

MARTHA GRAHAM TECHNIQUE: KENNETH TOPPING

Kenneth Topping, a native of Boston, MA, received a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Skidmore College, where he began his dance training under the supervision of Moss Cohen. After graduating in 1984, Mr. Topping moved to New York City and became a member of the Martha Graham Dance Ensemble under the direction of Yuriko. In 1985 he was invited to join the Martha Graham Dance Company. In 1990 Mr. Topping was promoted to principal dancer status. Under Ms. Graham's direction, Mr. Topping was given the opportunity to dance many of the leading male roles in the repertory including the Minotaur in *Errand into the Maze*, Hippolytus in *Phaedra*, Adam in *Embattled Garden*, the revivalist in *Appalachian Spring*, Oedipus in *Night Journey*, Orestes in *Clytemnestra*, among others. In 1990 Ms. Graham invited him as part of a small group of Company members to participate in the creation of what became Martha Graham's last ballet: *Eyes of the Goddess*. It was a work about an individual's confrontation with death. In 1993, Mr. Topping ventured off-Broadway to co-direct and choreograph the 50 year revival of the musical play "Dark of the Moon". Two years later he moved to Holland for one year where he taught Graham-based modern dance and choreographed at the Rotterdam Dance Academy. After returning to the United States, he was invited to dance Maurice Bejart's original role of "Faust" in an excerpted duet from Mr. Bejart's 1967 ballet. In 1996 while continuing to dance part-time with the Martha Graham Dance Company, Mr. Topping was appointed Artistic Director of the Martha Graham Ensemble (now Graham 2). From 2001-2004 he was Director of the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance. He retired from his three positions – dancer, director of the school, and artistic director of the Ensemble – in 2004. In his current position as Regisseur of the Martha Graham Dance Company, he assists in Company rehearsals and restaging. In 2014 he assisted Denise Vale, Associate Artistic Director of the Martha Graham Dance Company, in the 20 year revival of Martha Graham's *The Rite of Spring* for the company's New York Season. Mr. Topping continues teaching dance in the U.S. and internationally. In addition, he teaches Pilates in New York City.