



The National Service Organization for Professional Dance
1111 16th St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036

PRESS RELEASE

Press Contact:
Jim Byers
Email: jbpr@prodigy.net
Ph: 202/746-3165

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 20, 2009

DANCE/USA AWARDED GRANT FROM ROBERT STERLING CLARK FOUNDATION TO DEVELOP PLAN FOR INTERNATIONAL EXPORT OF AMERICAN DANCE

Washington, DC – Dance/USA, the national service organization for the professional, not-for-profit dance field, has been awarded a \$60,000 grant from the **Robert Sterling Clark Foundation** to support research and development of an **International Export Strategy for American Dance** (IESAD) to promote U.S. dance abroad. The fact-finding and research work, undertaken by Dance/USA and consultant **Carolelinda Dickey**, will commence immediately and conclude in early 2010. The report will be suitable for wide distribution to potential stakeholders, including, but not limited to, government agencies, private foundations, and organizations identified as likely partners in its implementation.

For the past two years, the Clark Foundation has been conducting a study on the financing and characteristics of U.S. cultural exchange efforts. To date, the results show major disinvestment in international non-profit arts exchange from 2003 through 2006 on the part of the U.S. government and private foundations. Margaret C. Ayers, president of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, noted that, in contrast to foreign governments that develop markets for their non-profit artistic product, the U.S. does little to cultivate export markets and is, in effect, a net importer of the non-profit arts while foreign governments are net exporters. She commented that this was the reason the Clark Foundation was so interested in Dance USA's project and why the Clark Foundation made the grant.

Aesthetically diverse and with few language barriers, dance is the ideal cultural ambassador. U.S. audiences flock to see ensembles from Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America – companies often sent by foreign governments to showcase their country's artistic vitality. Between the 1950s and the early 1990s, touring abroad was likewise a huge component sustaining the American dance field. But during the late 1980s, fueled by airline deregulation, the suspension of comprehensive U.S. Department of State subsidies, and a surge of nationalism in a post-Soviet Europe, American dance lost its economic edge and its share of the international cultural markets diminished. The escalation of negative perceptions of America from abroad following the start of the Iraq War further exacerbated the decline of international touring. While Dance/USA believes strongly in a vibrant environment of cultural exchange, it has noted that the loss of foreign markets and increased competition in domestic markets has resulted in a "trade deficit" in dance, which needs to be corrected if dance is to survive as a viable American art form.

More>>>

Touring American Dance – 2-2-2-2

This research and development work will examine how this cultural trade deficit might be rebalanced. Presumably, recommendations arising from the research will address how American dance can best be promoted abroad and what series of existing and new public/private programs and services might be coordinated that will result in increased international touring opportunities for America's dance artists and companies. On a secondary level, Dance/USA believes that if the dance field can successfully address this issue by creating a model to improve the exportation of American dance, other disciplines will also benefit, resulting in a new global appreciation for American culture and more international exchange.

The need for this project was underscored during Dance/USA's series of "Dance Dialogues" at three sites in the U.S. in the fall of 2006 funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and reported in the Spring 2007 *Dance/USA Journal*. "International touring is an important topic to U.S. dance companies. While presenters are eager to present highly subsidized work from abroad, there is not an equivalent 'exporting' of American dance to other countries. Limited government subsidy exists to underwrite American dance artists and companies going abroad, and international touring can be enormously expensive...Some participants called for 'a national arts policy that includes an export strategy, like France and Australia have.'"

Carolelinda Dickey (project manager) has worked both as a producer and an arts presenter; her work spans a continuum from a grassroots, community-based experience to international cultural exchange. She has an extensive background in arts management, including seven years as the founding Executive Director of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. Ms. Dickey has also been the company manager for the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company and Meredith Monk/The House. From 1987 to 1999, she served as Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Dance Council. Ms. Dickey is a Past President of the Board of Directors of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) and a past Director of Dance/USA, Citizens for the Arts (Pennsylvania), and PA Presenters. She currently sits on the Board of Directors of Squonk Opera, Inc. and the Advisory Board to the Conservatory of Performing Arts at Point Park University. In 1999, she founded Performing Arts Strategies and has consulted on program evaluation/development and public policy for the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Heinz Endowments, The Pittsburgh Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, Pentacle, Florida State University, and the Harlem Arts Alliance. An important aspect of her work has revolved around international cultural exchange. A frequent speaker on international exchange, Dickey currently is co-director of the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW in Köln, Germany. Ms. Dickey has spoken on cultural policy at conferences in Germany, Japan, Canada, and Venezuela and has testified before the U.S. Congress on the issues and concerns of touring artists. She has written and published numerous articles on the arts, especially dance and dance touring. Her report, *Improving Access* [to non-immigrant visas for foreign artists] for the Rockefeller Foundation has been widely lauded.



HOUSTON, TX, JUNE 3-6 ★ SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: REALITY CHECK!

For further information on the Dance/USA **International Export Strategy for American Dance** (IESAD), please contact [Carolelinda Dickey, at (412) 422-1864, or email: cd9p@aol.com.]

-30-

In support of its mission to advance the art form of dance, Dance/USA is grounded in the conviction that the concerns and aspirations of dance artists and institutions can be addressed effectively through active, cooperative endeavors with its membership, the broader dance field, and with other performing arts disciplines. Since its founding in 1982, Dance/USA has evolved to become the sole national service organization representing the great diversity of organizations and dance genres that exist in the field. Membership today includes over 500 ballet, modern, ethnic, jazz and tap companies, dance service and presenting organizations, artist managers, educational institutions, business affiliates and individuals, both nationwide and international. Core programs and services consist of **Public Communications** in the form of publications, and web, email and media communications; **Advocacy** on Capitol Hill in support of federal policies designed to strengthen arts organizations and individual artists, in the media to represent a unified voice for the field, and in the philanthropic community to articulate the field's needs; **Research and Information Services** in the form of statistical information on professional dance through data research and needs assessments; **Professional Development** workshops, training seminars and annual meetings; and **Special Projects**, such as Engaging Dance Audiences (EDA), a research and re-granting initiative to study new and existing audience engagement practices.