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BRENDA WAY TO BE INDUCTED TO THE CALIFORNIA HALL OF FAME



Photo by Vincent Gotti

www.odc.dance

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, January 12, 2024 – ODC is proud to announce that Founder and Artistic Director **Brenda Way** will be inducted into the California Hall of Fame next month.

Launched in 2006, the California Hall of Fame honors history-making Californians who embody the state's spirit of innovation. Inductees are selected annually by the Governor and First Partner for achievements in the arts, business and labor, entertainment, food and wine, literature, music, public service, science and sports.

Governor **Gavin Newsom** and First Partner **Jennifer Siebel Newsom** joined the California Museum in announcing the 17th class of inductees, which includes **Helene An, Willie L. Brown, Jr., Vinton Cerf, Ava DuVernay, The Go-Go's, Thelton E. Henderson, Los Lobos, Cheryl Miller, Leon E. Panetta**, as well as Brenda Way.

An induction ceremony will be held in February, followed by the opening of the 17th class artifact exhibit, and this event will be livestreamed. Details will be posted in the coming weeks at CAHallofFame.org.

Through her dance company, school and theater, Way has inspired audiences, cultivated artists, engaged community, and fostered diversity and inclusion through dance.

Way began studying dance as a young girl at the School of American Ballet and Ballet Arts in New York City under legendary choreographer George Balanchine. She helped create an inter-arts department at Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music in the late 1960s, and launched ODC there in 1971 before relocating to the Bay Area in 1976.

Over the last 45 years, Way has choreographed more than 85 pieces for numerous institutions, including commissions for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, San Francisco Ballet, Oakland Ballet, the Equal Justice Society, San Francisco Girls Chorus and Cal Performances. In 2011, her work *Investigating Grace* was named an American masterpiece by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Way is a national spokesperson for dance, has been published widely and has received numerous awards, including Izzie Awards for both choreography and sustained achievement. She is a 2000 recipient of the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship and has enjoyed 40 years of support from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2009, Way was the first choreographer to be a Resident of the Arts at the American Academy in Rome, and in 2012 she received the Helen Crocker Russell Award for Community Leadership from the San Francisco Foundation.

Under Way's leadership, ODC became the first modern dance company in the United States to own its home facility. Today the organization comprises three buildings including eight dance studios of varying size, a state-of-the-art theater, a gallery, café and media lab, as well as a health clinic, administrative offices and a 'Town Hall.' The organization's newest building, purchased last year, will soon undergo major renovations expanding ODC's operational capacity by 40%. In all, ODC forms one of the West Coast's largest and most active centers for dance.

Way holds a Ph.D. in aesthetics and is the mother of four children. For details on the California Hall of Fame or to download media assets, visit californiamuseum.org/california-hall-of-fame/exhibitions.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA HALL OF FAME

The California Hall of Fame celebrates Californians whose achievements have made history and changed the state, the nation and the world. Launched in 2006, the program serves as the California Museum's annual gala and the premise of on-site and online exhibitions inspiring visitors to make a mark on history. Learn more at californiamuseum.org/california-hall-fame and follow #CAHallofFame on social media for updates.

ABOUT ODC

Founded in 1971 by Artistic Director Brenda Way, ODC is a groundbreaking contemporary arts institution: a world-class dance company (ODC/Dance), a theater with year-round presenting and

mentorship programs (ODC Theater), a training school for dancers and movers of all levels (ODC School), and a fee-free, educational Healthy Dancers' Clinic. Known nationally for its entrepreneurial savvy and artistic innovation, ODC is unique for its holistic vision, now including a robust digital platform. With its home in San Francisco's Mission District, ODC makes a dynamic contribution to the Bay Area's vibrant dance and arts ecosystem, cultivating artists, inspiring audiences, engaging the community, and fostering diversity and inclusion through dance performance, training and mentorship.