

THE BESSIES ANNOUNCE 2014 RECIPIENTS OF NEW YORK DANCE AND PERFORMANCE AWARDS

Tuesday, October 21, 2014



NEW YORK, October 20, 2014 – [The New York Dance and Performance Awards \(The Bessies\)](#), NYC's premier dance awards honoring outstanding creative work in the field, announced tonight the complete list of 2013-14 season award recipients. The Bessies, produced in partnership with Dance/NYC, were held at the legendary Apollo Theater at 7:30 p.m., following red carpet interviews and photographs with the nominees in attendance. NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray gave opening remarks, and Lisa Kron, whose hit musical *Fun Home* will make its Broadway debut this year, hosted the evening.

Performances represented the past three decades of Bessie-recognized work, including Megan Williams in Mark Morris' *Bijoux*, *Shelter* from the early work of Urban Bush Women, Jennifer Miller and Jennie Romaine's *Circus Amok*, and Michelle Dorrance's *Three to One*.

Virginia Johnson, current Artistic Director of Dance Theatre of Harlem, along with the great Jessye Norman, presented Arthur Mitchell with the Lifetime Achievement award. Mikki Shepard, the original producer of the first *DanceAfrica!* at BAM, presented Dr. Chuck Davis with the Service to the Field award. Other presenters included Robert Battle, Faye Driscoll, Megan Fairchild, Karen Finley, Crazy Legs, Tere O'Connor, Jessye Norman, Omagbitse Omagbemi, Miki Orihara, Annie B-Parson, Lenny Pickett, Ken Swift and Wendy Whelan.

The 13 award recipients announced this evening at the Apollo are as follows:

Juried Bessie Award: Gerard and Kelly, for the inspired use of a simple score of movement and text to create mesmerizing and moving duets in *Timelining*, and for bringing a fierce and rigorous intelligence to their work that never loses touch with the heart at its center.

Outstanding Production: John Jasperse's *Within between* at New York Live Arts, for a feast of unpredictable kinetic imagination shaped by a sequence of dazzling light and soundscapes.

Also for **Outstanding Production:** Okwui Okpokwasili in collaboration with Peter Born for *Bronx Gothic* at Danspace Project, for creating a world within a world in which she embodied the fear, clarity and intelligence of a young girl; using text and movement to make public that which is intensely private.

Also for **Outstanding Production:** Camille A. Brown's Mr. Tol E. RAnCE produced by 651 Arts at Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts, for using the American vernacular dance forms of jazz, tap, and hip hop mixed with pop culture references and African-American stereotypes to question herself and her audience.

Also for **Outstanding Production:** Akram Khan's Desh at Lincoln Center's White Light Festival, for bringing a swath of Bangladeshi culture to life with a shape-shifting performance danced within a magical set that conjured a world of flora and fauna from muslin, movement, and light.

Outstanding Revival: Nora Chipaumire's Dark Swan performed by Urban Bush Women at The Joyce, for re-imagining a severe and beautiful solo into an expanded emotional force field performed by nine powerful women.

Outstanding Performance: Stuart Singer in John Jasperse's Within between at New York Live Arts, for a forceful grace capable of both commanding space and rendering delicate physical details with astonishing dynamic clarity.

Also for **Outstanding Performance:** Rebecca Serrell Cyr in Donna Uchizono's Fire Underground at New York Live Arts, for a mesmerizing performance demanding precision, control, and a remarkable range of intense emotions and providing the strong quiet center around which the narrative of the piece revolves.

Also for **Outstanding Performance:** Linda Celeste Sims, a major contributor for nearly two decades to the work of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, for being an expert interpreter of a vast range of styles who goes to the heart of choreographers' visions and crafts countless tour-de-force performances.

Also for **Outstanding Performance:** Aakash Odedra in James Brown: Get on the Good Foot – a Celebration in Dance at the Apollo Theater, for a dynamically fluid translation of James Brown's rhythms into kathak and bharata natyam expressions, turning traditional styles into original, contemporary, and captivating performance.

Outstanding Music Composition: Simphiwe Dana with Giuliano Modarelli, and Complete Quartet for Exit/Exist, choreographed by Gregory Maqoma and produced by 651 Arts at Kumble Theater for the Performing Art, for a tightly woven musical score, combining subtle guitar and traditional South African a capella choir singing, which movingly portrayed the struggle to maintain tradition in the face of colonialism.

Also for **Outstanding Music Composition:** Nicholas Young at American Tap Dance Foundation's Rhythm in Motion, for inventive percussion platforms integrating the tap dancer's traditional hardwood floor with electronic sound technology to allow for a deeply layered, live composition.

Outstanding Visual Design: Peter Ksander, Olivera Gajic, Ryan Holsopple, Chris Kuhl, and Keith Skretch, for a theater set seamlessly doubled by video projections, echoing the role of memory with its odd tricks and resurrections in the profoundly unified and moving production of This Was the End by Mallory Catlett.