

Athlete
+ Dancer
Transitions

LEAP

For Immediate Release

TORONTO (July 11, 2016) - Leading Edge After Performance (LEAP) is thrilled to announce that celebrated **dance artist Peggy Baker** and **Olympic champion Mark Tewksbury**, will be guest speakers at *LEAP Together: Career and Life Transitions in Dance and Sport*. This groundbreaking conference in athlete and dancer transition, will be held November 11-12, 2016 in Toronto. LEAP is honoured to present these two eminent Canadians who are leaders within the fields of dance and sport.

Peggy Baker C.M. LL.D., D.Litt, O.Ont, has been a vivid presence in contemporary dance for more than four decades, performing internationally in the work of Lar Lubovitch, Mark Morris (with Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project), Doug Varone, Tere O'Connor, Molissa Fenley, Charles Moulton (New York City), Fortier Danse-Creation (Montreal), Dancemakers and Toronto Dance Theatre. She established Peggy Baker Dance Projects in Toronto in 1990, the first 20 years of which she dedicated to her solo performances, winning rapturous praise for the eloquence and depth of her dancing, and garnering accolades for her collaborative partnerships with extraordinary choreographers, directors, musicians, and designers.

Among her many honours are the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Arts, The Governor General's Award, the Walter Carsen Prize, the George Luscombe Award for Mentorship, and five Dora Mavor Moore Awards. Ms. Baker is Artist-in-Residence at Canada's National Ballet School.

Mark Tewksbury burst onto the international scene in 1992 following a gold medal victory in the 100-metre backstroke at the Barcelona Olympic Games, capping a remarkable 16-year athletic career which included three Olympic medals, seven world records, a cover appearance on TIME Magazine and inductions into three major Halls of Fame.

Today Mark is recognized as a leader of social change. Author of three books, including *Inside Out: Straight Talk from a Gay Jock*, Tewksbury is one of the few openly gay Olympic champions in the world. In 1999, Mark co-founded OATH to take a difficult but necessary step to hold the International Olympic Committee accountable to its own ideals. In the decade that followed, Mark was the emcee for many of the Dalai Lama's Canadian appearances, was invited by the Government of France to address human rights issues at the United Nations in New York City, and in 2012 was the *Chef de mission* for the Canadian Olympic team competing in London. He currently sits on the Board of Directors for Special Olympics Canada, is an Ambassador for the Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research, and was recently awarded an honorary doctorate of Laws from the University of Western Ontario and the University of Calgary for his active humanitarianism and ethical leadership.

Registration is now open for **LEAP Together - Career and Life Transitions in Dance and Sport**. The two-day international conference will be held in Downtown Toronto on November 11 and 12, 2016 at St. James Cathedral Centre.

Further announcements regarding speakers and sessions will be made in the coming weeks. For more information and to register, please click here: <http://www.leaptransition.ca/2016-conference/>

About LEAP

Leading Edge After Performance (LEAP) is an innovative initiative bringing the dance and sport communities together in a collaborative partnership to explore career and life transition issues specific to their unique constituents: high performance athletes and professional dancers. LEAP is a pioneering partnership between Dancer Transition Resource Centre (DTRC) and Canadian Sport Institute Ontario (CSIO). LEAP is funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. www.leaptransition.ca

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