Dance. Workforce. Resilience.

DANCE/NYC LAUNCHES IMMIGRANT ARTISTS INITIATIVE TO ADVANCE THE RIGHTS OF IMMIGRANT DANCE MAKERS

Sunday, February 25, 2018

Dance/NYC Launches Immigrant Artists Initiative to Advance the Rights of Immigrant Dance Makers

▶ Share | Print | Download

Today, at its annual Symposium for the dance field, Dance/NYC announces the launch of a new initiative to extend the role of dance artistry in fostering the inclusion, integration, and human rights of the more than 3 million immigrants in the New York City metropolitan area, while shaping urgent public discussion about changing demographics and immigrant affairs. As part of this initiative, Dance/NYC unveils foundational research, *New York City's Foreign-Born Dance Workforce Demographics* (Dance.NYC/ForeignBornWorkforce2018) as well as online information resources available on the Dance/NYC website; and announces a free, day-long convening on September 21, 2018, presented with the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) and the Queens Theatre.

The *New York City's Foreign-Born Dance Workforce Demographics* report is the first initiative deliverable, and makes a data driven case for advancing dance making by immigrant artists and cultural workers. Foreign-born New Yorkers are shockingly underrepresented in the workforce surveyed. 15% of all survey respondents indicates a country of origin outside the United States, compared to 37% of the City's population, according to United States Census data. Visit Dance.NYC for the full report, as well as highlights and recommendations available in Spanish and Chinese.

"Immigrants play an integral role in this city's cultural fabric and have had a significant influence in the arts," says Speaker Corey Johnson, New York City Council. "The Council recognizes the importance of diversity in arts cultural programming which is why we've been proud to fund $5.8 million the Cultural Immigrant Initiative in last fiscal year. I want to thank the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and Dance/NYC for this important research report and for their incredible work supporting immigrants in the art world."

Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, offers: "Support for artists who are from and work with immigrant communities was a key recommendation in the City's CreateNYC cultural plan. From commitments to measurable progress toward a more diverse and inclusive cultural workforce, to increasing equitable access to cultural programming for all New Yorkers, we're dedicated to working with partners in all disciplines toward these essential goals. It's gratifying to see one such dedicated partner in Dance/NYC, which under the leadership of Lane Harwell, has contributed so much to our understanding of these issues in the dance community. We applaud Dance/NYC for its continuing focus on amplifying the creative voices of underrepresented populations. In NYC, a city of immigrants uniquely defined by the diverse cultures of people who come here from other places, it is particularly important that we, in the arts community, seek out, honor, and support the stories and self-expression of those who were not born here."

"New York City is home to world-class artists from all over the globe," says Bitta Mostofi, Acting Commissioner, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. "Our cultural landscape should be as richly diverse as the city we call home. We are proud to work with Dance/NYC in their mission to support immigrant artists and expand opportunities to create a more equitable field for dancers across boroughs."

The "go-to site" for dance in the metropolitan New York City area, Dance.NYC is now home to a directory of online resources at the intersection of immigrant affairs and the arts and culture, aggregated from service organizations and government entities, and Dance/NYC plans to add new promotional tools and learning from the initiative to the site through 2020. Bookending the initiative's activity for 2018 is the daylong community conference on September 21, 2018 at the Queens Theatre. The planned work, developed in collaboration with a 14-person task force of immigrant artists, educators, and advocates is iterative and sets the stage for additional action over time.

About Dance/NYC
Dance/NYC's mission is to promote the knowledge, appreciation, practice, and performance of dance in the metropolitan New York City area. It embeds values of equity and inclusion into all aspects of the organization. It works in alliance with Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance. Dance.NYC

Dance/NYC's Immigrant Artists Initiative is made possible with founding support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The initiative is also is supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; and the City of New York, Bill de Blasio, Mayor, and the New York City Council, Corey Johnson, Speaker, through the Department of Cultural Affairs, Tom Finkelpearl, Commissioner.