

2024 DUMBO Dance Festival: GALA Honorees



John Ryan is the founder, chairman and owner of John Ryan Companies, a global technology-enabled marketing firm. Since 1980, John Ryan Companies has spearheaded a revolution in the way banks and other traditional financial institutions market their products. In 1991, John created the first digital signage program in the U.S., whereby banks could use TV monitors inside branches to communicate their products and services to consumers. Today, John Ryan Companies has developed and implemented technology enabled marketing initiatives for more than 50,000 bank branches in more than 45 countries around the globe.

John is active in the non-profit community serving as a board member for WHITE WAVE Young Soon Kim Dance Company, the Keck Observatory Advancement Advisory Council, and the Ohana Foundation. He and his wife, Anne Barasch, also support numerous environmental and animal welfare organizations.

Joan Finkelstein (EdD, Dance Education Leadership & Policy, Teachers College/Columbia University; MFA, BFA, NYU Tisch Dance) is executive director of the Harkness Foundation for Dance (2014-present). She has performed with modern and Afro-Haitian companies and on Broadway, choreographed for modern and ballet companies, and taught children and adults nationwide. As director of 92Y Harkness Dance Center (1992-2004) she supervised classes, the Dance Education Laboratory, performances, workshops, space grants, lectures, and social dances. As dance director for NYC Department of Education (2004-2014) she spearheaded the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance, PreK-12*, citywide dance assessments, and dance teacher workshops. Additional standards writing: National Core Dance Standards (2014), NYS Learning Standards for Dance (2017). Boards/advisory boards: Dance/USA, ICDLI, Dance/NYC, Dance Teacher Magazine, Martha Hill Fund, EFSD, NYFA. Honors/awards: ICDLI Hall of Fame, NDEO Leadership, La Mama Moves! honoree, NYSDEA Outstanding Leadership, NEA and NARB Choreographer Fellowships. Joan was on the BESSIES Committee for 16 years.

