

PRESS RELEASE



The Asian American Arts Alliance Announces the Recipient of the 2020 Jadin Wong Fellowship for Emerging Dance Artist



Photo Credit: Jacob Kruty Photography

(NEW YORK, NY, April 28, 2020) — The **Asian American Arts Alliance (A4)** is pleased to announce the selection of **Rohan Bhargava** for its **2020 Jadin Wong Fellowship**, which includes a \$6,000 unrestricted cash award and eight months of professional development training and career support to foster the next milestone of Bhargava's artistic career.

Among this year's competitive applications, the review panel also created a special award, **Artist of Exceptional Merit**, to recognize **Belinda Adam** and the excellence of her work. This award provides one-on-one consultations with respected leaders in the dance field and ongoing engagement with A4.

As a tribute to the life and work of renowned Chinese American actress, dancer, and comedienne **Jadin Wong** (1913–2010), a pioneer and innovator of Asian American performing arts, the Jadin Wong Fellowship is awarded to an early-career, New York City-based Asian American dance artist whose work shows outstanding promise and who may benefit from further professional artistic development. This award is made possible by the **Jadin Wong Educational Fund** at the **New York Community Trust**, established to continue her dream of supporting aspiring artists, musicians, and dancers of Asian descent.



Jadin Wong. Photo courtesy of New York Community Trust.

The 2020 Jadin Wong review panel was composed of the following esteemed leaders in the field of dance: **Phil Chan**, Co-founder of Final Bow for Yellowface; **Jessica Chen**, Choreographer and Artistic Director of J CHEN PROJECT; **Jesse Obremski**, Dancer, Choreographer, and Founder of Obremski/Works and former Jadin Wong Fellow; and **Minila Shah**, Choreographer and Founder of Ajna Dance Company.



Left to right: Phil Chan, Jessica Chen, Jesse Obremski, and Minila Shah.

Reflecting on Bhargava's application, panelist Jessica Chen said, "Bhargava is smart, savvy, and his choreographic work is bold and nuanced. He has great potential for a long term impact within the Asian American arts community here in New York City and beyond." Panelist Phil Chan added, "I love that Rohan is not only dedicated to exploring his own heritage and identity in his dance work, but also demonstrates a high level of curiosity and commitment to support other artists of Asian descent as collaborators. I look forward to seeing his work continue to develop, and for Rohan to step up as a leading creative voice in our community."

Highlighting a quote from Bhargava's application, "I wish to discover, reclaim, and celebrate my Indian heritage while tackling issues of misrepresentation, cultural appropriation, and racism in the 21st century," panelist Minila Shah emphasized the importance and timeliness of Bhargava's aspiration as an artist. Panelist Jesse Obremski concluded, "I am extremely proud of the collective decision to select Bhargava as the 2020 Jadin Wong Fellowship recipient. Bhargava's bold, wide-ranging, choreographic voice between Indian culture and contemporary dance is extremely intriguing and clear."

"On behalf of the A4 team, I am thrilled to administer this prestigious award in the memory of Jadin Wong," says **Lisa Gold**, A4's Executive Director. "Like Jadin, Rohan left his home to pursue a love of dance. And even at this early stage of his career, he is working to uplift other Asian American artists and push against societally imposed limits. It is my hope that Jadin would be proud of this year's fellow, as Rohan continues her legacy as both a brilliant dancer and choreographer and also as an inspiring community leader."

About Rohan Bhargava

Rohan Bhargava was born and raised in New Delhi, India where he trained at the Danceworx Academy of Performing Arts before relocating to New York City for his BFA degree in Dance from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts in 2012. Featured as one of *Dance Magazine*'s "Immigrants Who've Inspired Us," Rohan founded Rovaco Dance Company in 2015, with which he has showcased work at reputed venues such as Ailey Citigroup Theater (New York), Gaertner Center for Performing Arts (Texas), DeBaun Performing Arts Center (New Jersey), Truro Center for the Arts (Massachusetts), Brattleboro School of Dance (Vermont), and the Southern Theater (Minnesota).

Rovaco Dance Company has won "Outstanding Choreography" at Tamasha NYC, and the company has been commissioned by Mare Nostrum Elements, Rhythmically Speaking Dance, the Dance Gallery Festival, and the Alsop Entrepreneurship Award, which paired the company with composition students at Mannes School of Music. Additionally, Rohan has been a resident artist for the James Jay Dudley Luce Foundation, Dancewave, Sam Houston State University, and the CUNY Dance Initiative at LaGuardia Performing Arts Center. He currently works with Greater Ridgewood Youth Council, Kizuna Dance, Notes in Motion Outreach Dance Theater, and Peter and Co.

About the Asian American Arts Alliance (A4)

The Asian American Arts Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring greater representation, equity, and opportunities for Asian American artists and cultural organizations through resource sharing, promotion, and community building.

Since 1983, A4 has sought to unify, promote, and represent the artistic and cultural producers of one of New York City's fastest-growing populations. A4 is a diverse alliance of artists, organizations, and arts supporters who believe that working together as a pan-ethnic, multidisciplinary community is essential to nurturing the development of artists and arts groups. A4 serves as a thoughtful convener of the Asian American cultural workforce around issues of race, identity, and artmaking and provides a critical voice for this community. It is the only service organization in the country dedicated to the professional development of Asian American artists in all disciplines.

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