

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Big Moves takes one of top honors at Montreal Fringe Festival:
Spirit of Fringe award includes free performance slot for 2008

BOSTON, MA.— After a week and a half of hectic, high-energy performances, promos, and even a community pancake breakfast, the combined East Coast chapters of Big Moves danced off with the Spirit of the Fringe Award at the closing night of this year's St. Ambroise Montreal Fringe Festival (which took place June 7 through June 17). In addition to a repurposed bowling trophy (it is a fringe festival, after all), the Spirit of the Fringe award includes a free and guaranteed slot in next year's festival for the company that most embodies the festival's ideals of involvement, artist community, and fun.

The fun started with Big Moves' own show, *Gargantua: Fear of a Fat Planet*. The original sci-fi dance musical, which played to packed houses in Boston and New York City in the fall of 2006, received good reviews from Montreal press and garnered an unusually high and positive amount of net buzz on the Fringe's web site (www.montrealfringe.ca, search by production and scroll down). Among the comments from audience members were these:

The show was moving as well as hilarious. The acting is spot-on and the vocals and dance are wonderful as well. I may go back to see a second performance because once is just not enough. Love you ladies!

This has got to be one of the funniest shows I've seen here at the Fringe. The singing and dancing is great, not to mention the fabulous over-the-top, B-grade movie acting. Go fatties!

In addition to preparing, performing, and promoting *Gargantua*, Big Moves came out *en masse* to see and support other shows at the Fringe (among the 10-person company, the group caught at least 50 performances). Big Moves members were also a constant presence, both on stage and in the front row, at the Thirteenth Hour, the festival's late-night variety show. In accordance with Big Moves' body-friendly, food-friendly beliefs, the performers even brought pizza and erotic cookies to share with the hosts and other attendees of the show.

The clincher for the Spirit of the Fringe award seems to have been the community pancake feast that Big Moves mounted on the first Sunday of the Fringe Festival. "They were around every night and they partied with us," festival producer Jeremy Hechtman said in a June 18th article in the Montreal English-language paper *The Gazette*, "but what really put them over the top is the pancake breakfast they served." Approximately 50 pounds of Whole Foods pancake mix were whipped up at the festival's beer tent, topped with 5 gallons of pancake syrup and washed down with 20 gallons of coffee from Canadian doughnut king Tim Horton's. Response from bleary-eyed volunteers, staff, and festival attendees was so positive that Big Moves plans to host it as a standing event every year (note for the next Fringe: start cooking bacon earlier and bring more griddles).

"The Montreal Fringe is known on the Canadian circuit as the Fringe with the strongest sense of community," says Hechtman. "[For this award]... mostly we look for the company who not only embodies that sense of community, but contributes something unique to it."

Big Moves is the only production company and service organization in the world dedicated to bringing more people of all sizes into the dance studio and up on stage. On the East Coast, Big Moves is a fiscally sponsored program of the Boston Dance Alliance. For more information about Big Moves in Boston, New York City and around the world, visit us online at <http://www.bigmoves.org> or call 617-869-2970.

Cast/crew list for Big Moves' production of Gargantua in Montreal:

Marina Wolf Ahmad, writer/producer/choreographer/performer (Boston, MA)

Avada Douglas, company manager (Boston, MA)

Ariel Federow, choreographer/performer (New York City, MA)

Jaclyn Friedman, poet/performer (Cambridge, MA)

Colette Gagnon, performer (Braintree, MA)

Mandy Lussier, choreographer/performer (Quincy, MA)

Janie Martinez, performer (New York City)

Suzi Tasca, performer (New York City)

Jenny Thoman, technical director (Portland, ME)

Reena Wyman, performer (Peabody, MA)

with guest artist Mitch Mitcham (Montreal, QC)