



knowledge + networks + financial independence for artists

2016 Dance Assembly

2016 DANCE ASSEMBLY SUMMARY

Compiled by Linda Chiavaroli

Bonnie Oda Homsey, event organizer, invited attendees to consider the Dance Assembly as a *white board* filling with comments, ideas, and ways to leverage change. The 50-minute speaker conversation started the ball rolling with key perspectives. Next, the 50-minute *Community Talks* segment resulted in commentary from many of the 144 registered participants. These comments as well as additional remarks by the six speakers (flagged with their initials) are grouped under topic headings.

At the end of day Homsey asked attendees to challenge themselves to devote five to six hours a month to acts of generosity or action benefitting the dance community as a whole. We hope you use this Summary as a springboard for pro-action and/or act of generosity.

WHITE BOARD

Speaker Conversation perspectives:

Kristy Edmunds/CAP UCLA (moderator) [KE]

In that moment of live performance each audience member creates a living archive of what is happening. Where is the place for those living archives to be shared and heard?

Ana Maria Alvarez/CONTRA-TIEMPO [AMA]

The demographic of dance has changed in the last 10 years as the climate has shifted politically. In the field there is a celebrating of engaging audiences and practices that build community – in addition to acknowledgement of the diverse array of different dance forms and perspectives out there. Artists are now getting grants for pushing back against the status quo. There's a realization that if the field is not willing to bring people to the table, important voices will be left out and the field will become irrelevant.

Chloe Arnold/commercial choreographer, director [CA]

The deep divide between commercial and non-profit emanates from fear. The Hollywood folks fear they can't compete in the incredible artistic level in New York. The New York folks don't know how to get the smart business connections of Hollywood.

Jodie Gates/USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance [JG]

The USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance curriculum, embracing ballet and hip hop, was designed to bridge the gap between the concert and commercial worlds including working with new media, to mesh with technology and research, to be career conscious.

Keith McNutt/Career Transition for Dancers-The Actors Fund [KMc]

The motivation for the work of the Actor's Fund is the life issues artists face. Programs are designed to create greater stability in artists' lives.

Rachel Moore/The Music Center [RM]

Including artists of color is not just a moral imperative but an economic one. Audience members want to see people like themselves represented on the stage. How can dance organizations be more inclusive everywhere, in the audience, onstage and backstage?

Community Talks Concerns:

[JG] For many "dance" is a loaded word. At USC/Glorya Kaufman School of Dance we have the challenge of helping 35,000 students understand what we do.

[CA] There are alternative strategies to getting new audiences do crazy things to get out the word — perform on the street, perform in church.

[CA] Mobilize the kids. Where are the competition studios? How do we activate them?

We have to put empowerment into our work, engage with audiences.

Site-specific work: Part of the power of going into a community is that there's no ticket price, no cultural background required. People encounter something they never knew existed.

Encourage dancing for fun.

Lots of dancers teach on the university level. They have the power to require students to go to performances so they develop the habit of going to see live dance.

Getting an audience is dance's biggest problem. We don't need to have ticket prices and parking get in the way of getting audiences.

New York has a wonderful model for introducing audiences in "Fall for Dance" which offers cheap tickets. I feel like we could do this in LA. It's a financial issue. Couldn't the big presenters sit down and work this out?

I find it very hard to share my work with my community. It's a huge issue because you want to build a base where you are.

Agencies who handle dancers are a resource we can tap into more. They have means to get out the word.

Flourish Foundation helps to bring kids to performances through their school site grant program.

Commercial vs Non-Profit

[CA] There's a stage for everybody if you have an iPhone. All stages are equally reputable – The Kennedy Center and Madison Square Garden.

Bridging the gap means creating opportunities in both realms. The Internet, You Tube help, can generate a huge audience. But the moguls think of dance as entertainment not art. How can we remain relevant? The bridge is us. We have to change to blend.

Dance Community Challenges

[RM] Categorizing art is not productive. I like to see the world the way that Liz Lerman does. Get out and experience other disciplines. Don't be afraid of art that scares you.

[KE] One of the glorious and remarkable aspects of LA is the constant seeking of ways to leverage communication.

[AMA] In spite of driving distances and busy schedules, dancers have to make an effort to show up for each other.

If driving to performances is a problem, approach Metro about helping dancers to get around.

Don't be afraid to throw yourself out there as an artist. What can we do if we get together? Let's get in a studio and create work and get the attention of presenters.

Where is the central place for dance in LA, where everything goes in and out?

Dance Resource Center offers a listserv and centralized calendar for DRC members.

The Dance in Los Angeles Facebook page has 1200 members. It's a place to share, to gain exposure.

Think bigger. Start asking for what you deserve.

It's crazy that we don't have a union. We need to come together and fight for our rights.

We need to talk about what we're paying our dancers.

Exposure

[KE] UCLA Center for the Art of Performance commissions works from and supports residencies by local companies.

[KE] Big institutions want to engage but they do have administrative and compliance guidelines. Don't wait to get to the top person. Look at who else in the organization you can get to. It's also important to question people as you go along because they can hold you back.

[AMA] Dance Place in New York and the National Performance Network (NPN) are good models for helping companies perform, get chops. We don't have those kind of places in LA.

[AMA] Rehearsal space, access to affordable commercial space, is a huge issue.

REDCAT is an important platform. Anyone can submit something. This should be happening at every venue in LA.

Dance Resource Center's Home Grown programs are an opportunity to elevate your work, to show a larger aspect of it.

Work is seen in one small venue and then it dies there. What I'd like to see happen for emerging artists/companies is for different institutions to collaborate to show small companies a bunch of different places in the LA area – first the West Side, then Pasadena and so on. The larger world will decide who they want to see.

Finances

[KMc] Most artists have no idea what they have to make each month. Knowledge is power.

[KMc] The Actor's Fund, which services dancers as well, has a whole curriculum for financial wellness, including the emotional side of dealing with money and talking about money with relatives.

[KMc] Career Transitions for Dancers has merged with The Actor's Fund: We want to be present from the beginning to the end of your career and from then on, provide stability.

Who in the room is able to pay part-time salaries? This is where we lack grace - organizational stability. Dance in LA is extraordinary! That is not a question. Our resources are lacking and that has to be dealt with!

Inclusivity

[RM] Dance needs to create an environment where all sorts of voices are on the stage. LA is ahead of New York in all of this. LA is more risk taking than New York.

[AMA] Inclusivity relates directly to audience engagement. Presenters are bringing in artists of specific cultures to help grow audiences.

Internet

[CA] The Internet allows us to see the star performers or the pop concert you can't afford – It's a tool for all artists to find an audience across the world. It's our responsibility as artists to share diverse work.

[CA] Maximizing visibility – Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival.

What do you put on the Internet without giving away too much for free? Is Internet exposure devaluing dance, underscoring that's it's free, that it doesn't need to be seen live. Can people really experience dance on the Internet?

How do we raise the level of what's being seen, educate? What's beyond getting 5,000 hits on a cool picture?

The Internet can be a way to share work, to talk to each other, to critique in a good way.

Dancers/choreographers should stop thinking of themselves as employees of the Internet and become masters of it. The NFL is on the Internet all the time and people still go to games. Beyonce is on the Internet, yet people still buy her recordings and go to her concerts.

Dance should market like it's 2016, and use all social media platforms.



2016 DANCE ASSEMBLY Resource List

MODERATOR

Kristy Edmunds

Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA

www.cap.ucla.edu

Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA (CAP UCLA) is dedicated to the advancement of contemporary performing arts in all disciplines – dance, music, spoken word and theater, as well as the emerging digital, collaborative and cross-art platforms inspired by today's leading artists and creators. CAP UCLA supports the creation, presentation and critical dialogues vital to the ongoing innovation and expressive potential of artists whose work, whether vibrantly emerging or internationally acclaimed, forms the dynamic and evolving heritage of contemporary performance.

ORGANIZER

Bonnie Oda Homsey

www.LADanceFoundation.org

Bonnie Oda Homsey helped organize the 2013 Dance Summit that emerged from efforts with the Southern California Dance Futures Fund. Since 2000, she is Chair of Dance for The Princess Grace Foundation USA supporting emerging artists in Dance, Film, and Theater. Bonnie performed with The Martha Graham Dance Company originating roles in repertoire with Rudolph Nureyev and Dame Margot Fonteyn, then co-founded American Repertory Dance Company, a recipient of several Lester Horton Awards. For twelve years, she did theater and also worked as a commercial dancer. With the Dance Heritage Coalition, she conceived "Dance Collections Database," a free online database matching dance professionals with dance archives.

SPEAKERS

Ana Maria Alvarez

CONTRA-TIEMPO

www.contra-tiempo.org

Ana Maria Alvarez is a choreographer known for her daring, multidimensional and boundary blurring work that pulses at the intersection of dance and social transformation. Alvarez received her MFA in Choreography from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures, exploring "Latin Dance" as a way to express social resistance. This became the impetus for

founding CONTRA-TIEMPO Urban Latin Dance Theater Company in 2005. In addition to being the Artistic Director of CONTRA-TIEMPO, she is an artist in residence at UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance and is regularly invited to teach, choreograph, and perform nationally and internationally.

Chloé Arnold

Chloe & Maud Productions/Chloe & Maud Foundation/Syncopated Ladies
www.chloearnold.com

Chloé Arnold is an International Tap Star & Highly Acclaimed Choreographer, Producer, Director. She was the winner of FOX's So You Think You Can Dance dance crew battle her company, Syncopated Ladies (www.syncopatedladies.com). Along with viral video hits including a cover of Beyoncé's Formation, Syncopated Ladies recently had sold-out concerts in Dubai, New York City, and Washington, DC with rave reviews in The New York Times and more. As a leading lady in Tap, Chloé has wooed audiences in over 28 countries and 35 states. Her work can be seen on film, television, and stages worldwide.

Jodie Gates

USC/Gloria Kaufman School of Dance
<http://kaufman.usc.edu/degrees/>

Jodie Gates is an educator, director, producer, choreographer and a former principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet and Pennsylvania Ballet. She is Director and Vice Dean of the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance. Her honors include the American Ballet Theater/Altria Choreography Fellow, a recipient of Jerome Robbins 'New Essential Works Program' and honored by the American Association of University Women for her achievement in the arts. She is a nationally recognized choreographer and is responsible for staging and producing William Forsythe's ballets world-wide. Ms. Gates is the Founding Artistic Director of the award-winning Laguna Dance Festival.

Keith McNutt

The Actors Fund
www.actorsfund.org

Keith McNutt has been Director of the Western Region of The Actors Fund since 2006. Prior to moving to Los Angeles, he worked in and then managed the AIDS Initiative of The Fund's New York office for over 11 years. McNutt has a Master of Social Work from New York University and is licensed in the states of California and New York. He has a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and completed the Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. Before entering the field of social work, he was a policy analyst at the U.S. Interagency Council on the Homeless, a program analyst at the National Clearinghouse on Runaway and Homeless Youth, and on the media relations staff of the Ohio Senate. In addition to his work at The Fund, McNutt has served on the National Grants Committee of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and was awarded a 2012-13 Stanton Fellowship from the Durfee Foundation to study the creative economy in Los Angeles. His 2013 report, "LA Creates: Supporting the Creative Economy in Los Angeles," was published as an attachment to the 2014 Otis Report on the Creative Economy in California and the Los Angeles Region.

Rachel S. Moore

The Music Center

Rachel S. Moore is president and CEO of The Music Center, Los Angeles' premier performing arts center. In that capacity, she leads the \$65 million company that manages The Music Center campus and operates and programs Grand Park on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. In addition, Moore oversees The Music Center's work as a presenter and curator of programming, including its internationally acclaimed dance series, Glorvya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, as well as a number of innovative programs, events and activities that are introducing new audiences to the performing arts. In addition, she guides The Music Center's multi-faceted arts education initiatives, which reach children and youth all over Southern California. Moore joined The Music Center from American Ballet Theatre (ABT), one of the world's great dance companies, where she served as CEO since 2011 and as its executive director since 2004. Moore comes from the performing arts, having danced with ABT as a member of its corps de ballet from 1984-1988. Prior to her appointment with ABT, she served as director of Boston Ballet's Center for Dance Education (2001-2004). From 1998-2001, Moore served as executive director of Project STEP, a classical music school for students of color in Boston and managing director of Ballet Theatre of Boston. She has also held senior positions with Americans for the Arts and the National Cultural Alliance, both in Washington, D.C. Moore currently serves on the advisory committee for the Los Angeles County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative, which is developing recommendations to enhance the participation and leadership of individuals from underrepresented communities in the arts. She is the author of a book, *The Artist's Compass: The Complete Guide to Building a Life and a Living in the Performing Arts* (May 2016). She holds a bachelor's degree from Brown University, Phi Beta Kappa, Honors (1992); and a masters in arts administration from Columbia University (1994).

SPONSORS

California Community Foundation

www.calfund.org

Our mission is to lead positive systemic change that strengthens Los Angeles' communities. We envision a future where all Angelenos have the opportunity to contribute to the productivity, health and well-being of our region. And we believe that our common fate will be determined by how successfully we improve the quality of life for all of our residents.

Career Transition for Dancers, a program of The Actors Fund

www.actorsfund.org

The Actors Fund is a national human services organization helping all performing arts and entertainment professionals--including dancers and choreographers--in times of need, crisis or transition. Career Transition for Dancers (CTFD) is a program of The Actors Fund. CTFD enables dancers to define their career possibilities and develop the skills necessary to excel in a variety of disciplines. Core program services include the National Outreach Program, Career Counseling and Guidance Program and the Scholarship and Grant Program. Dancers are also eligible to receive individual and group counseling services, referrals for healthcare and health insurance, and where eligible access to emergency financial assistance.

Center for Cultural Innovation

www.cciarts.org

The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) promotes knowledge sharing, networking and financial independence for individual artists and creative entrepreneurs by providing business training, grants, and incubating innovative projects that create new program knowledge, tools and practices for artists in the field. CCI believes that by linking the natural creativity and tolerance for risk of artists and creative entrepreneurs to the latest business tools and practices, and by helping to connect them to new financial resources, and to one another, CCI can give artists the knowledge and economic independence needed to bring their work and ideas into the marketplace, and establish a new voice for artists based on their collective clout.

Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles

www.culturela.org

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike. DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grantmaking, public art, community arts, and strategic marketing and development. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service to all residents and visitors in neighborhoods throughout LA.

LA Dance Foundation

www.LADanceFoundation.org

Founded in 1978 by Bonnie Oda Homsey, LA Dance Foundation's original purpose was to reconstruct a *living museum* of modern dances performed by American Repertory Dance Company's premier artists. The current mission shifted in 2010 to focus on capacity-building strategies that strengthen our artists and the field, and to promote greater awareness of America's dance legacies.

The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation

www.thegilbertfoundation.org

The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation is committed to providing and connecting resources to organizations that promote and improve health, education, economic, and cultural opportunities to communities in California and Israel. The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation supports:

- College access and retention in Greater Los Angeles
- Education, economic development, and scientific research in Israel
- Diabetes prevention and Alzheimer's Disease research & caregiver support
- Cultural organizations and arts education programs in Greater Los Angeles
- Jewish organizations in Greater Los Angeles
- Programs at UC Berkeley and UCLA that intersect with the Foundation's mission and objectives.

PARTNERS

Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA

www.cap.ucla.edu

Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA (CAP UCLA) is dedicated to the advancement of contemporary performing arts in all disciplines – dance, music, spoken word and theater, as well as the emerging digital, collaborative and cross-art platforms inspired by today's leading artists and creators. CAP UCLA supports the creation, presentation and critical dialogues vital to the ongoing innovation and expressive potential of artists whose work, whether vibrantly emerging or internationally acclaimed, forms the dynamic and evolving heritage of contemporary performance.

CONTRA-TIEMPO

www.contra-tiempo.org

CONTRA-TIEMPO is a bold, multilingual Los Angeles-based dance company creating physically intense and politically astute performance work that moves audiences to imagine what is possible. We collage Salsa, Afro-Cuban, hip-hop, and contemporary dance with theater, compelling text, and original music to bring dynamic experiences to the concert stage. CONTRA-TIEMPO takes an uncompromisingly radical approach to the ways in which artists function within communities—intentionally engaging diverse audiences, cultivating dance leaders, and centering stories not traditionally heard on the concert stage. Our engagement process informs and continuously re-fuels our creative process, and vice-versa.

Dance Camera West

www.dancecamerawest.org

Dance Camera West is a 501(c)(3) dance media arts organization committed to fostering and promoting the vibrant art of dance and dance on film from around the globe. We seek to interconnect diverse populations and environments through the innovative art fusion - dance on screen, which merges performance and cinematic aesthetics.

Dance Resource Center

www.danceresourcecenter.org

Dance Resource Center is the service organization dedicated to promoting the visibility and viability of dance in Greater Los Angeles on local, state and national levels. DRC acts as a centralized hub and voice for all things dance in Los Angeles and neighboring areas. Always, we remain guided by our mission to provide relevant and constructive programming that responds to the evolving needs of the Greater Los Angeles professional dance community and promotes sustainability and growth of the art form.

Los Angeles County Arts Commission

<http://www.lacountyarts.org>

The Los Angeles County Arts Commission fosters excellence, diversity, vitality, understanding and accessibility of the arts in Los Angeles County, encompassing 88 municipalities, and provides leadership in cultural services. The Arts Commission funds 364 nonprofit arts organizations through a two-year \$9 million grant program, implements Arts for All, the regional initiative dedicated to restoring arts education to 81 public school districts, programs

and operates the Ford Theatres, funds the largest arts internship program in the country and manages the County's civic art policy. The Arts Commission also produces free community programs, including the LA County Holiday Celebration for public television.

The Flourish Foundation

www.theflourishfoundation.org

The Flourish Foundation's mission is to support and provide opportunities for a complete education for middle school, high school and college-aged students in the Los Angeles area, with a primary focus on the performing arts. This mission is based on the belief that the arts are essential for the development of academic proficiency, creativity, leadership abilities and meaningful community connections. Our work provides local youth with essential pathways to bright, stable and productive futures... helping them flourish.

The Music Center

musiccenter.org

As Los Angeles' premier performing arts center, The Music Center's mission is to create, advance, support, preserve and present the highest quality artistic and community engagements through performances, festivals, educational programming, exhibitions, convenings and events. The Music Center seeks to transform lives through the arts and serve in a leadership role as it redefines the performing arts in the 21st Century and honors and responds to the unique and diverse voices and interests of the people of Los Angeles County and all over Southern California.

USC/Gloria Kaufman School of Dance

<http://kaufman.usc.edu/degrees/>

USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance is quickly emerging as an epicenter of excellence in the interdisciplinary study of dance performance and choreography. A rigorous academic curriculum within a conservatory style environment, USC Kaufman provides students with opportunities to work and collaborate with world-renowned artists and study a wide range of dance techniques. The school hosts the nation's top faculty, a group of artists unparalleled in their depth and diversity of experience and talent. "The New Movement" — is the development of new movement models, where intersecting dance techniques create hybrid forms to be expressed in new media, scholarship and choreography.