

Ontario

Toronto dancer named to Order of Canada

Peggy Baker still on creative wave

Suzuki promoted to Companion

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STAFF REPORTER

Canada's queen of contemporary dance, on the eve of her latest Toronto show, has been named to the Order of Canada.

Peggy Baker, 53, opens *the heart moves* Thursday for a four-day run with guest dancer Larry Hahn at the Betty Oliphant Theatre.

"I'm totally thrilled," she said of the award by phone from the rehearsal studio yesterday. "I'm still deeply engaged in my creative life right now. It's not something in the past for me. . . .

"In a broader sense, (the award) signifies to me a regard for our own cultural voice and

the importance of the work that's being created in this country."

Baker began her professional career in 1974 as a founding member and later artistic director of the Toronto company Dancemakers. In 1990, she joined Mikhail Baryshnikov and Mark Morris for the inaugural season of their *White Oak Dance Project*, and went solo the same

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year.

She is among 56 appointments named on the weekend to the country's highest honour for lifetime achievement.

Another is American-born Salome Bey, who appears in the honorary member category for

non-Canadians. She first performed in Toronto in 1961 and settled in the city in 1966, singing jazz, blues and spirituals in nightclubs and on radio and television.

Other Toronto luminaries named with Baker as members of the order are: defence lawyer Clayton Ruby; York University president Lorna Marsden; playwright George F. Walker and publisher Louise Denys.

Named to the list as officers of the order are: *Paris 1919* author Margaret Macmillan and Onex Corp. founder Gerald Schwartz.

Public servant Bernard Ostry and environmentalist David Suzuki were promoted within the order to Companion status.

The awards are to be presented by Governor General Michaëlle Jean on an unspecified date in Ottawa.