

FY2010
Choreography
Panelist Biographies

Douglas Risner is associate professor of the College of Fine, Performing & Communication Arts at Wayne State University. He is a summa cum laude graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees in Choreography & Dance Performance and holds a Ph.D. in Curriculum & Teaching with a Cultural Studies Specialization. He is editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Dance Education* with Dr. Julie Kerr-Berry and has served the National Dance Education Organization as Secretary and currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors. For over two decades as a dance educator, guest artist, and faculty member, he has taught and choreographed at Luther College, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Meredith College, Iowa State University, Winona State University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Gustavus Adolphus College, Weber State University and Western Illinois University. His work has been funded by the generous support of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the H. George & Jutta F. Anderson Endowment, the North Carolina Department of Public Education, the Iowa Arts Council, McNairs Scholars Program, the North Carolina Dance Festival and Dance USA/National Endowment for the Arts.

Dr. Risner is widely published and presents his research nationally and internationally. His work is published in *Research in Dance Education*, *Dance Research Journal*, *Arts Education Policy Review*, *Selected Research in Dance*, and *Chronicle of Higher Education*. His forthcoming book, "When Boys Dance: Rehearsing Heterosexuality in Dance Education", will be published by the Mellen Press in 2009.

Amy Smith, is co-director of Headlong Dance Theater. She grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she studied ballet, jazz and tap and got early professional experience with Jazz Dance Theater. Back then, she could do triple pirouettes and lay-outs. At Wesleyan University, she took full advantage of the amazing dance department, studying modern, composition, improvisational forms, ballet, Bharata Natyam, and Ghanaian dance. She also majored in Religion. After college, she spent a year at the Center for New Dance Development in Holland, where she soaked up European New Dance and learned from incredible people like Stephanie Skura, Ishmael Houston Jones and Steve Paxton. Other important teachers/mentors include Cynthia Novack and Richard Bull, Susan Foster, Deborah Hay, and Ann Trenka.

Besides Headlong, Amy has performed in the work of Deborah Hay (lamb, lamb, lamb...), Ishmael Houston Jones (Specimens), and many others. Theater goers may remember her as Ivona in Theater Exile's 2002 production of "Princess Ivona". She serves on the Executive Committee of the Dance/USA board of Trustees, and spent several years working to create Dance/USA Philadelphia, a local service organization for Philadelphia. She also serves on the board of the Canary Project, and helps artists and organizations with their tax preparation and financial planning. Amy has a rock-star

husband and two kids who fulfill her more than words can say. She lives in a geodesic dome in the woods, where the smells of woodsmoke and baking tofu fill the air. Amy loves the way Headlong embraces the many-layered lives of its co-directors - of course, this is by design.