FIVE TRAILBLAZING BLACK DANCE COMPANIES AWARDED HALF MILLION DOLLARS

The International Association of Blacks in Dance distributes MOVE (Managing Organizational Vitality and Endurance) grants to founding member companies in Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Los Angeles and Philadelphia with support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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(August 1, 2018) Washington, DC - The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) has awarded each of its five (5) founding member companies -- Cleo Parker Robinson Dance; Dallas Black Dance Theatre; Dayton Contemporary Dance Company; Lula Washington Dance Theatre; and The Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO!) -- $100,000 each in unrestricted grants, totaling a half million dollars, to be applied to general operating expenses. IABD awarded its IMPACT 100 grants during its inaugural financial and organizational health program, MOVE: Managing Organizational Vitality and Endurance, which was generously funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

“These grants will enable five leading dance companies, that are all deeply vested in African-American neighborhoods across the United States as evidenced by their operations of dance companies, facilities, programs, and schools to pursue greater innovation and take new risks, both organizationally and artistically,” said Denise Saunders Thompson, President and CEO of IABD. “Despite their creative excellence and international acclaim, many smaller and midsized Black dance companies have had to come to terms with inadequate capitalization and other business challenges. In addition to providing these companies with operating investments, we are also collaborating around financial planning and organizational development strategies and training with the Nonprofit Finance Fund, who have been wonderful partners.”
The cohort of founding organizations convened for a three-day MOVE Financial Leadership Clinic in Dayton, OH from June 23 - 25. The Clinic provided both peer-to-peer learning opportunities and a three-day intensive administered by Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) with additional support sessions by Arts Action Research and Baraka Sele. Artistic and executive leadership training for organizational health included access to consultants, information, and tools, that will support longevity and strengthen the capacity of these organizations to remain recognized artistic and thought leaders.

In March 2018, IABD received a $2,636,000, multi-year grant award from The Mellon Foundation for its continued support of the organization’s Comprehensive Organizational Health Initiative (COHI), Phase II. This grant, in partnership with Nonprofit Finance Fund, offers capital deployment, financial consultation, and technical assistance to participating IABD member companies. Responding directly to many of the lessons learned from Phase I activities (i.e. site visits, financial diagnostics, educational workshops), it serves as recommended next steps to strengthen IABD, Inc., its member organizations, and by extension, the field of Black dance. The collaborative nature of this program aims to ensure the vitality of the Black dance sector by addressing historic barriers, building parity among Black dance organizations that support and create work with differing aesthetics, and developing new organizational processes and practices for nonprofit arts organizations.

For more information on this program, please visit www.iabdassociation.org/COHInfo.

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ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACKS IN DANCE: The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) 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, such as administrators, artists, choreographers, dance companies, directors, educators, researchers and scholars, and those interested in artistry, Black dance issues, and performance presentations. The Association, founded in 1991, provides a network, formal newsletters, choreographer’s directory, and published papers; it is the raison d’être for the annual 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 national prominence and allowed the Black Dance Community to come together on important issues. For more information on IABD visit iabdassociation.org.
ABOUT DAYTON CONTEMPORARY DANCE COMPANY: Rooted in the African-American experience, the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company is a culturally diverse, contemporary dance company committed to reaching the broadest audience through exceptional performance and arts-integrated education. Dayton Contemporary Dance Company was founded in 1968 to create performance opportunities for dancers of color. Nearly 50 years later, it remains rooted in the African-American experience, committed to the development of diverse movement artists on the global stage. dcdc.org

ABOUT THE PHILADELPHIA DANCE COMPANY (PHILADANCO!): The Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO!) is a nonprofit organization that presents the highest quality of professional dance performance and improves the skills of emerging and professional dancers and choreographers in a nurturing environment, while increasing the appreciation of dance among its many communities. Across the nation and around the world, PHILADANCO! is celebrated for its innovation, creativity and preservation of predominantly African-American traditions in dance. philadanco.org

ABOUT CLEO PARKER ROBINSON DANCE: Cleo Parker Robinson Dance (CPRD) is a cultural ambassador, infusing vitality, innovation and education into every community we touch—around the corner and around the globe. Every action we perform is done with the intent to transform ourselves and others; to give a voice to the voiceless; to leave a lasting legacy of excellence and understanding. cleoparkerdance.org

ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE: Founded in 1976 by Ann Williams, the mission of Dallas Black Dance Theatre is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at its highest level of artistic excellence through performances and educational programs that bridge cultures and reach diverse communities. With an ever-expanding national and global audience, the company employs a diverse, multi-ethnic troupe of dancers performing for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. dbdt.com
ABOUT LULA WASHINGTON DANCE THEATRE: The founding mission of the Lula Washington Contemporary Dance Foundation is to build a world class contemporary modern dance company that travels worldwide with contemporary modern dance works that reflect African-American history and culture. Our education mission is to create a school in the inner city where young people can learn the art of dance, launch careers in dance, and where dance is used to motivate, educate, inspire, challenge and enrich the lives of young people so they can become successful, productive and competitive citizens. lulawashington.org

ABOUT THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION: Founded in 1969, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies by supporting exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. Additional information is available at mellon.org.

ABOUT NONPROFIT FINANCE FUND: Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) advances missions and social progress in underserved communities through financing, consulting, partnerships, and knowledge-sharing that empower leaders, organizations, and ideas. A leading Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), NFF currently manages over $310 million. Since 1980, we have provided almost $700 million in financing and access to additional capital in support of over $2.3 billion in projects for thousands of organizations nationwide. NFF is headquartered in New York City and serves clients from five offices across the country. For more information on NFF visit nff.org.