

For Immediate Release

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***Mary Day: Grande Dame of Dance in the Nation's Capital*
Wins Silver Medal in 2010 Independent Publisher Book Awards
Best Non-fiction in Mid-Atlantic Region Category**

Washington, DC – May 26, 2010 – A profile of one of America's ballet pioneers, *Mary Day: Grande Dame of Dance in the Nation's Capital*, was recognized with the Silver Medal yesterday, May 25, at the 14th Annual Independent Publisher Book Awards (IPPYs) gala celebration in New York City. Compiled by former Washington Ballet General Director, Elvi Moore, the book was chosen in the regional category, spotlighting the best titles from across North America, judged alongside books about their region. *Mary Day: Grande Dame of Dance in the Nation's Capital* won second place, *Best Non-fiction in the Mid-Atlantic*.

Launched in 1996, the annual competition is open to independent, university and self-published titles, and recognizes excellence in a broad range of subjects from economics to erotica. This year, there were 3,890 entries, and the medalists represent 42 states, the District of Columbia, seven Canadian provinces and six countries overseas.

Mary Day: Grande Dame of Dance in the Nation's Capital gives readers a glimpse into the life of the legendary teacher and mentor who founded The Washington School of Ballet and The Washington Ballet professional company, and gave Washington DC its first full-length ballets in the 1940s and '50s, collaborating with conductor Howard Mitchell and the National Symphony Orchestra. During her remarkable 60-year career, Day also founded the first academy of dance in this country, combining academics with dance training, and taught generations of stars who went on to illustrious careers not only in dance, but in musical theater, film and a myriad other professions. Noted among them are Shirley MacLaine, Georgia Engel, American Ballet Theatre Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie, Artistic Director of Dance Theatre of Harlem Virginia Johnson, and acclaimed dancers, including Amanda McKerrow, the first American to win a Gold Medal at the Moscow Ballet Competition; Marianna Tcherkassky; Patrick Corbin, formerly of Paul Taylor Company; and too many others to mention.

While Moore says Day never wanted her biography written, she felt her legacy should be recorded. This is why she chose to paint Day's life and contributions through the voices of those who knew and worked with her.

Mary Day, only \$19.95, is available via www.thelaurelfund.org, www.amazon.com, Politics and Prose, the Kennedy Center Gift Shop and at The Washington Ballet. All proceeds will benefit the Mary Day Scholarship Fund of The Laurel Fund for the performing arts.