

LUCY SEXTON RESPONDS TO GIA KOURLAS

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In Gia Kourlas's column on the changes in the New York Dance and Performance Awards, also known as the Bessies, [["Classifications in the Science of an Art," Aug. 12](#)], she takes issue with the subcommittees within the selection committee charged with looking at work in different areas of New York City's diverse dance landscape. Ms. Kourlas rather inexplicably concludes that "there seems to be more attention focused on raising the profile of the Bessies than on artistic achievement."

The committee was increased to 41 members from 15, so there are more eyes looking at more dance. The members work in subcommittees, so there can be more rigorous considerations of specific areas of dance. The result is that artistic achievement is more central. Clearly, raising the Bessies' profile ensures the artistic achievement recognized gets broader visibility.

The Bessies and its partner, Dance/NYC, introduced the new structure to make clear to a wider audience the spectrum of work being considered. It is a step in our efforts to, as Ms. Kourlas writes, "make the world care about dance."

LUCY SEXTON
Director, New York Dance and Performance Awards

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