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OUR NEW YORK CITY DANCE

WEEKLY ADVOCACY ALERT, FEBRUARY 10: OPEN CULTURE GUIDELINES ARE HERE!

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

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By Dance/NYC

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Photo: Mayor Bill de Blasio announces the opening of the Open Culture Program. Ed Reed/Mayoral Photography Office.

The City has released Open Culture Guidelines. Open Culture is a new permit type available from the Mayor's Street Activity Permit Office allowing for ticketed performances. Arts and cultural institutions, as well as entertainment venues, will have the opportunity to secure a permit for single day, socially distanced performances at over 100 street locations throughout all five boroughs. Here is the press release from the Mayor's Office.

FEDERAL

1. A petition to congratulate President Biden and Vice President Harris and urge them to boldly support the arts has been sent to the White House This petition letter includes specific recommendations including creating a Presidential Arts and Culture Advisor, increasing funding to National Endowment for Arts, supporting the arts in COVID-19 relief plus more. Download a PDF of the full petition letter and list of signatories

2. National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announces Biden-Harris appointees. They are Chief of Staff Ra Joy, White House Liaison and Senior Advisor to the Chief of Staff Jennifer (Jenn) Chang, Director of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Sonia Chala Tower, and Director of Congressional Affairs Ben Kessler.

3. Dance/USA announced a free new online resource to help artists and arts organizations document and preserve the record of the dance field's experiences and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resource offers suggestions for how artists and arts organizations can document the effects of and responses to the pandemic, as well as information about national or regional efforts to collect archives of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Join the US Department of Arts and Culture (USDAC), in partnership with MassCreative and The Theater Offensive for the 2021 People's State of the Union to show Arts are Essential! Download the toolkit, then visit the USDAC website, where you can participate in trainings, read FAQs, and get more information on how to participate in the digital story circle. USDAC is collecting and sharing stories from across the country, if you share your story on Instagram or Twitter, be sure to use one of the following hashtags: #PSOTU2021 #PeoplesStateOfTheUnion2021 #ArtsAreEssential #ArtKeepsUsSafe

5. The House and Senate have passed a budget resolution, a legislative tool to quickly deliver COVID-19 relief. The next step is for the committees to turn components of the Biden Administration's American Rescue Plan into legislative language that will become the budget reconciliation bill that is expected to be debated in early to mid-March. Separately, last week a group of Senate Republicans released an alternative proposal for COVID-19 relief.

6. Help focus the attention of lawmakers on the needs of nonprofits by signing your organization onto a new nonprofit letter calling for a package of solutions tailored to the needs and realities of nonprofits serving the public good. The letter calls for nonprofit-specific grants and forgivable loans for nonprofits of all sizes, and increase and extension of charitable giving incentives, full coverage of unemployment costs of reimbursing (self-insured)

employers, and financial aid to state and local governments.

SIGN ON

7. Join Nonprofit Vote for a webinar on Redistricting: What It Means and The Role of Nonprofits. The webinar is on February 18th at 2 p.m. and will help nonprofits figure out their continued role in advocacy efforts.

8. Join the New York Immigration Coalition, in partnership with the California Immigrant Policy Center, February 12 at 1p.m. for the first of a three-part series to launch A Blueprint for the Nation: Building Immigrant Power from New York to California. It centers on humanity and dignity of immigrants focusing on the areas of Creating Healthy Communities; Building Political Power and Guaranteed Civil Rights; Ending State Support for Detention, Deportation and Mass Incarceration; Ensuring Economic Justice and Good Jobs; and Quality Education.

NEW YORK STATE

1. New York State launched NY PopsUp. This is an initiative to accelerate the revival of culture and the arts with over 300+ arts events across the State.

2. New York Department of Labor indefinitely cancels unemployment insurance charges. New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon signed an Order to temporarily modify the unemployment benefit charging system and ease the burden for unemployment insurance charges incurred by all employers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The order relieves all employers including directly reimbursing nonprofits of all charges for unemployment charges dating back to the beginning of the pandemic.

NEW YORK CITY

1. Join Nonprofit New York, Community Votes, and the New York City Economic and Training Coalition for a public policy forum on the role of the nonprofit sector in voter engagement. The forum will focus on a new voter engagement toolkit with updated information based on rank-choice voting and recently enacted voting reforms.

2. New Yorkers for Culture and Arts is asking arts and cultures workers and organizations to complete this survey to help identify which policy issues are most impacting cultural organizations and individual artists to prioritize in the campaign for culture in its upcoming Cultural Covenings. The survey should take less than 10 minutes.

3. COVID-19 Updates

> a. Eligible New Yorkers can find vaccination locations and make appointments online at vaccinefinder.nyc.gov or by calling 877-VAX4NYC for assistance in multiple languages. For the latest information, please consult the City's Vaccine Command Center and continue to check the State's website for the full list of eligible groups. New York will open up COVID-19 vaccination eligibility to those with comorbidities that make them vulnerable to the coronavirus beginning Feb. 15th.
> b. The statewide positivity rate was 4.31%.
> c. State COVID zone restrictions remain in effect in certain parts of the city. To find out where the zones are and to see what restrictions apply to each zone, please visit www.nyc.gov/covidzone.
> d. Download the COVID Alert NY app today!
> e. Remember to follow the "core four"—wear a mask, wash your hands, practice social distancing, stay home if you're sick—and get tested! For information on free testing, personal protective equipment, and more, visit the NYC Mayor's Office Coronavirus page.

4. Engaging in community action in support of dance workers? Submit to be listed on the #ArtistsAreNecessaryWorkers Campaign Activations page. Visit the page for events, actions, and platforms that are independently led by the NYC dance community.

5. Dance/NYC hosts weekly dance field-wide calls to address questions, needs, and plans for the future of the field. Calls are Thursdays from 4:00 pm. – 5:00 p.m. Register here.

6. For the ongoing Coronavirus Dance Impact Study, Dance/NYC is tracking studio & company temporary and permanent closures to gain a better understanding of the financial impact the pandemic is taking on the dance sector. This data will be used to better document this historic time and to be able to advocate for aid to policymakers. Please email any closures that you know of in the dance community to research@dance.nyc. You do not need to be in charge of the organization to send a notification as Dance/NYC works to compile a list of closures.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Dance/NYC Coronavirus Preparedness Resources.
- Dance/NYC Racial Justice Resources.