

batterydancecompany

Annual Report • Fiscal Year 2013

SHOWCASING THE COMPANY'S ARTISTRY

New York Season at 3LD Art + Technology Center - April, 2013

Continuing its resource-sharing practice with downtown arts partners, Battery Dance Company presented its third series of performances at 3LD Art + Technology Center. For the first time in its history, the Company reached outside its ranks to commission new choreography by the acclaimed Polish choreographer Jacek Luminski, founder and artistic director of the Silesian Dance Theatre. The resulting work, *Not All Those Who Wander Are Lost*, challenged the BDC dancers to develop new skills and aesthetics in mastering Luminski's very distinctive style. Support for the commission was obtained from The Trust for Mutual Understanding, Polish Cultural Institute – New York and Adam Mickiewicz Institute – Warsaw. The run of performances included a gala evening plus a second evening performance and two matinee performances for New York City public schools. Each performance was well-attended. Unfortunately, The New York Times critic was out of town however, there were two favorable on-line reviews. Luminski's work was also presented by the BDC in the 2013 Downtown Dance Festival and as part of the 10th Anniversary of the Blue House in Breisach, Germany, eliciting very strong response that has led to support for a follow-up program in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2014. *Shell Games*, choreographed by Jonathan Hollander, was revived for the season as a complement to the Luminski work.

Poetry-Dance Collaboration with International Writing Program of the University of Iowa – November, 2012

Ten BDC dancers and alumni created works in collaboration with ten international poets associated with a State Department-funded program at the U. of Iowa. Instead of performing at Ellis Island, a plan dashed by Hurricane Sandy, the Access Theater in BDC's building served as the venue and a film was made, directed by Jeff Arak, funded by the State Department: *Of Words and Touch and Dance*: <https://vimeo.com/58791865>

New Film Project

Con Edison funded the creation of promotional films on BDC at the length of 10 <https://vimeo.com/67526696> and 4 minutes <https://vimeo.com/71535931> that throw the story of the company and its achievements into vivid relief. The 10-minute film was premiered at the annual CECP Summit: <http://cecp.co/events/summit/2013-summit.html> Both films were directed and produced by Jeff Arak.

PRESENTING FREE & ACCESSIBLE DANCE PERFORMANCES AND WORKSHOPS

31st Annual Downtown Dance Festival – August, 2012

Battery Dance Company presented its 31st Annual Downtown Dance Festival in Battery Park, One New York Plaza and Dance New Amsterdam, with workshops that ran from August 6 to 17; and performances from August 11-18, 2012. New York's dance writers and cultural media provided lavish coverage which helped swell daily audiences past 1,200. In total, twenty companies participated in the Festival, representing five countries and a variety of dance styles. Out of a large pool of applicants, the festival's curatorial panel selected 13 companies from the United States that collectively reflected the festival's dedication to diversity of style and level. The year's international highlight was Sri Warisan from Singapore. The Indo-American Arts Council Erasing Borders Festival of Indian Dance co-presented five dance companies representing a plethora of classical and popular Indian styles, with artists hailing from India, Russia, Canada and the U.S. Workshops were held at DNA in which dancers from the U.S. and Brazil took part. Four teacher trainees from Nigeria also participated, sponsored by Society for the Performing Arts of Nigeria. As an example of the cross-fertilization of BDC's programs, the Nigerian participation was a result of BDC's Dancing to Connect program in Lagos in 2011; and inspired the next phase, BDC's participation in SPANFEST, a new performing arts festival that will take place in November, 2013 in Lagos.

BRINGING THE ART OF DANCE TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF NEW YORKERS

Dance in New York City Public Schools

BDC brought Dancing to Connect and dance residency programs to six public schools in four New York City boroughs. The schools serve ethnically diverse communities with the majority of students on free or reduced-cost lunch programs. Their faculty and leadership recognize the need to supplement arts programming during the school day but budgets cannot cover the costs of salaried teachers. Funding from Con Edison and the Department of Education supported the hands-on, sequentially-designed dance programs that BDC offered.

PRESENTING A POSITIVE FACE OF AMERICA FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

BDC hosted a Fulbright student from Zambia who was completing his MA degree in Arts Management at Teachers College Columbia University in a six-month internship. BDC generated special programs for participants in State Department International Visitor programs from Syria, Brazil, South Africa, Palestinian Territories, Turkey, India, Cameroon, Croatia, Afghanistan, Angola, Estonia, Ghana, Haiti, Iraq, Jordan, Malawi, Peru, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Slovak Republic, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

ENCOURAGING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY THROUGH DANCE EDUCATION AND CREATION

Dancing to Connect – Europe

BDC reached eight European countries - France, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Georgia, Macedonia, Germany & Malta – training thousands of youth and performing for tens of thousands of public audiences (and millions via television broadcast and live-streamed performances.) These programs were sponsored by U.S. Embassies in each country, with matching financial and/or in-kind support from local arts and educational host institutions and hotels. In many of the programs, local teachers were trained in the strategies and techniques of DtC, and additional workshops were conducted in arts management, fund-raising and lighting/production for dance. Follow-on programs have already taken place with Greece, and are in the planning phase with France and Romania.

Dancing to Connect – Africa

Through the financial and facilitative support of Africa Regional Services Bureau and Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Embassies in Tanzania and South Africa, the Company engaged in Dancing to Connect programs in Dar es Salaam, Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town in the Fall of 2012. Hundreds of students were trained, powerful relationships were built and follow-on activities at a high level have resulted. The program in Tanzania was built on the success of a smaller program in 2010, and had the unexpected outcome of having the local students perform the choreography they had created under BDC auspices for FLOTUS Michelle Obama and her daughters during a VVIP visit 6 months after BDC's departure.

Dancing to Connect - The Maghreb

Coming weeks after the tragic attacks in Benghazi and shortly after Hurricane Sandy, BDC sent teaching artists Carmen Nicole and Tadej Brdnik to Algiers to serve as judges, master teachers and, with the other members of the Company, performers for the International Contemporary Dance Festival hosted by the Government of Algeria. Funding was supplied by the U.S. Embassy and the ECA Bureau of the State Department. This program constituted Phase Five in the bilateral relationship between BDC and the Ministry of Culture and the National Dance Company of Algeria – a record of achievement surpassed only by BDC's on-going programming in Germany.

Dancing to Connect – Asia

BDC returned to Laos in June, 2013, carrying out a Dancing to Connect program in a country that has little contact with the U.S. The Ambassador and Embassy staff attended the final performance and lavished praise on the company for its ability to engage local youth including a young man who was severely disabled by UXO (un-exploded ordinance.) Coupled with a vibrant program in Thailand, the Asia tour was saved from cancellation through a major grant from Laura and Brooks Entwistle that made up for funding that was reversed following the USG Sequestration.

Dancing to Connect – Russia

Three BDC teaching artists conducted Dancing to Connect workshops and performances in Vyksa, Russia for the second year, presented by Art-Ovrag (Festival of Urban Art.) This program stands out for the importance of engaging with a Russian community outside the capital at a time when US/Russo relations have been at a low point; and because all expenses were borne by the local sponsors with no help from the USG.

Cultural Diplomacy Toolkit

BDC continued the building of the first on-line cultural diplomacy toolkit embedded with narratives, lessons learned, project specifics, photos and videos describing the Company's experiences of working in 60 countries with funding from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation: <http://toolkit.batterydance.org>

IMPROVING BDC'S LOW COST STUDIO SPACE

Studio Share Program

Each year, Battery Dance Company's shares its two studios with hundreds of choreographers and dance companies. Following upgrades in the heating system during the fall of 2011 and the obtaining of a vending machine providing healthy food and drink options, BDC staff was awarded \$150,000 in grants from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs to revamp the electrical riser, allowing for the installation of air-conditioning in the rehearsal spaces and upgrading the changing rooms. The project was started in FY13 and will be completed in FY14.

CULTIVATING DONORS, BUILDING A DATABASE & GROWING AND CELEBRATING THE BOARD

With support from the Board, BDC hosted a fully-subscribed dinner at Bouley Test Kitchen in Tribeca in February, 2013, a first event of its kind for the Company. Taproot announced a second service grant to BDC, to customize the Salesforce.com program. Once completed, this program should yield great results for the communications and donor solicitation for the Company going forward. The Board added five new directors during the FY13 year; and was the only arts & culture organization to be a finalist in the Volunteer Consulting Group's Brook Mahoney Award for Board Excellence.