

2016 BESSIE NOMINEES ANNOUNCED

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New York, NY, July 13, 2016 – The NY Dance and Performance Awards, The Bessies, New York City's premier dance awards honoring outstanding creative work in the field, today announced the nominees for the 2015–16 season at a press conference. The 38 nominees were selected by the Bessie Awards Selection Committee, an independent committee of 40 dance industry professionals. Produced in partnership with Dance/NYC, Bessie Award categories include Outstanding Production, Outstanding Revival, Outstanding Performer, Outstanding Music Composition or Sound Design, and Outstanding Visual Design. The list of nominations follows.

The [32nd annual Bessie Awards](#), presented in association with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, will take place on Tuesday, October 18, 2016, at 7:30pm, at BAM Howard Gilman Opera House. "After five glorious years at the Apollo, we are thrilled to be bringing the awards to BAM's historic opera house," says Lucy Sexton, Executive Director of the Bessies. "It is in some sense a homecoming—BAM hosted the awards from 1985 to 1990—and it is especially meaningful as Brooklyn is home to so many artists."

Three 2016 awards were presented at the press conference. The Outstanding Emerging Choreographer Award was presented to Joya Powell for her passionate choreographic engagement with issues of justice and race in our communities and our country; for connecting with the audience in ways that make it clear that these concerns belong to all of us—and action is required.

The award for Outstanding Revival was given to Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder, choreographed by Donald McKayle. Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder was recognized for giving a classic modern dance new and powerful life, transforming the midcentury portrayal of an African American prison chain gang into a searingly resonant cry for our current times, performed with humanity, craft, and beauty by the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, produced by Paul Taylor's American Modern Dance as part of its 2016 season at the David H. Koch Theater.

This year's Bessie Jury—Yoshiko Chuma, Liz Gerring, and Bill T. Jones—named Pam Tanowitz the recipient of the 2016 Juried Bessie Award. Tanowitz was recognized for using form and structure as a vehicle for challenging audiences to think, to feel, to experience movement; for pursuing her uniquely poetic and theatrical vision with astounding rigor and focus.

About the Juried Bessie Award: A new panel of three acclaimed choreographers is convened each year. The Bessie Jury is responsible for selecting a choreographer who exhibits some of the most interesting and exciting ideas in dance in New York City today. The award provides the honored dance maker with touring and residency opportunities outside of New York City through a partnership with the New York State DanceForce, a statewide network of arts organizers and presenters. Legendary dance manager Ivan Sygoda works with the Juried Award recipient for a year, helping to book and manage the touring and residencies.

The 2016 Bessie Awards Steering Committee, responsible for setting policy and providing oversight of the Bessie Awards throughout the year, is comprised of Cora Cahan, Beverly D'Anne, Lane Harwell, Jeanne Linnes, Stanford Makishi, Nicky Paraiso, Carla Peterson, Tamia B. Santana, Laurie Uprichard, and Martin Wechsler.

The 2015–16 Bessie Awards Selection Committee consists of Diana Byer, Kim Chan, Leah Cox, Nancy Dalva, Maura Donohue, Simon Dove, Angel Feliciano, Boo Froebel, Angela Fatou Gittens, Caleb Hammons, Zhenesse Heinemann, Jerron Herman, Irène Hultman, Robert LaFosse, Melissa Levin, Matthew Lyons, Harold Norris, Craig Peterson, Mathew Pokoik, Rajika Puri, Susan Reiter, Walter Rutledge, Sue Samuels, Philip Sandstrom, Risa Shoup, Sally Sommer, Risa Steinberg, Carrie Stern, Kay Takeda, Catherine Tharin, David Thomson, Muna Tseng, Kay Turner, Tony Waag, Eleanor K. Wallace, Edisa Weeks, Ryan Wenzel, Adrienne Westwood, William Whitener, and Elizabeth Zimmer.

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