



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 28, 2012

LA Contact: Meiko Patton
meiko.s.patton@usps.gov
858.674.2676

DC Contact: Laura Dvorak
laura.s.dvorak@usps.gov
202.636.1270

National Contact: Sue Brennan
sue.brennan@usps.gov
202.268.6363

usps.com/news

Release No. 12-089



New Stamps Debut on the National Stage

Postal Service Honors Innovative Choreographers on National Dance Day



LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Postal Service paid tribute today — on National Dance Day — to four influential choreographers who forever changed the art of dance in this country and around the world: Isadora Duncan, José Limón, Katherine Dunham and Bob Fosse.

The Innovative Choreographers stamps were dedicated at Los Angeles County’s Grand Park, as part of the West coast’s flagship National Dance Day Celebration, by Nigel Lythgoe, executive producer and co-creator of “So You Think You Can Dance” (SYTYCD), the FOX prime-time dance reality show, and Ruth Goldway, chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC).

“I want to thank the U.S. Postal Service for creating such beautiful stamps honoring these four legendary choreographers and for issuing them on National Dance Day,” said Lythgoe. “I hope these stamps serve not only to educate people about the art of dance and its history, but also to motivate them to dance themselves.”

Designed to look like posters advertising a performance, the colorful stamps capture the art of the individual dance styles. Art director Ethel Kessler designed the stamps using illustrations by James McMullan, widely known for his work for Lincoln Center Theater in New York City.

“Together, the PRC and the Postal Service believe these stamps will serve as a reminder of the achievements made by these truly innovative choreographers,” said Goldway. “We hope more people will learn about the incredible contributions they made and their enduring legacies.”

National Dance Day was originally conceived by Lythgoe and was acknowledged by Congress in 2010. It is a nationwide grassroots initiative designed to promote the joy and benefits of dance for everyone.

At the same time on the National Mall in Washington, Lauren Froderman, SYTYCD season seven winner, and acting-Postmaster for Washington, DC, Delores Shearin-Lyle, joined Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton in an East coast National Dance Day event which featured the unveiling of the stamp image.

A postmark commemorating the Innovative Choreographers stamps and paying tribute to dance, will cancel First-Class postage stamps on letters and postcards nationwide from Saturday, July 28 through Friday, Aug. 31. The postmark image features the words "Just Dance" below three silhouetted dancers.

The Innovative Choreographers stamps are being issued as Forever stamps in self-adhesive sheets of 20 (5 of each design). Forever stamps are always equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce rate in effect at the time of mailing.

The Postal Service has paid tribute to the art of dance five previous times: American Dance (1978, Ballet, Theater, Folk, Modern); American Indian Dances (1996, Fancy Dance, Butterfly Dance, Traditional Dance, Raven Dance, Hoop Dance); Ballet (1998); American Choreographers (2004, Martha Graham, Alvin Ailey, Agnes de Mille, George Balanchine); and Let's Dance (2005, Merengue, Salsa, Cha Cha, Mambo).

Isadora Duncan (1877-1927) Dancer, adventurer, revolutionary and ardent defender of the poetic spirit, Duncan has been one of the most enduring influences on contemporary culture. Virtually single-handedly, Duncan restored dance to a high place among the arts. Breaking with convention, she traced the art of dance back to its roots as a sacred art. Duncan is credited with inventing what later came to be known as Modern Dance. The image on the stamp reflects Duncan's interest in classical Greek dance.

José Limón (1908-1972) José Limón was born in Culiacán, Mexico. At age 7, he moved to the United States, where he later studied with Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman and danced with their company (1930-1940). He established his own company in 1947, with Humphrey as artistic director. The company toured worldwide during Limón's life and remained active after his death. On the stamp image, Limón is shown in a performance pose.

Katherine Dunham (1909-2006) Katherine Dunham became one of the first African-American women to attend the University of Chicago, where she earned a doctoral degree in anthropology. She was a pioneer in the use of folk and ethnic choreography and one of the founders of the anthropological dance movement. She is credited for bringing Caribbean and African influences to a European-dominated dance world. On the stamp image, Dunham is shown in a pose from her critically acclaimed ballet "L'Ag'Ya."

Bob Fosse (1927-1987) Bob Fosse was one of the 20th century's great choreographers. As an artist, Fosse was known for his thoroughly modern style, a signature one could never mistake for anyone else's. Snapping fingers are omnipresent, so are rakishly tilted bowler hats. Both hip and shoulder rolls appear frequently, as do backward exits. Swiveling hips and strutting predominate, as do white-gloved, single-handed gestures. The image on the stamp portrays Fosse on the set of "Sweet Charity."

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at Post Offices, at The Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop, or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in larger envelopes addressed to: Innovative Choreographers Stamps, Los Angeles District, 7001 S. Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90052-9998. After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by Sept. 28, 2012.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and postal stationery items post-marked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic Catalog*.

Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP-24 or writing to: U.S. Postal Service Catalog Request, PO Box 219014, Kansas City, MO 64121-9014.

Philatelic Products

There are seven philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

469163 First Day Cover (Set of 4)	\$ 3.56
469168 Digital Color Postmark First Day Covers (Set of 4)	\$ 6.40
469172 A Century of Dance (32-page soft-cover book)	\$15.95
469184 Uncut Press Sheet	\$81.00
469191 Ceremony Program (Random Single)	\$ 6.95
469197 Commemorative Stamp Panel	\$ 9.95
469199 Cancellation Keepsake (Set of 4 Covers w/Pane)	\$15.95

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

#

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at <http://about.usps.com/news/welcome.htm>.

For reporters interested in speaking with a regional Postal Service public relations professional, please go to <http://about.usps.com/news/media-contacts/usps-local-media-contacts.pdf>.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 151 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, usps.com, the Postal Service has annual revenue of \$66 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500. In 2011, the U.S. Postal Service was ranked number one in overall service performance, out of the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world, Oxford Strategic Consulting. Black Enterprise and Hispanic Business magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

Follow the Postal Service on Twitter @USPS_PR and at [Facebook.com/usps](https://www.facebook.com/usps)