



the voice of THEATRE, DANCE and OPERA in toronto

Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts

2007 Barbara Hamilton Award Winner: Karen Kain

The Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award was inaugurated in 1996 and is given to a Canadian artist who demonstrates excellence in the performing arts and is dedicated to advocating and being an ambassador for the arts in Canada. The Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award is sponsored by the City of Toronto, and the recipient is awarded with a scroll and a cheque for \$1,000 from the City.

The Award was established to recognize the canon of work that was Barbara Hamilton's career. A list of previous winners reads as a who's who of legendary Canadian performers: Don Harron, George Luscombe, John Neville, Douglas Campbell, Mervyn Blake, Charmion King, Maureen Forrester, Eric Peterson, William Hutt, Martha Burns and Albert Schultz.

The winner of this year's Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award is Karen Kain, Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada and Chair of the Canada Council for the Arts.

In her acclaimed career as one of ballet's greatest performers, as well as in her capacity as one of Canada's most stalwart and passionate arts advocates, Karen Kain has illuminated and invigorated the contemporary cultural landscape as few others have. Born in Hamilton, Ontario, Kain studied at the National Ballet School in Toronto and joined The National Ballet of Canada in 1969. Her exceptional talents were recognized early on and after a sensational debut as the Swan Queen in Swan Lake, she was quickly promoted to Principal Dancer.

In 1973 Ms. Kain won the Silver Medal in the Women's Category at the prestigious International Ballet Competition in Moscow and, along with her frequent partner at that time, Frank Augustyn, was also awarded a special prize for Best Pas de Deux. This led to an international career that saw her perform the greatest roles in ballet with many of the world's finest companies, including Roland Petit's Le Ballet de Marseilles, The Bolshoi Ballet, London Festival Ballet, Vienna State Opera Ballet and the Eliot Feld Company. As well, she developed a close creative relationship with Rudolf Nureyev that lasted for many years and premiered numerous new ballets, many of which were created for her by some of the most prominent choreographers of her day.

After a farewell tour in 1997, Kain retired from the stage and assumed the position of Artist in Residence with the National Ballet, a role that was expanded two years later to that of Artistic Associate. In 2004, she restaged to great acclaim Rudolf Nureyev's famous version of The Sleeping Beauty and in the following year was appointed Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada.



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Kain has received numerous national and international awards for her work as a performer and arts advocate. She is a Companion of the Order of Canada, a recipient of the Cartier Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2001 was named an Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Government. In 2002 she received the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement.

The Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award selection committee is Martha Burns, Jacoba Knaapen, Eric Peterson and Jim Roe.