

Henry LeTang... My Teacher...My Friend

By Debbi Dee



The dance community has lost a legend in tap on April 26th, 2007. Henry LeTang was the master of his craft and devoted his life to teaching and creating choreography for stage and screen.

I could never begin to tell you the entire contribution he has made in his career, I will leave that to the many tributes that will follow, but I can share with you what he meant to me.

I met Henry over thirty five years ago. I was a dance teacher and studio owner who was attending a seminar where he was teaching. After seeing my students dance Henry asked to meet me. After seeing me dance, he invited me to his studio and that was the beginning of many life lessons I learned from this amazing man.

As a teacher, Henry taught me many things. It was not just about the steps, but it was about the consistency of a step and the articulation of a step.

As a performer, Henry taught me about loving what your doing and how to present myself to an audience. I was in numerous shows that he choreographed, those memories to me are priceless. We choreographed my night club act together and I assisted him on numerous projects, it was during this time I learned the "art" of choreography and the substance of a complete piece.

I had the privilege of teaching in New York at Henry's studio. I remember one time when Henry referred to me as one of his protégées. I didn't take this title lightly. The legacy that he leaves behind will live forever. As a teacher, Henry had thousands of students and he had "many" protégées. We are in a special group of people that know truly what an honor that is.

I will miss my friend most of all and our late night talks. As a friend, Henry over the past 35 years taught me about embracing life and family. I will try to continue to do justice to his legacy. ■

The Dancing Man

By Debbi Dee in Honor of Henry LeTang

*The curtain goes up.
The lights shine from above.
The piano starts to play.
As heaven opens its door to welcome another angel.
Our dancing man has been called home.*

*The teacher that gave so much.
The man who shared his talent with so many.
The master who captured magic.
This dancing man will be remembered for the gifts that he
gave to us all.*

*The rhythm of his creations will be in our souls.
His routines will live in our hearts.
His smile will be remembered through our eyes,
As this dancing man moves on to his next chapter.*

*His imagination will be preserved.
His lessons will be forever treasured.
His steps will live for generations.
As this dancing man is welcomed into the clouds above.*

*For all the aching feet...we thank you.
For all the "one more times"...we thank you.
For all the memories...we thank you.*

Henry LeTang:

*The man
The husband
The father
The teacher
The mentor
The creator
The friend...we thank you*

Goodbye dear friend.