

PRESS RELEASE: DANCE/NYC SPOTLIGHTS LOCAL VIBRANCY IN NEW CAMPAIGN FEATURING 51 STORIES FROM 51 CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS

Thursday, June 5, 2014

Press Release: Dance/NYC Spotlights Local Vibrancy in New Campaign Featuring 51 Stories from 51 City Council Districts

By Lane Harwell

► [Share](#) | [Print](#) | [Download](#)

Dance/NYC Spotlights Local Vibrancy in New Campaign Featuring 51 Stories from 51 City Council Districts

Today, Dance/NYC unveils a NEW YORKERS FOR DANCE visibility and advocacy campaign, which leverages the power of digital storytelling. It features 51 individual [video](#) statements on why dance matters locally, spotlighting New Yorkers from neighborhoods in each of the 51 City Council districts, and this video montage:



Videos are live on the all-new DanceNYC.org and YouTube.com/DanceNYCorg and being released throughout the day through Dance/NYC and participants' social media channels #newyorkersfordance @DanceNYC. [Click here for the YouTube.com playlist.](#)

The NEW YORKERS FOR DANCE launch coincides with hearings on New York City's FY 2015 budget, and demonstrates vast grassroots support for robust allocations to cultural affairs and arts education. With this campaign, New Yorkers testify to the value of the arts and culture and make the case for the city's future as a dance capital.

Dance/NYC Executive Director Lane Harwell says, "When we ask why dance matters to New Yorkers, one answer consistently rings out: 'community.' With this campaign, we are acting on a charge to bring communities within and beyond dance together and to strengthen their collective voice." He continues, "Our goal is to draw the attention of elected officials to the importance of arts and culture in every neighborhood, while creating new, localized entry points to engage potential audiences and patrons citywide."

The spirit of expanded community and local vibrancy is felt in the range of stories offered and the participants, from Broadway choreographer [Josh Prince](#), b-boy [Kwikstep](#), and [Juan Castano](#) of Calpulli Mexican Dance Company to a [Coney Island mermaid](#), [a poet](#), and [two pastors](#). In addition to English, select video testimonials are offered in Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, and Russian.

NEW YORKERS FOR DANCE also creates a powerful online platform for elected City leadership to express their support. [Jimmy Van Bramer](#), City Council Majority Leader and Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee, stated in his video statement, "We are all better off in the city because we have dance." Council member [Stephen Levin](#) is a New Yorker for Dance because he sees "first-hand the joy, passion, and discipline that dance brings to young people."

The campaign engages peer arts advocates, from [Diane Fraher](#) of American Indian Artists (AMERINDA) to [Virginia Louloudes](#) of the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York (A.R.T./New York). Ms. Louloudes states, "This new advocacy campaign invites us in to harness the opportunity for collaboration and common messaging. Just as dance is an integral part of musical theatre, so too are our organizations (A.R.T./New York and Dance/NYC) working together, helping our city continue to lead in the performing arts."

For [Lakai Worrell](#) of Purelements: An Evolution Dance based in East Brooklyn, "There is a rich culture of dance throughout our great city and many communities have not been on the radar for mainstream audiences and patrons to experience. This campaign creates new energy around the arts and a wider lens for all who live here, and is a step forward into a new narrative between all communities."

Stories result from an open call to New Yorkers to have Dance/NYC film statements, first come, first served by City Council district. Dance/NYC hosted filming sessions with partners in each borough: Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance (BAAD!), Center for Performance Research, Rockaway Artists Alliance, Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, Spaceworks and Staten Island Arts. Leadership support has been provided by the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation/Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Arnhold Foundation, and The New York Community Trust. Video by Nel Shelby Productions. Music by Andy Kautz. Graphic design by Monroe&Co.

Dance/NYC's mission is to promote the knowledge, appreciation, practice, and performance of the dance in the metropolitan area. It works in alliance with Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance.