



Sept 5, 2007

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2007 ROCKY AWARDS-- Philadelphia's Dance Awards.

The Philadelphia dance community celebrated its 06-07 dance season on Labor Day Sept 3, 2007 and paid tribute to ten companies or individuals in the annual peer-to-peer awards event known as the ROCKYS. Unlike other awards that have a panel of judges or votes by the public each 2006 recipient has the honor of bestowing a 2007 ROCKY.

2007 Rocky Awards were presented to:

**Renee Banson
Kim Bears-Bailey
Gwendolyn Bye
Silvana Cardell
Hellmut Gottschild
Roko Kawai
Dara Stevens Meredith
Painted Bride Art Center
Rennie Harris Puremovement
Melissa Rector**

Melanie Stewart, bedecked in blonde wig and sparkling gown, hosted the event in the guise of Cat Deeley of "So You Think You Can Dance" accompanied by "judges" Meghan Durham, Megan Mazarick and Karl Schappell.

Hellmut Gottschild, the German born 70-something modern dance master lit up the stage when he danced on to accept his Rocky. He pointed out that with 10 awards given each year and given that the Rockys have been going on for 7 years, 70 awards were given out before his name came up. He decided he would accept anyway. The audience of approximately 100 dancers and dance-makers gave him an enthusiastic ovation.

Joan Myers Brown presented to Kim Bears-Bailey for the reconstruction of Talley Beatty's Southern Landscapes and for her many years of service to Philadanco.

Nick Stuccio, Executive Producer of the LiveArts-Philly Fringe and Lois Welk, Director of Dance/USA Philadelphia took the stage together to present a special Rocky award to Rennie Harris Puremovement in recognition of their extraordinary accomplishment of producing three sequential productions at the Kimmel Center in June – a repertory program, Rome and Jules and Facing Mecca. These three back-to-back opening nights involved distinct casts of over 50 dancers and musicians and an absolutely heroic effort on the part of Puremovement. In the words of Ms..Welk, we present this “from the bottom of our collective hearts”. Mr. Harris accepted the award on behalf of Puremovement.

The program included performances by Eleone Dance Theatre, Kun-Yang Lin Dance, Latin Nation Dance Company, and Dance Fusion II.

“What struck me”, commented Lois Welk, “was the number of recipients who commented that they could have gone to NYC but chose to stay in Philadelphia because of their devotion to the artists and companies that inspired and nurtured them. It was a great gathering of Philadelphia dance people, spanning many generations.”

The ten 2007 awards were created by Philadelphia artist- Isaiah Zagar, famous for over 100 mosaic murals in the city and his Magic Garden at 1020 South Street. A self-described dance lover of the first degree his original awards incorporate line drawings of moving figures with fragments of mirror, glass and ceramic embellishments.

For more information about this event or about Dance/USA Philadelphia contact Lois Welk, Director at loiswelk@danceusaphiladelphia.org

