

PRESS RELEASE

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THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACKS IN DANCE ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF PRESERVING THE LEGACY AND HISTORY OF BLACK DANCE IN AMERICA

Silver Spring, MD (June 17, 2020) – The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) is pleased to announce *Preserving the Legacy and History of Black Dance in America*, a program digitizing at-risk audiovisual recordings of historically significant material dating back to the 1970's including the organization's inception in 1988. The project was only one of 20 selected from a total of 43 applications nationwide. The grant awards \$50,000 over 1-year to digitize approximately 299 betamax, VHS, and audio cassette tapes holding recordings from 1988-2010.

These recordings have been selected to be digitally reformatted and freely made available worldwide to the public via Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center's online archive Digital Howard; an archive site that will be accessible from IABD's website; and, videos posted to its YouTube Channel. The material in the initial collection includes panel discussions, lectures, master classes, demonstrations and performances that showcase the work of regional, national and international companies, and provides an inclusive depiction of the rich legacy of the Black Dance experience.

Recordings included in the first round of the collection are from the following:

Adrian Vincent James, Washington, D.C.
Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, Denver, CO
Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dallas, TX
DC Youth Ensemble, Washington, D.C.
Diamano Coura West African Dance CO,
Oakland, CA
Dianne McIntyre, Cleveland, OH
Dimensions Dance Theater, Oakland, CA
Dove Arts Program, Columbus, OH
Dr. Linda Goodrich, Sacramento, CA
Dr. Sherrill Berryman Johnson Collection,
Washington, D.C.
Forces of Nature Dance Theatre, Brooklyn, NY
Hamilton Academy of the Arts, Lafayette, LA

Howard University Dance Program,
Washington, D.C.
Images of Cultural Artistry, Washington, D.C.
Joel Hall Dancers, Chicago, IL
Jones-Haywood Dance School, Washington, D.C.
KanKouran West African Dance Company,
Washington, D.C.
Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Los Angeles, CA
Ohio Black Dance, Columbus, OH
Philadanco!, Philadelphia, PA
Rod Rodgers Dance Company, New York, NY
Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company,
Brooklyn, NY
The International Association of Blacks in Dance,
Silver Spring, MD

“We are truly excited and honored to receive funding for this program, that will help bring to light the contributions of Black artists to the dance field. *Preserving the Legacy and History of Black Dance in America* will afford a unique resource for the study and discourse of Blacks in dance and their inclusion in dance curricula and history throughout the United States and abroad. This collection will provide a wealth of primary source material for anyone studying and/or who has interests in expanding their understanding of our artists and their works,” states Denise Saunders Thompson, IABD President and CEO.

Without this project, the material would not otherwise be collected and made available in one central location. IABD is eager to see the historical documentation of the Black Dance field to ensure that it is not lost to future generations of dancers, students, scholars and the general public. Having the material stored safely in a central repository, ensures the legacy of Black Dance is no longer at risk of being lost to time.

The project team consists of Lela Sewell-Williams, IABD Dance Archivist who will serve as the lead and Lopez D. Matthews, Jr., Digital Production Librarian, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and Howard University Libraries.

Preserving the History and Legacy of Black Dance in America is supported by a Recordings at Risk grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). The grant program is made possible by funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

About The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD)

The International Association of Blacks in Dance preserves and promotes dance by people of African ancestry or origin, and assists and increases opportunities for artists in advocacy, audience development, education, funding, networking, performance, philosophical dialogue, and touring. IABD has become the mecca for Blacks in Dance. The Association, founded in 1991, provides a network, formal newsletters, choreographers directory, published papers and is the raison d'être for the annual international conference and festival. The Association also responds to and initiates dialogue around issues that impact the Black Dance Community as well as the Dance community at large. IABD has developed international prominence and allowed the Black Dance Community to come together on issues important to them. iabdassociation.org

About Howard University Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Digital Howard

The Howard University Libraries is a forward-looking organization, dedicated to providing the highest standards in service and resources that support the University mission for excellence in learning, scholarship and service. Digital Howard is an online repository curated by the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and the Howard University Libraries. dh.howard.edu

About the Council on Library and Information Resources

The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) is an independent, nonprofit organization that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning. To learn more, visit clir.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).