

Friday, May 19, 2023

WADE Vision Benefit

Company: WADE DANCE INC
Venue: Jack Crystal Theater
Location: New York, NY

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Ellen Crane

WADE (Wandering Avian Dance Experience) is hosting a Benefit Concert and get-together on May 19th at 111 Second Avenue in New York City to introduce our collaborating artists and organizations, to honor Phyllis Lamhut, a legend in the dance industry and to introduce some of our upcoming efforts in the arts and research sectors. WADE is inspired and dedicated to women, their experiences in the personal and working spheres.

As a woman in the performing arts for over thirty (30) years I have been sexualized, body-shamed, patronized, put in my place, overlooked, underestimated, overworked, and underpaid. I have been made feel worthless and disposable; my work has been plagiarized with no repercussions, and I have been expected to navigate delicate situations with no training or support. Through the years, I have observed that many of my female students feel progressively more voiceless and marginalized with the more identities they inhabit; I have tried to be their advocate and supporter, modeling a leadership style steeped in compassion, transparency, and fairness. I have dedicated a decade in curating international professional training and performance opportunities for them with the intention of eradicating the concept of "other" and in defining a pedagogy for ballet that is inclusive, joyful, and healing.

I've seen the worst of people in my personal life as well being a survivor of violence in both the maternal and the marital home. I left my abusive marriage with substantial financial debt, emotional exhaustion, and the full responsibility of caring for a small child completely on my own. His father launched six unfounded Child Services investigations against me in retaliation for my desire for freedom. In our five year-long contention in Family Court, I accrued a handful of Orders of Protections against him because of his relentless harassment and I spent close to ten years dealing with debilitating anxiety disorder and panic attacks. Notwithstanding the abuse and the lack of support from the systems supposedly designed to protect my family, I made it my mission to not alienate my son from his father while shielding him from as much pain as possible; he (my son) eventually made his own decision in regards to his relationship with his father that serves his own best interest and mental health.

By the time the Covid-19 Pandemic brought the entire world to a screeching halt, amongst the insane rantings of a misogynist political leader and the normalization of school shootings caused by boys bent on asserting a toxic masculinity that society defines by violence, I had enough! I spent a large part of my isolation researching the effects of the lockdowns on women and I found myself loathing a world that continues to abuse them in the midst of a global health crisis. According to the UN, the instances of violence against women and non-binary folks increased by 30% in a matter of months, only conflating an already horrifying statistic of one in three: 1 in 3 women (worldwide) are expected to experience some form of violence in their lifetime. WADE was born as a response to this situation with the determination to use my own voice and story to support others who may still be entangled in the suffocating cruelty of violence.

At WADE we use the performing arts as a point of entry to important conversations around the systemic, patriarchal, and pervasive global structures that create and promote gender-based violence; we are focused on supporting the voices and artistic expressions of women and historically underrepresented artists of all ages; and we hire women-identifying individuals in all aspects of our productions, on and off stage. We want to spearhead a kind of organization that puts its people first, before profit, before politics, before personal self-interest. Since its inception in 2020, we have instituted bi-monthly paid Team Professional Development sessions, defined clear boundaries between work and personal life, allowed for open communication, negotiated yearly financial raises, and paid all our collaborating artists a living wage for their expertise and time.

The initial spark for WADE may have been generated by one person, but the company is shaped with the input of all its team members who are each fiercely devoted to human rights issues and justice issues in dance. We decided to concentrate our efforts around four main pillars: training, production, performance and activism. Each of them was meant to clearly define our efforts in elevating dance in its many applications as a catalyst to change. Today the pillars are so interconnected, we cannot distinguish a stark division amongst them, and we produce each of our programs with an intersectional approach. With this new intention, WADE began the conversation about equity and safety in the arts. Mainstream media sheds light on dancers who were sexually assaulted, harassed, and manipulated by a company's founders, teachers, or choreographers, and yet systems have not changed fast enough to end sexual violence even after powerful global feminist movements like "MeToo".

These conversations led WADE to spend a year working with the Dance Education Equity Association (DEEA) and pen a Policy and Procedure working handbook with the intention of creating safe and equitable dance spaces for all. The process was informed by the Be Courageous training course with Geri Brown in how to deal with power dynamics, consent, anti-othering, conflict resolution, and accountability practices. The process had the WADE team confront and investigate their own biases, come up with common language around equity and justice and compile hefty resources lists in cultural competency, mental health and mindfulness, organizational accountability and harm reduction. At the beginning of each program, WADE now creates community agreements with all participants defining how they want to show up for each other and they speak about the consequences of not abiding by their own requests. WADE has a detailed evaluation process to address any concern and evaluate/incorporate any feedback in future programs. "We understand this work is in-progress and that our words and policies are imperfect and ever evolving. We recognize our own humanity and the humanity of others that may result in biases, friction, conflict, or harm. We respect and celebrate the diversity of our community and work to create opportunities for utilizing the performing arts as a tool of social activism." (Cover letter of WADE DANCE INC. Policy and Procedures 2023).

It is a gross understatement to say that WADE needs the help of a large supporters base to insure impact and a sense of accountability in the communities we serve. If you relate to the mission and vision of WADE, if you believe in creating safe dance spaces for everyone, and in fighting violence against women, girls and non-binary folks, we invite you to join us in a collective action toward change. You can simply speak out against violence if you are witness to it, write to your policy makers expressing concern about gun control regulations, bring up the gender wage gap to your employer, participate in Women's Marches, donate to organizations like MeToo or Black Lives Matter, and join us for WADE's Benefit Concert.

The evening will take place at 111 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10003 on Friday, May 19th @ 6:00-9:00 pm. It will be a celebration in two parts:

First, enjoy a performance in the Jack Crystal Theatre (5th floor) including works by

Roy Assaf, Resident Choreographer Dance HUB Italy 2019

Anna Caffarelli and Crimson Moeller, alumnae Dance HUB Italy 2022

Jennifer Chin, WADE Artistic Advisor

Dahyun Kim, alumna Dance HUB Italy 2021

Cherylyn Lavagnino, WADE Board Member

Following the performance, join us downstairs (2nd floor) for a reception honoring Phyllis Lamhut, including a silent auction and a studio performance by Mal Stein and Gigi.

TICKETING INFORMATION:

Tickets can be purchased [HERE](#).

Standard Event Ticket \$125.00 Includes admission to the performance and reception

Sponsorship Event Ticket \$250.00 Includes admission to the performance and reception plus a \$100.00 donation to WADE in sponsorship of the evening's events

Performance Admission \$50.00 Includes admission to the performance but does not include admission to the reception

Reception Admission \$75.00 Includes admission to the reception but does not include admission to the performance

What does the \$125 go to?

One hour Professional Development Session for the team, or

Two and a half days Per Diem for one of our guest artists in Italy or Spain, or

Five hour studio rental in Spain, or

Pay for a WADEintoACTIVISM collaborating artist's community workshop for thirty (30) minutes, or

WADE's DropBox Business Account fee for a year, or

WADE's Zoom Business Account fee for a year, or

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE IF YOU CAN'T COME TO THE BENEFIT

WADE Dance INC. is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. Financial gifts of all sizes are accepted with the utmost gratitude. WADE Dance INC. is considered a public charity under the Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). We are also currently accepting financial support through PayPal and Venmo. If you'd like to direct your gift towards a specific program, please consider including a note or designation with your gift.

WADE DANCE INC
111 2nd Avenue
New York, NY, 10003
https://www.tickettailor.com/events/wade/872742?fbclid=IwAR2NxbkystGFmUkffCwgjvgwdGRVfadxAnyK8wQFsxYvxguHE5_VreUDOWI

Schedule
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