HOW CAN SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS?

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How Can Social Media and Other Technologies Increase Participation in the Arts?

By Dance/NYC Junior Committee

Testimony to the Committees on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup and Technology on Oversight: How Can Social Media and Other Technologies Increase Participation in the Arts?—December 14, 2012

As representatives of the Dance/NYC Junior Committee of dance workers ages 21-35, we submit testimony on behalf of our peers, of the service entity Dance/NYC, and of the wider local dance field—more than 1,200 dancemakers strong.

Our goal today is to highlight the importance of social media and other technologies in increasing participation in dance and to encourage continued inter-agency collaboration in the advancement of technology for use in our discipline and arts-wide.

Technology and social media can increase the bottom line. Our City's dancemakers are working entrepreneurially to put new crowdfunding tools (e.g., Artspire, Kickstarter, Indiegogo, RocketHub, USA Projects) to use. In response to a Dance/NYC town hall, "Kickstarting NYC Dance," the Washington Post published "Dance is Kickstarter's Most Successful Category," applauding "funders and dance advocates [for] paying attention." A Dance/NYC Twitter campaign in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, #sandydance, helped provide testimony necessary to establish an NYC Dance Response Fund. Fifty Years, Fifty Stories, the New York City Arts Coalition's artist-lead video campaign for the New York State Council on the Arts, was described by Stuart Elliott of The New York Times as "State of the New York Arts."

Another Dance/NYC town hall, "Dancer's Voice: Personalizing the Marketing Experience" showed that technology and social media are evolving dancers' roles as advocates, commentators, and company ambassadors, using American Ballet Theatre, Keigwin + Company, New York City Ballet, and New York Live Arts as case studies.

Opportunities for using technology and social media to increase audience participation are also demonstrated by New York City participants in Dance/USA's Engaging Dance Audiences initiative: Misnomer Dance Theater now helps artists/companies adopt and utilize their web-based Audience Engagement Platform (AEP), designed to facilitate two-way interactions between dance audiences and artists through innovative web interactions that allow emailing, blogging, live-streaming, instant messaging and much more to occur all through one portal.STREB was also supported through this initiative for their SLAM REMOTE, a new presentation model that employs interactive technology to connect remote audiences to live performance and engagement activities.

DanceNYC.org, the centralized resource for promotion and management resources in dance, experienced growth of 100% in registered user-base from 2011 to 2012—signaling the field's commitment to growing its online footprint.

In response to a Dance/NYC Junior Committee social media campaign in preparation for this Hearing, Facebook user Faith Rein, writes, simply: "Going viral is saving the arts."

Committed to harnessing the potential of technology and social media to increase participation in dance, Dance/NYC wants to acknowledge and thank the Council for organizing the Hearing today and for its commitment to advancing the City's role as a global dance capital.