



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 15, 2009

WHAT: The 9th Annual Metro DC Dance Awards
WHEN: Monday, September 14, 2009, 7:30 pm
WHERE: The Terrace Theatre/The Kennedy Center, Washington DC
COST: \$30 general admission/\$15 tickets available with DancePass
INFO: (202) 778-1190 or www.dancemetrod.org

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Sold-Out Audience Honors Washington DC Dance Professionals

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Peter DiMuro, Director
Roxann Morgan Rowley,
Cheryl Sidwell,
Programs Associates

Washington, DC — The enthusiasm for dance was palpable in the packed house of the Kennedy Center’s Terrace Theater and among the hundreds of people who attended the Millennium Stage prelude performances at the 9th Annual Metro DC Dance Awards (The Awards) presented by Dance/MetroDC and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Last night’s “kick-off” dance social event of the season honored dance professionals from DC, Maryland, and Virginia for excellence in their field.

Advisory Committee
Douglas Yeuell, Chair
Barbara Blauhut
Suzanne Callahan
Rima Faber
Susie Farr
Harriet Moncure Williams
Michael Ann Mullikin
Carla Perlo
Cheles Rhynes
Nikki Strong
Susan Shields
Aysha Upchurch
Septime Webre
Helanius Wilkins
Brian Williams

Dance/MetroDC Director Peter DiMuro referred to the evening as “other worldly,” and the illustrious cast for the ceremony included appearances by Martha Graham, a breathtaking performance choreographed by a 10-year-old, and a stage full of rowdy, bedazzled cowboys.

Brooke Kidd, Founder of World Arts Focus, Inc. and Executive Director of Joe’s Movement Emporium, received the prominent Alan M. Kriegsman Award for lifetime achievement, honoring her history of community and dance activism. Named for Pulitzer Prize winner and former Washington Post dance critic Alan “Mike” Kriegsman, the award was presented by Doug Yeuell, Executive Director of Joy of Motion Dance Center and winner of the 2008 Kriegsman Award.

2009 Awards Selection Committee
Ashley Baer
Enoch Chan
Cathy Eliot
Nikki Ghambir
Helen Hayes
Sharon Mansur
Alvin Mayes
Richard Pilkinton
Christel Stevens
Naima Prevots
Heidi Schimpf
Shula Strassfeld
Sylvia Soumah
Harriet Williams
Lisa Swenton-Eppard

Joining Kidd, were award winners in 15 categories ranging from Emerging Choreographer to Excellence in Costume Design. Also presented were the Pola Nirenska Awards for Contemporary Achievement to Gesel Mason co-founder and artistic director of Mason/Rhynes Productions and artistic director of Gesel Mason Performance Projects and for Lifetime Achievement to Virginia Johnson, founding member and newly-appointed artistic director of Dance Theatre of Harlem. A DC-native, Johnson’s poignant words of “dance is life, and life is beauty,” represents last night’s honorees’ commitment to the field.

This year’s ceremony, hosted by Frederick, MD native, Richard Move as Martha Graham, also featured performances by area dance companies Furia Flamenca, ARKA Ballet, Life, Rhythm, Move Project, and the DC Cowboys, fresh from their appearance last year on NBC’s America’s Got Talent.

The celebration continued at a reception and silent auction at 600 Restaurant at the Watergate where members and supporters of the DC metro area dance community toasted fellow winners and helped raise funds to support The Awards.

(more)

Awards Founder
Cheles Rhynes

Winners of the 2009 Metro DC Dance Awards

Outstanding Individual Performance

Jason Garcia Ignacio in "Nocturne Monologue"
And **Delphina Parenti** in "On a Train Heading South"

Outstanding Group Performance

CityDance Ensemble in "Folksay"

Outstanding Youth Performance

Maryland Youth Ballet in "Tahquamenon Falls"
And **Indian Dance Educators Association (IDEA)** in "Katha: Tales From India"

Outstanding New Work

Dana Tai Soon Burgess for "Hyphen"

Emerging Performer or Group

Urban Artistry in "Time to Come Home: A Tribute"

Emerging Choreographer

Cassie Meador for "Drift"

Excellence in Costume Design

Estela Velez for "Lorca: Flamenco Poetry"

Excellence in Lighting Design

Jeff Bruckerhoff for Washington Ballet's "Wunderland"

Excellence in Sound Design/Original Composition

Guillermo Christie for "Lorca: Flamenco Poetry"

Excellence in Stage Design/Multimedia

Shane Meador for "Drift"

Overall Production – Small Venue

VT Dance for "Witness" at Dance Place

Overall Production – Large Venue

The Washington Ballet for "Highland Fling: La Sylphide & Celts" at Lisner Auditorium

Outstanding Achievement in Dance Education

Helen Hayes

Alan Kriegsman Award

Brooke Kidd

Founders Award

Next Reflex Dance Collective

Pola Nirenska Award for Contemporary Achievement

Gesel Mason

Pola Nirenska Award for Lifetime Achievement

Virginia Johnson

*The Metro DC Dance Awards is the only annual opportunity in Metropolitan DC for artists and audiences to recognize excellence in the dance field. Dance/MetroDC, a branch office of Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance, became the lead organization for MDCDA in 2006. **Dance/MetroDC** produces The Awards, along with other programs throughout the year that serve and engage the region's dancers, dance entities and their audiences, including Dance Is The Answer, DancePass, and Forward Five. Visit www.dancemetrodcc.org for more information.*