

THE BESSIES ANNOUNCES ELIZABETH STREB AS HOST, LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT TO PAUL TAYLOR, AND SERVICE TO THE FIELD TO ALICE TEIRSTEIN

Thursday, September 27, 2012

The Bessies Announces Elizabeth Streb as Host, Lifetime Achievement to Paul Taylor, and Service to the Field to Alice Teirstein

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The New York Dance and Performance Awards
Produced in partnership with [Dance/NYC](#)

September 25, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Bessie Awards Announces 2012 Host
Elizabeth Streb

Bessies award presenters will include Marina Abramovic, Luciana Acuña, Ronald K. Brown, Brenda Bufalino, Archie Burnett, Kevin McKenzie, Bebe Neuwirth, Charles Reinhart, Rokafella, Stuart Hodes, David Thomson, and Wendy Whelan, among others.

Paul Taylor Receives
2012 Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance

Alice Teirstein Honored with
2012 Bessie Award for Service to the Field of Dance

Trisha Brown Company and Souleymane Badolo to perform at the ceremony

The Bessies are produced in partnership with [Dance/NYC](#).

Apollo Theater
253 W 125th Street NYC

Monday October 15th, 2012
Doors open at 7 pm, Award ceremony at 8pm
Food and drink available in the theater

Tickets \$10
Available at the Apollo box office and at www.apollotheater.org
2012 Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance

The Bessie Selection Committee is thrilled to honor Paul Taylor with the 2012 Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance. For nearly six decades Taylor has been inventing movement and creating dances which delight and challenge the audience. Starting in 1954, Taylor was one of the early radicals reimagining the ways that one might use dance to communicate ideas. The Bessies salute him as a pioneer who helped reshape the landscape of American dance.

BIO: Considered the "last living member of the pantheon that created America's indigenous art of modern dance," Paul Taylor has worked closely with such outstanding artists as Martha Graham, George Balanchine, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Ellsworth Kelly, Alex Katz, Tharon Musser, Thomas Skelton, Gene Moore, John Rawlings, William Ivey Long, Jennifer Tipton, Santo Loquasto and Matthew Diamond. His many works are performed by the world-renowned Paul Taylor Dance Company and ballet companies throughout the world.

2012 Bessie Award for Service to the Field of Dance
The Bessie Selection Committee has chosen Alice Teirstein as the recipient of this year's award for service to the field. Teirstein's work with young dancers in New York City has changed countless lives and given generations of young people the ability to express themselves through dance and choreography. She believes in their abilities to create and compose, and offers high school students from across the city the opportunity to choreograph and perform their work via her Young Dancemakers Company. All of us working in dance in NY owe her a great debt of gratitude.

BIO: Alice Teirstein is the Founding Director of the Young Dancemakers Company. She has been choreographing, performing, and teaching dance in New York since the early 1970's, and has nurtured creative work from generations of teenagers. Among her many achievements, Ms. Teirstein designed, initiated and developed the dance curriculum for grades 7-12 at the Fieldston School, where she served on the faculty for over 3 decades, leading the dance program and directing its Touring Fieldston Dance Company. She initiated the dance program's Dance Out Project, bringing her students into the city's homeless shelters where they served as group leaders in dance workshops with homeless youngsters, for which she received an award from the city's Human Resources Administration. She also brought the Dance Out Project to public schools in the South Bronx, and designed and directed the Fieldston Summer Performing Arts Institute, an intensive dance, theater and music program for teens, offered for ten summers.

BESSIE AWARDS PROGRAM 2012
Presented in partnership with Dance/NYC
Monday October 15th at 8pm

Elizabeth Streb will host the 2012 Bessie Awards.

Bessies award presenters will include Marina Abramovic, Luciana Acuña, Ron Brown, Brenda Bufalino, Archie Burnett, Kevin McKenzie, Bebe Neuwirth, Charles Reinhart, Rokafella, Stuart Hodes, David Thomson, and Wendy Whelan, among others.

The Bessies will also feature live performances by the Trisha Brown Company, recipient of last year's Bessie for Lifetime Achievement, and Souleymane Badolo, the 2012 recipient of the Juried Bessie Award, known for his contemporary interpretations of traditional African dance.

The Bessies will take place on Monday, October 15, 2012 at 8:00pm at the legendary Apollo Theater in New York City. The 2012 ceremony will mark The Bessie Awards' second year at the Apollo Theater.

Elizabeth Streb BIO: Once called the Evel Knievel of dance, Elizabeth Streb's choreography, which she calls "POPACTION," intertwines the disciplines of dance, athletics, boxing, rodeo, the circus, and Hollywood stunt-work. The result is a bristling, muscle-and-motion vocabulary that combines daring with strict precision in pursuit of public acts of "pure movement." In 2003, she established S.L.A.M. (STREB Lab for Action Mechanics) in Brooklyn, NY. S.L.A.M.'s garage doors are always open for the community to come in and watch rehearsals, take classes, and learn to fly. In 2011, Streb was commissioned by the London Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Mayor of London to participate in the London 2012 Festival.

About the Bessie Awards

The mission of the Bessie Awards is to gather the city's many dance communities, to honor outstanding work in the field of dance, and to advocate on the national and international stage for the extraordinary range of dance being performed in New York.

Established in 1983 by David White at Dance Theater Workshop, the New York Dance and Performance Awards or Bessie Awards---named in honor of the treasured dancer and teacher Bessie Schonberg--- acknowledge outstanding creative work by independent artists in the fields of dance and related performance in New York City. They honor exceptional choreography, performance, music composition, visual design and others areas of dance and performance. The award recipients are chosen by The Bessie Selection Committee, which consists of artists, dance presenters, producers, journalists, critics and academics.

Director

Lucy Sexton is the independent producer of the Bessie Awards. A choreographer, director, and producer, she has worked in the field of dance and performance for more than 25 years. Highlights include creating the dance performance duo DANCENOISE, directing the off-Broadway play Spalding Gray; *Stories Left to Tell*, and producing *TURNING* a film about Antony and the Johnsons by Antony and Charles Atlas, and *The Legend of Leigh Bowery* directed by Charles Atlas. Please contact her with any questions about The Bessie Awards: thebessies@gmail.com.

The Bessie Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is responsible for setting policy and providing oversight of the Bessie Awards throughout the year.

Chair:

Lane Harwell became director of Dance/NYC in September, 2010. Prior to joining Dance/NYC, he was the director of development at New York's arts-wide advocacy group, the Alliance for the Arts. His lifelong history in the arts also includes training at the School of American Ballet, a performance career with American Ballet Theatre Studio Company, and management experience in diverse theater and service contexts. Lane attended the Professional Children's School while performing with ABT. He holds a BA in Philosophy from Princeton University, an MA in Performance Studies from the University of California at Berkeley, and an MBA at Columbia Business School. Lane chairs the Steering Committee for the New York Dance and Performance Awards (aka the Bessie Awards). He is also a member of the Steering Committee for the New York City Arts Coalition and of the Policy Leadership Circle for the Cultural Strategies Initiative.

Steering Committee:

Cora Cahan (President, The New 42nd Street), Judy Hussie-Taylor (Artistic Director, Danspace Project), Carla Peterson (Artistic Director, New York Live Arts), Elizabeth Streb (Artistic Director, Streb Extreme Action), Martin Wechsler (Director of Programming, Joyce Theater), Reggie Wilson (Choreographer, Artistic Director, Fist and Heel Performance Group), Beverly D'Anne (From 1980-2011, Director of Dance Program, New York State Council on the Arts), and Laurie Uprichard (Independent Producer and Curator).

The Bessie Selection Committee:

Responsible for choosing work to be awarded from the 2011-2012 season. A complete list of selection committee members can be found online at: <http://www.dancenyc.org/bessies/committee.php>

Final Works for Each 2012 Bessie Award Category

Bessie nominees in each category:

Outstanding Production (of a work performed in a larger capacity venue of more than 400 seats):

- Event* by Merce Cunningham, performed at the Park Avenue Armory
- Preludes and Fugues* by Emanuel Gat, performed by Ballet du Grand Theatre de Geneve at The Joyce Theater
- Samhara* by Surupa Sen performed by the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble at The Joyce Theater

Outstanding Production (of a work that stretches the boundaries of a culturally specific form):

- La Edad de Oro* by Israel Galvan, performed at The Joyce Theater
- Dingle Diwali* by the Darrah Carr Dance Company with guest choreographer Sean Curran performed at Symphony Space
- Jazz Meets Flamenco* by Juan de Juan and Jason Samuels Smith, performed at Jazz at Lincoln Center

Outstanding Production (of a work performed in a smaller capacity venue of less than 400 seats):

- Twin Pines* by Keely Garfield, performed at Danspace Project
- NOX* by Rashaun Mitchell performed at Danspace Project
- Antigone Sr./Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at the Judson Church* by Trajal Harrell, performed at New York Live Arts

Outstanding Production in the expanding field of contemporary arts, dance, and performance practice:

- The Rehearsal* by Cuqui Jerez, performed at Performance Space 122, and the French Institute's Crossing the Line Festival at the Performing Garage
- Big Girls Do Big Things* by Eleanor Bauer, performed in Perfoma 11 at New York Live Arts, and in American Realness at Abrons Arts Center
- The Thank-you Bar* by Emily Johnson, performed at New York Live Arts

Outstanding Revived Work:

- Fort Blossom revisited (2000/2012)* by John Jasperse, performed at New York Live Arts
- The Shining* by Yvonne Meier, presented by New York Live Arts, performed at The Invisible Dog Art Center
- Roaratorio* by Merce Cunningham, performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music

Outstanding Visual Design:

- Wendall Harrington and Simon Pastukh, for set and projection design for *Firebird* by Alexei Ratmanský performed by American Ballet Theatre
- Company XIV, for light, set and costume design, for *Snow White* by Company XIV performed at 303 Bond Street
- Doris Dzersk, for set design for *Blessed* by Meg Stuart, performed at New York Live Arts
- Christine Shallenberg, for lighting design for *Restless Eye* by David Neumann, performed at New York Live Arts

Outstanding Sound Design or Composition:

- Alex Waterman for *Show* by Maria Hassabi performed at the Kitchen
- Christian Wolff, John King, David Behrman, and Takehisa Kosugi for *Event* by Merce Cunningham performed at the Park Avenue Armory
- Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi, Dhaneswar Swain, Prasanna Rupatilake, and Surupa Sen for *Samhara* by Surupa Sen performed by Nrityagram Dance Ensemble at The Joyce Theater
- Flamme Kapaya and band for *more more more . . . future*, by Faustin Linkyékula, performed at the Kitchen in the French Institute's Crossing the Line Festival

Outstanding Emerging Choreographer:

- Jennifer Weber and DECADANCE colleagues for *DECA* performed at Joyce Soho
- Liz Santoro for *We Do Our Best* performed at Danspace Project
- Lee Sher and Saar Harari for *Fame* performed at Montclair State University
- Rashaun Mitchell for *NOX* performed at Danspace Project

Outstanding Performer (nominated by the committee looking at work performed in a larger capacity venue of more than 400 seats):

- Shantala Shivalingappa in *Swayambhu* by Shantala Shivalingappa performed in World Music Institute at the Skirball Center for the Performing Arts
- Silas Riener in *Split Sides* by Merce Cunningham at the Brooklyn Academy of Music
- David Hallberg for his work with The Bolshoi Ballet and American Ballet Theatre

Outstanding Performer (nominated by the committee looking at work that stretches the boundaries of a culturally specific form):

- Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards for sustained achievement in performance, and her work with Jason Samuels Smith at the Joyce Theater
- Gianne Abbott in *Brazil! Brazil!* performed at the New Victory Theater
- Jessica Alejandra Wyatt in *Asuka* by Eduardo Vilario, performed by Ballet Hispanico at the Apollo Theater and at The Joyce Theater

Outstanding Performer (nominated by the committee looking at work performed in a smaller capacity venue of less than 400 seats):

- Omagbitse Omagbemi for sustained achievement in the works of Keely Garfield, Ralph Lemon, David Gordon, Urban Bush Women, and many others
- Ryoji Sasamoto in *Glowing* by Kota Yamazaki, performed at the Japan Society
- Silas Riener for sustained achievement in the works of Merce Cunningham and in *NOX* by Rashaun Mitchell

Outstanding Performer (nominated by the committee looking at work at the performance end of the dance spectrum):

- John Fleck in *Mad Women* by John Fleck, performed at La MaMa
- Emily Wexler in *Mad Heidi* by Yvonne Meier, performed in American Realness at Abrons Arts Center
- Nicole Mannarino in *Devotion Study #1* by Sarah Michelson performed at the Whitney Museum

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