio, and Ana "Rokafella" Garcia.

PHOTOGRAPH AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

About ADF:

Throughout its 86-year history, ADF has been a nationally recognized leader in our indigenous art form of modern dance. Generations of dancers and choreographers have come to ADF as students, taught as faculty, and created and performed work as professional artists. Each summer, ADF has been the beating heart of the dance world. The best companies in the world premiere work on ADF's stage, much of it commissioned by the festival. Other festivals and season programs are measured against ADF. Over 25,000 people see performances by more than 30 companies each season. The festival has commissioned 427 works and premiered 689 pieces including dances by Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, and Paul Taylor. Each summer at ADF, more than 370 students from some 25 countries and 42 states study with ADF's 70 faculty members. They come as kids in leotards with as many doubts as dreams. They leave as dancers and artists—and sometimes even new members of companies. Lives change in those 5½ sweaty weeks. Beyond the summer, ADF maintains year-round dance studios offering movement classes to over 650 participants, provides over 180 free classes to almost 4,000 local dancers, and offers choreographic residences providing artists with the necessary space and time to create. americandancefestival.org.

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