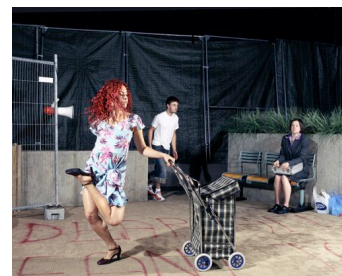


Jasmin Vardimon



JASMIN VARDIMON COMPANY'S PARK

SWEEPS THE BOARD AT THE CULTURE AWARDS

Last night, one of the UK's most innovative and acclaimed dance companies swept the board at a glittering gala event at the University of Kent to celebrate East Kent's **Culture Awards**. Picking up no less than three awards, The Jasmin Vardimon Company dominated the evening.

In recognition of their special cultural achievements and their contribution to the artistic landscape of the area, the company walked away the **The Artist Award**, **The Destination East Kent** award and was honoured with the coveted **Canterbury Award**.

Artistic Director **Jasmin Vardimon** says,

"We are overwhelmed to have picked up not just one but three awards and are incredibly grateful to the Culture Awards, Kent County Council, Ashford Borough Council, Ashford Leisure Trust and The Arts Council of England for their continued and vital support. Since we relocated to Kent two years ago, we have been deeply impressed by the artistic vision of this region and by the importance it attaches to its vibrant cultural scene. This is no more clearly reflected than by The Cultural Awards and we are honoured to have been recognised by them."

The Canterbury Award is the top prize in The Culture Awards which are designed to recognise the outstanding work of creative practitioners in East Kent: fine artists, performers, venues and commercial designers working in all mediums. They celebrate and showcase the benefits that the creative industries bring to the East Kent region, helping it to become a prime tourist destination, a centre of excellence for arts education and a magnet for commercial creatives. Sponsored by Canterbury City Council, The Canterbury Award is given at the discretion of the judges to recognise the very special cultural achievement of an individual or organisation connected with the Canterbury District. There is no entry or public voting.

In a statement issued on behalf of the judges it was stated,

"In order to be considered for the Canterbury Award the winner must have an established history of success within the arts at the highest level of administration or performance. The Jasmin Vardimon Company succeeds on both counts. Since relocating to Kent the Jasmin Vardimon Company has become a jewel within the county's cultural scene: setting examples of excellence, education and accessibility. The company is defined by the word quality'.

The award was presented to Jasmin Vardimon by Colin Carmichael, Chief Executive of Canterbury City Council.

The Artist Award is given to a cultural practitioner or collaborative group of practitioners working within East Kent who are judged to have created a new work of high quality within the last twelve months. Winning this Award is recognition of exceptionally high quality and creative work. The judges particularly commented on the way that the company focused on building local partnerships and were proud to talk about East Kent as their home, describing the company as presenting incredible work deserving of its international reputation. The Award was presented to the Jasmin Vardimon Company by Denise Harmer representing the Award sponsor, University for the Creative Arts.

The Destination East Kent award rewards the organisation, group or individual judged to have been most influential in raising the profile of East Kent's cultural offering regionally, nationally and internationally. Jasmin Vardimon Company was described by the judges as being "like a supply chain of art, connecting the local to the international" and was credited as doing a tremendous amount to boost cultural tourism in the east Kent Region. The Destination East Kent award was presented to the Jasmin Vardimon Company by Declan Kelly, General Manager of the Abode Canterbury, sponsors of Destination East Kent.

The Culture Awards were established in 2011 as a partnership between CANTERBURY FOR CULTURE and Canterbury City Council district. Today the Awards are organised by CANTERBURY FOR CULTURE, the independent strategic group representing the views, needs and ambitions of the district's cultural sector.

Jasmin Vardimon Company has been part of the Kent cultural scene since it moved to its creative home **The Jasmin Vardimon Production Space** in Ashford in 2012 thanks to the support of **Ashford Borough Council**, **Ashford Leisure Trust** and **Arts Council England**. From there, the company have been responsible for connecting people, institutions, organisations and opportunities in and for the area. With a specific focus on Canterbury as a central cultural hub of activity, Jasmin Vardimon Company have enriched provision in the arts in institutions through education work and provided access and audience opportunities for residents of Canterbury as well as developing tourism opportunities by attracting people to the city. The company's relationship with both The Gulbenkian and The Marlowe has grown and developed over the past two years. Not only do they stage their major productions at both theatres, they work hand in hand with the educational and outreach initiatives of each by nurturing new talent and engaging new audiences through the work of JV2 and involve local communities through Q&A sessions and open workshops. The company launches their national tour of the acclaimed piece Park at The Marlowe Theatre.

Jasmin Vardimon Company was founded in London in 1997 and has rapidly risen to become a significant element within the British dance theatre scene. The company is dedicated to the choreography of Artistic Director, Jasmin Vardimon – Associate Artist of Sadler's Wells since 2006.

For The Culture Awards **Liz Moran**, Director of The Gulbenkian says:

"We are incredibly lucky that Jasmin Vardimon has chosen to base her company in Kent. Jasmin has played a vital role in Canterbury now being recognised as an international destination for vibrant and pioneering arts and culture. Her work not only inspires audiences and artists but also a new generation of exceptional dancers through the work of JV2. There is a rapidly developing audience and interest in dance in Canterbury and Jasmin has been a lead contributor in this creating work that challenges the perception that dance is for the few."

Borough Council portfolio holder for culture Cllr Jessamy Blanford says:

"I am thrilled that Jasmin Vardimon Company has scooped all three awards. They thoroughly deserve such prestigious recognition for their work. This is great victory not only for them, but for Ashford. Jasmin Vardimon Company have been a wonderful addition to our town, both as artistic residents and as committed members of the community. They have worked closely with schools and young people even while rehearsing for international tours. These are extremely exciting times for the arts for Ashford, and we look forward to supporting the company as they continue to grow here in Ashford."