



2023 Ken McCarter Award Recognizes Two Distinguished NBS Alumni for their Contributions to Dance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Toronto, ON, June 8, 2023 – Canada’s National Ballet School is thrilled to announce two recipients of the 2021 Ken McCarter Award for Distinguished NBS Alumni for their transformational contributions on and beyond the stage in local, national, and international communities—enriching lives and breaking ground in their chosen fields. The 2023 laureates of the award are:

Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt (class of 1970): an influential teacher, author, and researcher who has helped preserve Canada’s unique dance history and explored innovative new ways to share the art form. From early on in her studies at York University, she developed a keen interest in how dance is taught. She championed innovative approaches to improving how we support dance students on their learning journeys, including early explorations of using digital technology as a tool.

Paul Winston MD, FRCPC (class of 1989): an expert psychiatrist who draws on the joy of dance and movement in his work helping people with musculoskeletal and neurological disorders. His innovative work treating spasticity—the stiff limbs that occur with stroke, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy—is helping improve quality-of-life for people around the world.

“The 2023 Ken McCarter Award recipients perfectly reflect how an NBS education can be the foundation of a profoundly generous and enriching life’s purpose in countless fields,” says Mavis Staines, Artistic Director & CEO. “In their respective areas of world-renowned expertise, Norma Sue and Paul draw on the joy of dance to help others live full and enriching lives – physically, intellectually, and creatively. They inspire today’s young artists to have limitless imagination for the ways their gifts can make a positive difference.”

Reflecting on their time at NBS, the winners share:

“My years at NBS are the absolute foundation of everything I’ve done,” says Fisher-Stitt. “There are so many personal qualities that are so crucial to success in any field that my years at NBS really instilled in me or made me understand the value of: respecting others, respecting yourself as well, but also resilience.”

Winston says: “The motto of our specialty is ‘maximizing potential and restoration of function.’ You work with what you have. And that’s one of the things in the dance world: we’re all given a different body type, but as a dance teacher, you try to take whatever is in front of you and you inspire it to meet their potential.”

Established in 2017, the award highlights the inspiring range of significant contributions that NBS Alumni make in their chosen fields and communities. Nominations are submitted by fellow NBS Alumni to recognize their peers’ commitment to moving the world forward through their professional activities.

The Award is named for the late W. Kenneth McCarter, an NBS Board Director for eight years who had special admiration for the many and varied accomplishments of NBS Alumni. The Award in Ken's name is designed to acknowledge the important contributions to public service made by NBS Alumni through a broad range of professional activities.

- 30 -

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