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Hortense Kooluris: In a Dance to the Divine  
A Memorial Tribute at St. Mark's Church  
Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at 6pm

A celebration to honor the art and life of Hortense Kooluris (1914-2007) - and her enduring impact on the legacy of Isadora Duncan will take place on Wednesday, May 21st at 6 P.M. at St. Mark's Church located at 131 East 10th Street on Second Avenue in New York City.

The press remembers Hortense Kooluris as "a gracious goddess," "synonymous with the art of Isadora Duncan." Early in Hortense's career Irma Duncan prophesied that she would be "one of the chosen ones to live and die in Isadora's beautiful art." Kooluris's devoted work inspired a great deal of contemporary interest in Duncan dance. In her memory, Chopin's "Valse Brillante" will be danced by noted soloists Lori Belilove, Jeanne Bresciani, Judith Landon and Adrienne Ramm; and an ensemble of Duncan dancers gathered from around the world will perform a contemporary staging of the "Tanagra" figures to music by Corelli. Family, friends, and dance enthusiasts will reminisce about Hortense's gentle spirit and extraordinary grace and charm. Special guest speaker Madeleine Nichols, Curator Emerita of the Dance Division, The New York Public Library will recall their long acquaintance. Archival photography and film of this great dancer will add a vital dimension to the tribute.

Legendary Gemze de Lappe will be presented The Hortense Kooluris Award for Inspirational Devotion to the Art of the Dance by The Isadora Duncan International Institute.

A reception in the garden of St. Marks's Church will follow.

Hortense Kooluris dedicated her life to the spirit, technique and repertory of Isadora's art, as it was handed down to her by the 'Isadorables' - Irma, Anna and Maria-Theresa Duncan - and by her childhood teachers, Anita Zahn and Erna Lane of The Elizabeth Duncan School. Kooluris began her career in the late 1920's at age fifteen, the youngest member of The Irma Duncan Dancers. Appearances included those with The New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall and at Madison Square Garden with Walter Damrosch conducting, with The Philadelphia Symphony and The Minneapolis Symphony and for the Sociedad Pro-Arte Musicale in Havana. In subsequent years, Kooluris not only performed but also trained today's outstanding Duncan soloists, introducing them to the public by founding The Isadora Duncan Centenary Company with Julia Levien, a colleague from The Irma Duncan Dancers. The resulting resurgence of interest in Isadora found Kooluris staging the Duncan portion of Agnes De Mille's "Conversations about the Dance." Kooluris performed in this concert program along with Gemze de Lappe and the Joffrey Ballet. While in her seventies, she staged and performed to critical acclaim several of Isadora's rarely seen ensemble works for The Downtown Dance Festival before The World Trade Center Towers; and also performed and participated with Carolyn Brown and Sara Rudner in the symposium "Decision-Making Dancers" at Movement Research, New York City. Kooluris performed, taught master classes and lectured in Athens, Tokyo, Toronto and Paris, as well as colleges and universities, such as New York University, Rutgers University and Smith College. Her photograph graces the cover of The Smithsonian publication, Isadora Duncan: The Dances by Nadia Chilkovsky Nahumck. A collection of video- tapes, films and published articles about her can be seen at The Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center.

Photos available upon request.