

A Dance Community Gathering

session notes/documentation

march 19, 2004
barbara barker center for dance
university of minnesota



McKnight Foundation
March 19, 2004 Dance Gathering
On the Future of Dance in Minnesota

I. Background

As a part of its ongoing work on behalf of Minnesota's arts community the McKnight Foundation invited dance artists, arts administrators and dance supporters to spend a day discussing the following question:

**How can we collectively enhance and support our efforts to
make Minnesota a place where dance and dance artists thrive?**

The conversation was facilitated using open space technology (OST) by William Cleveland, Director of the Center for the Study of Art & Community. The Open Space process provides a fluid group environment that enables individuals to explore ideas, network with like-minded colleagues, make decisions and take action. In the introductory session participants were asked to identify issues, ideas and or opportunities related to the question above, and then take responsibility for convening or participating in small groups on those topics.

II. The Discussion

In all 28 issues, ideas and opportunities were identified as session topics by the more than 150 participants. After some of the suggested issues were combined, a total of 20 actual sessions were scheduled and conducted. Of these, 18 produced documentation that is represented in the collected summaries and notes. A perusal of the questions that framed these sessions provides a good overview of the variety of issues identified and the depth of the discussion that ensued. Please note that merged or combined issues are grouped together in the list on the following page.

Following the individual sessions the participants gathered to hear short summaries of each discussion. The participants were then asked to identify the two issues that they felt should receive the most attention over the few years. The results are "most attention" column in on the list.

(Presentation note: The summaries and session notes have been reformatted for consistency and received a quick spell check. We have not messed with the internal format, syntax, grammar or shorthand used by the note takers. In essence, they are the raw deal. For anyone who cares to delve they are a very accurate reflection of both the tenor and content of the discussions. Transcripts of the session summaries that were orally presented at the end of the day have been inserted at the beginning of the notes for each session. Please note that session 6 and 12 have no summary or session notes and sessions 5 and 15 have summaries, but no session notes.)

List of Sessions Convened

	Session Title	Page #	Most Attn.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you bridge the separation between studio dance and concert dance? • How are community-based dance groups and concert based dance companies mutually beneficial? 	5	2
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to share necessary back house support? (i.e. Real estate, marketing, fund raising) 	8	0
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can dancers perform like musicians? (i.e. constant gigs of several groups (or cabarets,) diverse and large audiences, relaxed performance atmosphere etc.) 	13	7
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is behind the new and old performing venues and what are their agendas? 	18	2
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we chronicle, preserve, museum, etc. what has been our dance past in MN? 	25	4
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we create a graduate program in dance here in the state of Minnesota? 	26	0
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we open up the Minnesota Dance Festival to be more representative of the MN dance community? • Does the dance community want an annual event that will celebrate our accomplishments? (i.e. “The Minnes”) 	27	12
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to share/create cooperative funding sources and what would that look like? • How can we encourage more funders to acknowledge the value of dance and support more dance artists? 	31	29
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do artists of ethnic dance forms who are not of the “blood” legitimize/validate their art for the dance community, funders and the general public? 	36	2
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do values action and poetry intersect to cultivate aliveness in our dance work? 	42	0
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and what can composers, musicians and theater artists contribute to our creative process. • What laws govern copyright materials for music we dance to? 	46	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I gain respect and awareness , both in the arts industry and with the mainstream public for a dance form that’s considered social/recreational, but not really an art form 	51	0
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we bring to and sustain dance in public education? • What needs to happen so that every kid in Minnesota dances? 	52	16

14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will be the interface between the public and performance? --- Editors, critics, spokespeople? How will they be supported? • How can writing (journalism, etc.) help? What is the function of dance writing? • Now that the Dance Alliance is gone, who can document and inform the dance community of current events? 	56	39
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re: Building Audience--How can local dance performance reach those beyond the dance community and touch the public at large? 	61	4
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we create a choreographic residency center for emerging, international and established artists in Minnesota? 	62	23
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What considerations and action steps are needed to finish building the Schubert Theater? 	67	2
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we all have health insurance? 	69	3
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we effectively engage our communities? (i.e. cultural communities, social action) • What are the pressing issues for dancers of color? 	70	17
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is saturation an issue in developing an audience for dance? If so, what would we do about it? 	73	11

Also included:

List of organizations offering meeting space to dance work groups, page 80

Original invite letter, page 81

Invite flyer, page 83

List of registrants, page 84

HOW DO WE BRIDGE THE GAP?

- Accept the validity of each dance forum and venue
- Opening act like local bands for a national touring concert.
- Exposure. Take dance to a contained audience—the schools.
- Barter teaching time for performance space. Artist wins and school wins.
- We need to inspire to entice involvement.
- Collaborate and ask for involvement in other local companies. A piece in a school show.
- Networking between studios. Studio listening.
- Networking direct contact. The personal touch.
- Can we look at other nations? Cultures and dance for ideas as to how we can have our culture value dance more.
- Financial reasons contribute to the barrier between communities of dance. Need to find a way around this.



Participant: How to bridge performance element in studio and concert?

MEAGAN:

- Knowing that a student is an artist.
- Bring students to Northrop.
- **age appropriate material to build an audience.
- Band tours
- Rent H.S. to exchange teaching for free rent.
- Attachments with the school/performances.
- How can the values of dance—become a core value in the state?
- Children, parents, culture of this state.
- Inspire the students/people.
- That there is a separation between concert elitist venues because of language.
- Studio exposure.
- HIP/HOP has bridged this idea.
- Outlet for student's performance
- Network/personal touch. Validate students where they are.
- Video. Check out of artist works.
- Combine performance venues. Collaborate.
- More we all work together, better for everyone.
- Community-performance.
- Building audience—invite other professionals to perform in recitals.
- Dance for students who can't afford dance. Tap introduction.
- Financial reasons contribute to barrier.
- How to get the message to people?
- Everyone is in school. (captive audience)
- barter

Schools

- See the performance in school setting.
- Help dance audience and dance specialist.

CONNECTING.

1. HOW BECOME A PRESENT? AT MY H.S.
2. WAY TO COME TOGETHER NETWORK ORGANIZE.
3. ANOTHER ISSUE IS THAT DANCE IS NOT FUNDAMENTAL TO CULTURE IN U.S. CAN WE LOOK AT OTHER CULTURES?
4. LOCAL FOLK DANCE IN A DIFFERENT CATEGORY.
5. SCHISM BETWEEN VENUES & IDIOMS.
6. VALIDATING MOVEMENT EARLY.
7. TALK HEALTH CONCERNS

www.dancenyc.org

Session 2

Is it possible to share necessary back house support? (I.e. Real estate, marketing, fund raising)

The scarce resources in the community suggest that sharing of resources does make a certain amount of conceptual sense. The question is it really feasible in practical terms due to issues of turf and potentially emerging or blurring of vision. Our discussion touched on a couple of points. They mentioned the obvious fact that there are a number of different tiers in this artistic community each with their own very specific needs and concerns. We spent a great deal of time talking about the past history with the intent of making sure we didn't repeat history's mistakes specifically around the dance alliance and some of the past history of dance presenting at the Ordway. We also mentioned as has been mentioned previously here this afternoon, that there is a void in the advocacy/information/leadership of the dance community. David Gallagher expressed a very strong interest in learning more about the echo system of dance in the twin cities and this quickly led to a discussion about the many advantages that were seen by those in our group as the advantages of the venue/presenters working together. Or at least talking together and meeting and talking and potentially working together. This, in contrast to the expectation of many people who came to this group thinking that it would be more about what the potential benefits of arts and producers working together. But the talk quickly turned to the idea of venues and presenters gathering and sharing information and ideas and the potential for the coordination of schedules, cross marketing opportunities, and more efficient use of resources and the idea was positively perceived by the artists who were there. There was a certain fever of what we called the "Kabul" expector and the anecdote was seen as an open process with strong artist feedback.

Convener: David Galligan, Dave Moore

Participants: Galligan, Moore, Jeff Bartlett, Leni Darrow, Diane Elliott, Craig Harris, Gary Peterson Diane Elliot, John Munger, Suzanne Costello, Dannell Deever Shu, Deborah Jinza Thayer, Lauren Moore Shawn McConnelog, Maria Jette

Session Notes: Ritz, Schubert, Southern, (Illusion), (Jeune Lune) Ordway

David G intro

David M one of my obsessions is to broker mergers

Anything we can do to cut costs, on paper, is a good idea

However, it is in actually feasible in real terms

Does merger dilute vision?

Does sharing jeopardize the "purity" of the work

Intros:

- David G Ordway is a sharing kind of place
- Leni President of NYFA background in business/finance
- Jeff health of dance community is critical to ST
- Gary P

- Diane Elliot Hollywood studio of dance African/American children, wants to find ways to market and promote and raise funding
- John M meeting ground common ground meeting place?
- Suzanne Stuart and I moved here because of wealth of dance community. Wealth just in the room, fabulous and amazing. Not great is issues of saturation... touring person maybe has more “opportunities” than home town person, younger people, difficult to have work presented... ties into space, facility, audience issues
- Dannell: seeing cooperative efforts working in the real estate world, can dance use this as a model?

David Moore: “mergers and acquisitions” is a way to maximize profits in corporate world

David G would be interested in talking about the ecosystem

Suzanne: that would be fabulous, so that there is some correlation among programming

Walker Northrop Pantages Orpheum State Ordway Southern Shubert Red Eye Intermedia
Northrop O’Shaughnessy Fitzgerald BLB Patricks future: Ritz Shubert Hopkins Center

Pantages: is that a facility the dance community would like to use? Gary P: deemed the Shubert as the “horse we wanted to ride”, Pantages is renovated for a different niche

Whole generation of dance makers who are primarily interested in smaller more “cabaret”-like spaces

Is there a cooperative we support the various “tiers” of art
If we only have so much audience, we end up running after it,
Coordination: BLB > Red Eye > ST > etc....type of progression

Ordway: helped the Dolls double their audience

David Moore, asking about history of “MICA” addressed questions about how time energy and the funneling of money could be addressed, MICA broke insularity, addressed the questing as to how can we work together, developed a set of programs, ran into hard times, failed to make the change,

Gary P: tried to become all things to all people, everything started to be done a little less well

Suzanne: service orgs cropped up, looking for a more grass roots way to accomplish this

Convening function is needed, communication function

DJT: Frogtown loft, subsidy there is critical. Also have movement business, that resource goes into choreography. Marketing: figuring it out for myself. Looking to widen my reach

Lauren Moore: dancer and designer. Would like to know where the money is in the dance community. Thinking about starting a non-profit? Marketing agency? How to combine efforts? What's the deal with the money, where is it and how do artists get it?

Shawn: build the presence for dance? How would that work?

Raise the presence?

History of McKnight at the Ordway, originally designed for local companies

Currently not too much local

Suzanne likes the house, David interested to know that

Summerdance: festival of local dance, MN Dance Alliance curated. Rotating rep, practically sold out. Second year, sizzle of being new was gone, not as great, aud declined, funding dropped away, new mgmt decided to go elsewhere

Locus of energy moved to studio 6A

Jeff made long rambling speech about the Dolls moving to the Ordway etc

Deborah the "eat street" concept moved to Open Book/Washington

Want to move people around

Rather than trying to put together a new MICA kind of organization, even just some kind of network of theater and venue directors. Advocacy group.

Lets say 4 co-productions per year at the Ordway. Work gets presented at the Ordway, does it again... show moves to the Southern. Audience moves to the Southern?

Does the audience move?

Audience goes to one place and not another, this really characterizes the Twin Cities.

Gary P research show there is very little crossover. It's all fragmentation.

What I like about the venues talking to each other, it puts together coalescence, a "powerhouse"

However: always suspect of "cabals"

Always that possibility, but start by focusing on one you do well. Hammer on your 1-3 creates strength. Different for diff companies

Don't have much clarity about identity/focus/mission for different venues

Is there the possibility of more research? The Schubert feasibility study is existing documentation that is very relevant

Festivals. Sharing.... If there is a major festival, can we give away tickets to performances at other venues.

A SAMPLER including the “?” “mystery guest” to give people clues about who’s out there, how do I spend my entertainment dollars

29% attended dance, not a surprisingly low number. But not too many events per attendee.

Can we increase repeat buying? Not so sure.

What people say they want and what their behavior bears out are not necessarily the same
Laura really wants to take action steps

Gary: everyone is different so it may be a challenge to get everyone to work together

Where is the money? There isn’t any.

White Oak gathering year before last: another good place to start. Have to think regionally, as opposed to nationally. Identify existing resources

Fear of the cabal: checks and balances: artists will let us know.

Artists do need to have a voice. Is there a correlation/coordination of calendars? Programming feeds each other. Asian company at Northrop feeding into an Asian company at ST the next week?

An “opening act”: of a local group before a national show at Northrop

John Munger: specific concerns about the cabal concept, but the underlying rob is: there are more guerillas than institutions in the dance world. Guerillas instinctively distrust institutions. Need to learn to work together more.

Coordinating efforts among venues: funders might be interested in hearing from the consortium, to ask for planning dollars to figure out how this might work. Might possibly increase available funds. The field is working together more tightly. Funders trust might increase.

Market is going to be maximized somehow. Leverage matching investments.
If I have to pick between artist and artistry Goal of any funder is to make a grant that’s “final”.
If a consortium can make things more effectively, remove duplication.

Building capacity for dance
Creating better performers

Summary notes:

Scarcity of resources suggests that sharing resources, cooperative effort, makes a certain amount of sense.

The question is whether it is really feasible in practical terms

There was discussion of the fact that there are many different “tiers” in this community, each with specific and often entirely different needs and concerns.

There was also discussion of past history, primarily MICA-MDA, to try to work towards not repeating the mistakes of the past (while recognizing that the world and the world of dance are very different today).

There was recognition of the fact that there is currently a void, in terms of centralized advocacy/information/leadership in the dance community.

David Gallagher early on suggested that he is very interested in learning more about the ecosystem of dance in the TC and thought it would be a very good idea for the venues/presenters to meet and talk amongst one another.

This idea was received very positively by the artists present.

There is a strong feeling that by the venues/presenters talking amongst one another, there is a potential for :

- coordination of schedules
- cross-marketing opportunities
- more efficient application of resources where they will be most effective

Fear expressed, amongst artists and presenters, of a “cabal” mentality: the idea the too many decisions would be controlled by too few people, that artists would be excluded from the process.

Antidote to this, is an open process. If artists don’t like the directions you’re going in, they’ll let you know. A personal note: I hope this is true.

Overall, the discussion centered on the potential benefits of venues/presenters meeting and talking and hopefully cooperating with one another.

Next Steps:

Get the venues together to talk to one another

Laura wants to know actual names

Identify existing resources: White Oak project, Schubert feasibility study

Session 3

How can dancers perform like musicians? (i.e. constant gigs of several groups (or cabarets,) diverse and large audiences, relaxed performance atmosphere etc.)

We were asking the question how can dancers perform in alternative venues such as cabaret style. Why can't we gig like musicians? A couple of other questions that came up: how can we create something that is artistically fulfilling and yet performed in nontraditional spaces and how can dance happen as part of an environment, perhaps not being the only focus in that environment but blending in. There was a little bit of discussion about corporate dance and commercial ventures versus doing work that is very artistically satisfying for the choreographer/performer. We decided to list the existing venues and the venues that came up were Patrick's Cabaret, Balls, Bryant Lake Bowl, Wild Yam, and Cedar/Riverside Center. It was mentioned that Mayor Kelly's wife supports dance and that that might be a resource there. What about the possibility of being an opening for musical acts which also came up in another discussion later this afternoon. It was interesting. Then we discussed a little bit about the need for a cohesive network of collaborative artists joining forces with other styles of dance because each style has its own audience base and the idea came up for creating a website so that we could create a resource on how to access other venues and share information and perhaps the website would also be a way to connect people in the community. Then our discussion went into the whole questions about a need for a network for communicating and how does the dance community relate to itself. With the loss of the dance, alliance there is no longer a center and how do we share ideas, network with each other and get information.

Convener: Brinsley Davis

Participants:

David Wick

Becky Heist

Brita Jackson

Maija Pevra

Tammara Melloy

Otto Ramstad

Julia Teven

Ann Willemsen

Francis Kofi

Cathy Wind

Session Notes:

BH – Tell me a little about you to BD.

BD – told about how she recently held an event like this as a gift between friends. We had it set up with drinks served, the informal feel, all different kinds of genres, and people were drinking and there was an MB and people were invited to move around, or watch, or eat. As we were

planning it we were envious of musicians who get to gig all the time and the event is a social event and earns some money.

BH – Where are you from, did you go to school here...?

BD – Rhode Island, moved after college for the dance scene. I studied with someone in RI who said that it was great. I work with Jamie Garner and Suzanne?

BH – What about you, Brita?

BJ – I do more commercial agency work for dancers in Chicago and Minneapolis, our youngest is 9 and oldest is 39.

BH – I did not know that there was a dance agency in the Twin Cities.

BJ – We started a year ago, and there is an audition process for getting people into our group. We are having trouble getting people with strong enough technical skills and have been seeing our dancers not get the assignments that they want. Some dancers we watch are not ready for our agency, but are kept on the roles.

BH – I am in modern dance and work with the freelance dance community.

BJ – I have been in the non-profit world and was a choreographer, I have also done grant work for kids, I worked for Marylee Hardenberg in one of her shows.

MP – I mostly have studied Middle Eastern dance and African dance I have been trying to work on a project related to Jamaica. I have been a student and have started teaching, but I don't have any resources to get out and do performing. The cabaret would enhance my personal development as a dancer and I am interested in finding ways to get out.

CW – I have a tap company and we often work with musicians, it is more about the sound than about the performance and visual aspect. I see the future as working with orchestras, jazz bands, and regular work with musicians. I would like to see this happening on a regular basis.

MJ – Did your kids go to the regional competition? (yes) I have seen them.

CW – My students do, but they just perform, they do not compete. They go from 12 – 21 after college they have to leave the company. They perform about once every 1-2 months. I am interested in people trying to get musicians to work with dancers. We have done one school residency and are trying to do another one. We also fuse with Tyco drumming.

TM – I have danced with lots of people in town and with Alvin Ailey in NY, I am interested in getting in the schools and the fact competitive dance, that I do not feel it is about. I work with really young kids to incorporate stories and I don't think that the work done in the strip malls is not about art, or stories, I want to get to emote more to get dance to be a vehicle to express ideas, and feeling and stories. I don't want the ballet master with the stick, the teaching approach was wrong, there is more creative movement. I have been booking art openings and we have been booking more dance than just bands, and people have been really enjoying that type of work.

BH – teaches dance at Macalester College, interested as a teacher and promoter of dance to see dance in many venues beyond the theater . I have seen work in cabaret settings, social events and felt that it was some of the most powerful work that can be done.

OR – from Body Cartography project, we have done a lot of site-specific work and video work for dance. I love different formations of venue and audience performer interaction. I enjoy the quality of different spaces, juxtapositions, I am considering making a venue in my backyard, and making my garage into a space that could be used for showing dance and

JT – I am a dancer with Ballet of the Dolls, and when working with independent artists I find it frustrating because you are often not paid, and I want the financial support, how do you support that informal work. A lot of the emerging artists that I work for don't have the money to pay, and they don't have the ground work for grant applications, How do I support my friends, and get paid.

TM – You can get paid at Escape if you are scantily clad and wearing body paint. There is corporate theater, who about corporate dance. Maybe a promotion for the Mn Orchestra. Not a dance concert formation.

BJ – I started in the Twin Cities doing commercial work for corporations, for galleries, for fair style things and other events like that were they would have these moving sculptures. My partner moved to NYC and we ended the company, I went back to LA to work and moved-on. We had brochures and marketed directly to companies and sold our work to them. We had a small reel to give them to show them what to expect.

JT – Colleen McClellan has also done this type of work for her hip hop work, she markets it to companies. This is a way to get paid through the corporate world. I have danced for business people and this type of event and it is paid.

OR – Does this type of work feel like a way to be artistically fulfilled?

BJ – I think that you need to work in both ways, you can do both at the same time.

CW – I see the difficulty of a cabaret, as being that there needs to be an organizer.

BD – How do you get to the party atmosphere? How do you take the pressure off of the audience, keep from intimidation.

BJ – I have been to things like this. The person who puts it on can make lots on the parties, but then pays very little to the dancers.

BD – I have done an event for lawyers where I did gogo dancing

OR – What are the venues?

9x22 – once a month at BLB, people in this group did not know about it.

Patrick's Cabaret –

Balls –

Wild Yam in St. Paul

Janet Skidmore -

BJ – just wrote to the papers about needing more press about dance.

CW – I think that people are starting to talk more about the need for papers to cover the arts. You need to give pressure and keep up the pressure.

BD – Back to the idea of an informal cabaret style show, I did one recently, and it was lots of fun. We were able to get some interest from WCCO because it was more than a pure dance concert. I think that there could be a greater incentive to cover the events

If you can show that it is something different, appealing to broader audiences, then you may be able to sell the idea.

CW - If you do go to the cabaret approach you can have many types of work. I have done work with circus people, musicians, collaborative work had gotten more attention.

BJ – What if, we play off of the fact that Mayor Kelly has a son at Julliard, Mayor Kelly's wife has an initiative to have a conservatory for dance, what if we work with the Mpls and St Paul government to get a

BD – Do we need another cabaret in the Twin Cities? I sometimes think yes, and sometimes no.

AW – what about opening for musical acts, bands at First Avenue.

MP – maybe there is a need to create a group that can market this type of presentation work. Maybe we need collaboration and not simply another venue.

TM – the music community has a set structure, but we have no base. Maybe if we work together we can be a stronger community.

MP – We represent different forms of dance and could build more by working together.

BD – curious what shape this could take? Do we try to get people together through a Web site? Create a network so that we know who wants to create and share work like this.

BH – I think that the Web site is a great idea and could be used in a lot of different ways, it could help diffuse the effort required to coordinate, sell and present the events. Lots of us have ideas, but there is no cohesive

DW – what about resources for getting paid gigs at venues,

FK – What about a dance association day where all artists come together and share work and see work and. We have more here in the Twin Cities than we know. Dance is about uniting a community; it is about bringing people together. I find it difficult to understand why different

dance forms don't come together and unite in an understanding of what dance and the arts mean to us. It is difficult to have people recognize what dance means to them, if we could unite and become a community, we could have the support from one another, we have the talent, we have the artists, we don't have the togetherness. We are not a community, If we can do something about it, if we really want to get together to see what we have it is more than just performing.

BD – A while ago there were monthly meetings for the dance community at large.

FK – I think that meetings, goals and ideas once a month would be very good. In Ghana, one of the people created a national dance association in the country, we have 125 cultural groups, all of them are aligned with the national dance association., It think that the most important is to organize something that would get the groups together, on some regular basis, not everybody can come every time, but some regular plan with the community building. I want to see the artists in this community come together.

MP – I see a tree system which shows all of the forms of dance.

FK- If you have a company and perform, but don't have communication with others and connections with others in the dance community, you can't benefit and build audiences. Sees an opportunity to have the groups support one another to develop. Let's support each other.

BH – back to the cabaret event.

BD – we had 15 performers and an audience of 70, we served drinks and snacks and people donated to that and to us for all that we gave. There was a \$5 cover, we covered our costs and made money. We might do it again. It was a lot more work than we had thought. We thought that having more people involved would be easier than creating all of the work ourselves, instead we had a lot of coordinating work. We had a lot of fun and will do it again. We liked the people, the setting, the social aspect.

Next Steps:

- resource of contacts, ideas and methods for getting work into new spaces and connecting the community.
- Ways to support one another
- Approach Mn Artists.org for a bulletin board for artists who would like to co-produce a show. Make a list of informal/unusual performance venues and contact information for showing work in those venues.
- Maybe a Yahoo! Group.

Session 4

Who is behind the new and old performing venues and what are their agendas?

This group was about the venues in our area. The new ones and the old ones. What is their audience size. What is their intention in the curatorial needs and views roughly speaking? We heard from the Ritz, the Schubert, Walker, Intermedia Arts, The Southern, Red Eye, Patrick's Cabaret, Northrop Auditorium and Bryant Lake Bowl. They all spoke about their mission and their curatorial decisions about what they show in dance. Some of those listed feel misunderstood and want to clarify what they are doing or change such as the Red Eye, and in specific, their isolated acts. Walker will be increasing the choreographers evenings to twice a year rather than once. Further, some wondered how to get dancers to commit either to renting space for rehearsal such as the Patrick's Cabaret which is now \$6.00 an hour during the day or come on board to use their facility for performance space such as the Ritz which will be available for 2/3 of the year for programming with 1/3 being used by the resident company "Valley of the Dolls.". The Schubert sees the venues as a continuum from small to large, they being on the house size. There were issues about the unions brought in. Some brought up that dancers drive and create venues which make them very hearty. Others said we have to look at reaching large audiences and filling halls and that is not really, what a dancer driven venue can do. What is going to make for a healthy community? That is what we are interested in and that remains the issue.

Convener: Judith Brian Ingber

Participants:

Mike Grogan
Sandy Moore
David R. White
Bonnie Mathis
Laurie Van Wieren
Maria Gonez Tierrey
Beth Brady
Dana Holstad
Rita Mustaphi
Mary Ellen Childs
Miriam Calvin
Sarah Harris
Vickie Benson
Steve Busa
Miriam Must
Judith Howard
Robert Harman
Kim Motes
April Sellers
Erik Johnson

Session Notes:

The Ritz, The Schubert, Walker, Intermedia Arts, Southern, Red Eye, Patrick’s Cabaret, Northrop, and Bryant Lake Bowl all spoke about their mission and curatorial decisions about showing dance. Some feel misunderstood and want to clarify what they are doing, or change, such as Red Eye and their isolated acts; and Walker with increasing Choreography Eve’s to twice a year rather than once; or how to get dancers to commit to leasing their space such as The Ritz which will be available for 2/3’s of the year. The Schubert sees the venues as a continuum from small venues to large, the Schubert being on the big house size. Some brought up that dancers drive and create venues; other said we have to look at reaching large audiences and filling halls. So all together, what is a healthy community? That’s what we are interested in. Rental for rehearsals came up, as did the difficulty of having enough friends though the presenters were proud of how artists have been and will be supported in their programming. The local dancers don’t want, of course, to feel lesser than the national or international dancers.



A Walker –Opening Theatre --Phillip here for 7 years.	(380 seats opening) (200 tap)
Ballet of the Dolls –240 seat house for local dance --Craig	2005
Dale Schatzlein – 1932 Wigman Opened in Northrop --National & International series is 1971	4800 Seats
Mike Grogan runs Intermedia Arts Space & did	120 seats
Sandy Moore Managing --Present more dance than music. Interested in collaboration.	200 seats
David White—don’t have a venue but was 28 years	
Bonnie Matri’s –rents several venues (dir)	
Laurie Van Wieren produces series of chorographer’s monthly At Bryant Lake Bowl	90 seats
Maria Conez Tierney, chorographer and teacher at Gustavus Adolphus	
Beth Brody, dancer Dana Holstad, dancer 15 years --liaison@Southern Theatre	

Rita Mustaphi, Katak Dance Theatre Direction since 1987
--80 students in her school
--leases space

Mary Ellen Childs runs McKnight Program

Sara King, costumer/dancer

Miriam Calvin & Sarah Harris – 2001 49-100 seats
--Artist and Community Organizer
--Shared evening of 6 artists for 15 minutes each
[Paid the house, C. Patrick Cabaret's]
Jerome Fatin
--Supports artists in a Y & Mo. \$ is paid to both

Steve Busa 100 seats
--Co-founder of Red Eye. (20 years)
--Works to encourage new work

Miriam Must

Judith Howard
--Teacher, performer

Robert Haarman
--In Three Companies

Kim Motes, Director of MN Schubert 1,000 seats
--Mission Company

Erik S. Johnson – Metro Ballet Project
--See what venues have
--Heightened trust for audiences to pay for

WHAT MESSAGES ARE WE GETTING?

--Rehearsal spaces have closed down and we hear there is a great need for spring floors.
--We are trying to help dancers who don't have money for rent @ \$6.00 an hour.
--In 2002 we rented to capacity but by 2003 space rental fell by \$10,000 though it is improving now.
--April rents a lot of space and she doesn't have funds to research. She barterers by cleaning or cooking for people when she can't pay. She is not available for cheaper rent during the day. It is really getting harder especially center for performing arts now makes you pay beforehand.

PHILLIP:

--Says it is an exciting time here with the Walker curatorial mission is about contemporary arts, inviting outside artists but we hope to commission local choreography a couple times a year and then present them during the season. We also partner with other presenters such as Southern Momentum Series with them will continue. Invited arts will get three weeks. The Southern is the appropriate series for self-producing artists. Choreographers and evenings will be expanded twice a year in the new. We are post dance alliance.

--Where can services once provided by given to dancers?

--By having visiting arts here longer, might foster interaction with locals.

--If Walker chooses someone who fits our mission, we don't ask artists to pay. We try to be helpful.

--What can serve choreography for contemporary?

--The process by which we choose.

--Phillip chooses who?

--What are the platform gaps that doesn't exist?

KIM:

--We are creating a continuum from smaller Red Eye/Particles/Southern/Walker/to larger venues.

--Can begin to have choice for where you perform?

--Can create more visibility.

--An arts committee with 20 arts organizations and arts space. Save the theater for the dance community.

--Red Eye is headed: They are important venue for emerging choreographers. We think our strength is in developing new work and we want also mid-career, not just young visions. We want to change from working with young choreographers. We are shifting in who we produce.

--We see a big lack for new work.

--100 might be a big audience or space and it is hardly fundable and you might fail.

--With a venue, you have to succeed and with new work.

--We don't want to be a venue. We want to be a place for process.

--What is happening is people see "Isolated Acts" as a venue Opportunity.

--Isolated Acts – 3-7 week multi-disciplinary festival and it's become more and more dance.
[We choose what goes on.]

APRIL:

--We need to widen the lens so what is on your mind?

--What is your impetus for choosing?

GROZIN:

--Regarding Intermedia Arts, we care about community, could be either multi-media or interdisciplinary stuff that works with communities such as underserved, grassroots groups.

--Panel of programming team with five people of all proposals.

DAVID:

--What constitutes a healthy working community? It doesn't start with the venue, it starts with the artists.

--SF is 2nd largest community but not healthy.

--NY venues that are healthy were started by artists (CTW, Joyce) you need.

--What is the gorilla in the room? Issues of quality, the integrity of work.

--You need delegations of curators. The community has gaps, how do institutions work to develop curatorial integrity of decision making curatorial decisions?

-Dance is a self-produced art form, artists are producers of their own work and can do others.

DAVID:

--wants to separate two issues:

--The Artists: what motivated dynamics, making work.

--Resources are badly distributed. Health of community dependent on the health of the dancers.

ERIK:

--What something exciting happens, how can the mass community see it? What is the process of connecting the artists with the public at large?

PHILIP:

--What is the broader issue of connecting dance which is also connected to issues of media attention?

SANDY OF THE SOUTHERN:

--There is a tremendous generative energy. The Southern wants to support those who are doing their own work. There is a spectrum of venues and we know artists can start at Patrick's and Red Eye and getting the venues and the artists together is:

--It is all of a piece, who is talking about it. We need the wider things around us. In this town, we know dancers are active but the greater public does not know it.

David says you need people to talk up dance; there are no major institutions for dance. There is a latent interest.

CAROL TORDOFF:

--Larger question: we cannot communication in our smaller community of dancers. The Univ. in Salt Lake is a major force and it is a gigantic force: I want to say until we have a strong core, it won't change and with the demise of the Dance Alliance, we are in trouble as a community.

BETH:

--How do you make balanced program and a quality: sees we do need quality and something need to stand for that.

ROBERT HAARMAN:

--Says it is important to fail and that means all we have left is Northrop. I understand what you are saying, but we need the melting pot to fail.

DAVID:

Even when there are reviewers. They are lo. New is next and that is what we want to support.

THE RITZ:

We are going to be having a studio and a stage. We want to hear the dancer's needs. Ballet of the Dolls will be present 1/3 of the year but we want to establish partners and to find those who can help us. Where can we bet bit into the continuum? There is something to be said for dancing all around but then being home makes a difference. Having the audience know they can go to an address and see works of integrity. Identity and integrity. There is a lot of ways to establish that.

MYRON:

The director wants edgy work but we have to blend things so it stays alive and how it will.

BONNIE:

Jiri Kylian's work depends on great lighting too. The Southern is having a lighting design course and that is great. A wonderful service. Bonnie says why doesn't Walker introduce us to artists?

PHIL:

We want to feature visiting artists with local artists.

DANA:

Why doesn't the V. foster the process of meeting other artists?

ROBERT:

I would entreat Northrop to make cross-over. Take a theater that's empty here at the university and take that empty house—and we go around and take off. The university is the lab.

VISITOR: Accepting of musicians to dance is very mysterious. Olive says it is different.

APRIL: Is an independent artist. I feel very strongly I have been supported and that creates an even strong craving. It is felt on an individual basis.

DALE:

--Has been a member of the community my whole life—30 years in dance. The growth in the field is fabulous. So many more local presenters.

--So Northrop has a union contract house of 5,000. It is not affordable unless we bring in big shows.

--We have a dialogue with artists.

--Along history with Merce 1957 @ Walker
1970 @ Northrop

--We have started to focus on international companies from Brazil, Israel, and Netherlands.

--I am sorry it is expensive and big and I am doing what I can to make sure.

LAURIE C:

--Bryant Lake Bowl

--I am an artist doing a series every 3rd Wednesday of the month, to show dance and then to have a conversation afterwards. I am very interested in what David Mite says. That it be artist driven and to have several hubs and a laboratory.

STUART:

Has a question: do you personally or institutionally have a way to speak to the future?

--We have covered that.

DANA:

Wants to say that choreography should be expanded. It is a great idea to do it twice a year. We need that because it won't be doing a whole evening.

MIRIAM:

--How do we choose ourselves for a cabaret? Rather than one curatorial voice.

--How often are evenings also social?

MIKE GROGEN:

--Would love a way to find artists to work with, a tech.

Session 5

How can we chronicle, preserve, museum, etc. what has been our dance past in MN?

Our actual big dream would be to have a dance center that would be like a museum archive, that would be a place to keep all the archives from all the different kinds of dance companies and teachers and figures that influenced dance in Minnesota. Many of us have talked about the boxes sitting in basements that we are afraid are going to be flood damaged or whatever and they are now kind of scattered in different places. Minnesota History Center has some. The University library has some. The St. Paul Public library has some so we would like, in our big dream to have a dance center where dance writers could go. Students of dance could go to look up information. You could have costumes on display. We would also like a DVD that could be handed out for schools, public, anyone else to plop it in and take a quick look at the history of dance in Minnesota. Maybe an interactive website that would allow people to have a conversation with choreographers and other artists. To get this started in terms of history our group has decided to write a page for the big book of dance so that those of us who have had a history and connections with different, that it is kind of our lineage. Our history. Our own oral history put on one page to be collected by Louise Robinson and then we will get it out for other people to see.

No session notes.

Session 6

How can we create a graduate program in dance here in the state of Minnesota?

No summary, no session notes.

Session 7

How can we open up the Minnesota Dance Festival to be more representative of the MN dance community? Does the dance community want an annual event that will celebrate our accomplishments? (i.e. “The Minnes”)

I am reporting on the Minnies and the annual festival which was two ideas coming together:: Andrew Wrist’s 16th Annual Minnesota Dance Festival and this idea that Stuart Pimsler has been brewing for over five years and now feels confident in bringing it to the floor of an annual recognition, celebration for various dance practitioners, and organizations that support dance, advocates, emerging dance. Anyway, just to talk a little bit more about the “minnies” and the idea is that if people are interested, they should contact Stuart. We will be the point person and at first, it has to be a group effort. There has to be some sort of collectives that come up with the categories and that help on what Stuart thinks on a low budget basis, could get this thing off the group to recognize different artists.? Anything more you want to say Stuart. I have his e-mail address on the bottom of these notes if you want to contact him but there were a lot of ideas floating around and a lot of categories and Minnesota Nice. The Minnesota Dance Nice Community that doesn’t want a lot of hierarchy and that kind of thing so we were thinking broadly but also do want to emphasize that people have been here and should be recognized so that exists. That was a great idea and that may or may not lead into this other idea of an annual dance festival or hooking into Andrew Wrist’s Annual Dance Festival which is happening in the Fitzgerald Theatre in downtown St. Paul April 28-May 1st. It is hosted by Andrew Wrist. He puts that together. A lot of marketing money into that and not as much as artist support but that can grow. He is interested and he threw out the idea of taking on other duties like being a clearinghouse like being a resource, etc., etc. but obviously he is a one-person show right now in that regard. A lot of these ideas about a new federation or organization, he has sort of offered that up. The thing is everyone has to step up and today isn’t just about talking and throwing out ideas. It is also about stepping up to the plate and doing that and his e-mail address is also at the bottom of these notes.

Conveners: Andrew Rrist and Stuart Pimsler

Participants: Anne Marie, Olive B., Kristin, Jim L, Neal C., Andrew Rist, Mary Harding, Stuart Pimsler, Sandy Agustin,

Session Notes:

Concern for how dancers get time and recognition... "mini" based on Mini Minoso, baseball player...

Jim L: concerns are that people get recognition without judgement..how do you include people and make them feel comfortable? And the dance festival idea...what about something that is semi-annual, to try to capture people that travel so much...if there was a Minnesota Festival and something more, so that there is a continuum. Various sized events...

SP: can't there be a planning committee for 'mini's' ...

JL: should be a sense of interest in finding people who are developing...planning needs to reach out to artists in the community...

AR: Mn Dance Festival has been happening for 16 years...the "mini" could easily be done as part of the festival, but there has been fewer resources....there is available space for a week, why not use it? It's so open...it seems exclusive, but it's not.

OB: The Contact Improv festival. the committee has to re-elect and select the next year's panel

JL: could there be an additional amount added to ticket prices at different festivals? There has to be a monetary worth at the forefront of this. The festival should definitely support paying artists.

NC: There are a lot of goals for one thing to carry...what is the goal of the festival? To celebrate? To market? With a lot of these things, you can't have so many goals to be practical.

AR: Through the festival, they have an opportunity to see many different artists in the same venue/event. The notion that "dance is invisible" is right on. We need to build audiences and expose these dancers to new people. We are constantly trying to bring in the same people/audience. How do we get people recognized...so when I go into a theater, it frustrates me because it's the same people. Few people in the audience. Marketing is a huge problem. I think it's a starting point...maybe it can expand into doing the "mini" at the same time or it could evolve into something else.

Ann Marie: why does it have to happen in a theater? Why not pull it out to some other space? You're talking about dance every night...limited the expenses to somewhere else.

AR: I agree. Schools have been involved. These are people who have never had a professional experience.

OB: A healthy festival would be all kinds of dance and spaces. She works in site-specific work.

SP: Contrary to too many things, I'm wondering about folks ideas about the "mini"...

AR: We thought about awards for several years. How to recognize someone's work over someone else's...? At the same time, I think it's great to validate the work that is happening here.

Mary Harding: There has to be a process and procedure. I like [the mini] awards...but the biggest problem is seeing the same people all the time.

OB: it doesn't have to be expensive. Could be the categories of creativity in setting up the awards? I thought that the awards that Debra Thayer started has been a great idea.

JL: What about cable TV? Great way to get visibility... visual has become so overwhelming...

SA: Artists of color..how do they get hooked in? There needs to be a visible resource?

SP: Talking about MPR: obvious things are DANCE CRITIC, VISIBILITY, a thing that we can do that doesn't have to take a lot of money. I think it should be bold, but there will still be people who don't feel satisfied. I think we could do it fairly quickly, and can be BOLD, and make a statement. To walk in this room was enough, just to see so many people in this room. I feel that I have a responsibility

...

JL: If we establish something that celebrates, but where it goes somewhere..get it on tv and so that it doesn't sit in our community [only]...wouldn't it be great if we got a program on cable?!

AR: What you're talking about would take more effort than what we're talking about. I'd like to see this thing happen. We have space, for next year...

THIS YEAR THE FESTIVAL IS: Fitzgerald Theater in downtown St. Paul. This April 28 - May 1st, 2004. Hosted by Ballet Minnesota.

MH: I really think the idea of celebration is really important. History is in this room. I think that there is a feeling in Minnesota is that we don't want to make anyone better than anyone else. An award is something that opens doors. I'm not a different teacher than I was, but I have trust and faith in people that this community could use it.

SP: Other people in the community thought the Bush Fellowship was a George W....!!!

?: I want to share with people and want them to share with me.

OB: Every year the categories can be revisited...

SP: I'm curious, how would we recognize people...do you have ideas about that?

AR: Could be a people's choice award?

JL: What about the idea that there are various kinds of awards and honorary awards (length of time)

SP: Who should be empowered to do this?

Ideas: A group of people has to do it first, then wherever it falls, is where it goes.

- Emerging Choreographer
- established company/choreographer
- Dance Educator
- Interdisciplinary/collaborative
- Dance theater
- Modern, Ballet,
- Design.....costume, lights, etc.
- New on scene
- Orgs that have helped dance; advocates, senators, funders?

- Innovators

How is this different from McKnight dance and choreographic awards? Not exclusive. It's the community celebrating these entities.

Is it an evening of awards? Do these awardees get to present? Should be an evening that is fun. Formal dress....celebration and entertainment. Where many different people turn out. Expensive visibility.

One night.

Is it assumed that Stuart is the "steward" of this idea?

SP: Five years ago, I wasn't comfortable putting this out there, but I would certainly be interested in putting a lot of myself into it. Stuart will be the point person... if there is a consensus that this thing should happen, then I will be the "it".... and want to throw out that we lose the word "award" and use RECOGNITION/ACCOMPLISHMENTS....

Andrew Rist is the point person to connect regarding the MN Dance Festival....might take up where the MDA left off.

Kristine: There are many young people that don't know where to hook up.

AR: There is about 75K of marketing and advertising and remarkably, it's dwarfing the festival. Target (artist fees), marketing comes through City Pages, Simon Delivers

SP: Other festivals, I associate there are more ideas. Have you AW thought about this?

AR: Last year I opened up to displays, etc., I doubt that there's any idea that I would turn down....people power...there's a lack of people power. I've wanted an evening of "cutting edge" and young choreographers....the thing is to get more people...this year we have an audience of 3,000, we hope for it to grow.

JL: Could you spread the festival throughout the year?

We should open the call for categories up to the entire community...

AM: Last year I did something

AR: have to see the festival as what it is and not what it CAN be....it sometimes gets assumed under the idea that it is a BALLET FESTIVAL and not an open....

Next Steps:

- Announce the Festival - Andrew Rist: andrewrist@earthlink.net
- Contact Stuart Pimsler: spdanth@aol.com

Session 8

Is it possible to share/create cooperative funding sources and what would that look like? How can we encourage more funders to acknowledge the value of dance and support more dance artists?

We addressed the issues of funding. Come on over and how perhaps we could share resources in order to develop strength in the community and greater visibility and what seems to be the recurring theme, at least my own personal observation is that we need to rally and marshal the energy and resources in this room to develop a community coalition that can serve as a central communication point. That can serve to tell us about upcoming events that can serve to help promote and even increase the number of dance community events to help share in visibility and just to help with out funding issues. In that, many themes emerged. We talked about the need for value in marking to be an exceedingly important issue that we need to have prominent events and several of them to move deep into the community and to showcase the depth of talent that exists in the community. What we suggested again, as has been brought up previously, that we incorporate and talk to folks at larger venues such as the Orpheum, etc, and perhaps promote our projects there. We talked about a place to share these resources and house these resources, a communication place. Perhaps a grant writer or fundraiser that could be a point of contact or a department that could be a point of contact. The funders who were there definitely felt that institutionalization is necessary for us to get the ongoing grant support that we needed and so the establishment of another dance alliance or nonprofit organization could really help us to obtain those funds.

Briefly, funders were inviting dance companies and dance artists to let them know about their work, their issues, about concerns within the community to really keep the dialogue open and to invite them not only to performances but also classes and workshops, rehearsals, just to really have an open dialogue and consider the relationships with funders as not something that happens through the mail but something that is really about letting them know the work that we are doing and inviting them more into what we do. We also touched briefly on other ways to expand funding sources so that we don't have to solely rely on foundation and corporate support and that touched on things like touring. There is a growing network of venues in the state of MN that want to present dance and the State Arts Board and the MN Presenters Network has information available about who these people are and contact information about them. Again just raising the general question of are there ways that companies can pool their needs so that we can form critical mass, what if several dance companies shared an administrator or marketing or other ways we can work together so that can have access to greater resources.

Convener: Catherine Baumgartner, Deb Skophammer

Participants: Cindy Gehrig, Bob Booker, Catherine Baumgartner, Deb Skophammer, Arwen Wilder, Noa Stark, Jaana Matson, Tri, Chris, Colete, Rebecca Cusick, Beth Hennessy Tapestry Folkdance Center, Lise Houlton, Donna Bachman MN Dance Theatre

Session Notes:

- 3 funders present at this session
- 501c3 organizations; Guthrie, etc. Dance community has lagged in 501c3 organizations
- Funding for choreography is better in this area due to fellowship programs
- Most small and mid-size companies desperately need an administrator and can't afford one. Is there a way to better institutionalize the field and combine resources?
- Choreography led to history and infrastructure of dance, but less history of major companies in this area. More support goes to individual dancers.
- AS well as administrative collaborative, there is needed an infrastructure for networking information. A centralizing company to stand in as a flag ship organization.
- Will emerging artists, collaborative opportunities are overlooked if a "flagship company" (Xenon) receives the majority of attention/funds?
- Marketing opportunities often drive funding.
- Demand: as a grantmaker the number of proposals from theatre is much higher than dance. Community must create own demand may forcing funders to recognize by increasing applications for funding.
- How to seek opportunities to go beyond the cities and tour in outlying regions. Small companies and independent artists should find opportunities in this area. Outlying areas looking for reasonably priced product for new or existing venues in St. Cloud, Princeton, Duluth, Morris, etc. The network of MN presenters can facilitate block booking. The list of presenters is available from the Arts Board or the Presenters Network. One on one phonecalls enable the relationships
- Experience is that it's not difficult to find the venues, but they do not have the funds, the gigs are a cut of the box office with no travel fee.
- The economy is improving, and our current issues are more related to advocacy than economy, so the dismal situation is beginning to improve.
- Heartland Arts fund registry is the large Midwest organization to help fund and promote to mid-size opportunities. Crossing these barriers is productive
- Could the community designate a grant writer, a focal point and development director of the community. Conflicts of interest could be challenging, as many companies and individuals would be competing.

- What is the division between classic non-profit activities and more commercial enterprises?
- Possibly grant writing workshops and assistance would facilitate beginning grant writers.
- Available grant writing seminars have not been customized to dance. Could workshops be specific to the discipline, possibly sponsored by the Dance Dept. at the U. Bob Booker's org. is willing to collaborate in this.
- Roster artists who have had the experience in the schools can share their tips and tricks; how do you work with diverse groups in an educational setting, etc.
- The Dance Alliance used to provide a lot of general operating structure. Was the large size the problem, and would several smaller organizations be more wieldy and fundable? Can some functions be shared,(marketing, touring, grant writing) without centralizing all administration? How can smaller organizations pool resources to hire experts/professionals in each of these areas?
- The information sharing coordination role seems to be absent in the community right now. Southern Theatre has been facilitating this network, but it may grow too large to accommodate this way
- The Dance Alliance was a chute for new people to enter the community. Decentralization has made this difficult
- Could the space on the 6th floor Hennepin Center be used/funded/run as a collaborative presentation/audition/general use space?
- Carlo Cuesta...
- Independent Center for the Artists is another low-cost option.
- Can be hired on an independent basis at low-cost at Creation in Common.
- What would be the most valuable use of the dollar for dancers? Bob Booker has 2 individual programs now, the artists's initiative program to build careers and a new program for artists of color, Cultural Community Partnership Grants to create work in collaboration. If new money appeared, where is the biggest need? Space, operating,
- For the State Art's Board education is seen as a specific priority; Arts in Education programs. Recent bump in NEA money is going to education.
- For Jerome or McKnight small grants are critical and touring and operating support need funding.
- Define a small grant: \$800 to \$3000

- Recent study asked what would you do with \$10000 to advance your work? 2 key answers; many covered the hidden costs rarely funded (daycare, car repair, etc) and quick turnaround, low labor applications (outcome criteria only, 3 week turnaround, 2 pages). Answers resulted in a database of conditions in the field.
- “Give me money to do some new works”. Everything is in place but the funding to do a show
- How closely do funders look at the end result; ticket sales, reviews, performance quality etc? Varies by funder. Ask the funder how they gauge priorities for success. Ideally a mid-term review benefits the partnership. From funders perspective assessment drives the depth of future goals and considerations.
- Cultivation: what funders don't attend performances, and how do you get them there? How to make them respect and fall in love with your work. Invitations to rehearsals, updates and notes on progress, ask for help and networking opportunities. Bring the experience back to the funder's office. Educate funders with information on relevant issues, distributed articles. Personalize and nurture those connections with intervals in the funding organization. Your name has to recur over time before recognition and legitimacy take root.
- What responsibilities to funders who currently fund dance have to encourage colleagues and other funders to increase funding of dance? Host a briefing, advocate, etc.
- Video, required by funders but difficult for smaller companies to finance
- Bob Booker, there is movement on the national level. The Nat'l Endowment is receiving increased federal funding. Join MCA Mn Citizens for the Arts.
- Do organizations share or guard information? Share, however this is one of the first venues some have known of for this type of communication.
- Butterfly: Maralyn Habermas-Scher founder of Dance Alliance. If need is to have movement as a value in the state at large, will facilitating that need loosen funding? Seeding the question to consider how it underlies the difficulties with having dance valued.
- Arwen; lives off of and loves the foundations, but would like to move away from that dependence. How can we be supported by the community that values us, rather than exclusively the public & private grantmakers. How do we tap the other resources? Conceptualize as non-profit recipient, creative independent contractor and educational resource
- Butterfly from the Cabaret convening: Marketing, to alter the self-image and perspective of dancers/ small groups to approach alternative commercial sources for support for events (Target, etc)

- Prominent events to move deeper into the community and resources and showcase the depth of talent, how do we move beyond Hennepin Avenue and showcase more work?
- How do you bring local folks into larger venues, Orpheum, Stomp, etc. Opening acts? How can this be approached
- Request for more visibility and involvement in events
- Increasing support and funding streams through centralized space, funding, venue, communication, collaboration
- Recommendation of funders; going independently to outstate venues
- Increase communication between dance, funding and press community
- Continued advocacy for public funding
- Would another Dance Alliance increase opportunities for funding? Yes.
- The centralized space with coffee pot and a bulletin board is fundamental to community.
- Propose easier grant process for smaller amounts with shorter turnaround
- Work on discipline based workshops
- Invite funders, presenters and media to be part of the process and true partners
- Incorporation is important part of being fundable
- Promote public values and early outreach to build long-term relevance and funding
- The Dance funding community itself has some responsibility for communicating priorities with own colleagues
- How can dance artists do a better job of communicating what dance is all about? Familiarity breeds demand. How do we better articulate, rather than merely feel the value?
- Importance of documenting work with technology and funding to share and support funding proposals>

Session 9

How do artists of ethnic dance forms who are not of the “blood” legitimize/validate their art for the dance community, funders and the general public?

What was interesting in our conversation is that we looked at two sides. Not only those who are not from a certain ethnic origin presenting an ethnic dance but also those who are from an ethnic origin who are presenting not their dance but another type of dance so those were some of the questions. A stereotyping that tends to kind of happen sometimes. We all kind of decided that we had similar concerns about gaining the legitimacy of a dance form and this was also social dancing forms too, not just ethnic and folk dance forms as a true art form. Both in the traditional ways. Sometimes we are expected to present them traditionally but also being able to expand those dance forms with more contemporary additions. Developing art beyond the boundaries of the actual traditional. Also the inherit cultural issues that need to be addressed as far as ethnic dance goes. Out of this conversation, we came up with the idea of an organization that we kind of called the “all inclusive dance coop” and this could be for the purpose of networking, potential collaboration projects, and having support groups that bring together a greater awareness of both arts to the general public and to recognize the needs to educate and promote the art and the need, also for us to go out and become active by joining boards and things of that sort that people could be educated on how to look at these dance forms.

Convener: Patricia Auch

Participants: Derek Phillips, Jonathan Frey, Samantha Morgan, Shen Pei, Marcus Young, Janet, McKernan, Autumn Compton, Cindy Gardner. Note – others joined the group. Everyone signed a sheet, so that will have a more complete listing of participants.

Session Notes:

Approaching funders – show that they’re sincere as to their intent in displaying the art form.

How do people of color – working from a tradition – be viewed as not only from that tradition? Chinese dance actually part of the greater art scene, not just an ethnic dance?

Person of color, doing other forms outside of his culture, finds himself with feet in lots of different worlds. Concern – how it will be viewed. What he’s “supposed” to be dancing.

Political implications of the dance being presented. Having the “right” to do a particular dance form. Can a white person do African dance?

Embrace a culture so that it can be presented properly – go to a country to understand it.

Lots of forms will disappear if they aren’t produced/preserved/presented. Wonderful way see other cultures, other art forms.

Tagging in: swing, hip hop, urban freestyle, social dance forms that aren't recognized as art forms.

Two major issues:

Legitimizing a dance form within the community.

Bringing about mainstream public awareness.

Funding panel situation – always have to take extra step which legitimizes appearance of this dance form at the table.

We're not

We're from a hybrid community – little pieces of a story thrown in – whenever some new element is added, it's no longer the original dance form. We may use a basis in a traditional dance form, but

Do we have to legitimize that dance is not easy? Maybe it is easy?

Wants to keep it alive – based in another form, but new partner and I have collaborated and now our dance is something new. Do we need to compartmentalize our dance form? Sometimes we need to use languages that others understand.

As a group – we need to educate – each other and the dance community as a whole as to what our art form is.

Ethnicities cross over – don't have to be Chinese to do or appreciate Chinese dance form.

Street dance – don't even think about it – just go out and do it. Performing on stage and shows – go spin on your head – performed for lots of people for many years – people want him to do a certain thing to “fit in.”

Improvisation is a part of many shows.

People don't understand that jazz, middle eastern, etc are improvisational dance forms. Arabic music has lots of improv – the dance form has that also.

Highly respected part of jazz is improv – same thing with the dance.

How do we get people to realize that we're dancing as an art form? What's lost in translation between improv and choreographed dance?

Nothing is lost if the interpretation is right on.

You can not get to your point, but if you're really getting to the essence of what you're trying to stay, as detailed and technique oriented as you want to be, if you do it well enough – hybrid ideas

and building on them – if you're just giving spectacle without substance – if audience is educated they'll see it.

Spend our time coming up with a language. So that we don't have to defend our dance form on a grant application. If you say you're doing ballet, jazz, line dance, etc – they will have an image in their heads about what it is. We don't have to fight against that, but we're all in the same place of feeling dance. The trance that street dancers go into – it looks difficult, because it's not familiar. Ethnic dances are community dances that everybody did – everybody knew them.

There's a wealth – some good, some bad – keep it out there.

EDUCATION has come up – keep educating each other about what we do, so that we know more about each other's dance forms. If we start here – within the dance community – it can grow from there. If we have a larger understanding of that well that's in the community, maybe that's the thing that will connect it.

The language that's used can help.

Have to educate – people are looking at forms with Western eyes – don't know what they're looking at. People look for spatial movement in middle eastern dance, but that dance form is all in the torso – it's not spatial. It's a different "language" of dance.

Cultural values in different countries can be very different from each other.

Every artistic event has to have an educational component to it, since most viewers don't have a background in that dance form. We need to know that it's an essential part of the performance.

Who has access to resources? Who has historically had access to resources? When a white woman presents herself, there are all sorts of dynamics there.

Legitimacy – wanting the respect from these funders or presenters who have a given perspective.

All visual art forms – gets down to the dancer.

Street and folk dancing – what you watch on the corner or at a party – it's hard to make that jump to it being great on a stage? Will people want to come and watch it in the theater? Maybe we need more resources in marketing, to the funders as well as to the public.

Hip Hop classes are the biggest draw at Zenon. Several Hip Hop groups have rented space from Jawaahir.

Get us onto one track – what do we really want out of this session? Clarity.

To find the best way to interpret what we want the public to see and hear.

Getting people to see folk dancing – includes getting them to do it. Get them to participate, then they can become more excited to see it.

How do we open the definition of dance for everybody?

Raise issue of putting this into the context of racism – appropriations – resources. How do we talk about ourselves? Present ourselves as artists? Politics of our identity.

How can you be “ethnic” if you’re white?

CONCEPT: Colorblind dancing. You don’t have to be of a culture to appreciate the culture. If we all start spouting the same message to the funders, they will begin to take it as a given.

Wants to get deeper into the understanding of the complexity of her relationship as a white woman to the history of the people from whom the dance form has been stolen. How can she fulfill her need to relate to a dance form whose tradition is not of her race?

Hula dancing – that race doesn’t want others to do it. Also – Indian – it’s tied to the religion. Several cultures don’t want others to do their dance forms for various reasons.

Even without race, just amongst groups of dancers – having a hard time when people get together – respecting each other’s dance forms.

CONCEPT

As a group, we need to somehow become part of the mainstream dance situation – serving on MRAC panels, and other panels, so there’s an educated person there representing non-traditional dance forms.

Make ourselves available with our knowledge.

Responsibilities that we have to promote our own dance form.

Ties you into the dance community.

Just had a Chinese new Year – asked designer to design program – if very Chinese in design – white person – can he really do a good job of creating “Chinese” program? Designer learned calligraphy and paper cutting – he had a chance to learn more – then he was respecting the art form and did a good job. Process of EDUCATION in the art form that leads to greater knowledge and ability to do the art form. From West – go to China to learn the art form. Lots of people who aren’t Chinese went to martial arts thing – it’s still a Chinese martial art – even if others attend. Some people look and say “You are Chinese” they think that she should be the traditional Chinese. Because the panel isn’t familiar with the art form, they think the dance should be a certain way. They ask why it looks different from what they think is traditional way. She feels like she has to always do the same thing to fit their perception. This year, chose opera music and put in some tap. Kids are very excited about it. Parents want their kids learning Chinese, not tap or anything else. Sent kids there to learn Chinese. Perception that Chinese

dance group shouldn't be doing tap. She feels that project looks forward to see how dance connects to the future. Now has problem with those kids – mostly Chinese. If you use the white kids they won't say anything – it's normal. If your group is Chinese, they ask why they can show the future? From her side – funders, parents, audience, all say “You are Chinese” and have preconceived notions.

We all talked about representation. We don't have a language amongst ourselves. Those who have to keep their companies open – if you were to put all Chinese kids on stage to tap – why can't she do that? If anyone sees racism in that, it's the audience who questions it. We can't have a discourse about these things, cause it's not about style of dance. It's about the color of our skin. Wants to see a white fgirl do manjani – it's about technique. Staying within traditions – everyone breaks them – can't do a community dance form on stage without breaking the rules.

When it comes to funding – we have a responsibility to the people we're showing it to. It's ok to present it the way, but we have to expect that there will be a reaction to what we're doing. Without some written information – without some proof that we have a reason for how we get to where we are – we don't create anything in a vacuum. We should be grateful that we have someone to disagree with us. Gives us the chance to legitimize ourselves.

Few years ago – white jazz choreographers did works to African American works. Black performers were mad that money went to white jazz artists. Wendy saw their work over the next few years – got deeper. What got really clear was why they're doing this. They deepened in their work. They had to clarify issues that were really painful.

CONCEPT

Produce a stage show where different groups come together and create a show. Each group does 15 minutes of a show.

Talk to Andrew Riss. Sp?

Dance organization where people get together and talk about what we're doing. Grass roots. No membership fees – all volunteer – just get together and talk.

Seems clear that what's needed is more coming together – more dialog – opportunities to get together and talk. In addition to an annual dance festival – an annual dance conference.

Start with list of email addresses and phone numbers. Anybody here willing to coordinate?

Jonathan Frey: willing to coordinate.

What's the defining purpose? Traditional dance forms. All-inclusive dance. Advocacy group for dance that has been under-represented? Or movement for inclusivity on MRAC panels? Both.

Hybridization is the future of everything. It's vast. Can't figure it out in ten minutes.

New World Theater. Summer institute – hip hop – bring scholars in to develop a language with young people – in the hop hop esthetic – to get at the issues that are imbedded.

Next Steps:

We all have similar concerns about gaining legitimacy for our dance form as true art forms, both in their traditional forms, but also in their contemporary and developing forms, taking them from their traditional base and stretching the boundaries as other dance forms do. Also, that there are inherent cultural issues that need to be addressed.

= Organization of an all-inclusive dance co-op for purposes of networking, potential collaboration on projects and having a support group for bringing greater awareness to both the arts communities and the general public. An ad hoc group can be one larger voice instead of each of us separately having very tiny voices.

= Recognize the need to educate and promote our unique dance forms. This concept includes the need for information sharing about the dance forms and developing a language in the forms that will make their characteristics more recognizable.

= Need for more representation on dance panels, review boards. We have a personal responsibility to get involved to make existing organizations more aware of who we are and what we do.

Session 10

How do values action and poetry intersect to cultivate aliveness in our dance work?

The first question we talked about what the difference between complexity and complication in our practices, in our work, in our community and the idea of integration being the difference between those two things. This question sort of became a model for our talk. It was very round, very multifaceted including the idea of perhaps doing this more often. We talked about Ralph Snore, audience member in Mpls. And lots of other things. It was very circular and round. One thing we came back to and sort of at the end that was very exciting was the question was how does our work relate to our world? It became sort of obvious to me that it is about that aliveness is created when people gather for the expressed purpose of an intimate connection without a decided linear direction to their gather. I pose the question because it was all conversational and so we want to present it as a conversation. For me, values really develop from lived experiences and there are principles that develop from those experiences without a form outside of us. One of the big schisms that I see is kind of a liberal schism or a liberal etiology which is where anything goes versus, dogmatic, understanding of what is right and good and these sorts of things develop from very personal experiences and body experiences and that this is our medium and so interacting with “this is our medium” in very small, contained settings like one on one is how we start to develop understandings of each other where that residence happens and putting our finger in those intersections is how we start to grow and create “to see” work.

Participants: Justin Jones, Diane Waller, Lightsey Darst, Becky Weinberg, Lisa First, and Colin Rusch (convener). Christopher Watson

Session Notes:

We began by talking about what kinds of things might be hurdles to the intersections, things that might get in the way of creating something totally new?

Colin talked about how there aren't a lot of hurdles. He is working really hard at letting others know what he is doing. Even to the point of harassing people to let them know what he is doing. This turned into people telling him things to let others know what is going on.

Developing a network of other ways of how this structure of working can work. Getting people into a space where no one knows what is going to happen

Great to have a space like this (a studio) where people know that something will happen, a question will be asked.

Colin would like to have an open studio space, so that there is a way to be ...

Lightsey talked about how it would be good to get non-dancers (writers) to be open to moving.

Colin talked about how his body is his medium. That's where the connection is because he is always himself. There is a sensibility that can always be gleaned from someone's work.

So, maybe this meeting can be a model for how this kind of work can work. What about the dilution factor? How many people are too many people for it to work?

Diane asked Lightsey how she would like to combine her poetry and dance. She talked about how as a dancer she is a student and as a poet she is the authority.

Diane asked if she has thought of turning poetry into movement. Lightsey said she thinks she would need help to be able to do that.

What if Lightsey showed up at one of Colin's open space meetings – how would he approach helping her work?

Colin talked about an aliveness – a negotiating back and forth until one or both of them feel that what is happening is touring into something. Something appropriate to the source work – the poetry or the dance movement.

We talked about how to work together with others in this way – that all involved need to be aware that this is the way the work is going to be happening.

Colin talked about keeping the work in smaller spaces to encourage more interaction. Keeping forums small in *mnartists.org*. until they are about to burst and they need to grow into a bigger space.

Justin talked about “beating a dead horse and then jumping away from it” – hammering away at the same thing and then just going in another direction entirely. Maybe the aliveness is in the beating the dead horse. Has been working collaboratively with one other person and they recently brought in 2 other people and now they are working on the same project all four of them. At the end of the process they are looking at it and they see these intersections and can't see where their individual contribution is. They used rotationary leadership. One person at a time was leading and then it became someone else's responsibility. You have to have leadership and then you have to follow.

Colin – its interesting to lead and follow at the same time.

Lisa – what about when more than one person was leading simultaneously.

Justin – people get hurt.

Issue of complexity and complication -- integrating all aspects of a creative practice into an integrated thing that is a whole.

Diane asked – how do you let an audience into the issues that you are dealing with so that they understand that complexity.

Colin replied that he tries to work as often as possible. So that people can see that it is ongoing. Talked about how his step –mom wanted program notes of the show he is doing so that she can understand it. He tries to get her to understand that when she is there that is her experience.

Becky talked about how any experience one has is totally valid. How one can enjoy a reading of poetry without really understanding the poetry.

Diane asked how do you communicate that way of experiencing work to others?

Colin talked about his recent work and how lightsey write about it.

She connected with the dancing that happened after the speaking.

Colin says this is what dance is. People can makeout in the background, go to the bathroom. Whatever. The question is is this what this medium is?

Lightsey talked about seeing a music group that she reviewed as if they were dancers because their movement was so interesting. And then she saw colins show the next night. There is a lot of difference between where people plug in. some like the character stuff and some like the dance part.

Writers are less comfortable with the process bring laid bare and dancers are more willing to shoe the rough draft stuff to others.

Justin said he knows dancers that aren't at all interested in having others see the work in progress. He is very interested in auteurs – people that are interested in the authorship of the dance. He looks to artists like this as an inspiration. He is skeptical when he sees work that is about the process of the making of the piece.

Justin talked about the idea of complexity – does the dance community need to be integrated for it to...

Many different colors showing up into one place instead of everyone merging into one color.

Justin asks how does this relate to the people that are going to come see what we do.

Diane brought up Ralph Schnorr – he is a civil engineer and he comes to every dance show. He says he comes because he loves watching the patterns. He is an expert in system analysis. What we are really talking about is how systems take root and change.

Christopher says he has a very simple reason for being there and that makes him particularly open to what he sees.

Lisa talked about a person she knew in Boston that came to everything and he got a signature from every performer. His obsession was connecting with the performers in a superficial way but a connection nonetheless.

What if there could be an announcement before each show that “you don’t have to get it” because it is such a blocker.

Becky said – what if there could be some way of stopping the performance and ask the audience how what they are seeing made them feel.

Colin - Values are deeply held thing that are experienced at a bodily level. (feels that we are getting to the heart of the question)

Diane – there is a real value about being an artist all the time.

Colin – notion of values. That aren’t related to lived experience. And a dogmatic sense as well. (?)

Diane – what we are trying to instill is that we are seeing more than what our prejudices are allowing us to normally see.

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Next steps:

Meet at colin’s studio to talk more at a time TBD

Session 11

How and what can composers, musicians and theater artists contribute to our creative process. What laws govern copyright materials for music we dance to?

Our group was talking about collaborations among theater artists, musicians, and composers, trying to find ways to get more of that active collaboration going and then there was the related issues to licensing and royalties which seems to be kind of a circular argument. It is clear among the group that was meeting that there is a real interest in collaborating across disciplines and it really comes down to these issues of how do you find support for it and the issues of licensing were really crucial. Royalties. Trying to find ways and I think of the dance artists, choreographers and companies here are real interested in doing the right thing with respect to royalty payments and things like that. Clearly it is an extremely complicated and crazy process right now and no one at the meeting felt that this was going to suddenly clear and become much easier however there is a lot of information out there and we are trying to identify ways it could be helpful for everyone here. Mary Ellen Chiles at the Southern Theater has been working on this issue for quite a while. She has put a lot of time and energy into it and is very interested in providing this information to this group. She has offered to provide anybody information if they call her.

We also talked about the possibility of doing some kind of web service. Maybe there is some information that could be just posted possibility on the Southern Theater website or some other website so that Mary Ellen isn't totally overwhelmed with calls by everyone wanting to find out how can they pay their royalties. I think that is something that is really concrete and that could at least inform people better about what some of the issue are and how they might be able to move their connection with that issue. Other issues: we need to find other ways for people to meet other people. There has been a variety of other organizations and activities in the past that have tried to get some grass roots activity going. Getting chorographers to meet composers, getting theater artists to meet chorographers and work with other people. There is the American Composer's Forum which at times plugged into this. Meet the composers who are also interested in working on this issue. There is the International Guild of Musicians and Dance and so I think clearly there has to be some more discussion about how all of these different activities can work together and there are artists who would love to get going with improvising music and dance like Janet Skidmore. You can connect up with her directly at Patrick's Cabaret.

Convener: David Moore and Craig Harris

Participants:

David Moore
Craig Harris
Manju
Janet Skidmore
Colin Rusch
Genevieve Bennett
Bonnie Mathis
Sarah Cain

Mary Ellen Childs
Beth Brody
Leni Darrow
Cathy Wind
Robert Harman

Session Notes:

GB – Is on an internship at CTC is considering relocating, here to meet people in the community.

BM – artistic Dir at Ballet Arts, train dancers and commissions dancers and composers to create work. Performs about three times a year.

CW – has tap performance company and runs a dance studio has performed with SPCO and others. WE think of ourselves as half dance and half music. We are in the dancer world and in the musician world making music with our feet.

MEC – have collaborated with choreographers and also incorporates movement into her creation of music, runs the McKnight program for choreographers and dancers has been composer in residence at Concordia, Southern and elsewhere. I have been involved in music rights questions as they pertain to dance.

SC – has a background in costumes, dance, theater and related arts. Looking at ways in which it works together.

BB – As a choreographer I recently worked with composers who gave me permission to work with the music of contemporary composers. Making the connections was productive and they gave me permission.

RH – Dancer in town will soon be creating his own work, also musician and drummer trained in different styles, background in African and other ethnic forms, seeks collaboration with musicians.

CH – wears two hats with Ballet of the Dolls, have done shows there with live, or original music at the shows. I have tried to encourage more of that as part of the shows. I am also a composer and have worked with hem and with other companies and video and others for the last 30 years, I am interested in the intersection of different art forms and bringing different elements together. The problem we have had is that there was no other funding to get composition. I was able to pay other performers and not me. I have been part of conversations with Meet the Composers, American Composers Forum and others, nothing has come of those efforts.

LD – What were the main ideas from that meeting?

CH – WE talked about how to get original and live music into dance shows. There is a huge amount of interest, but resources are the biggest problem. No resources are allowed be it for licensing, or for creating and performing new work with musicians. The budget for adding music

can be very prohibitive. For the rehearsals, artistic. I am concerned about the license issues, many people don't say anything, for many of the production companies they don't know how to or have access to get permission. It is hard to get the information and the permission and to manage that work, to determine how to pay, how much to pay.

MEC – It is tricky and I can see that the future is for things to shift in the future. Intellectual property will have to change in the future, all music is considered intellectual property and must be licensed, when it is performed with dance there is not the same avenue as with ASCAP and BMI for concert performance. In Dance, Theater and Opera rights must be negotiated directly with the owner of the copyright. There is no single agency you can go to, you must contact every single copyright owner.

DM – Is different if the work has had a copyright lapse? Older work.

MEC – If you are using recorded music you need rights for the music and the performance of the music. The fees are entirely negotiable, to \$25 to \$200. Some are negotiable and some are very willing to work with you.

RH – When you say it is changing do you think that it will go away?

MEC – No, but it is so easy that you can get the information and it is too easy to copy, it will have to change to accommodate the modern reality.

DM – there may be new legal issues coming up in the future. Now that things are more available there are new problems.

RH – How do we get the information out about what we should be doing?

MEC – Southern hosted a gathering in January about these issues, and from there we can just share the information, I am willing to be a resource and to answer questions. I have people telling me what they learn, but I can't know everything.

BM – Everybody does it, but, it does not become right, it seems that it must be ok because we all do it.

MEC – Bigger companies learn that it is more expensive to be sued than to figure it out and pay.

DM – This is actionable, we can disseminate this information easily.

DW – this could be spread through the venues.

MG – I often sell my work outright.

BB – I thought that for classroom use it was ok,

MG – There is an organization for music in dance IGMD, we created it because the Am Composers Forum did not support music for dance. WE know the history of music and dance. The place for music in dance classes.

BB – I run into this with video and we had one made for Nutcracker and the projection person somehow had the rights to the video and we could not show our video because he had rights to it.

MEC - It sounds like a contract problem. There can be an issue with collaborating artists about who owns the works, usually each collaborating artists keep the rights to the contribution that they made.

DM – In the end anything can be negotiated and arranged and should be put down in writing, It is whatever the participating artists agree to. In the theater, most is subject to performance rights, we have to rent the rights for the play to produce and perform it. The designers, actors and presenters have no rights.

CH – When performing recently at the Ordway, they charged us ASCAP and BMI from the Ordway based on seats, tickets and other things for the amount of our license. I don't know what we paid for with that.

MEC – I don't know what they may have been charging you for.

CW – But for dance studios you have to pay ASCAP and BMI to use music in your classes.

CH – We pay those fees as well, but it covers classes and recitals, but not paid events.

BB – If you had a brochure or flyer, you could explain fair use and composer and label rights and those questions. Fair use....

MEC – I will see about having that online or otherwise available. There is also a nice publication from Meet the Composer “The Composer, Choreographer Commissioning Handbook” It gives guidance and is now out of date, it will be new in a year or more, the old one has some good information on it.

MEC – concert and pure music use is covered through the ASCAP and BMI license.

RH – Would McKnight be willing to get the information from Meet the Composer out to people.

MEC – I envision a fund for music for dance, a place that choreographers could go to for license fees, to pay musicians, to pay composers etc...

Manju – I have seen most-often that companies have composers in their budgets, that fee has never been turned down, the composer often has to get the money in order to collaborate.

CH – I don't specifically agree that the funding exists for commissioning of music for dance and performance. I think that there is limited funding. There are many people that take the funding before you can consider the music.

Manju – We have faced this issue for years, How do you get work.

JS – Does the Am Composers Forum have anything to do with this?

DM – It is on their interest list.

CH – It is the same issue from a different perspective. They are interested in supporting the activity, but it is low on the spectrum of focus.

JS – I am finding the problem of getting people to collaborate in improvisation. I see that people don't

SC – What about having more connections between composers and dancers, maybe ask more musicians to play in class. How do we work together on a daily basis? They could improv in the class and grow the relationship, what about a resident composer, or musician.

Maju – That is how it exists, and when it works. I have done it for my whole career.

CW – We would like to have live musicians, but cannot afford to have them in our rehearsals.

Manju – The role of dance composers and accompaniment is dying, the battle has been difficult. We had trouble in ACF we were drowned out, and ICMD had had a different role to build that.

LD – This may come back to building audiences, increasing ticket prices and other issues. Reaching out to other audiences may be served by greater collaboration between forms and ethnic groups and traditions, there may be a way to fund efforts to reach out to other audiences, multi-cultural experiences.

CW – My group has worked with SPCO, Tyco Drumming and Jazz musicians we have found that we need to learn how dancers and musicians speak we had to learn how a dancer could ask for what they want from a musician.

Manju – I think that Young Audiences does great work in this area. Many dancers are not able to communicate with musicians.

BM – There was a workshop where a dancer and composer were linked up and later stayed together. We have not had those

Summary:

- Rights issues, get the word out and do it
- Figure out how to connect people musicians and dancers
- Funding will be a follow-up issue

Next Steps:

Session 12

How can I gain respect and awareness, both in the arts industry and with the mainstream public for a dance form that's considered social/recreational, but not really an art form?

No summary, no session notes.

Session 13

How do we bring to and sustain dance in public education? What needs to happen so that every kid in Minnesota dances?

Our group discussed how do we bring dance into the schools and sustain it. What needs to happen so that every kid in Minnesota gets to dance. First, there was a discussion, a sense that although dance in the school is very modern based and that people here are mostly modern based, an opinion from the group, that dance education is really about many different views and experiences of dance and that we all agreed that an aesthetic impression and an aesthetic approach. We also realize that we didn't even, among our group, know about the different whelms of success that is happening in studios, in K-12 schools, Perpich Center, the Dana Semi Kana, in other groups. We often don't know about each other, which lead to discussions about the need for a statewide association. Some kind of coalition that may more directly work to influence public policy and advocacy. We talked about the sense, what hear sometimes, what we believe is that funding effects decisions about budgets and curriculum but really it is the values that affect those decisions and that is where our work is globally as well as in the schools is surfacing the value of dance in everyone's lives. We know that. How do we explain it and reiterate the practical need for it in our communities and schools. When that happens, then we will have it in the schools more readily. Suggestions beyond this: need for more conversations perhaps convened by Perpich Center and a discussion about dance educator's coalition, which was wonderful, and reaffirming the need for that emotional support, that individual teaching practice and the restoration. But the piece of active advocacy is clearly ahead of us and one that needs to be entered into.

Convener: Steve Norlinj-Weaver, Diane Aldis

Participants: Jerry Lopez, Laura Selle, Beverly Cott, Florence Cobb, Genevieve Bennett, Janet Skidmore, Matt Janewski, Kathy Mohn, Michael Engel,

Recorder: Kathy Mohn

Session Notes:

As participants introduced themselves, these are some of the concerns they expressed. I don't have a name with each comment.

Dance in education is important in order to grow audiences through teaching, building audiences, starts at the beginning. ---Every kid dances and keeps dancing. Dance, not just to be a special thing, but to be accessible to all children,

If the schools are going to standard based education, make sure that dance is one of the standards and is supported.

If you put it in the schools, it better be done right. Can't get kids interested unless you get parents interested.

Florence Cobb: Seen this discussion since 1968, dance often ignored. Hope to see education accept dance. Time for dancers to take a stand.

Marilyn Habermas-Scher: concern about future, and wonder how the underlying value of teaching value of movement can be heightened as a value in the state.

Janet Skidmore: even after 20 years, same questions when go into the schools. MPR's series on physical education. Movement taught for athletics, not expression, even therapeutic. If the only activity in schools is negatively received (many in her class had negative experiences in PE as a child, how to keep people physically active and keep the programs positive.

Genevieve Bennett: theater director

Michael Engel: Dance specialist, K-8 a lot of academic and social goals that his school has that need to be integrated into the program. Get the value more in the public's eye. Many don't understand dance education. Not easy communication.

Kathy Mohn, Dance specialist Linwood. Many aspects to the question of academics and dance as art both

Carol Tordoff: involved in dance education for 25 yr. In this community. Questions sound the same. However, great potential for us to be more cohesive group through U and PCAE. Seems like we have no core now that the Dance Alliance isn't here. In Salt Lake City the university is an incredible anchor in the community, disseminates information, a center for the life of dance in that community. Other arts have that in Minnesota, because when the Dance Alliance went away, that organizational structure is needed.

Esther Granba's a dance studio, social dance plus belly dance, Haitian etc. space open for rehearsal.

Laura Selle. Performer, teacher, residency,

How does the Dance Educator's Coalition fit? It has a different mission, to support people who work in education in the state. Look at the diversity in this room, many different aspects of dance.

The need for an organization that can pull us all together.

Will this organization be the one to communicate with the public schools? The advocacy piece is important. The studio dance teachers have a support system Dance masters organization.

MMEA, music educators organization. Can there be a comparable organization?

Many different points of view, yet there are dance standards in the state. Dance in the schools, and standards in place, how do we convince districts to embrace the standards?

Dance in the past was incorporated in physical education. It was valued to do dance.

Steve: raised the question from a selfish point of view. Dance is driven by budget. Would like to see dance as a fine art have more importance. Want licensed people doing dance programs. If you can begin at K and bring it all the ways through. If you can't afford to have a dance specialist What can we do?

Diane Aldis: does provide training and dance specialist into the school through the PCAE.

Steve-when you have a specialist, the planning time with classroom teachers. For a number of years, partnership with the Minnesota Opera, now the program is carried on by the fourth grade teachers.

Building the dance experience, how do you get every body there? Need to present the research that is there.

The concept of dance in the popular culture: who defines it? Dance is a basic human experience. Think about ways to do it otherwise. An organization that sends artists for free and the goal is that as the schools see the value, they will take over the program. They need a movement life of their own to appreciate the importance of dance and movement for their students.

Twin Cities visibility not as central as it was, major concerts in the week instead of weekends

What the schools can do is limited. (Michael Engel) Minneapolis Public Schools focusing on Music and arts, not mentioning dance at all. The positive: Wendy Ansley among others giving a proposal to Sage Cowles, why couldn't we that kind of sponsorship for dance in the Minneapolis / Twin Cities public schools to create an endowment for dance in the public schools. Money that would not be used for anything else.

Individual principals have to make dance important. If you say yes to dance, then have to say no to something else. Is there a bigger public, like Sage, like Best Buy, that could do this kind of endowment to help bring and keep dance in the schools.

Janet: how do you market dance to those corporations.

Go back to the state and colleges for funding.

Can the local corporations provide resources, even tickets to performances?

If you want kids to dance, have to make compromises. Jerry: services for free. Never charge to teach a class. Make it accessible. Kids come in because they see the connection between who they are and this form of dance. Making a cultural connection. Nevertheless they also experience that the art department doesn't acknowledge the dance form as an art. When I (Jerry) look at the art that has become institutionalized, art form can be corrupt. How can we learn and teach the authentic dance forms of the cultures. Definitely need funding, but we have a different philosophy: we offer things for free. We are successful with schools we have come for three years. None of the dancers get paid, but want to make it available.

Genevieve: a logistical question. Do you have grants that support you?

Jerry: some performances have donations. Everyone has full time job outside of dance experience.

Dance is alive in the communities. i.e., the Hispanic community. If these groups can be connected to the schools, the vitality of dance can enrich the schools.

Michael: Most cultural dance forms will be vibrant in their communities. But concert dance forms how to keep concert dance forms alive. And funded.

How can we give a unified picture of dance in relation to the dance standards? How can we market dance so that schools see the value. We have very different points of view about dance.

Janet: propose another meeting to address a meeting about this issue.

Florence: a canopy to have access to everyone focused on dance. Music has an overriding organization that feeds into Music education. Dance doesn't have that. Instrument is the body. Don't need anything else.

Genevieve: Have to make choices. The possible corporate sponsorship. Now how to "testify" about the value to people who can give you the resources.

In the public schools to teach the standards.

The importance of being able to manage behavior. A licensed teacher has the training and the legal status to manage students in the public schools.

Diane: There are standards in place that are compatible with any form of dance, but many schools are not aware of them. You really want to affect the decision makers. It's not just the information; it has to do with a change in values. An aesthetic or therapeutic justification.

Jerry: all the arguments of athletics have to justify their participation; same argument can be made for dance.

Session 14

Who will be the interface between the public and performance? --- Editors, critics, spokespeople? How will they be supported? How can writing (journalism, etc.) help? What is the function of dance writing?

We talked about the intersection of dance and writing and it was a fairly large group. We had a lot of different takes on it. Some of us were more interesting in using text in performance. How dancers can use text. Others coming from the writing side were more interested in how to write about dance. What is the most useful way to write about dance? I think the main part of the conversation revolved around the question of how to get dance writing out there which is something I think a lot of the other groups have touched on is how do we create an audience and how do we let people know what is going on? We talked about this a lot of different ways. How do we, people in the dance community, know what is going on with other dancers and then also how do we get this out to the public at large? We talked about the dearth of dance criticism in major outlets. Also, the fact that we just don't seem to know what is going on. People get a lot of postcards but you just have the feeling that you are missing things every weekend. We did talk a lot about different venues. The southern, Dana Holstad is putting together an e-mail newsletter you should contact her if you want to be part of that e-mail list. We talked about the end of the dance alliance and where their e-mail list went to. Also, the Walker is involved in a website. Minnesota MN artists.org. and they have some of the information from the dance alliance so there are two places to go to and we also talked about the possibility of, I don't know, like Zeen, a little printed thing. All kinds of different ways to get the information out there.

Convener:

Participants:

Session Notes:

Who can we deem the critic? Who are the spokespersons for dance? What is the most useful way to write about dance (reviews, criticisms, essays, articles)? How does writing support dance?

Preview, review, or things in-between.

Newspapers, journals.

How do you writing in dance?
Materials, text

Interplay between words and movement. Deb Skophammer

Void in rich, textured dance criticism. Every review reads like a book report. Why is it that that is the state of dance writing? Writing contributor. Justin Jones

Derek Phillips: networking and cross-pollination and how we may do things together. Getting the word out to all segments of the community.

Becky Weinberg: Experiences the world in reading, writing. Reviews, writing is a way to get the word out.

Britta Jackson: Here for the alliance question. Write but has editor. Editor reviews work.

Dana Holstad—Southern Theater employee. Dance Alliance—newsletter writer, e-mail for dance community. Development associate as Southern—friends lamenting about not having a newsletter. What if any of the other functions Dance Alliance organization could we do?

Serious lack of dance writing/topic in the community.

Laura Sully. News Tribune Duluth dance writer (boyfriend). Vision: how can he come here and increase visibility. Different views/perspectives needed in terms of review. More literary ways to promote dance.

Deb Thayer—Dancemaker. Writing assist to bring artists together and attract others to field. Writers could convene with artists and ongoing dialogue: writer and artist work together to develop written work. Audience development—pamphlet for audience—history of artists, dance work, pieces. Frustration—lack of validity in art form is because we don't have something tangible. Music community—have written literature; dance does not have this. Hopes to work together with writer.

Carol Kordoff—Dancer, artist/educator for 25 years. Squeaky wheel to get larger institutions, Walker, University to loan support to help to create another vortex for dance in the community. Central locale for collective work, communication piece and disorganization—we have no muscle. We don't have a dance critic at either major newspaper. Hope to have a broader exposure in Twin Cities. No strength—not cohesive, whole.

Michael Engel—interest in writing different toward children's dance books and dance video. Public education dance specialist, dramatizing, dancing them, and writing them with children. Dance videos favorite genre—tries to broaden genre to broader picture. How can writing help to help to enhance dance and dance artists? Not familiar with publishing—with children, video the product is important to them. Audience: people, teachers, dance from the perspective of a middle school child.

Marcus Young—Starvation for good writing of dance. If we can't muscle our way into the newspapers, Marcus would help in a collective dance newsletter.

Julie—Editor of Journal of Dance Education (official magazine) looking at dance of art education. Issue dance and sexuality—sexploitation. Julie Kerberry.

Brian Sostek—Dancer, actor, writer. Dance other than video, difficult to capture in words. Dearth of good dance criticism. We are in a capitalist market driven system—dance is not an interest/marketable.

Julia Tehven—not a writer, but reads. MPLS paper covers events, criticism, articles, interviews. Nothing in the St. Paul Pages. City Pages—music. There is so much going on and there needs to be a good kick in the butt to newspapers to support dance. No publicity.

Jaana Mattson—visual artists. Writing as tool for marking or interpretation of the experience.

Noa Stark—Dance Alliance question, void that now exists, in the capacity to have a collective voice.

Tamra Malloy—work with children, arts educator. Children's books, children's video, children's literacy—coordinator of Book Pals, Screen Actors, book players, performers bringing books to life. Unable to teach a dance class without bringing books to class. Children had no sense of story, feeling, emotion that comes through dance. Write what you saw—about what you felt, socially what's happening, why this is done. A lot of the dance community other dancers learn through other dancers. As dance artists, dancezine idea to turn on the public at large. Huge effort to get to the papers—community papers, community dance. More community dance and not just dance classes in the local dance school. You don't have to be a dancer to dance—how do we turn on the community to be participants. Bringing dance to the community and encouraging participation.

Phillip—Walker Art Center—lack of dance coverage in local publications. Loss of dance critic 4 years ago. Met with leadership at Star Tribune—didn't work and has fallen away as a priority. Wishes to urge that Star Trib. Broader media coverage needed—dance to be reinfused as a part of the culture on a media level. Interested in the loss of the Alliance. Walker is interested in loss of alliance—and what can we do to pick up parts within mandates. Continuing with choreographers evening—learning what else may be done.

Judith--Dance writing at the University. Phillip assisted. Through dance community, writers, venues—raised money for fellowship in community. Caroline Otis, but couldn't sustain the funding. Since Mike Steele's death, newspaper decided not to keep that as a single, full-time job. There was a writer who came but decided not to apply for job. Monies are now a scholarship at the University's School of Journalism. Editors on committee. It wasn't attached to an institution—so it disappeared. We need to have a some kind of dancer martial arts people muscling editors. City Pages has said they will not cover dance. Judith now has to send a DVD and press release. Independent Center for the Artists helps with DVD.

Lithsey Darst—dance criticism stuff, giving opinion who may or may not have seen it. It seems weird. My own thoughts, opinions. What's most useful to say? What do you want to hear?

Stunned by writing—far more interesting than most critical reviews. Inviting, personal, not oppressive. Didn't cut people off. Described the work without reducing it to lowest common denominator. It was appreciative of the work, respect for the artistry of the work. Critical writing should feel like this. Fundamental respect. Inviting other people to form their own opinion. *Mnartists.org*. taking critical discourse on work. Wonderful eye for talking about dance. How are we going to support her?

McKnight Walker mn.org clearinghouse that people may tap into. New outlets as well? Hell with the press—let's go online. www.mn artists.org too closed still, but started.

Phillip—where do we get people to pay attention? Heighten the level of criticism –both need serious attention.

Mnartists—feel inclusive—not a broad audience. Doesn't like coming to concerts because everyone else knows everybody—she felt alienated.

Friends don't feel comfortable—that they are isolated. We still need the major press for broadest reach.

I like to go to dance, but I just don't "get it." Educational piece—there is often nothing to get.

Lele Pachett—Dancer, choreographer, from Iran. Supporter for arts—love you all. We are going to face our problems to make it better. Attends every performance as an usher. Dancers walk properly and so they look like snob, so that's intimidating. As an outsider—they are intellectuals, grasp things, read things. Dance is abstract. People don't get things, especially the abstract. Theater is the tutu,--they don't see those things anymore. So—they are disappointed. Immigrant from third world country—not able to join. Try to let you in, but don't belong. The way I do things is different—I feel neglected. They don't answer my calls. They are rude to me.

Judith—each person feels that way—we all have this sense of being ignored. We need to find a way to find a helpful solution. Give us one suggestion.

Lela—dancers are all soloists. They think of themselves, they are not as a group. They do not join hands together. They don't talk from their guts. They want to be together, they are not.

Judith—We are all sitting together, we are talking. I object.

How can we use the English language to increase attention to dance?

Increase the e-mail letter that Dana is editing and increase mn.org.

Dana—random study of calling. Panel at end—showed findings. 2-3 media panel. Discussion: 2 tv producers, one editor. We never get an overwhelming response from the community for a need to dance. Community needs to demand it—be vocal, be heard, be loud with papers. When they dropped the column, they would cover news. Nobody responded when it went away.

Lightsey: Star Trib not that interesting. Dance audience does not pay attention to the outlets. Zine, website, e-mail list, phone call. Real problem introducing people into the system.

Platform for reason why written dance is important. Becky Weinberg—to get 10 point documents, why written work about dance is so important.

Phillips—vitality of the TC community. Rotating—don't know the community. They don't know that this is one of the richest dance communities in the country. Revive small group effort—10 persons meet with Star Tribune. Not interested meeting with a group and being yelled at. Delegation needed. Vast middle class who do look at the Star Tribune every a.m. Willing to work with 1-2 persons to set up a meeting again/try again. Even people who write—they don't feel supported with publications. Include the St. Paul papers too.

Dana—newsletter lacking. Chance to get together informal basis. Small series, open the Southern space. Impart information. Music rights for dancers session—forum time. Very few people there at last meeting. Would people value something like that. Could a meeting be organized about this subject? Inviting publicists at meeting. Might fuel writers who are already writing with information.

How are people finding out? Could McKnight share to link us all together? Dance Alliance database?

Walker has the Dance alliance database. Southern database is seriously lacking. Walker and Southern combined both databases. Beginning step to be connected to each other.

Phillip—Walker does mailing. Walker could take the dance alliance list and employ it for some other use. At least access is available for use for other purposes.

Southern doesn't have money, manpower, to maintain it.

Mn.artist.org website could be clearinghouse for e-mail list/contacts.

Judith—dance is so ephemeral. Way to have a community memory in writing, in remembering in writing, efforts. As editors come in and leave, people now come in and out of the dance community. Always wanted to have archives, books.

Gertrude Lippincott—MN History Center. Hope was that other archives would join there. Ideas on how to archive our past.

Beautifully rich. Dana have another meeting, please.

Next Steps:

Session 15

How can local dance performers reach beyond the dance community and touch the public at large?

Obviously, with all the beautiful things that happen here, we have a lot to celebrate and I just want to tell you all that I think it is amazing. I came out of music and theater into dance so my perspective is more from that audience at large. That is where I brought the question into focus and it largely can stem from audience expectations obviously. The material being accessible and appealing to audiences that already exist like what Mel Gibson did with “The Passion.” I mean, there is a huge audience for something like that and so maybe the choreographers can think about including in their program not that particular work but learn from success by thinking about themes that audiences already exist would have a vested interest in seeing. That was one of them. Also, the idea of starting with the creation and then working toward the audience so that there is something that someone is brilliantly created and then they have convinced the audience to come see it as one concept and then on the other side was start with the audience and then work back toward the creation and our conclusion was both are true and both need to be taken into consideration which leads to subject matter. The work being timely with respect to political and social issues obviously would appeal to groups that already exist and we also talked about the warm up acts just before the main show. We should get someone in the local dance community in there also. We lost Mike Steele and I think that is a tragedy because he really followed what was going on locally in dance and I think we need to put more pressure on the media to cover what is going on locally in dance and the letter that Dana puts out from the Southern Theater, it would be great if that could be a tangible hand held letter that everyone could take out of studios and performances to see what is going on in the dance communities.

No session notes.

Session 16

How can we create a choreographic residency center for emerging, international and established artists in Minnesota?

We talked about the choreographic residency idea and I think really what we were talking about was a home dedicated to dance research for Minnesota. Ideally, this is a building which has a theater and a studio space in it. It is open for emerging and international artists. It would be space-time and equipment and also visibility for the form to develop and evolve. It is a big vision and one of the things that within the vision, that is really important is that the center fits the needs of the choreographers rather than the choreographers fitting the need of the center. One of the ideas that we talked about as a group is how can we utilize the existing spaces, the existing theaters in the twin cities right now to potentially make this idea happen during the day when the spaces are not being used. We also talked really about how we can begin this process so what happened was that we decided we needed to get seed money for the initial person to begin the research and look at existing programs that are happening in other parts of the world like Canada and New Zealand, and Australia and Europe and various other places. Do the research, come up with a proposal, and then present it. So if anyone wants to offer more seed money, we have already collected \$35.00 here from our group, you are welcome to give that to me.

Convener: Olive Bieringa

Participants: Olive Bieringa, Otto Ramstad, Jim Lieberthal, Judith Howard, Michele Rusinko, Tri Sutrisno, Jodi Collova, Laurie van Wieren, kristin van loon, Suzanne River,

Session Notes:

Teaching dance from the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties.

Olive: Developing a dedicated space for people to be able to work for two weeks or three weeks or a month. Does not have to be a product oriented thing or not. A space to cultivate without the timeframe of just renting a studio. Audience interaction and dance under the microscope. Local mostly, national and international. Geared toward choreography

Kvl: would it be a space in the twin cities?

Olive yes why not.

Jim. Go to a number of presenters and ask if they would give one dollar of ticket price to support artists, a fund to support residencies. Then you could choose to have a space with out having the challenge of maintaining an individual space. Like while oak they had stuff happening all over the place

Olive I think it is nice to have a place that is identified as a dedicated space, hard to schedule in other spaces.

Michele. Would be good to identify the needs that we have. I would like to see more grants and stuff to bring people together, universities and the professional community. A project like that would serve the college and some people in the community. But let's dream big, a center, for some companies they just need space for two hours a day. For some dancers they want dancers and they want to see their work produced.

Olive. Some people just want to play in the theater.

Michele. Composers forum. Provides musicians that can play your score to see if it works.

Judith. That could be for dance as well, dancers to do your work for choreographers.

Leili. Bringing all of the forms together in theater stuff.

Jim. Getting theaters to help provide support for people that are going to support artists that will be their main attractions later. Not just taking people out of university.

Michele. What stops people from doing their work, space, dancers, etc,

Olive, lets dream.

Kvl. In theaters what happening in the space during the day. Could we use this down time space? It could be efficient to cover some money for the theater to do this.

Otto. You could also have some people that cover that need and liaison with all the theaters.

Brinsly. You could have two weeks now, two later. Have it be ongoing consistent.

Leili. You could have dance student interns from university that could cover that.

Judith. How about six month

Olive you are then talking about a stipend.

Judith it is hard to take off just two weeks.

Olive, so you are talking about a dedicated space?

J. Yes.

j. A place were you have more space for people to work

Laurie. I see performance as a big part of the process in dance. So you have space for people to perform.

Leili. How do you record the work?

Laurie. I storyboard.

Otto. Have the space serving the choreographers vision, so that the choreographer don't have to fit the center, the center fits them.

Leili. I want to have someone new to collaborate with.

Michele. Netherlands Dance Theater that documented all the hours that they put into the show. When a huge part of the learning curve so you have a lot of time. To perform.

Jodi. There little presentation time compared to other arts.

Otto. Have time so that you can show you work as part of the process is showing the work to an audience that is a dance audience that will engage with the work without having to make it so market public.

Jim and kvl. Balls is good space for this but it is so late at night.

Jim it would be great to have a space with natural light and theater light so that you can practice in that space.

Suzanne. Lets talk about a center that there can be living, performing, rehearsing, etc. What would it take to get there?

Olive. I will research with other people exiting spaces around the world and then approach funders with a proposal.

Michele. Look at existing models from other art forms and see how they support it, playwright's etc.

Suzanne. You could have many different studios so you could have multiple people working on stuff and then cross-pollinating. The biggest thing for me is space; I am tired of being of being jealous of funeral parlors.

Leili. We need to come together and support each other people we are not that different, we are more similar. We need to sit down together, art is not being alone, art is being together. I have been so lonely here and it is hard here because people don't come.

Michele. I think that a lot of people are coming because think of this.

Jim. If we come up with an idea that is specific enough then foundations support that.

Michele. Some of the studios in the university are empty at time. So maybe in the beginning there is a time that you don' have a dedicated space you can use other spaces.

Laurie. We can't just ask, we need to do what we want and just do that and live it.

Jim. When we go to organizations we say we are providing the space for what will grow your business in the future because we are growing the community. The one dollar on the ticket idea.

Kvl. Ticket prices are high here.

Olive. It may not be the time.

Suzanne. It is not an either or. We do our work on our own. But we also come to each other classes, interact, with each other. If we could allow ourselves to accept that we need the support then we could get the support on a broader financial support or not and we will still be happy.

Olive. Who are we? That is the first step and finding the people.

Suzanne. We show what we have. The theaters, the space to work, the dancers what they are doing and how much it costing, show the funders that.

Michele. It is important that each artists needs are not the same. I would like space to have multiple prongs to meet all of the other centers.

Howard. Space is key, center.

Olive. Can people list residencies?

Jacobs pillow. La mama in Italy in Umbria. Bates. Banff. The Yard. Wagon wheel in Nebraska. Centrum.

Who wants to help?

Jodi, brinsly, laurie, olive, otto.

Michele. It would be great to get universities together to bring in visiting artists going in the schools. Joe Chvala is coming in and they will have space to serve the artist and serve the students. The one thing that we don't have a lot is funds. If we could get five of the colleges together to get money to tour people around the state.

Kvl. You can get NPN commissioning funds to pair with a presenter. June Wilson is the new NPN person. Talk to David white too.

Jim. American Express and Target.

Brinsley. I like starting with what we have.

Otto. we could have a minimal effort to

Judith. It reminds us that we don't have a dance theater now.

Michele. I miss 6a

Judith. We don't have a venue now.

Brinsly. If one hundred people give 10 dollars we would have a bit of seed money.

Kvl would like to approach presenters that I am meeting.

(People then put in several lots of 10\$

Suzanne. We need cross-fertilization.

Next Steps: a group of people researching the ideas and developing seed money to develop those ideas: olive bieringa, brinsley davis, laurie van wieren, jodi collova, and otto ramstad.

Olive is point person, olive@bodycartography.org

Session 17

What considerations and action steps are needed to finish building the Schubert Theater?

We discussed what consideration and what action steps are needed to finish building the Schubert theater. We spent a fair amount of time updating ourselves on the current discussion going on and will be going on through the month of April at the legislature on the 10 million dollar bonding request for the Schubert theater. The statewide grass roots effort is in the process of building grass tops around each legislator. These are the people who most influence them in their lives and in their thinking. Many of them have connections to artists and are looking for that. We have managed to get through the first committees in each house. The house and the senate. We are in front of the capital committees of each house right now. We are likely to get killed in the house capital committee but we have got potential life in the ways and means committee after that and it ain't over until it is over. The resonating arguments with the legislators are that it is Schubert's turn. The Guthrie and the Children's Theater had their shot at it. We have been over there for four years. The arts and education piece. The web casting, the availability of programming throughout the state, and the service to multiple organizations and not just one organization are the salient selling points. Phone, e-mail, and mail are the action items of the day. All legislators. There are 201 of them can be contacted and are urged to support the Schubert bonding request and that can go on most imminently now in the next ten days but throughout the month of April. We also touched on concerns, issues to be addressed, or clarified. Education needing to be done or problems to be solved. Parking. Loading and unloading. Rentals, shared box office, and current concerns for personnel for theater operations.

Convener: Gary Peterson

Participants: Ann Willennsson, Zenon; Kim Motes, Artspace; Donna Bachman, MDT; Lise Houlton, MDT; Gary Peterson, Sewell Ballet; Matthew Janczewski, Arena Dances; Dale Schatzlein, Northrop Auditorium; Mike Grogan, Intermedia Arts;

Session Notes:

Current position overview:

- In the midst of legislative session – once on the other side will know better what next steps are.
- At the Capital: Kim-realistically we have a good shot. Lobbying team is well respected (Messerly and Kramer), Schubert staff, 8 meetings a day at the Capital.
- Good “author” support in both the House and the Senate.
- Good buzz regarding the Arts in Education component.
- Good support from Cohen, who is carrying the Ordway bill, but serving as an advocate for the project.
- Survive in the House – killed in the Senate.
- Email barrage to get folks to call regarding individual support.
- Mayor Rybak is not supportive due to Planetarium project.
- City Council? They “support the whole platform”, but it's the mayor who's out talking with community organizations about the Planetarium as the “favored” project.

Educational Component

- Outfitting the building to do live webcast. Could put lecture/demonstrations on the website in order for schools to be able to download the webcast and view the performance from the computer.
- Electronic study guides. “in person” vs. on paper creating an arts education resource that would be free.
- Received a grant to begin the technology research to begin this process in order to ramp up prior to the completion of the Schubert.

Concerns:

- Stagehands, crew cost, etc.
- Loading dock, accessibility, not blocking streets to load and unload.
- Parking

Questions:

- Will the space be available for rental or only programmed? Rent based. Principle users plus availability after those organizations are scheduled.
- Shared box-office – is it a viable idea? One that would serve the patrons of the arts partners.

Next Steps:

Session 18

How can we all have health insurance?

We had a short meeting about insurance at lunch. We talked about the struggles of paying for insurance and not having insurance and I learned from Brita Jackson who is here still. She is working on this project, as she is an agent. She gave us a lot of information and she is going to be sending out a message through Dana at the beginning of May. There will be a large meeting on this subject so if you are interested, that is where you will find out what is going on.

Convener: Laurie Van Wieren

Participants: Ellen Keane, Cathy Wind, Fuego Flamenco, Ann Williams, MARCUS, Tracy Doheny, Bill Glade, Laura Sellen

Session Notes:

Many of the dancers have insurance through spouse, worked part-time at a company, or half very expensive insurance with high deductibles.

Brita has no insurance due to preexisting condition, Brita is in school to be a doctor for dancers has new ideas for health ins. For dancers being there own group. Health Partners not as supportive as Blue Cross for dancers and there needs. She is looking into Blue Cross as a dancer group for insurance.

Brita has a credit union working with her and is looking into daycare options, loans, and finding how dancers can become professional and using professionals to help her help us. Her plan will be released in May or June. Dancers will be notified by Dance alliance mail list or call Brita Jackson 612-455-6894 Dana@Southerntheater.org weekly e-mail newsletter.

Judith Howard has insurance. Part of the year, Tamara Melloy has insurance. Through her spouse, and Brinsley Davis has catastrophic insurance that just went up, and is looking into a medical savings but you have to be paying self employment tax to qualify. State laws are different and MN Care just went up from some families 60\$ a month to \$400 a month for a family of 4. MN is affordable for people making under 35,000. Beth Brody just joined and she had insurance. Through school and Daytons and now spouse.

Next step: check with Brita who is actively working to help dancers and is planning a meeting in possibly June. Her specialty is living as an artist. Marcus asked what about working with Compass at Landmark for insurance. Will there be a salary requirement with Dance Alliance for insurance.

The end.

Session 19

How do we effectively engage our communities? (i.e. cultural communities, social action) What are the pressing issues for dancers of color?

I am reporting on the group that was talking about what are pressing issues for dancers of color and how do we effectively engage our communities? I want to begin by inviting any of the other group members to join in as I report, especially artists of color. I will skip to the end of our session where we decided on the main issues that came up which were including communication, the history of elitism and racism, competition within communities, the scarcity of resources, and a forum for artists of color to talk more, education that is needed, and certain kinds of dance not being viewed as legitimate were the main things that came up. Larger than that, that this was just such a small tiny piece of the larger conversation that needs to happen. We decided that we were all interested in continuing it and inviting more people to be involved in it and possibly Patrick's Cabaret or Intermedia Arts might be a forum to hold that conversation. Certain artists of color today were asked to invite their contacts in order to spread the word and part of the question that came up was why is that and why aren't more artists of color known by the whole community? Why don't we know each other? How can we support each other if we don't know each other? There was one person in our group that just totally found out about this meeting on happenstance even though he has been teaching and dancing in the community for over ten years. The agenda was set by those of us who are here and many people of color are not here so their issues are not being addressed. Why aren't those people here? Was it a matter of economics? This meeting was held during the middle of the day? Was it a matter of communication? How do we let people know what forms of dance are being performed right now? Are we sending out postcards or is e-mail our main form of communication? Are we cutting off people by using e-mail as our main form of communication?

Convener: Wendy Morris, Sarah Harris

Participants:

Miriam Calvin
Rebecca Frost
Jonathan Frey
Steve Busa
Dawn Stom
Matte Kelly Halbesleben
Elinar Andersen Genne
Francis Kofi
Ann Williams
Sandy Austin
Sarah Harris
David Wiley
Beverly Cottman
Karen Charles
Beth Hennessy
Jerry Lopez

Autumn Compton
Maria Durz
Rebecca Cusick
Stuu Pea
Maria Gomez Tierney
Roxanne Wallace
Maria Genne
Florence Cobb
Maureen Koelsh
Jonathan Frey
Lisa McLean
Dawn Strong
Julie Voight

Session Notes:

Discussion whether to talk in small groups: artists of color, how we engage in our communities, how to be effective?

Introductions:

--Why certain artists of color were called to call their contact?
--Why people of color were not informed?
--One participant, a teaching working in Mpls. Since 1993, only here because she happened to see a flier totally by chance.

--Agenda set by these here, many POC not here, issues are not addressed.

FLORENCE COBB:

--glad we are all here, dance is underserved.

Vision:

--an organization of all dancers, have representation, have voice to families, community, legislators. We have no vote. People come see us, get thrilled and leave.
--We cannot nourish each other enough.

From other meeting: thinking of setting up council to advocate for a dance focus that are seen more as recreation.

SANDY:

--From her last meeting, Mpls. Dance Festival becoming more.
--Attendance is influenced by economics.

ROXANNE:

--Issues of awareness, don't know each other because no _____ companies. But teach choreography and perform.
--How can we support each other if we don't know each other?

--Can we have a black choreography evening and other events become a celebration of black choreographers?

--Choreography evening this year (Walker) a good spectrum of artists of color.

JERRY:

--Artists of color need to talk more, create forum.

SARAH:

--Patrick's Cabaret.

--Artists are doing a project to create systems of communication and connect to community and reaching out to artists and audiences of color.

WENDY:

--Wanted to combine two issues, partially to combine resources.

--Alu dance magazine recently has an article about racism

--Dance magazine sold under "entertainment" in Barnes & Nobles, they are reinforcing stereotype.

--Tapestry in community that no one is keeping track of. How do we acknowledge all history and colors of people?

OTHER CONVERSATIONS:

--Keeping track of history: where are videos from dance alliance?

--MN Artists Organization and Springboard—can be used as they are already working.

--Ethnic dance, belly dance, etc., shows diversity. Get audiences to experience many kinds of dance.

--Mix groups up that have followings.

--All grow together.

--Cross pollination.

COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATION:

--If use only computers, are we cutting many people out?

--Recently Northrop had an event for students. No one there. How is that information communicated? How to get maximum participation?

--When only legitimize certain look, race of dance only brings certain people to all white performances. All black performances.

--Traditional Aztec dance "cultural dance"

--Issues we can collectively push.

MAIN ISSUES:

--Communication

--History elitism of racism

--Competition within communities.

--Continue this discussion.

--Everyone is interested.

--Patrick's Cabaret and Intermedia will host.

Session 20

Is saturation an issue in developing an audience for dance? If so, what would we do about it?

This group was the saturation group which I think rather quickly turned into where is the dance audience, how do we develop it group. They seemed to be connected ideas. I am going to present what I got and it is not in the order we thought of it but in an order, that makes some sort of sense. In terms of saturation the decision was “no, it is not saturated, we are just not reaching all of the people who are available to come to dance.” So that is really the challenge we have. How do we get to those people? How do we get on their radar? The question then was what is on the radar, what is not on the radar? We are not on the radar. Dance is not on the radar and how do we put it on the radar?

One of the questions that came up were issues or the idea that the dance institution that exists which is a virtual institution, it is the community itself versus bricks and mortar like the Guthrie itself. It is a building, a place, a parking lot. We don't have that and how do you do what a bricks and mortar institution does when we are a virtual institution or do we stop doing that? Do we make a transition? We don't have an answer. Discuss it among yourselves. There is a thing going on that is a problem between local artists versus visiting artists. Visiting artists draw a bigger crowd because it is a fire sale moment. It is just two weeks, two days. You know, if I don't catch this, who will ballet in the fall? I will catch them in the spring. Sally says it is not the same show but that is the thinking. It is always here, I can get to it later. How do we address that one? Someone brought up the fact that the audience we are missing is in the studios. She was brought up in the dance studios. She went 4-5 days a week. She danced all the time. She had no idea there were dance companies in the twin cities until someone had a beer with somebody and the boyfriend or girlfriend. Do we act as more of that beer? Do we work as opening acts for other things? That is a way we can get out in front of other people.

The festival that involves all the venues in town. A video preview of coming attractions in dance for the month of May that is shown at every dance venue in town, showing things that are coming up that month. We do know why people come to dance. They come because of word of mouth. We discovered that. What we don't know is why they don't come to dance and that is a big, ugly question that we may not like the answer to but we have to ask that question.

Convener: Jeff Bartlett

Participants:

Leigh Dillard
David White
Christopher Watson
James Swell
Becky Heist
Megan McClellan
Maria Chapman
Neal Cuthbert

Sally Rousse
Mark R. Ruark
Ann-Marie Lokshina-Thomsen
Susanne Costello
Sarah Pimile
Joe Chvala
Laura Zimmerman
Laurie Van Wieren
Danial Shapiro

Session Notes:

Jeff opened: is there an issue of saturation, subdivided into too much dance, too little audience. Too little performance or too little audience? If there is a problem what do we do?

James Sewell: surprising small amount of cross-over. Some, but not much. Each company develops own. Maybe saturation within larger audience, lots of potential to crossover. Each company develops own. Creates larger pool.

Leigh: audiences are down?

Jeff: Yes, audiences are down, at Northrop isn't down, mixed. Sewell down a bit.

Audience helped by press?

Sally: not enough audience development.

d.marie: you have multiple audiences, dance community audience

stewart: Get a sadi grant for audience development, an issue is why are the audiences by walker and Northrop fuller than those of small companies.

Megan: as a dance patron too much to see, but dance also happens too fast, all in one weekend. if you have multi weekends audience can build. Can there be just as many weekends of dance, like theatre?

David White: a lot of dance has small audience, 100 folks, not like Guthrie with big audience, good org, audience insight, people rely on media/times, most important factor word of mouth. There is a Northrop audience, a Guthrie audience, get Dale to justify it on his season. I've taken people to dance, non-dance folks, intellectually active, they don't know, dance is off the radar. Huge audience potential, no institutions to drive audience to other places/groups. Will Schubert help, some skepticism?

James: Schubert, if used right, can catalyze. The community has invested in infrastructure, music, see orch. hall, viz arts, see MIA or walker, nothing like that for dance. Nothing big splashes. Could put dance audience in front of public, makes it visible. Dance is second most important in country, but invisible.

White: if Schubert is piece of puzzle, but if it's just its own entity, it won't

James: has to be spun right.

White: does Schubert plug a whole or become part of the whole. The institution is the center of community, real thing is a flow of activity, plunge into and then pick up on things.

Jeff: a picture, there isn't an audience driving institution. Question, do you feel that an institution is an answer?

White: can be an answer for companies with companies needing a substantial place for the audience. They may need to own it more. Need a producing function.

Jeff: is it your experience does a major institution help?

Dan: dance is off radar. What's on the radar? Stuff that is how bricks and mortar, or consistent brick and mortar home. If you keep looking you find buildings, companies at Lincoln center having one venue, doesn't work, what new york has a wide range of venues, a wide range of work not venues. Why does something show up on radar? Audience doesn't care where it is, they'll just show up.

Stewart: practical suggestion two venues attract large audience, Northrop and walker, how can the local audience get some visibility, some endorsement. how can the local dance community get endorsement

Jeff: opening act at Northrop.

Dare drug guy: this community pulls together and tries to keep you out. La and ny don't have anything to lose, the different venues work because there's trying different things all the time.

White: has there been festivals in nyc we did a multi venue festival. Co-equal, 40 artists in three weeks. Model behavior to create what you want. Smaller venues aren't lesser. Try to tie in walker southern to cash in chips with resident audiences to help. Make a landscape of venues.

Joe: opening for outside company, Pittsburgh used to do video presentation before other performances, like coming attractions.

Mega: did walker relationship with southern help southern audience.

Jeff: Walker publicity helps their shows.

Suzanne Costello: does everyone need more audience? Vying for audience. Lots of competition. Audience isn't coming yet in ny they had tdf vouchers, could use any place. You link ideas, you link venues, creates a notion among people that there is a commonality between Ordway, southern, etc.

White: tdf, back in 1970s, it was marketed to unions, teachers and people began to misuse it. The groups that really benefited to smaller audiences. There are, among audiences, initiators and

responders. People that make the dates and people that go, what you want to identify is the initiators.

Marsha: two things, Northrop used to sponsor things from the cities, MDF did it, festival, mosaic is going

Marsha: mosaic happening, lots of venues and variety of art forms, thru summer

Catherine Baumgartner: someone at Northrop had never been to local company, I've always meant to. Come up with annual dance catalogue, people can see variety of venues and artists

White: that was part of tdf, comprehensive calendar

C.baum: try to have a place and background,

Dan Shapiro: opening act, festival, previews, when we did sadi grant, used Wallace and other info, we're doing what you're not supposed to do. Big question is why do they not come to dance, once they come, after a couple of shows, why don't they come back?

c.baum: lots of people didn't know there is a dance community.

White: when audiences started to drop in NY, it had to do with people getting married, folks stopped going. People dropped out of audience, there's a residual effect

c. baum: the not knowing there's dance here, people don't what dance is, dance is on TV it's everywhere, people aren't coming to see dance.

Carla: getting hired in studio dance

Colin: what's meaningful? It's about intimacy, in smaller venues, in studios, the container is too small and it gets very meaningful because it's packed, people running into each other.

Stewart: the issue is the same. What's cool about dtw, that's what made it get small venue, 125 people, made the event feel important. How do you pack?

Colin: intimacy and size, smaller venues lead to larger venues.

Dan Shapiro: we need a range

White: circle around thru different size spaces, you want the audiences to cycle with you.

Sally: issue is exclusivity, went to Northrop on Tuesday night, 1,000 people there, going Thursday thru Sunday, too much going on, but you may not go to Sewell because they live here, other venues, are important and valid. A Wednesday night audiences would be huge, in Europe it's normal. If Northrop addressed audience, support your local companies, at the southern the curtain calls are important, shouldn't be too long. Propose to dale.

Joe: booths in Northrop about different companies. Polling Northrop audience about why they're not going to other venues. Ask Walker audiences too. KTCA should do a series about local dance. People would know about nooks and crannies and love it

Suzanne: Northrop has a captured audience but there are a whole lot of other people not coming. People in our workshops/healthcare come to shows, larger groups, and larger non-dance audiences.

Joe: the studios, send polls home with their parents. Dancers don't know about it and come or know about. Cross over scene.

Dare drug guy: any press listening dance events?

Jeff: it's a missing piece right now.

James Sewell: the Northrop audience has been built over many many years. It's not a fluke, huge venue, lot of reason why it's there. Audience in suburbs, you go out to them, some of them do come in. how do we attend to them and they can then attend to us.

White: lots of St. Paul people don't go to Minneapolis. TV. People rounded up peoples tapes, did short interviews, clear air time, put it up on public access.

An addendum via e-mail

Hey Neal,

Again – thanks for picking up the ball we kicked your way and getting it to roll so smoothly and well. And – thank you for sharing credit with all who had a hand (foot?) in kicking that ball along the way. Generous and a gentleman you are....

Here are the points I tried to summarize – and maybe some that didn't get into that summary. If I've missed something, well, my mind isn't what it used to be, and it probably never was.

DAN'S BULLETS

- **Is the TC Dance community saturated?**

No. We don't have too much dance here...more than we "should". Our audience is too small. There are many people who go out who don't go to dance – how do we bring them to dance?

- **Virtual Institution**

We have a virtual dance institution in the TC's that is the dance community itself. The theater and music communities are predominantly bricks & mortar as well.

- **Bricks & Mortar (B&M) in relation to Attendance**

The largest audiences are associated with B&M. The only companies I can think of with massive name recognition – even among dance-goers – have long-term relationships with B&M. By and large this correlation holds true elsewhere as here:

B&M

City Center
Lincoln Center
DTW
PS122
BAM
Joyce
Northrop
Southern
Schubert
O'Shaughnessy

VISIBLE Companies

NYCB
ABT
Mark Morris
Sewell
MDT
Paul Taylor

- **Local vs Visitor**

People are going to dance performed by TC visitors, at Southern, Northrop & Ordway – in much larger numbers than they go to TC Dance – at any venue. How do we address the “local is not as good” syndrome? How do we break down the “It’s local I’ll have another chance to see it” vs. the “firesale” mentality of visitors?

- **Radar**

What’s on the radar? We’re NOT. Why not and how do we get there?

- **What We Know**

We know WHY people come to dance. The number one answer is “Someone brought me” – Word of Mouth. David White’s comment is effective here – We need to identify and communicate with the Universe of Initiators and its residents.

- **What we DON’T Know - and must.**

We don’t know why they don’t come.

We don’t know why there is a pattern of attrition - coming a few times in a row – then stopping.

- **Start Here**

THIS is where our work must start- not with our fabulous suggestions of things to do. This is a big, bad, scary bogie man of a question – the answer to which may to be really hard to listen to. We must look squarely at this question, acknowledge and answer it. That answer is the 800-pound gorilla, the elephant in the room that no one wants to talk about.

Fabulous Ideas

- **Warm-up Acts**

Schools/studios could be warm-up acts for local companies.

Local Companies could be warm-up acts for visiting companies.

- **Festival**

David White's example of a city-wide festival in NYC. A movable feast that moved audiences from venue to venue.

- **Video Previews**

A short "Coming events" video of dance coming up at a range of TC venues, changed month-to-month and shown at all dance venues before performances.

- **Start a TDF-type voucher system**

Northrop and Walker, as well as other venues could participate in this. The brochure for this would feature dance throughout the TC's, being seen by Walker/Northrop subscribers – exposing them to the range of local work while presenting it to them on the same "level" as the visitors. The system need not be limited to TC geographically – it could include theaters in the Ring, Saint Cloud etc. This could have the same effect with outlying audiences –bringing them into the Metro, and introducing Metro audiences to potential venues for them in the Ring.

Organizations Offering Meeting Space to Dance Workgroups:

McKnight Foundation, 710 Second Street South, suite 400, Minneapolis, MN 55401, 612-333-4220, contact: Neal Cuthbert, ncuthbert@mcknight.org, Laura Zimmermann, lzimmermann@mcknight.org meeting space available for groups up to 30, daytimes by appointment.

Jerome Foundation, 400 Sibley, 125 Park Square, St. Paul, MN 55101, 651-224-9431
Contact: Cynthia Gehrig, meeting space available of up to 16-18 people, by appointment.

Minnesota State Arts Board, 400 Sibley, 200 Park Square, St. Paul 55101, 651-215-1600
Contact: Gail Burke, meeting space available of up to 20 people, by appointment.

Southern Theatre, 1425 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55555
Contacts: Christa Olson, 612 340-0155 x.20; christa@southerntheater.org or Sandy Moore, 612-340-0155 x11; sandy@southerntheater.org meeting space available by appointment.

Artspace Projects, 250 Third Avenue N., suite 500, Minneapolis, MN 55401
Contact: Kim Motz, 612-465-0242, meeting space available in the Hennepin Center for the Arts by appointment.

Original Invite Letter:

February 20, 2004

Dear Friend:

I am writing today to invite you to be part of a daylong conversation with dance artists, educators, and others who care about and support dance in our community. The question we'll consider is:

How can we collectively enhance and support our efforts to make dance and dance artists thrive in Minnesota?

We will gather **March 19, from 9am to 3pm at the Barbara Barker Center for Dance** on the West Bank campus of the University of Minnesota. The Barker Center is located at 500 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis, 55455 (at the intersection of 21st Avenue South with Riverside).

Allow me to explain the impetus for the gathering.

The Twin Cities is arguably one of the best places for dance in the country, and for most of us, it is easy to see why. The area boasts amazing dance artists, companies, and schools. Some have long histories here, some are just beginning. The concentration of first-rate work seems at times delightfully out of proportion to the size of our community.

Yet dance artists at all different career stages and situations are struggling to make ends meet. They wrestle with worries about audiences, dollars, training, and teaching. As support waxes and wanes, artists face tough choices about how, and sometimes whether, to keep dancing and pursuing their work. Although there's been some improvement in the economy, the times are still quite challenging, particularly for a field that already faces a lot of economic and communication challenges.

After talking with dance artists in recent months, we at McKnight felt that by getting the dance community together, all of us could benefit from the ideas and energy that could emerge. We live in a place rich with dance, but how can we be sure that dance continues to thrive? What's next for dance in the Twin Cities? Where should energy and resources be invested? McKnight doesn't have an answer, a silver bullet, or any particular agenda, except for the belief that there are compelling reasons to come together and talk.

The conversation on March 19 will rely on Open Space Technology rather than on a set agenda. For over a decade, Open Space has been used in business, government, and community organizations to make meetings more productive and responsive to the needs of constituents. Open Space provides a fluid group format that helps people explore ideas, network with other

February 20, 2004
Page Two

like-minded folk, make decisions, and take action. You will be able to convene or participate in a small group on any topic related to the central question above.

We at the Foundation regularly work with independent artists, nonprofit dance companies, schools, and presenters. However, we know that the dance community is much broader than that and includes unaffiliated movers, private schools, professional training programs, supporters, thinkers, and dance lovers. All of these groups are important to making dance succeed here and our hope is to create a day for the entire dance community to come together.

The success of an Open Space meeting depends on who shows up. It needs each of us to bring ideas, passions, problems, stories, and creativity. If you can take part, please do. We hope it will be a useful and energizing experience and help move dance forward in our community. Plus, we'll provide lunch.

If you'd like to come, please send an email with your name to rsvp@mcknight.org or call **612-336-3732** by March 12. Feel free to pass along this invitation to others who care about dance in our community or post the enclosed flyer. If you have any questions or feedback, please call me directly at 612-333-4220. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Neal Cuthbert
Arts Program Director

NIC:rjw

Enclosure

"How can we collectively enhance and support our efforts to make dance and dance artists thrive in Minnesota?"

A Dance Community Gathering

Friday, March 19

9am to 3pm

Barbara Barker Center for Dance

University of Minnesota West Bank Campus

500 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis

(at the intersection of 21st Avenue South and Riverside)

This gathering will use Open Space Technology, a meeting process used to make meetings more productive and responsive to the needs of participants. Open Space provides a fluid group format that enables individuals to explore ideas, network with like-minded colleagues, make decisions, and take action. You will be able to convene or participate in a small group on any topic related to the central question above.

If you're interested in coming please RSVP to rsvp@mcknight.org or call **612-336-3732** by March 12. Parking is available at meters on the street or in the ramp next to the Barker Center.

**COPY, POST, OR PASS ALONG THIS INVITATION TO OTHERS
WHO CARE ABOUT DANCE IN OUR COMMUNITY!**

Sponsored by the McKnight Foundation.

