

White Bird Celebrates Departing Co-Founders

Celebrating 50 years of astounding physicality

On October 4, 2023, White Bird will pay homage to Walter Jaffe and Paul King, who co-founded White Bird, the Portland-based dance presenting organization, in 1997. After 25 years leading the nonprofit, including two years of co-leadership with Executive Director Graham Cole, Jaffe and King have passed sole leadership of the organization on to Cole. Now responsible for the artistic and strategic direction of White Bird, Cole will be stewarding the values Jaffe and King championed throughout their tenure: excellence in performance, dedication to community, and generosity to both artists and audiences.

White Bird's 2023-24 Season will open October 4 at the Ar-



Walter Jaffe and Paul King co founders of White Bird

lene Schnitzer Concert Hall with Pilobolus, the globally renowned dance company now celebrating 50 years of astounding physicality. This evening will mark the final time Jaffe and King appear onstage to deliver their pre-show remarks to the audience.

White Bird's presentation of Pilobolus will be preceded by the Founders Fête, a celebration to be

held at the Portland Art Museum's Fields Sunken Ballroom. The ticketed event will feature entertainment by Co-Hosts Dale Johannes and Poison Waters, a toast and tribute to the Co-Founders, and the return of the White Bird Awards. The Community Award, Angel Award, Lifetime Achievement Award, and Barney Commissioning Prize will be awarded to exceptional dance

artists and supporters for the first time since 2020, as the White Bird Awards were paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. Proceeds from the Founders Fête will benefit new initiatives to sustain White Bird's ongoing contemporary dance programming and continue Jaffe and King's legacy of commissioning new work from pioneering choreographers. White

Bird has commissioned 41 new works since 1997.

Jaffe and King remain involved in vital behind-the-scenes roles, both locally and nationally. The pair serve as Co-Presidents of White Bird's Board of Directors, and continue to share their programming expertise as consultants. Jaffe and King continue their service to the arts in Portland as members of the Portland State University College of the Arts Dean's Council. They serve the American dance field as founders and coordinators of the MOVE FORWARD network, a North American network of presenters fostering the growth of dance presenting within the United States. On September 7, 2023, Jaffe and King will jointly receive the Tim Wilson Distinguished Service Award from the Western Arts Alliance (WAA), the primary professional association dedicated to performing arts in the Western U.S. Named after the longtime Executive Director of WAA, the Distinguished Service Award "recognizes leaders in the touring and presenting field" and is the Alliance's most selective award.

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