

DANCE HERITAGE COALITION

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For Immediate Release:

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University of Minnesota inducted as 12th Dance Heritage Coalition member, with Cecily Marcus to serve on DHC board of directors

Washington, DC – **Dance Heritage Coalition (DHC)** has formally accepted **University of Minnesota** into its membership. **Cecily Marcus**, curator of the Performing Arts Archives at the University of Minnesota Libraries Archives and Special Collections, represents the University on the DHC board of directors.

DHC is a coalition of American libraries, archives, and museums with significant collections in dance. With the addition of the University of Minnesota, there are 12 DHC members throughout the country. Each member organization selects its representative to serve on the board of directors, developing and initiating a range of projects to advance the field of dance preservation.

DHC Board Chair **Jan Schmidt**, curator of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, welcomed the University of Minnesota to the Coalition. “The efforts of Dance Heritage Coalition are made on behalf of the entire field, and it is therefore crucially important that we include the widest possible range of dance repositories. The collections safeguarded by the University of Minnesota Libraries are clearly significant, and offer important contributions to the history of dance given the Twin Cities’ vibrant dance community.”

DHC Treasurer **Martha Briggs**, curator of modern manuscripts at The Newberry Library in Chicago, was pleased that a second institution from the Midwest had been accepted into the Coalition. “The innovation and ingenuity of choreographers and dance companies from the midwestern United States has made significant impact on the dance field, but often these artists lack the renown of those from New York. The University of Minnesota Libraries has been a key contributor to the documentation and preservation of dance in the Midwest, and this addition helps to geographically balance representation in the work of the Dance Heritage Coalition.”

Founded in 1971, the **Performing Arts Archives (PAA)** documents the unique and thriving performing arts community in the Twin Cities. With particular focus on theater, music, and dance, the PAA now holds more than 125 collections, including the archives of some of the community’s most influential dance companies: The Minnesota Dance Theatre; Minnesota Dance Alliance; James Sewell Ballet; Ballet Arts Minnesota; the papers of dancer, choreographer, and teacher Gertrude Lippincott, and those of dance historian and dancer John Munger.

Marcus sought membership in the DHC after a number of opportunities to seek counsel from and collaborate with DHC on matters ranging from artist-driven archives to grant projects focusing on African American theater and dance and media preservation and access. “Minnesota’s participation in the DHC allows the history of dance here to be showcased in a national context, promoting wider scholarship and performance,” Marcus said. “It also offers Minnesota opportunities to facilitate collaborations locally and

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nationally that will enhance collection development and shared resources. The DHC's past and current initiatives are active, focused, and effective. I look forward to working with my DHC colleagues to further unite key dance resources, historians, and curators from across the country."

DHC Executive Director **Libby Smigel** said, "I am thrilled that the University of Minnesota Libraries has joined the Dance Heritage Coalition, and that Cecily Marcus is the board representative. The University of Minnesota has been growing its collections and initiatives to reflect the dynamic community it represents. Its collections, combined with Marcus's leadership, provide another important addition to the DHC membership."

Cecily Marcus brings a strong background in library practice and scholarship to the board. In addition to her current responsibilities, she has led numerous projects, including a series of outreach efforts with dancers, historians, choreographers, and others leaders of the Twin Cities dance community to assess the interest in archiving dance, the needs of dance companies to create and maintain their archives, priorities for preservation, and attitudes toward questions of access. As part of these efforts, the University of Minnesota Libraries has completed a state-funded grant to digitize more than 2,500 video and film objects, including all video holdings from James Sewell Ballet and Minnesota Dance Theatre, now available online at the Libraries' image/video repository, UMedia Archive (umedia.lib.umn.edu). Marcus received her PhD in Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Minnesota in 2005.

Founded in 1992, **Dance Heritage Coalition** is the sole national non-profit U.S. institution with a mission to preserve, make accessible, enhance and augment the materials that document the artistic accomplishments and cultural significance of dance. DHC pursues its mission by encouraging, initiating, and developing collaborative projects among the dance communities, library and archival fields, scholarly institutions, and individuals in four essential areas: access to materials, the continuing documentation of dance employing both traditional methods and developing technologies, preservation of existing documentation, and education within and beyond the field of dance.

Member organizations of Dance Heritage Coalition are:

- American Dance Festival, Durham, NC
- Arizona State University School of Theatre/Dance/Film, Tempe, AZ
- Dance Notation Bureau, Inc., New York, NY
- Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Becket, MA
- Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center, New York, NY
- Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
- Library of Congress, Washington, DC
- Museum of Performance & Design, San Francisco, CA
- Newberry Library, Chicago, IL
- UCLA Library, Los Angeles, CA
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

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