

DANCE COMMUNITY MEETING NOTES

Jose Mateo's Ballet Theatre

Thursday, Jan 2, 2020

Attendance:

Callie Chapman
Dayenne Walters
Jennifer Kelble
Margot Parsons
Bill Parsons
Matthew Bretton

Magdalena Gyftopoulos
Janelle Gilchrist
Marianne Harkless Diabate
Kevin Jur
Noli Rosen
Kirsten Swartz
Mary McCarthy

Doug Pouliot
Scratch
Mina Murray
Peter DiMuro
Adrienne Hawkins
Marissa Molinar

- **Clarification** - we seem to be talking about critical mass rather than community:
 - increasing the number of active professionals in Boston area
 - increasing the consistent engagement of those professionals
 - increasing visibility of professional dance activity in Boston
- **Intersection with broader community** - how do we reach beyond the dance community and stop "preaching to the choir"?
 - Why is this needed?
 - Attract new audiences and gain visibility overall
 - Attract dance professionals who are not "in the know" or who are "geographically beyond the community"
 - Attract recent grads from Boston-area colleges as well as young people who grew up in Boston but went elsewhere for college
 - What can we learn from earlier eras of Boston dance?
 - Boston used to have dance calendar on TV as a way to reach new audiences.
 - Boston used to have reviewers, key people doing advertising, PR and marketing entities -- now the onus of all work lies on individual artists.
 - What can we learn from other communities?
 - Visual arts community is highly unified - can we learn from them?
 - Boston's activist community is well-established - how do we learn and/or tap in?
 - **CONCLUSION:** We need external PR, marketing, and outreach entities/resources to exist again, but what do we do to get there? And what do we do in the meantime?
ALSO: from Cambridge Arts Council (CAC) point of view, now is a great time for big and bold action in the city of Cambridge: City Councilor wants to support dance, and CAC is tapped out in terms of their manpower, so the potential for change is there but organized community advocacy is needed.
- **ACTION ITEMS**
 - Establish a Community Website similar to havetodance.com
 - Use universal hashtags - look at what is already in use for different categories and create a community outreach strategy
 - Create a list of current credible publications/press outlets that we want to connect with, and flesh out what a meaningful relationship to the dance community would mean
 - Create an umbrella group of companies+choreographers to create a Boston dance season
 - Create a Call To Action for BDA - what accountability do they have to the community? What do we expect of them, and what would we do if they continue to fail to meet those expectations?
- **UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS**
 - What are we asking from the City of Cambridge?
Our concerns include: rising cost of living, housing affordability, studio foreclosure, and lack of meaningful financial support from the City. But what are we asking for specifically, and how do we create pathways toward those goals?
 - How do we educate the "next generation" in the activism and civic engagement that will be necessary to implement and establish real change?

DANCE COMMUNITY MEETING NOTES

Studio@550

Sunday, Jan 5, 2020

Attendance:
Callie Chapman
Andrea Blesso
Mary McCarthy
Carl Alleyne
Jean Appolon
Darnell Snoopy Brown
Ava Untermeyer
Papa Sy
Anastasia Yendiki

Jennifer Kelble
Karen Klein
Katerna Obarski
Jessica Liggero
Sumati Rammohan
Madison Florence
Elizabeth Epsen
Karen Krolak
Nicole
Ramon de Los Reyes

Maria Moreno
David Karger
Dan Marshall
Chloe Frankel
Jenny Oliver
Sara Craver

Who are we as individuals/community prompt:

- We center ourselves around space due to the unique nature of dance requiring space.
- Looking at both the inward facing (community) networking and outward facing (public) connections, how can we better share resources?

What do we need to support existing work?

- Spaces are where things are crafted
- What has the impact of lack of space, or the closing of spaces had on the community?
 - MIT space closing with over 200 people using a common practice space at the same time as Green Street Studios closing affecting hundreds of others
 - Hip hop community who used both of these spaces suffered 2 very big hits in a short span of time.
- There was discussion surrounding a potential "lending library" for dance artists sharing physical resources to help transform space into dance-able space in otherwise un-danceable spaces.
- Possible avenues include spaces in Allston or other inner-City places in which institutions may have underutilized spaces.
- Kendall also has a bunch of under utilized spaces as well.

What are existing resources that can be more streamlined to serve the community better?

- Lists of existing performance spaces with specs including location.
- Internal networking to find other artists.
- More efficient systems to book space (networked space booking like spacefinder in NYC). Spacefinder charges an extra \$10K for this mechanism. Arts and Business Council had sponsored the initial launch of Spacefinder Boston (created by Fractured Atlas).
- A webpresence that simply listed all of the resources available to dance newcomers to Boston.
- Resource of hashtags and more networked social media presence so that existing and new dance community can be more connected.
- PR and Marketing resources to further promote Boston Dance
- Questions were asked about the roles of organizations in these efforts. Boston Dance Alliance was identified as an organization which is prime (and has in the past) provided these resources to the community. Questions surrounding their current efforts and how they are meeting the communities need.

ACTION ITEMS

Regular meetings to discuss further - *Jennifer Kelble volunteered to coordinate efforts.*

Hashtag research - *Carl Alleyne has volunteered to do some research of what exists already*

Unified web presence - *Callie Chapman will resurrect www.bostondancecommunity.org (4 year old site that was started due to other community meetings that were had in 2016).*