

Dance America:

An International Strategy for American Dance

prepared by

Carolelinda Dickey and Andrea Snyder | May 2010

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Introduction

We are very pleased to share with you the results of more than a year's worth of research and many more years of visioning, conversations and observations focused on realigning American dance in the global cultural marketplace. Although the formal research for this report was undertaken in the past year and a half, the impetus for this work began in 2000 when we noted the dearth of an American dance presence in Europe. Carolelinda Dickey was working as an advisor to the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW (Düsseldorf, Germany) where she continues to serve as its co-director. Also in 2000, Andrea Snyder assumed the directorship of Dance/USA. Together they began a 10-year process to understand the challenges of reintroducing American dance into the global scene and to formulate effective strategies to reverse the decline of international touring for American dance companies.

The loss of interest from international presenters in learning about or presenting American dance was palpable. Thankfully, with the help of Margaret Ayers, president of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, we have been able to move from a hypothetical framework to a strategy of what we believe is a viable plan to strengthen American dance's footing internationally.

The most significant detail learned over the past 10 years is the impediment to American dance artists/companies caused by the absence of a national strategic and tactical cultural plan. Over the years, we raised the issue with colleagues, pitching the need for a long-term strategic plan that would comprehensively re-educate presenters, promote and support touring artists and companies, and build a sustainable system for increasing opportunities over time. This work was not intended as an initiative or project, but rather a comprehensive outline of what our research has suggested is needed to improve the export of America's dance companies and dance artists. We have sought strategies that are doable and sustainable in the current economic environment and changeable political climates to ensure credibility overseas.

We identified many hurdles that American dance artists need to overcome. We learned that international audiences continue to appreciate the work of American dance artists even if foreign programmers and presenters occasionally perceive the American contemporary dance aesthetic to be old fashioned. We learned that American ballet is well regarded, but cost prohibitive to tour without serious subsidy. And, some American dance forms struggle to find a foothold abroad. Most importantly, though, we learned that the largest hurdle is not in convincing foreigner programmers that American dance has value, but getting them to think about America dance at all. By and large, American dance has fallen off their collective radar screens.

Because the focus is on work going abroad, it is vital that this work connect with the U.S. Departments of State, Commerce, Defense and Homeland Security, all of who are posted within U.S. Missions (embassies and consulates). An empowered dance field could strengthen and expand its partnership with government. For the U.S. non-profit agencies engaged in cultural exchange, it is most critical that they work together with transparency and a shared vision. Not unlike the federal government, where inter-agency cooperation is rare or opportunistic, the cultural organizations must rise above their self-interests if change is to occur.

Our work at this stage is focused on dance, but we believe the results may be applicable and beneficial to all American art forms. Dance/USA has assumed the leadership for dance, but other national service organizations, particularly Theater Communications Group and the American

Symphony Orchestra League, have created parallel and complementary efforts for their respective fields. In time, these efforts can likely coalesce into a cooperative structure for the export of the totality of America's performing arts.

We welcome feedback and encouragement to keep the "Export American Dance" flame lit.

Carolelinda Dickey

Andrea Snyder

Authors:

Carolelinda Dickey has been a dancer, an agent, dance company executive director, and dance presenter. Currently she is co-director of the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW (Düsseldorf, Germany) and director of Performing Arts Strategies, an independent consulting business.

Andrea Snyder has been a dancer, an agent, dance company executive director, administrator, and grantmaker. She is a former assistant director of the National Endowment for the Arts Dance Program and currently is the president and executive director of Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance, and a certified executive coach.

An International Strategy for American Dance

Many signs indicate that the time is ripe to implement a new era of international cultural exchange. The Obama administration has begun to realign American foreign policy and appears to recognize the potential of the arts to rejuvenate and reframe global perspectives about the United States. Talented people are focusing on this opportunity across a broad swath of organizations and government agencies, including individuals with experience working abroad. Most importantly, we have the diversity and quality of American dance companies who can fully compete in a global market.

While many stars have aligned, it should be noted that the strategies outlined in this report are most appropriate for world regions that maintain established dance communities and existing infrastructures. Regions without strong cultural infrastructures, such as most of Africa, Southeast and South Central Asia, will require modifications of the strategies suggested here.

This report proposes an international vision to strengthen and reposition American dance by:

- **Instituting Dance America, a support structure to increase the export of American dance**
- **Creating a council of key program providers to coordinate all international dance touring initiatives for American dance artists and companies**

To arrive at this vision, we undertook a comprehensive examination of the field in order to:

- 1) Better understand the existing practices, barriers and opportunities for American dance companies touring internationally; and
- 2) Propose a comprehensive, field-wide plan to increase the opportunities for American dance abroad.

Throughout, this report considers a number of critical questions:

- Who should assume responsibility for the creation of international policy to export American culture, specifically dance?
- How are priorities identified?
- Is dance or national identity to be served first in any international strategy?
- How do international exchange and cultural diplomacy differ?
- Are all American dance artists and genres of dance suitable for international touring? If not, who or what body is best qualified to make those decisions?
- How can available resources be best applied to these strategies?
- In what areas would financial investment have the greatest impact for long-term sustainability?
- Is the National Endowment for the Arts sufficiently recognized internationally as a National Cultural Institution (NCI) to lead this Plan? If not, what agency/entity is?

Specifically, we posed the following questions to individuals who are currently working within or recently retired from the Foreign Service, staff of foreign NCIs, and foreign dance programmers.

1. What can be done better to insert American dance artists into the international dance scene?
2. What do American dance artists need to do to better partner with foreign cultural organizations?

3. What will help foreign programmers to better understand American dance?
4. What will help foreign programmers to meet/see more American dance artists?
5. What are the barriers to programming American dance?

Context of Report

Historically, American dance, especially contemporary dance, was widely available and visible in post-WWII Europe. Its strongest presence was in France and the UK. Often under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State, American dance companies toured widely in post-war Western Europe during the 1960s and early '70s. Eventually, in the mid-'70s, American dance began to tour into the Axis countries of Germany, Austria, and Italy as well as Japan. As Europe was rebuilding, the United States Information Agency (USIA), begun in 1953 under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State, partnered with dance companies to strategically promote them as a function of U.S. cultural diplomatic efforts; that is, they programmed or assisted in the programming of dance in areas that were important to U.S. foreign policy. In the late '70s and early '80s, this policy shifted to the Eastern Bloc countries and then into Asia.

Regardless of the political impetus, American dance companies and artists benefited and wholeheartedly partnered with the U.S. government, resulting in the development of foreign markets for American dance. Disseminating the American aesthetic carried a profound message to foreign communities. Issues of gender and racial equality were evident both on stage and throughout the non-performance activities in which the companies engaged in the host communities. For instance, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company toured widely throughout Southeast Asia with its work, *Freedom of Information*. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater presented in dance the struggle of the African American experience as well as a celebration of African American culture. Martha Graham Dance Company shared the universality of Greek drama and its relevance to contemporary life. The company of Merce Cunningham explored post-modern concepts, while Alwin Nikolais introduced a look into the future with technological innovation.

Toward the end of the Reagan administration, support for the USIA declined and during the Clinton administration the office was de-activated, resulting in a reduction of resources for touring and removing the only visible government support structure for American dance (and arts in general) to be seen abroad.

In contrast, beginning in the late '80s, many foreign countries initiated comprehensive programs of cultural diplomacy through their NCIs and began aggressively promoting their artists to American presenters and institutions. The most successful of these government initiatives were in France, Canada, England, Holland, Australia, Mexico, Ireland, Japan and Germany. Generally, these strategies have included:

- Subsidies to support their national artists touring in the U.S.;
- Travel and educational support for American presenters to see work in their home country;
- Access to their country's national corporations and NCIs/NGOs;
- Marketing support provided directly to American presenters;
- Global marketing and promotion of their artists.

These countries created cultural policies and, more recently, developed formal national dance plans that insert their artists into the American cultural landscape. The result has been a tremendously rich and satisfying experience for the American public. These initiatives have benefited every strata of the American presenting community, from Brooklyn Academy of Music's *Next Wave Festival*, The Kennedy Center, and the Joyce Theater to college and university presenters across the country, as well as museums and

contemporary and performing arts centers. Although the American dance field genuinely welcomes this exchange, the fact remains that American dance companies have enjoyed neither reciprocity to work abroad nor domestic support to enable touring. The playing field is not level. We have a trade imbalance in dance.

In addition to the efforts of the foreign NCIs and reduced U.S. government involvement, other factors affecting demand for American dance:

- A post-9/11 political environment has refocused cultural attention to urban cultures and immigrant populations;
- The growth and development of the European Union has created cultural programs to unite the disparate European community, which in turn unintentionally minimizes American culture;
- Key international individuals who historically were champions of American dance and culture are increasingly disappearing from the scene; their successors do not have a history of working with American dance.

In developing of this report, we considered the needs of both the government and the dance field. On the government side, we conferred with current members of the Foreign Service, Department of State, National Endowment for the Arts, and retired Foreign Service staff. Within the dance field, we focused on three groups: artists/companies, artists' representatives and dance presenters. We found uniformity around the importance of cultural exchange, but not necessarily common thinking around how best to approach it.

Partnerships with Government

Foreign Service employees working abroad asserted that American art, especially dance, has a remarkable ability to engage communities on a grassroots level in a manner that a U.S. Mission cannot as easily achieve. A U.S. Mission can communicate the diversity and tolerance of its people, but a racially mixed, culturally diverse dance company working in the schools and neighborhoods of Turkish immigrants in Germany, the Moroccan enclaves of France, or in the tension-plagued countries of Southeast Asia, is far more effective in demonstrating the American diversity and tolerance of Americans. To their credit, the Department of State's partnership in 2009-10 with the Brooklyn Academy of Music to produce DanceMotion USA has been a tremendous step forward in recapturing some of the benefits of the old Arts America programs.

Within government agencies, we found strong interest in cultural exchange but also a general sense of fatigue because international exchange has been neglected for so long. With the exception of the staff of the National Endowment for the Arts, diplomatic mission employees exhibited a consistently low level of American cultural literacy among Mission employees, especially for the performing arts. Without the background, training and a formalized program to gain knowledge of the dance field or interact with the staff of the Arts Endowment, the U.S. Missions are grossly unprepared to engage in work with American dance artists. There are, unfortunately, examples of poor program outcomes for tours administered by U.S. Missions. From non-dance specialists, such as U.S. Mission personnel, the response most often heard was the need for better access to and information about American dance. We repeatedly heard that no one on a local or regional level could provide access and information on touring companies or appropriate introductions.

Two common and repeated themes from those posted abroad were: 1) the need for access to informed sources to identify artists who are qualified and appropriate for their communities and 2) to have resources

(human and financial) to manage the programs that become available to them. One European Post reported spending a full month on a residency program of a visiting artist. After the residency, the Post staffer praised the success of the program but asserted that the workload was so great that another residency could not be justified without external support.

Regional arts organizations (RAOs) in their quasi-governmental role were consulted and reviewed to examine their current programs and their parallel investigation into how best to expand support for cultural exchange. Much of the focus of their collective work is to import artists from abroad through their touring and commissioning programs and to support travel for American presenters to see non-U.S. based work and exchange programs. The RAOs manage several noted and highly effective programs, including the only ongoing program to support artist travel to festivals (USArtists International).

Partnerships within the Dance Field

Cultural exchange is widely embraced within the dance field, but perceptions about it vary. Dance artists and companies understand the benefits of an open and viable system of “exchange” and recognize that having access to new and different work nurtures their creative development. Presenters understand that cultural exchange provides them access to foreign artists and, therefore, has significant value. The concept of export as a part of cultural exchange was a bit more elusive, as presenters did not necessarily see it as benefiting them directly. Among The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center and the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the three largest U.S. presenters that engage in international exchange, up until just recently only The Kennedy Center included programs to export American culture.¹ Artists’ representatives probably have the most balanced understanding of cultural exchange as a two-way street since they represent both American and foreign artists.

There was no disagreement among dance leaders and practitioners about the value of cultural exchange. Nor was there any disagreement about the value of the tactics identified in this report. Questions consistently came up about the resources needed to implement the recommendations and concerns about who would make decisions and set policy. The following statements summarize each group’s attitudes toward cultural exchange.

Dance Artists and Companies - Artists and companies clearly believe that they have much to offer when touring abroad. In addition to the financial and experiential benefits that they gain, there is an underlying sense of patriotism that they derive from working in tandem with U.S. diplomatic efforts. They also recognize the difficulty of touring internationally without the support that their foreign colleagues enjoy. They cite the lack of coordination in existing support programs and challenging procedural details within those programs. Dance companies have largely adopted a “throw their arms up in the air” approach to international touring. Not only do they receive little financial support, but, more importantly, they have no access to national programs that provide infrastructure for international touring. As a cohort, they do not know the international players; they cannot afford the financial investment to build relationships; and/or they cannot afford the time to gain the necessary experience of working abroad. With few exceptions, the dance field demonstrates a strong will to work internationally, but no viable means to gain the skills, access and financial support necessary to create and sustain an international presence.

¹ *Promoting Public and Private Reinstatement in Cultural Exchange-based Diplomacy*, Margaret Ayers, The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, 2010.

Dance Presenters - Those presenters who have been fortunate enough to build relationships with foreign National Cultural Institutes have enjoyed a number of tangible benefits. First, they are often subsidized by foreign NCIs to travel to see work abroad. Some stated that they travel more often to see international work than they do to see American work. Through invitations to festivals and platforms, they are able to familiarize themselves with dozens of foreign artists. Co-productions have resulted that allow foreign artists to tour the U.S. with generous subsidies from their governments. Support provided over the years has created a viable market for foreign artists in the U.S. and built lasting relationships.

A frequent source for information about American dance comes from presenter gatekeepers, an informal network of our most important programmers and presenters. They travel widely and take seriously the need to see international work. By and large, these gatekeepers are an asset, but one that needs to be better developed. Because this group has built strong, respected global relationships, sometimes their opinions take on too much influence.

Imagine a group of international colleagues standing around a bar after a performance and one in the group asks the American, "What's good in dance in the U.S. these days?" The American shrugs and responds, "Not much." With a sip of good wine and an off-the-cuff remark, our gatekeeper has just dismissed the entire field of American dance in the eyes of his or her foreign colleagues. When this scenario was posed to a number of U.S. colleagues, there was general head hanging and recognition that it could, and has, happened. Clearly, our gatekeepers are vital to the dance field, but their awareness needs to be raised to include their role as "exporters" as well as "importers" and as spokespeople for American culture.

Artists' Representatives - Artists' representatives are key players in the distribution and development of work in the U.S. With only a handful of exceptions, they tend to respond to interest from foreign markets, but do not have the resources to actively develop those markets. U.S. artists' representatives are largely domestic, but as a group they express a tremendous desire to work beyond U.S. borders if systems are in place to support their efforts. The agents/managers distribute arts and culture around the U.S. very effectively and a few also manage to work well abroad. Others are willing and able to expand.

Initial Findings

A survey conducted in Fall 2009 of American dance companies and artists who have toured in the past five years paints a diminished picture of international touring for American dance. The survey was sent to approximately 300 companies with a response rate of 50%. Of that sample, 85% stated that they have toured internationally within the past five years. About half (49%) began touring before 1995 and the other half (51%) began touring after 1995.

Currently, 60% of those that responded tour no more than once a year, with 32% touring for less than one week a year. Of those who tour, 36% have budgets under \$100,000 and 78% have budgets under \$1 million. Of those who tour for multiple weeks at a time or multiple times per year, most have budgets above \$1 million (22%). Compared to 10 years ago, 56% stated that their touring has decreased or remained the same. Companies tour to every continent (except Antarctica). The most frequented regions are Europe, the Americas, and Asia, and the least frequented are Africa, Oceania, and the Middle East. By a ratio of 4:1, the genre of work that tours is contemporary dance.

Other notable findings are:

- 43% of those companies that tour receive no financial support outside of touring fees;
- 71% stated that touring fees do not cover the direct costs of touring;
- 64% are without an agent or artist representative to book international tours;
- 86% are satisfied with the quality of their touring, while only 37% are satisfied with the quantity of touring.

When asked what programs or services were needed to support American dance artists going abroad, the answers and priorities from the artists, dance company managers and artists' representatives were reasonably succinct, falling into three distinct categories:

- Access and opportunities;
- Information and training;
- Financial support.

Access and opportunities comprise:

- Attendance at international meetings, fringe festivals, and marketplaces;
- Introduction to foreign colleagues, especially programmers;
- Hosted performance appearances at fringe festivals;
- American-curated showcases at marketplaces;
- Invitations to network internationally;
- International programmers who are willing to travel to see work.

Information and training includes:

- Understanding who's who on the international scene and access to good contact information;²
- Acquiring business skills, including an understanding of cultural mores of diverse countries;
- A working knowledge of visa and taxation regulations;
- Better-developed foreign language skills.

Financial support was most often focused around:

- Travel and fee support;
- Support for co-productions and research.

From non-dance specialists, such as U.S. Mission personnel, the most common response was the need for better access to and information about American dance. We repeatedly heard that no one on a local or regional level could provide information on touring companies or could provide introductions.

Most importantly, foreign dance colleagues said that they feel distanced from American dance artists and have no clear understanding of who speaks for the dance community in the U.S. A national voice for dance is needed. Many international presenters who have attended the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW (Düsseldorf, Germany) know Dance/USA, as do many within the World Dance Alliance. French artists and programmers are becoming more familiar with FUSED, a partnership between the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) and the French American Cultural Exchange (FACE). Few programmers are aware of the USArtists International Program at the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, even when the American artists they present are funded. DanceMotion USA is very new and does not yet appear to be on the radar screen. Many artists and important programmers in Europe and Asia remember the NPN from earlier years, although the NPN currently has a strong and positive foothold in Latin America. The absence of Arts

² Contact information is more difficult to attain internationally than it is domestically, as foreign websites are often less transparent and less user friendly, only occasionally available in English.

International is often noted, even if its domestic presence was never as strong as its international one. Over the years, access to informed Foreign Service employees has been limited due to changes in the diplomatic corps which is now typically less knowledgeable about American performing arts, especially dance. International programmers more often familiarize themselves with American dance through showcases at the Arts Presenters booking conference in New York, which is a mixed blessing. The production quality of the showcases does not always permit work to be shown at its best, and the showcases usually only offer excerpts of a work, sometimes as short as 5-10 minutes.

Geographic isolation is a huge impediment facing the U.S. dance field; travel time and distance certainly contribute. This isolation results in a dance field that is less informed about the fundamentals of international touring. International websites are often less transparent than American ones. As a result, managers often obtain outdated and inaccurate contact information about who's who on the international dance scene. American dance managers and choreographers are rarely present at international festivals and convenings. By and large, choreographers and managers have little knowledge and less opportunity to learn and engage in the aesthetic flux and international marketplace. Most American managers have little training in the logistics of international touring and are frequently ill informed about tax and visa regulations.

As a result, this European artistic nationalism has led to a "soft power" and an aesthetic gap for American dance internationally. The change in influence is most striking between Europe and the U.S. where the systems of single choreographer dance companies are relatively similar. As European countries actively export their dance companies to non-Western countries -- with no American dance available -- American cultural and aesthetic models are being displaced and replaced, creating even greater aesthetic and influence gaps. The U.S. has a strong and important effort in Africa through the leadership of MAPP International Productions and The Africa Contemporary Arts Consortium to import African culture to the U.S., but it is only now expanding its efforts to strengthen infrastructure within Africa that will encourage equitable cultural exchange.

And, the competitive landscape has changed. Beginning in the mid-1980s, Western European dance companies began to develop work stylistically different from U.S. work. The new European work largely moved away from both neoclassicism and postmodernism toward genres with new, non-American origins. The prerequisite that once mandated European choreographers to study in New York City was supplanted by the influence of Pina Bausch and William Forsythe (both in Germany), as well as the most prominent group of French choreographers of the time. Dance critic Jennifer Dunning wrote in 1987, "French modern dance was founded on the pure dance styles of Alwin Nikolais and, later, Merce Cunningham. But the young Turks of French modern dance today have moved toward a theatricality in dance that has been seen here in work by Maguy Marin and Jean Claude Gallotta - dance filled with dream imagery, literary references and theatrical effect."³ Europe's newfound artistic nationalism also directed dance students to schools in their home countries. The Centre National de Danse Contemporaine in Angers, which had first been directed by Alwin Nikolais, then by Viola Farber, hired its first French director in 1987.

In 2002, choreographer Liz Lerman drew attention to this aesthetic gap when describing a view of dance and its relationship to a larger society. In a perfect world, shared values infuse a knowledgeable audience, and the dance carries meaning for all involved. She contrasted this with her own experience growing up and training to become a professional dancer in the U.S., where specialization of function led to fragmentation.

³ Jennifer Dunning, "French Modern Dance Stresses Its Own Accent, *The New York Times*, September 6, 1987

A corollary to specialization is a world built on hierarchy, and hierarchy is at the heart of the culture schism that American artists are currently experiencing in the international dance world. For example, dance in many parts of the world is seen in festivals whose format requires choreographers to present shortened, full evening works of 60-70 minutes. American dance is most often seen over a presenter's 9-12 month season in a format of 1 ½ to 2 hours where three to four pieces of repertory are included on the program. If the hierarchy ranks festival formatted work at the top and repertory programs at the bottom, then American work is less valued. In order to address this challenge, Lerman proposed flipping this system on its side, to replace the vertical hierarchy of ranked values with a horizontal spectrum of equally valuable possibilities. She described how this shift in the axis of values is happening in many professions, allowing a movement away from an either/or mentality toward one that embraces such seeming opposites as nurture and rigor, process and product. In a hierarchical world, good is on the top and bad is on the bottom; but if the hierarchy is flipped on its side, it changes discussions of quality.⁴ Encouraging this move away from hierarchy toward embracing diverse genres (and formats) needs to be a primary tenet of any American plan, and this understanding needs to extend to the international dance community.

⁴ Paraphrased from a presentation by Liz Lerman at the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW, 2002, discussing how to rethink cultural and aesthetic difference.

Dance America: The Vision

The scope and scale of creating an international vision for dance is daunting. As a country, we incorporate 50 states plus numerous territories. By comparison, the European Union has 27 countries. Our population is 308.4 million, slightly less than the entire population of Western Europe at 365.8 million. While it is difficult to know precisely how many American dance companies exist, the number would be counted in the thousands – perhaps as many as 2,200.⁵ Each European country with comparable dance systems counts its dance companies in the low hundreds or less. The UK has approximately 200.⁶ Germany has approximately 150.⁷ Australia has 50.⁸ France has around 500.⁹ Counting only those American companies deemed appropriate for international touring either by organizational capacity or aesthetic sophistication, the U.S. pool would be in the high hundreds, while in most foreign countries the local pool would be a dozen or less. In the survey of American dance companies conducted for this report, we concluded that the tally of all American dance companies touring abroad over the past five years is probably around 200 companies – more than the entire number of dance companies touring internationally from Great Britain, France, Germany and Australia combined. The importance of these comparisons is to define the challenges of how to create a plan that will benefit a constituency of approximately 200 existing touring entities and envision eventually including a potential pool of, perhaps, 1,000 more.

The U.S. government does not have a national cultural policy, nor does it have a NCI or a mandate to include art and culture on a cabinet level. Given the character of the American people and the priorities of the U.S. government, it is unlikely that such a structure or a department within the federal government is forthcoming. Therefore, the Vision will, of necessity, be a different operating model from those used by foreign governments. It will require the inclusion and cooperation of multiple organizational and philanthropic partners and the coordination of a myriad of tactical efforts. Ideally, the American model would be aligned with an existing federal agency to ensure its authority and accountability to the dance field and to the public. Yet, it needs the scale of resources that only a public/private partnership can provide. It also needs to provide leadership to the valuable network of RAOs and SAAs engaged in international work. The model should be based on mutual respect among the potential partners and advance clear, untainted collaborative directives. A successful model will most likely be based on the values that have historically served the United States well, such as a market-driven economy, self-determination, and respect for diversity and tolerance.

After reviewing the NCIs in the UK, France, Germany, Ireland, Australia, the Netherlands and Canada, it became clear that only a national effort could successfully increase and sustain the presence of American dance internationally. The American model needs to organize and streamline information and activities, but not limit the creativity and entrepreneurialism of existing organizations. The American model should set priorities and establish goals and objectives, but not dominate each and every tactical effort. It must foster trust and exchange of information among the service providers and the artists and dance companies who benefit from those services. And, when necessary, a mechanism needs to be identified for the entity to be the arbiter of discourse, while functioning as a team leader for all parties concerned.

⁵ Based on a compilation of estimates by Dance/USA, National Endowment for the Arts, and regional dance service organizations.

⁶ "Dance Facts, DanceUK.org" n.d., < <http://www.danceuk.org/metadot/index.pl?id=22529&isa=Category&op=show> > (accessed Dec. 2009).

⁷ "DataBase, Dance Germany" n.d., < <http://www.dance-germany.org/> > (accessed Dec. 2009).

⁸ "Dance Plan 2012, Australian Council" n.d., < http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/dance/reports_and_publications/dance_plan_2012 > (accessed Dec. 2009).

⁹ Centre National de la Danse, "www.cnd.fr" n.d., < <http://fms.cnd.fr/fmi/xsl/compagnie/liste.xsl> > (accessed Dec. 2009).

The Vision is intended to be comprehensive and tactical. Tactically, the Vision would:

1. Identify existing programs and coordinate communication among them to bring together dance organizations, U.S. government agencies, state governments, and private and public organizations into efficient, coordinated and sustainable partnerships;
2. Manage the foreign distribution of positive information about American dance overall;
3. Provide better training and technical assistance to enable American dance companies to tour abroad;
4. Assist U.S. Missions to work better with dance organizations;
5. Propose strategies to sustain dance touring abroad;
6. Most importantly, provide the leadership to harness resources from the government and the private sector.

Recommendations were formulated after conducting:

- A review and benchmarking of the strategies of foreign governments with current, successful track records of exporting performing arts ensembles;
- A review and evaluation of current U.S. organizations that engage in support for American dance touring abroad with an eye to identify potential partners that might join together in this work;
- Analysis of results from a field-wide survey of dance companies and individual dance artists;
- Extended conversations and interviews with dance artists, dance managers and dance presenters who engage in international work;
- Exploratory conversations and meetings with U.S. government agencies to whom this work would have relevance.

In proposing this Vision, historic and current structures for touring dance domestically were examined to consider what knowledge or assets could be harnessed to use on the international level. Two “asset areas” were identified: 1) our government and quasi-government agencies, and 2) the dance field itself.

We have a strong and viable federal agency -- the National Endowment for the Arts --as well as a regional distribution system through state arts agencies and regional arts organizations. In addition, a number of programs and projects scattered throughout the federal government promote American culture abroad.

The only federal agency mandated to foster the development of America’s dance artists and dance companies is the National Endowment for the Arts, a critical and the logical lead partner in the implementation of the Vision. The Arts Endowment has over 40 years of experience touring American dance companies. It first began to develop a domestic market for dance in 1967 with the Coordinated Residency Touring Program (CRTP), which evolved in 1975 into the Dance Touring Program (DTP). From its beginning, the Arts Endowment partnered with state arts councils to move dance around the country and, in 1974, they were joined by the newly created regional arts organizations.

Strategies

The Vision encompasses two strategies: 1) establish **Dance America** to develop and implement programs and services that support the international work of American dance companies; and 2) create a **Council of Advisors** made up of providers of international programs.

Strategy 1: Establish and Implement Dance America

- A. Create programs & services that research, advocate, promote, and provide technical assistance for America's dance companies, including the establishment of **Dance America Abroad**.*
- B. Identify new resources to strengthen existing grantmaking programs as well as develop new grantmaking programs that support dance artists touring abroad, including direct financial support both to American artists and foreign programmers.*
- C. Create a sustainable, positive working relationship between American dance companies and U.S. embassies and consulates abroad, including but not limited to programs originating from the Departments of State, Commerce, Defense and Homeland Security.*

To best understand **Dance America**, one should consider how the foreign NCIs work with American presenters. Key to the success of the NCIs is that they have offices in American communities and become familiar fixtures on the cultural scene, gaining the trust and respect of the American dance community. They organize showcases and create opportunities for their artists to connect with American presenters. They provide both travel funds to allow presenters to meet their artists and funds to support touring of their artists. The NCI is the matchmaker, facilitating introductions and functioning as a two-way conduit of information.

Now, flip the flow of information and resources.

Central to the success of **Dance America** is **Dance America Abroad**, a network of international satellite offices established to represent American dance interests abroad. **Dance America** would maintain a dual presence: a domestic office in Washington, D.C., charged with coordinating and communicating programs within the dance field in the U.S. and **Dance America Abroad**, a network of international offices charged with promoting and coordinating touring of American dance abroad. **Dance America's** primary functions would be promotion, relationship building and creating access to international programmers, technical assistance, information gathering and dissemination -- and becoming a resource for American artists' representatives.

Programmatically, **Dance America** would:

- Promote American dance abroad at global marketplaces, festivals, gatherings and convenings;
- Coordinate interagency cooperation among the departments within U.S. Missions and coordinate activities between American dance companies and the U.S. Missions;
- Facilitate communication between American dance companies and foreign programmers/dance communities by building relationships and networks with foreign programmers, dance companies and NCIs;
- Coordinate and provide consistent, reliable and current information to American dance companies that is needed to tour efficiently, including information about visas, tax regulations and political conditions;
- Counsel companies and artists' representatives on logistical tour management/assistance;
- Maintain a portal website connecting the American dance community and the international presenting community;

- Act as a resource to foreign programmers seeking information and access to American dance companies and choreographers;
- Identify and coordinate new resources directed to the grantmaking of existing and new programs to support artists.

Working closely with other government departments and agencies, **Dance America** would develop and facilitate cooperative projects. For example, a speakers' bureau about American dance might be designed to support the efforts of cultural and public affairs offices in U.S. embassies and consulates as well as to provide ongoing dance literacy training for consular employees. **Dance America** would track dance companies' availability and help match dance companies with appropriate consular programs. Working through the **Dance America Abroad** offices, direct logistical support could be provided to embassies and consulates on cultural projects. Residency programs between dance artists and DOD and DHS in strategic communities around the world could be created. Or, partnerships with DOC to insert American dance into trade missions and fairs could be established.

In addition to the programs and services made available through **Dance America**, a comprehensive series of grantmaking programs must be sustained at home, some of which currently exist through the RAOs and SAAs. Organizations that currently engage in grantmaking do a very good job with the resources at hand, but much more could be done with additional resources to expand the breadth and depth of existing programs. Other grantmaking exists on an informal basis, such as support to foreign programmers to see American dance. A collective, comprehensive approach to grantmaking must consider the programs currently spread across a number of organizations and institutions as well as informal programs that exist.

In particular, USArtists International (administered by the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation) is successful at getting funds to touring artists. Similarly, FUSED (French U.S. Exchange in Dance), a joint program of the National Dance Project (New England Foundation for the Arts) and French American Culture Exchange (FACE), has been instrumental in fostering positive cultural exchange between French and U.S. dance artists and programmers. Both programs are excellent models and limited only by the resources available to them. Increased resources to USArtists International and replication of the FUSED model into other markets could have a significant positive impact on the ability of American artists to work internationally. Additionally, the RAOs are well positioned to provide leadership to expand the import side of cultural exchange. **Dance America** should be considered a resource for the current program providers to identify new resources for their programs. (For a list of key dance programs, refer to the appendices.)

The research has identified the following grantmaking needs:

1. Direct support to American Dance Artists

- Travel support to festivals as well as theaters and dance centers
- Fee support to touring artists
- International co-productions
- Creative research/residency
- Fellowships to individual American artists for creative research

2. Support to Foreign Presenters/Programmers

- Subsidies to see American dance in the U.S. or abroad
- Direct support to program American dance

3. Fellowships to foreign programmers to research American dance

Strategy 2: Create a cooperative operating structure (Council of Advisors) composed of the National Endowment for the Arts and independent program providers that will envision and coordinate present and future international dance initiatives and programs under a cooperative management team.

The Council of Advisors is conceived as a cooperative operating structure for program providers. The model might be viewed as a cultural holding company for American arts and culture going abroad. The holding company would include programs spread across a number of organizations. While each entity works and functions independently, they all would agree to be accountable to the holding company for those programs that fall within the overall strategy. It will be necessary to coordinate existing programs, but not to radically change or appropriate them. Accountability would include coordination, communication, and planning.

The dance field has a history of several highly effective programs to support the export of American dance, but little has been coordinated to consciously connect individual programs to a larger plan or goal. At the moment, many thoughtful people are exploring how to improve the environment for international cultural exchange. It is a huge endeavor with many intelligent ways to approach it. However, a spirit of competition and hierarchy exists within the community. This report strongly encourages the creation of a single, shared strategy with the Council of Advisors as the dedicated entity to implement it. We do not need a hierarchy of tactics, but rather a web of coordinated programs with a consensus about common goals.

To ensure transparency and accountability to the dance field and to foster multi-directional communication, the **Council of Advisors** would convene on a regular schedule to discuss pending and proposed new programs, review current programs, and coordinate collective programs to ensure that they are meeting agreed-upon objectives. The result might include consolidation, elimination of duplication, and/or transference of programs from one agency to another. The partners would evaluate and revise existing programs to develop ones that are most efficient, relevant and allow for new opportunities. The community of program providers for international export programs would benefit from engaging in a facilitated process to review existing programs and needs with an eye toward partnership building. Possible program providers include:

Regional Arts Organizations
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (DOS)
Arts Presenters and ISPA
National Performance Network
Dance/USA
DanceMotion USA
State Arts Agencies
Dance America
Philanthropic organizations

Each potential partner comes to the table with assets and liabilities. Regardless of its weakened position over the past decade due to diminished resources, individual artists and companies prefer the transparent strategy that the NEA provides over private organizational management, including fair access to programs and the ability to inform the process. Dance/USA as the national service organization and a national voice

for dance has the broadest understanding of the needs of the dance field. Although Dance/USA is a membership organization, it maintains a policy of aesthetic neutrality and does not engage in curatorial work. The RAOs have an impressive history of supporting international exchange, and since their primary focus is regional, they ensure broad geographic coverage. Although SAAs do not provide uniform programs nationally and their funding levels are highly unpredictable, they often represent more grassroots efforts. The private foundation community has sustained neither a unified approach toward international program support nor maintained definable leadership in this arena, but has always indicated a willingness to respond to smart thinking. The new thinking outlined in this report is an opportunity and a challenge to the philanthropic community to reenter the arena of international cultural exchange.

Dance America Operations

After a careful review of existing dance programs and organizations and with input from those working in the field, this report recommends that administration of **Dance America** can best be housed within the National Endowment for the Arts and managed in partnership with Dance/USA, as the national service organization for dance.

In addition to the NEA and Dance/USA, unique individuals in the dance field will be invaluable assets to implementing this vision, including expatriates with extensive first-hand experience working and living abroad, those whose primary work is overseas, presenters who enjoy great influence with foreign decision makers, and artists' representatives who have the potential to be instrumental in this process. Lastly, individuals and institutions that have the financial ability to assist in the capitalization of this strategy are clearly vital to this process.

Identifying the best people to staff **Dance America** will be vital to its success. It is important to attract dance professionals with international touring experience and with personal connections to the international dance scene. As these people will be instrumental in building necessary relationships, it will be critical that they possess the social and business skills to insert themselves into international and national gatherings. It is also important that the staff required for an overseas office remains current on the dance scene at home. Not unlike the U.S. Mission's model for Foreign Service personnel, rotating overseas "assignments" every two to three years will attract more experienced individuals who find the long-term prospect of living abroad unacceptable. This will also build a cadre of individuals with the connections and experience to sustain these efforts.

As a first step, it is recommended that **Dance America** draw upon the individuals and artist organizations that have already developed the skill set and credibility of working in several world regions. For instance, the National Performance Network has a successful history of working in Latin America and MAPP International Productions is well versed working in Africa. Both organizations could be likely candidates for establishing **Dance America Abroad** offices in their respective regions. Dance/USA has developed a visible presence in Europe as have a number of likely individual candidates with significant experience in Europe and Asia.

As envisioned, **Dance America** would need four levels of staffing:

- A staff to run the Washington D.C. office and supervise the overseas offices;
- American dance professionals with broad knowledge of the global dance scene to run the overseas offices;
- Retired/former CAO/PAO advisors with knowledge of working in foreign communities and U.S. Missions overseas;
- Foreign national assistants to provide administrative support in overseas offices.

The **Dance America** offices will be modest as the available resources are likely to be limited. Through careful and strategic planning a series of well-implemented actions will serve to establish the potential of the **Dance America** vision. For instance, in the first three years, we would hope that **Dance America** and **Dance America Abroad** would:

- Establish the first two overseas offices;
- Initiate a number of facilitated introductions between American dance artists and key international programmers;

- Implement a global marketing presence at marketplaces and conferences;
- Begin to fill in the existing gaps of contact information;
- Identify key programmers for American work;
- Support the efforts and partner with US. Missions abroad, including training in cultural literacy;
- Publish and distribute informational material about American dance.

The artist representative or the individual dance company manager of a dance organization¹⁰ would be the key link to the success of **Dance America**. As the staffing for **Dance America** would be too limited to cover to wide region alone, the artist representative/manager could be supported in his or her work and, subsequently, aid in the delivery of the programs and services of **Dance America**.

In fact, artists' representatives could be our greatest assets, as this cohort is peopled with an extraordinary collective of talented, dedicated and entrepreneurial individuals. With the exception of artists, this group is the only group that is solely dedicated to the *distribution* of dance – recognition that this report gives the utmost importance. In the U.S., the most proven distribution tool for American dance is the cohort of agents/managers whose business it is to promote dance (companies and individual artists) to programmers (presenters, festivals, colleges and universities, arts centers, etc.) who, in turn, present public events (performances, workshops, classes, etc.) to their communities.

The equation below has proven to be effective and efficient domestically; it is a clear, three-legged stool strategy.

$$\text{American Dance Artist} + \text{Agent/Manager} + \text{Programmer} = \text{Audience}$$

All parties involved understand how it works as it mirrors one of the basic rules of economics:

$$\text{Good Product} + \text{Distributor} + \text{Retail Market} = \text{Consumer Sales}$$

Unfortunately, this equation does not transfer well to international cultural exchange, as there is a missing factor in the equation, which becomes:

$$\text{American Dance Artist} + \text{"X"} + \text{Programmer} = \text{Audience}$$

The "X" factor represents the dearth of U.S. agents working to export American artists and the even fewer foreign agents who represent American artists abroad. Additionally, American agents rarely work internationally. Of 18 artists' representatives who participated in a focus group, 40% of the dance artists on their rosters were non-American companies. All of the agents/managers worked in the U.S., but only four actively promoted their dance artists abroad. Thus, there are few foreign distributors for U.S. dance artists. Our research can document clearly that American agents/managers have the will to work abroad, but the task is daunting without access, training and opportunity.

In other countries, the NCIs have inserted themselves into the distribution process, in some instances acting as an artist's agent or working in tandem with an American agent/manager. Applying the models above to the strategies by foreign governments who export dance, the equation becomes:

$$\text{Foreign Dance artist} + \text{Foreign NCI} + \text{U.S. Agent} + \text{Programmer} = \text{Audience}$$

¹⁰ In the context of this report, artist representative/artist manager refers to any individual working on behalf of a choreographer, including the choreographer himself/herself.

This equation moves from the three-legged strategy to a more stable, four-legged model. The “Foreign NCI” represented in the equation is generally a ministry of culture or sanctioned NGO, such as the British Council, Culture Ireland, the Australian Council, the Canada Council, Theater Instituut Nederland (TIN), or Goethe Institut. In all cases where a significant number of national dance companies exist, there is a government-sanctioned organization that facilitates the export of dance.

The three-legged strategy works best for *domestic* touring. To tour internationally, American dance needs to mirror the more stable, four-legged model. If we overlay the two equations, replacing the Foreign NCI with **Dance America**, the proposed model to promote American dance abroad becomes:

American Dance Artist + Dance America Abroad + Agent/Manager + Foreign Programmer = Audience

Cost and Capitalization

The primary financial objectives of **Dance America** are to:

1. Ensure that U.S. artists have access to the funds necessary for them to best compete in international markets;
2. Facilitate the viewing of American dance by non-U.S. presenters through ongoing promotion and facilitation of global showcases;
3. Provide a suitable administrative budget that will attract experienced, appropriate dance professionals to staff the **Dance America** and **Dance America Abroad Offices**;
4. Provide funds or supplement existing funds to support the collaborative and collective pool of international export programs;¹¹
5. Provide resources, including funds and a workforce, to support a beneficial working relationship between U.S. Missions abroad and touring American dance companies.

In attempting to identify an appropriate scale for **Dance America**, we looked at a number of benchmarks to determine what size budget would be needed to ensure a level of activity that would make an impact and be sustainable, while identifying a baseline below which the objectives would be deemed unattainable. From the beginning, the assumption has been that any effort would be a private/public partnership with eventually a substantial and sustainable income stream. Working with the dance field, the program providers, the U.S. Missions, and the foreign programmers – all beneficiaries of **Dance America** – **Dance America** would seek in its first five years to identify and implement a graduated means of generating earned income from its programs and services.

To be fully operational, including the full complement of five international satellite offices, **Dance America** would require \$5 million annually, based on today’s costs. A start-up phase would set up the Washington office and two foreign offices plus provide \$1.3 million for programs. The cost of the start-up phase would be approximately \$3 million.

In considering the appropriate scale, one benchmark was how a proposed budget would compare to historical levels of funding similar work or comparable work. In comparison to other major industrial nations,

¹¹ Approximately 7% of the \$5 million Dance America budget is effectively already implemented and funded through USArtists International (Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation) and FUSED (New England Foundation for the Arts).

\$5 million is “pocket change” in the context of the cultural budget; yet \$5 million would be a considerable first step for dance in the American context. At \$5 million, the Dance Plan budget would be comparable to the total budget of Culture Ireland,¹² one of the newest and most recent NCIs (2005) working on the international scene, but would remain a fraction of the expenditures spent by the British Council, Alliance Française and Goethe Institut.

The British, French and German NCIs were begun when complicated structures were necessary and their expenditures were appropriate to the times.¹³ Thus, it is necessary to keep the development of this plan in perspective when compared to other international dance plans. For instance, the British Council has offices in 107 countries, manages 233 locations with a combined budget of £551 million, or U.S.\$841 million (FY07). The Alliance Française works in 112 countries with 1,300 locations (140 of them in the U.S.) with a budget over €700 million (U.S. \$940 million). The Goethe Institut works in 99 countries with 142 offices and a budget of €278 million (U.S. \$373 million). The average cost per country location by the foreign NCIs cited above is \$7.9 million, \$8.4 million, and \$3.8 million, respectively. It is unrealistic to imagine the U.S. initiating a program at these levels.

Nor does this plan seek to create a large government or quasi-government agency or usurp the public diplomacy mission of the diplomatic corps. Rather, a more nimble and pragmatic model is appropriate for the U.S. At \$5 million annually, **Dance America** would have a budget equal to 3% of the FY10 budget for the National Endowment for the Arts, or the same amount currently proposed by NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman for *Our Town*, a pilot program to support the creation of local U.S. - based arts districts. At \$5 million, the budget would be five times that currently allocated for cultural exchange by the NEA.¹⁴ To put \$5 million into an historic perspective, **Dance America** at \$5 million would be less than the cost of the much-touted Dance Touring Program (DTP). In 1977, the NEA spent \$7.2 million dollars (adjusted for inflation) to support the DTP, the first major investment it made in distributing dance nationally.¹⁵

The Departments of Commerce, Defense and Homeland Security could be viable partners, supporting aspects of **Dance America** in areas where international dance touring addresses some of their own objectives. Clearly the ability of dance companies to tour is also a trade and employment issue. The primary mechanism to distribute dance on the macro level is the circuit of marketplaces and trade fairs. Dance companies are both a product and a service. As a product, they contribute to the U.S. economy in terms of payroll taxes, purchase of airline tickets, and the spending power of dancers and staffs in their communities. As a service, dance companies foster good relations abroad, supporting the efforts of U.S. Missions and the military. In his testimony on April 13, 2010 to Congressional leaders, General Nolan Bivens, a recently retired Army brigadier general, stated, “The United States government should start thinking of the arts as a tool, if not exactly a weapon, in the nation’s military campaigns and diplomatic initiatives.” In September 2009, British Council Director of Arts Rebecca Walton told ‘Monocle’ magazine: “We’ve really been striving to put the arts back alongside the main purpose of the British Council, which is cultural relations. The arts are the most powerful tool you have to build a dialogue discussion across boundaries. It was only very recently that I heard a member of the Foreign Office say for the first time that arts are now as important as sanctions in the [diplomatic] toolkit.”

¹² It should be noted that Culture Ireland serves a population equal to 2% of the U.S. population.

¹³ Alliance Française was created in 1883; British Council in 1934; Deutsche Akademie (forerunner of the Goethe Institut, 1951) was created in 1925.

¹⁴ Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government Sponsored Exchanges and Training Annual Report, 2003-2007, www.IAWG.gov.

¹⁵ A Brief History of Dance Touring/Presenting Support at the National Endowment for the Arts, Anna Steele, 1989

Dance America Budget

The **Dance America** budget identifies three primary cost centers: 1) international dance offices; 2) a Washington-based domestic office, including the costs of administration for the Council of Advisors; and 3) the direct costs of programs and services, including the current and expanded costs of grantmaking programs that presently support international touring. A possible scenario for sources and distribution of capitalization is included in the budget summary below.

	% of Total	Fully Funded	Start-up Phase
Income			
National Endowment for the Arts	20%	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 600,000
Department of State	20%	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 600,000
Department of Commerce	5%	\$ 250,000	\$ 150,000
Department of Defense	5%	\$ 250,000	\$ 150,000
Homeland Security	5%	\$ 250,000	\$ 150,000
Foundations	24%	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 720,000
Businesses	15%	\$ 750,000	\$ 450,000
Individuals	5%	\$ 250,000	\$ 150,000
Fees for services	1%	\$ 50,000	\$ 30,000
	100%	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 3,000,000
Expenditures			
International Dance Offices		\$ 2,780,000	\$ 1,166,000
Washington Office		\$ 478,200	\$ 474,800
Programs		\$ 1,740,000	\$ 1,355,000
		\$ 4,998,200	\$ 2,995,800

The National Endowment for the Arts, Department of State, and a consortium of philanthropic foundations are proposed as the primary sources of income (64%). Each entity has the ability to support this effort at significant levels, based on the history of funding programs of this kind.

Although foundations have the ability to give, their participation in promoting international cultural exchange is not a given. A common assumption by foreign NCIs is that the lack of government support for American culture is somehow offset by an abundance of philanthropic activity. In some areas of grantmaking this may be the case, but not, necessarily, in cultural exchange. From the period between 2003 to 2008, the 19 foundations that gave \$1 million or more for direct international arts and cultural exchange collectively averaged only \$18 million per year for all artistic disciplines -- performing, visual, media and literary. Since 1994, there has been a 64.8% decrease in the number of foundations supporting international exchange.¹⁶ In light of the economic downturn in 2009, one can assume when those statistics are updated foundation support will have fallen further.

¹⁶ *Promoting Public and Private Reinstatement in Cultural Exchange-based Diplomacy*, Margaret Ayers, The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, 2010.

Dance America Offices

The costs assigned to the international and Washington offices include rent and utilities, salaries, fees to professionals, local initiatives, travel, and overseas living expenses.

At \$5 million, the plan proposes a string of five international dance offices more or less mirroring the DOS's regional desks, plus a coordinating office in Washington, D.C. The core cost of **Dance America** offices is the personnel that will drive the creation of global networks and building the relationships needed to export dance. There is no logistical way around those costs, but over time these costs are less likely to grow while direct program costs can grow as resources become available. Upon the advice of a number of advisors from within the Foreign Service, the report proposes as a first step (start-up phase) that the domestic office and the first two foreign offices be established, including a primary office in Europe, fully staffed and operational, and a smaller development office in South America. This phasing in would reduce the \$5 million budget by \$2 million. As additional resources become available additional offices would be opened in Africa, Eastern Asia, and the Near East.

Europe: This report proposes that initial efforts be directed to Europe. Historically, Europe has provided the largest market for American dance. The data confirms that this continues to be the case. It is logical that the first efforts should be to reestablish and reinvigorate this market. Additionally, European countries by and large have strong audiences for dance as well as existing systems to support distribution.

South America: A smaller developmental office in South America would seed a potential fertile environment for American dance. Developing this market is more challenging than Europe or Asia, but the competition from European and Asian companies is far less. If Europe represents the "motherland" for 19th century immigration, then South and Central America can be considered a "motherland" for new and current immigrants that hold great promise for cultural exchange.

Washington, D.C.: The Washington-based office would include a small staff to work with American artists to ensure that they have full access to **Dance America** programs and provide technical assistance to dance companies to ensure that they are prepared to tour internationally. Additionally, it would coordinate the activities of the Council of Advisors and the centralized liaison with U.S. government agencies and foundation partners.

Reflected in the expenses of the **Dance America** offices are local initiative monies to assist U.S. dance companies and their managers to work on an international level in non-artistic activities. For instance, most artists' representatives operate on a shoestring budget and do not have the financial resources to travel to meet with international colleagues, or to attend international conferences, or festivals, or marketplaces. The funds designated as local initiatives would provide financial resources to this group. Some dance companies turn down work because they cannot string together logical dates. These funds might be available to cover the housing and per diem costs of a company already overseas with a brief gap between performance dates, allowing them to string together lucrative tour dates. Additionally, in the context of promotion, initiative monies might be available to enhance the quality of showcases both at home and abroad.

Program Costs

Above and beyond the costs required for creating access (operating costs of the **Dance America** offices), artists need direct touring subsidy to compete in the global market and programs to support building the necessary relationships to operate internationally, such as promotion, support for foreign programmers, commissioning partnerships and creative research fellowships.

Programs		
Marketplaces	\$	225,000
Foreign presenter support	\$	50,000
Fee subsidy	\$	575,000
Travel subsidy	\$	200,000
Showcase performances	\$	200,000
Co-commissions	\$	80,000
Research fellowship	\$	25,000
	\$	<u>1,355,000</u>

Subsidy Programs:

The subsidies needed are straightforward: international travel and/or fee support.

- Travel support through MAAF is currently engagement-specific. A program is needed that provides dance companies and artists travel funds for non-festival engagements. Commitments are needed up front in the booking process to help them stimulate touring rather than simply to respond to invitations. Knowing that they have travel funds to offer earlier in the negotiations is critical according to the artists.
- The fees that American companies demand are generally high in comparison to their international counterparts. A program that allocates funds to subsidize a company's salaries for international touring could bring the fees into alignment with non-U.S. companies, greatly enhancing the Americans' ability to compete economically. Funding of this sort could be nominal -- 10-20% of the salaries – the concept is one of subsidy, not total funding.

Support Programs:

Support programs include promotional activities, support for foreign programmers to see work, commissioning partnerships and creative research/fellowships.

- *Promotion* – Creating a presence at marketplaces and festivals and producing showcases of American work represents the bulk of the costs associated with promotion. Creation and distribution of printed bi-lingual materials and the creation and maintenance of appropriate websites are also included in the promotion costs. A significant destination for printed and digital materials would be offices of U.S. Missions worldwide.
- *Support to see U.S. work* – There are three basic types of possible support for programmers:
 - Guided tours in the U.S. for small groups of presenters to see dance;

- Inviting a small group of programmers to a single event where a concentration of companies can be seen, such as at a festival, APAP conference, Dance/USA annual conference, regional booking conferences, etc.;
 - Small direct grants to programmers to see individual companies or specific events.
- *International co-productions/co-commissions* – A pool of dedicated funds to match international commissions and co-productions could stimulate interest in American choreographers, especially if co-productions are paired with American presenters. A model program is the National Performance Network’s Creation Fund that provides a \$6,000 subsidy to leverage the commissioners’ resources.¹⁷ Expanding the current Creation Fund to include international partners might be a viable approach. The American Dance Festival’s International Choreographers Commissioning Program (ICCP) invites foreign choreographers to create work in the U.S., but with some formalized reciprocity it could also benefit U.S. choreographers.
 - *Creative Research/Residency/Fellowship* – Building upon the programs of either the Magee Allesse National Center for Choreography or the ODC Dance Commons programs to support creative development, creating international access to space and technical resources, uninterrupted work time with dancers and collaborators, and access to new potential relationships serves the dual purpose of aiding choreographers to better develop their work and provides alternative ways of building relationships.

Based on program expenditures of \$1,355,000, **Dance America** could annually provide support for delegations to 3 international marketplaces, travel support for 50 foreigner programmers to see American dance, 23 dance companies or artists to receive fee support to tour, travel subsidy to 20 dance companies or artists, 4 showcase performances directed at foreign programmers, 10 co-commissioning grants, and 5 choreographic research fellowships.

This proposed level of activity would benefit upwards of 75 dance companies or individual artists in a single year. The **Dance America** offices in Washington and those abroad would directly serve additional companies and their managements.

¹⁷ National Performance Network, “<http://nnpweb.org/programs/creation-fund>” (accessed February, 2010).

Conclusions

Before concluding this report, there is the inherent question regarding which artists will be selected to tour and how they will be supported remains unanswered. The touring market for dance has historically been a blend of market-driven and “sanctioned” touring, whereby artists are selected from a prescribed list or roster. For example, the Arts America program of the USIA used panel adjudication to recommend groups to tour. Throughout the years a number of subsidy programs have affected the free market system. Beginning with CRIP (Coordinated Residency Touring Program) in the 1960s and its evolution into the Dance Touring Program (DTP) in the 1970s, then the Dance on Tour Program (DOT), the Dance/Inter-Arts/State Programs Dance Presenting/Touring Initiative (DIS) and, currently, the National Dance Project (NDP), each has served to both foster and encourage the presentation of dance while inadvertently creating a perceived stamp of approval on individual dance companies. The dance system in the U.S. does not have officially approved rosters, yet it does create hierarchies. It does not presuppose who is an artist of quality, yet it sometimes suggests it. We do not have national dance companies, but we have funding criteria that favor some companies over others. Additionally, the natural evolution of the dance field leads to stylistic favoritism and preferences. The system is not perfect, but everyone in the dance field understands it and it works.

To successfully insert and strengthen the presence of American dance on the international scene, the dance field and those that support it need to rethink their understanding of American dance. The real estate industry has an adage that “every house has a buyer.” After conducting research on American dance companies touring abroad, we have concluded that every dance company has the potential to perform internationally. Issues of perceived quality and professionalism are less clear when working globally. In a world of more than 200 countries where each country has its own set of criteria to judge quality, the possibility exists for a wide range of American dance to have both an audience and an impact. When looking at American dance through an international lens, realities change.

As the programs and services identified in this plan are proposed, how will it be decided who is to be served and who will make that decision? No one answer can possibly please everyone, and no process will or should be enforceable. We propose a policy that supports all American dance without prejudice to genre, scale, etc. This does not mean that all American dance is entitled to receive financial support to tour. On the contrary, the programs in this budget can probably support only a limited number of companies, but the services and access can benefit the entire spectrum of the community. Specifically, the international dance offices should be accessible to all professional, U.S. dance entities. Subsidy, on the other hand, should be directed to proven choreographers and companies who possess the professionalism and aesthetic sophistication to compete on the international stage and represent the best of American dance.

This report reflects critical thinking that conjoins our work (and the work of others) with the needs of dance artists. It calls upon the resources of the U.S. government and the private sector. It is intended to be an inclusive and comprehensive strategy; one that can succeed only if cooperation, collaboration and clarity of roles are evident. The report’s recommendations are, first and foremost, to be sustainable and accountable with clearly articulated rationales.

We cannot stress too vigorously the need for cooperation and collaboration among the individuals and organizations that are currently engaged in international exchange as well as those entering the international arena. Too often we have heard both from the dance and diplomatic fields a perceived need to return to the glory days of the 1970s and 1980s -- but 1970 was 40 years ago! The world and the dance field have moved on. To succeed, the new order needs to be comprehensive, collaborative, and multi-generational.

Please note that this report by Dance/USA is not the only document or process that is currently examining international cultural exchange. Several significant efforts are underway by the U.S. Department of State, the National Endowment for the Arts, the regional arts organizations, both collectively and individually, several state arts councils, and a number of private organizations, including the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, the funder of this particular study. Additionally, the Foreign Service Institute and a number of experienced individuals are actively engaged in this work. Any successful international strategy must be built on a coalition among these organizations and agencies.

Thank you.

Appendices:

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Leading U.S. Programs Engaged in Exporting American Dance

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The following individuals contributed to the report's content via interviews, focus groups, background information, and/or expanding our understanding of the complexities of international touring and informing our recommendations.

Alicia Adams The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts	Madeline Boughton Culture Ireland	David Edmunds DEP Arts Ltd
Yannis Adoniou KUNST-STOFF arts	D. David Brown Pacific Northwest Ballet	Liss Fain Liss Fain Dance
LaRue Allen Trisha Brown Dance Company	Linda Brumbach Pomegranate Arts	Dr. Helena Kane Finn U.S. Embassy Berlin
Anna Amadei Elsie Management	Charya Burt Charya Burt Cambodian Dance	Jane Ford New England Foundation for the Arts
Alberta Arthurs Independent Consultant	Trevor Carlson Merce Cunningham Dance Company	Ken Foster Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Margaret Ayers Robert Sterling Clark Foundation	Laura Colby Elsie Management	David Fraher Arts Midwest
Colombia X. Barrosse Cultural Programs Division U.S. Department of State	Maia Comeau The German Marshall Fund/U.S.	Sarah Frankland British Council
Jennifer Barry Australia Arts Council	CC. Conner Houston Ballet	Niels Gamm Konzerdirektion Landgraf
Adam Bernstein Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation	Alan Cooper Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation	Julie George Julie George & Damien Valette
Cees de Bever Netherlands Instituut Nederland	Sally Cowling British Council	Julia Glawe IMG Artists
Nicole Birmann Bloom Embassy of France in the United States	Jess Curtis Gravity	Sandra Gibson Assoc. of Performing Arts Presenters
Rebecca Blunk New England Foundation for the Arts	Jean Davidson Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company	Marian Godfrey The Pew Charitable Trusts
Lisa Booth Lisa Booth Management	David Eden David Eden Productions	Guido Goldman First Spring, Inc.
	Eugene Downes Culture Ireland	Jennifer Goodale Trust for Mutual Understanding
	Barbara Dufty Trisha Brown Dance Company	Joe Goode Joe Goode Performance Group

Joanna Haigood ZACCHO Dance Theater	Paula S. Lawrence The Starr Foundation	James Nelson Houston Ballet
Elizabeth Hayes F.A.C.E	Ben Levy LEVYDance	KT Nelson Oberlin Dance Collective (ODC)
Keith Hennessey Keith Hennessey	Sharon Luckman Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater	Harold Norris H-Art Management
Bernd A. Herbert U.S. Consulate Düsseldorf	Ken Maldonado Zia Artists	Bill O'Brien National Endowment for the Arts
Kathleen Hermesdorf La ALTERNATIVA	Aaron Mattocks Mark Morris Dance Group	Pennie Ojeda National Endowment for the Arts
Jonathan Hollander Battery Dance Company	Julie Mau Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu	Paul Organisak Pittsburgh Cultural Trust
Frank Hodsoll Resource Center for Cultural Engagement	Glenn McCoy San Francisco Ballet	Nadine Owen British Council
Karen Brooks Hopkins Brooklyn Academy of Music	Mollie McFarland AXIS Dance Co	Bénédicte Pesle Paris
Calvin Hunt Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater	Joseph V. Melillo Brooklyn Academy of Music	Carla Peterson Dance Theater Workshop
Judy Hussey-Taylor Danspace NYC	Sharon Memis British Council	Tricia Pierson Trisha Brown Dance Company
Martin Kagan Paul Taylor Dance Company	Eveline Y. Metzen Amerika Haus e.V. NRW	June Poster Stephen Petronio Company
Jodi Kaplan Jodi Kaplan & Associates	Rachael Moore American Ballet Theater	Bess Pruitt Bess Pruitt & Associates, Inc
John R. Killacky San Francisco Foundation	Robert Moses Robert Moses' KIN	Cathy Pruzan Cathy Pruzan Artist Representative
Paul King White Bird	Greg Mudd Cedar Lake Ballet	Sophie Renaud CultureFrance
Kelly Langgard Canada Council for the Arts	Sophie Myrtil-McCourty Pentacle	Isabel Von Rittberg AscenDance Project
Richard Lanier Trust for Mutual Understanding	Sophie Nadeau American Embassy Paris	Lynn Roche U.S. Department of State
	Kajo Nelles Internationale Tanzmesse NRW	Verdery Roosevelt Ballet Hispanico

Maia Rosal
Joe Goode Performance Gr.

Ann Rosenthal
MAPP International
Productions

Amelia Rudolph
Project Banadloop

Mark Russell
Under the Radar Festival

Celine Schein
Chitresh Das Dance Co.

Bernard Schmidt
Bernard Schmidt Prod.

Arlene Shuler
City Center Theater

Linda Shelton
Joyce Theater

Rena Shagan
Rena Shagan Associates

George Skalkogiannis
Memoranda Productions

Yoko Shioya
Japan Society

Deborah Slater
Deborah Slater Dance Theater

Douglas Sonntag
National Endowment for the Arts

Ivan Sygoda
Pentacle

Carrie E. Thompson
Trust for Mutual Understanding

John Tomlinson
Paul Taylor Dance Company

Shelly Trott
Rainin Foundation

Nancy Umanoff
Mark Morris Dance Group

Laurie Uprichard
Dublin Dance Festival

Dierdre Valente
Lisa Booth Management

Anne Valois
Canada Council

Jacinta Vlach
Liberation Dance Theater

Kathryn Wainscott
Educational And Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

Christian Watty
CCN de Caen/Basse-Normandie

Brenda Way
Oberlin Dance Collective (ODC)

Martin Wechsler
Joyce Theater

M.K. Wegman
National Performance Network

Valerie Wilder
Australian Ballet

Laurence D. Wohlers
U.S. Department of State

Arthur T. Zegelbone
Inter. Visitors Leadership Program

Alice Zimet
Arts + Business Partners

Cathy Zimmerman
MAPP International Productions

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar
Urban Bush Women

Leading U.S. Programs Engaged in Exporting American Dance

Asian Cultural Council

The Asian Cultural Council offers grants to projects of particular significance to Asian-American cultural exchange in dance, film, video, music or photography. It also provides fellowship grants to artists, scholars, students and specialists from Asia to study, research, and travel. <http://www.asianculturalcouncil.org>

DanceMotion USA

DanceMotion USASM is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, produced by BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music) to showcase contemporary American dance abroad. The goal of DanceMotion USASM is to share work by some of America's finest contemporary dance makers and serve as a gateway for cultural exchange. <http://www.dancemotionusa.org>

Dance/USA and Internationale Tanzmesse NRW

Dance/USA serves as the umbrella for a delegation of U.S. artists, managers and presenter to the Internationale Tanzmesse NRW. Dance/USA's participation includes hosting an exhibit space in the marketplace, providing financial support of American dance companies who have been invited to perform by the Tanzmesse, and creating content and opportunities for dialogue among dance professionals worldwide. www.danceusa.org

French-US Exchange in Dance

The French-US Exchange in Dance program (FUSED) melds the French and American dance communities by fostering dialogue and exchange, consolidating professional relationships and spawning choreographic innovation. The program introduces choreographers and performers whose works have not yet - or rarely - been seen in the partner country. The FUSED program offers grants to U.S. and French non-profit presenting institutions for residencies, commissions, and/or touring the work of one choreographer/performer from the partner country. Co-productions between presenters are encouraged. Administered by the National Dance Project of New England Foundation for the Arts and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. www.facecouncil.org/fused/index.html

Performing Americas Project

The Performing Americas Project is a partnership between the National Performance Network (NPN) and La RED (Red de Promotores Culturales de Latinoamérica y el Caribe). This partnership has created a structure for systematic exchange of contemporary performing arts touring in the Western hemisphere through residencies that provide opportunities for community engagement. NPN and La RED have contributed resources to plan and implement the Performing Americas Project and to subsidize the travel, touring costs and artists' fees. <http://www.npnweb.org>

USArtists International

USArtists International provides support for American dance, music and theatre ensembles and solo performers to travel to major international arts festivals anywhere in the world outside the United States. USArtists International is administered by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. <http://www.midatlanticarts.org>

U.S./Japan Cultural Trade Network (CTN)

CTN's mission is to provide leadership, vision, information and support to enhance cultural trade between the U.S. and Japan. The objectives of CTN are to design and deliver exemplary arts and cultural exchange programs in the United States and Japan; to build and share broad knowledge within the professional community about artistic resources and management practices of U.S. and Japan, to provide access to contextual understanding for the artistic works to enhance understanding and appreciation of audiences/participants; to facilitate strong working relationships between and among artistic professionals in the U.S. and Japan; and to provide translations, felicitations and coordination services to enable cross cultural projects. Originally conceived by Arts Midwest, CTN is an independent U.S. non-profit. <http://www.usjapanctn.net>

U.S. Department of State – Cultural Programs Division

The Cultural Programs Division of the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries around the world. Its website includes information about grants, exchanges, and education programs abroad.

For more information, contact:

Dance/USA

1111 16th Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
T. 202.833.1717
F. 202.833.2686

or

Performing Arts Strategies

6636 Wilkins Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
T. 412-422-1864
F. 412-422-7414