

*For Immediate Release*



**SIMONE FORTI TO RECEIVE AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN DANCE AND  
MARYA WARSHAW TO RECEIVE AWARD FOR SERVICE TO THE FIELD OF DANCE AT  
THE BESSIE AWARD CEREMONY OCTOBER 8 AT NYU'S SKIRBALL CENTER FOR THE  
PERFORMING ARTS**

Two groundbreakers, Brooklyn Arts Exchange founder/director Marya Warshaw and avant-garde choreographer and dancer Simone Forti, have been tapped to receive The Bessies' highest honors. Warshaw, who will receive the 2018 NY Dance and Performance Award for Service to the Field of Dance and Forti, selected for the 2018 NY Dance and Performance Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance, will be honored during the October 8 ceremony at NYU's Skirball Center for the Performing Arts.

In announcing the awards, New York Dance and Performance Award Executive Director Lucy Sexton noted Forti's distinguished contribution to dance in a citation that reads: "For her revolutionary, inspirational and fearless approach to movement both in dance constructions and in improvisation that pushed the boundaries of what dance could be. For years of instruction and investigation into the human body in motion, finding poetry in gravitational forces, the movement of animals and the natural world."

A visionary humanist, Marya Warshaw was cited for "founding the Brooklyn Arts Exchange and working over 25 years to create a space where dance artists of all identities and backgrounds can create and where students of all ages can study. For constantly finding new ways to support the progress and creation of work in comprehensive ways through generous residencies and innovative planning."

The 2018 Bessies will be hosted tap dancer and actress Ayodele Casel, and feature performances by Mariana Valencia, recipient of this year's Bessie for Outstanding "Breakout" Choreographer, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in celebration of their 60th season, and Pooh Kaye, who will perform in honor of Lifetime Achievement recipient Simone Forti.

There will also be a costume runway moment featuring designs by Machine Dazzle, Liz Prince, Claire Fleury, and the design team of Reid Bartelme and Harriet Jung. Among the presenters will be Taylor Mac, performer, writer, producer and winner of multiple awards including a 2017 MacArthur Genius Award, former Bessie-recipient tap dancer Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, Dr. Donald J. Rose of the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries, Kitty Lunn, Greg Miller, Jennifer Monson, Dwana Smallwood, and Eduardo Vilaro.

The evening's festivities continue following the ceremony at a free after-party at the legendary Judson Memorial Church, just down the street from the Skirball Center.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

For tickets, visit [www.Bessies.org](http://www.Bessies.org)

### **PERFORMANCE DATES AND TIMES**

Oct 8 7:30pm

NYU's Skirball Center For The Performing Arts

###

091218