

Diversity pays off at Prix de la Danse, Montreal's dance awards



VICTOR SWOBODA, SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE

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Now in its fifth year, the annual Montreal dance award known as the Prix de la Danse upped its ante on Thursday at a ceremony held for the first time in the grandiose hall of Montreal's city hall to announce the winners for 2015. Two more prizes were added to three already established, and an extra \$15,000 was added for an overall pot of \$57,500.

Veteran choreographer Zab Maboungou received the new \$10,000 prize presented by the Montreal Arts Council to recognize cultural diversity.

"Montreal's image is one of diversity," declared municipal cultural affairs councillor Manon Gauthier in presenting the award.

As founder of Danse Nyata Nyata, Maboungou has presented and taught African dance in Montreal for a quarter of a century. Her choreography reveals African myths and a complexity that reflects her own strong intellect.

"I grew up in Paris where the recent (terrorist) attacks occurred," said Maboungou, whose roots are Congolese. "Diversity does not kill."

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