

Miss Hill

making dance matter

A Documentary by Greg Vander Veer

80 minutes / English / Digital (BluRay) / 2014



FIRST RUN FEATURES

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Synopsis

Miss Hill: Making Dance Matter tells the inspiring and largely unknown story of Martha Hill, a woman whose life was defined by her love for dance, and who successfully fought against great odds to establish modern dance as a legitimate art form in America.

Through archival footage, lively interviews with friends and intimates, and rare footage of the spirited subject, the film explores Hill's arduous path from a Bible Belt childhood in Ohio to the halls of academia at NYU and Bennington College, to a position of power and influence as Juilliard's founding director of dance (1952-1985). Peppared with anecdotal material delivered by dance notables who knew her, this revelatory story depicts her struggles and successes, the film is a celebration of dance and an examination of the passion required to keep it alive.

Production Team

Director Greg Vander Veer's award winning film *Keep Dancing* was an official selection at over 25 international film festivals and was nominated for International Documentary Association's 2010 Distinguished Documentary Award. In 2012, Greg was one of twelve filmmakers chosen as Independent Filmmaker Project's Emerging Vision Fellow and was also selected to participate in the Film Society of Lincoln Center's Artists Academy. He also serves as president of the board of directors for Dance Films Association.

Coordinating Producer Vernon Scott obtained a BFA from Juilliard in 1985, the same year as Martha Hill's last year as director. He danced with many companies, among them Elisa Monte, Steven Petronio, Pilobolus, Lar Lubovitch, Mark Morris and 8 years as dancer and Rehearsal Coordinator with Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project. He has been involved with event production as Director of Development at 360° Dance Company, National Public Relations Manager for Aga Ranges, Venue Manager for Mercedes Benz Fashion Week and currently Special Events Manager at Baryshnikov Arts Center. He serves as president of the board of directors of the Martha Hill Dance Fund.

Editor Elisa Da Prato is a filmmaker exploring music, sex, and science in various incarnations of short form, experimental, documentary, and narrative work. She edited the documentary film *Keep Dancing*, which was featured at several festivals internationally. Her work has screened at various venues in NYC including Invisible Dog Gallery, Issue Project Room, Market Hotel, Zero Film Fest, and has been featured with such outfits as K Records, East Village Radio, La Blogothèque, and Index Magazine.

Cinematographer Peter Eliot Buntaine has worked with a wide range of clients including Maysles Films, New York Opera Society, Toyota, United Nations Foundation, IFC, The World Bank, Avaaz, Jstreet, Timberland, Water for People, and Earth Day Network. He is currently in post-production with his

feature directorial debut, *Church Forest*, as well as contributing, as cinematographer, to three feature documentary films in production or post-production.

Praise for *Miss Hill*

"Illuminating... Defiance [and] tenacity, animated Hill's life, and it drives 'Miss Hill' forward, too. Archival footage distills the essence of a time when American concert dance, like never before, sought to comment on society rather than escape from it; a time when, as the choreographer Bessie Schonberg said, "everything was new." And that's only the first half. We also get a thorough history of the Juilliard dance department, its initially groundbreaking curriculum of warring genres (ballet and modern dance) and its near-demise at the hands of George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein, an episode in which matters of money, power, real estate, politics and national identity collide." - SIOBHAN BURKE, The New York Times

"Wonderful! A complete portrait of this remarkable figure in modern dance history." - StageBuddy

"A treasure trove of images and revealing stories lovingly assembled. It made me miss her all over again." - ArtsJournalBlogs