

ADESOLA AKINLEYE DANCING STRONG

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BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Adesola Akinleye, FRSA: Biography

Adesola is a choreographer, dancer, researcher and teacher. She originally trained at Arts Educational School, London, and then Rambert Academy in UK. She began her career as a dancer with Dance Theatre of Harlem. While in New York she studied choreography with mentor Bessie Schönberg. She later established her own company Saltare which toured work around New York, American East Coast, Caribbean and Canada. For her work with Saltare she was awarded '1999 national Women's History Month award for Distinguished Achievement in the Field of Dance' by Town of Islip, NY. In 2000 she moved to Canada where she was a part of the nationwide artists-in-schools program as well as teaching at the University of Manitoba. It was here she started DancingStrong.

In 2005 she returned to the UK being awarded ADAD's *Trailblazers Fellowship* and the *Bonnie Bird New Choreographers Award* the following year. In 2016 she received One Dance UK's Champion Trailblazer Award. Her performance works include '*Truth and Transparency*' commissioned by Dance Northwest and supported by a grant from Arts Council England; *Migrations* commissioned by *Manchester International Festival* and *Ludus Dance, IOcAte* commissioned by Dancin' Oxford (*Oxford Dance Festival*), *Trace* commissioned by *Dance in Herts (Dance Digital)*, and *The Jingle Dress* commissioned by *State of Emergency* which toured UK in 2010, Light Steps work for young audiences with the support of an Arts Council Grant Toured UK in 2015, and Untitled Women's Work commissioned by The Center for the Education of Women, USA.

Adesola is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce (RSA). She holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Sports and Exercise Science with focuses on sociology of the body and embodiment from Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. She has a Master of Arts with distinction, in Work-Based learning: Dance in education and the community from Middlesex University, UK. She has been a guest teacher / choreographer in a number of professional training programmes including, South East Dance UK, Wayne State University USA, University of Michigan USA, Dance Theatre of Harlem Summer program USA, and Creative Partnerships UK. She is a Senior Lecturer in Work-Based Learning and in the Media and Performing Arts Department, Middlesex University, UK.

Her interest in dance as the language of embodied experience has led her to make several works for young audiences, as well as works about the experiences of those who identify as women. Her creative process begins with community informed starting points and community engagement in the arts. Adesola's work has a strong conceptual strand, ranging from theater presented work to site-specific to installation-based performance. She enjoys working with light as a three-dimensional inquiry.

An overview of her work can be seen at www.dancingstrong.com