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OUR NEW YORK CITY DANCE

DANCE WORKER DIGEST | FEBRUARY 2024

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By Dance/NYC

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This month's topics cover the National Arts Summit in DC, Dance/USA's 2024 elections toolkit, the campaign against cuts to arts & culture in NYC, and new legislation
protecting freelance workers in New York State.

Policymakers, Academics, and Advocates Joined National Arts Summit in DC

On January 30, 2024, 450 government officials, policymakers, artists, advocates, academics, and leaders attended the National Arts Summit in Washington, DC to discuss how arts and culture can contribute to other fields and open up new opportunities for artists and arts organizations. A live stream of the event was also available to close to 3,500 virtual attendees.

Co-hosted by the White House Domestic Policy Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Summit titled "Healing, Bridging, Thriving: A Summit on Arts and Culture in our Communities" explored avenues through which artists and arts organizations can improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities, revitalize physical spaces, uphold democratic principles, and advance equitable outcomes.

During the event, federal officials revealed various initiatives aimed at advancing these efforts. These announcements from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and NEA align with President Biden's executive order urging the incorporation of arts and culture to foster national healing, unity, and prosperity.

- Check out the NEA's press release on the Summit
- Experience the the livestream of the National Arts Summit
- Explore the National Arts Summit outcomes released by the Associated Press

Photo courtesy of Shutterstock for NEA

Dance/USA's #Dance2Vote Initiative Advocates for Active Participation in the 2024 Elections

Dance/USA has launched the 2024 #Dance2Vote Initiative to mobilize members of the dance ecosystem and the broader performing arts sector to actively engage in the electoral process, and ensure that support for the arts continues to be a major priority for the government at all levels.

With the Presidency, 33 U.S. Senate seats and all 435 U.S. House of Representatives seats up for election, along with numerous gubernatorial and state legislative positions, there is a critical need to facilitate voter registration and encourage turnout this November.

Dance/USA has developed an elections toolkit to ensure dance artists, creative workers, interested stakeholders, and the general public have the most accurate information about voting during each election cycle and know the relevant issues impacting the dance ecosystem and the performing arts sector.

- Check out the #Dance2Vote Toolkit

#Why15 Campaign Opposes NYC Budget Cuts and Calls for Transparency

Last September, Mayor Eric Adams announced that each agency budget would be slashed by 15% through three rounds of 5% cuts, citing a budget gap they deem is caused by continued immigrant and asylum seeker arrivals. Following the news, Nonprofit New York launched the #WHY15 campaign, calling for:

- removing the arbitrary 15% reduction across the board,
- involving nonprofits in the budget planning process,
- transparency about the City's plans to cut its budget,

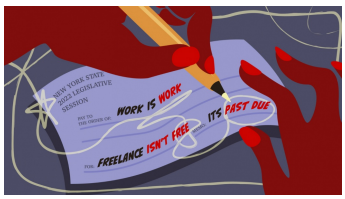
- and fixing contracting issues, including paying agencies on time and in full.

The Adams administration implemented 5% cuts last November, and on January 16, 2024, the administration cut funding for arts and cultural institutions by an additional $11.6 million this fiscal year. An additional 5% cut planned for April 2024 was recently canceled.

Nonprofit New York is inviting individuals and agencies to sign an open letter calling for transparency and inclusion in response to the budget cuts.

- Sign Nonprofit New York's open letter calling for transparency
- Review press release on the cancellation of the April 2024 cuts
- Review Nonprofit New York's statement on the January 2024 cuts
- Review Nonprofit New York's statement on the November 2023 cuts
- Review the Mayor's "Program to Eliminate Gap (PEG)" plan

Governor Hochul Signs Bill Protecting Freelance Workers



Last fall, Governor Kathy Hochul signed into law the "Freelance Isn't Free" Act (S.5026/A.6040) to provide freelance workers certain protections across all of New York State.

Starting May 20, 2024, employers across New York State must draw up a written contract with workers when the total cost of a single project is at least $800, or if the freelance worker has provided the business with multiple services within a 120-day period that totaled $800 or more.

Other protections establish a right to a written contract with certain terms, timely and full payment, and call for freelance workers to be compensated on or before the date when compensation is due under the terms of the written contract, but no later than 30 days after the completion of the freelancer's services. Freelance workers would also have protection from retaliation and discrimination for exercising these rights under the new law.

Although the provisions of the act aren't new to New York City employers—the City passed its own law under the same name in October 2016—the statewide law echoes the protections outlined in the City's legislation. The Department of Labor will provide model contracts on its website for freelancers and hiring parties to use with terms that comply with this new law.

- Check out press release on "Freelance Isn't Free" Act
- Review the full text of "Freelance Isn't Free" Act
- Check out WorkMade's primer on the law on Instagram

Illustration by Freelance Solidarity Project organizer Olivia Schwob (oliviaschwob.net)

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