

National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum

Vision 2020

*Creating a New Place for Dance in
the
Public Imagination*

September 2010

FINAL

A Leadership Initiative of the
Dance Heritage Coalition

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Forum Facilitation and Plan Development
Partners in Performance, Inc.

The logo for the Dance Heritage Coalition features the words "DANCE HERITAGE" in a large, purple, serif font, stacked vertically. Below this, the word "COALITION" is written in a smaller, purple, sans-serif font. A thick, grey, curved line sweeps across the bottom of the text. The background of the logo is white with a pattern of thin, horizontal, light green lines that curve and fade out to the right.

DANCE
HERITAGE
COALITION

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DANCE HERITAGE COALITION ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

The **Dance Heritage Coalition** (DHC) is a national non-profit alliance of institutions holding significant collections of materials documenting the history of dance. Its mission is to preserve, make accessible, enhance and augment the materials that document the artistic accomplishments in dance of the past, present, and future. The 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. The DHC also serves as a think tank and a convener for the dance heritage field.

The Dance Heritage Coalition was founded in 1992 to address problems identified by a study of the state of preservation and documentation of dance in America. This study titled *Images of American Dance*, which had been jointly commissioned by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, recommended the formation of an alliance of the nation's major dance collections (1) to facilitate communication; (2) to develop national standards, policies, and priorities; and (3) to implement collaborative activities and projects in the fields of dance preservation, documentation, and access.

Some of the recent projects and programs of the Dance Heritage Coalition include: (1) America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: The First 100 (website and traveling exhibition); (2) work to create a Secure Media Network of significant moving images and ancillary materials; (3) fellowships for study of archival practices at DHC member institutions; (3) the copyright project, to develop a *Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use*; (4) archival consulting for dance companies that have in-house archives; (5) online finding aids for dance materials in special collections at DHC member institutions and other libraries and archives; and (6) a registry of analog videotapes and digitization initiatives.

DHC Member Organizations

American Dance Festival

Dean Jeffrey, Director of Archives and Preservation

www.americandancefestival.org

Dance Notation Bureau

Dawn Lille, Board Member

www.dancenotation.org/DNB/index.html

Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University

Fredric Woodbridge Wilson, Curator of the Theatre Collection

hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/collections/htc/index.cfm

Herberger Institute School of Dance, Arizona State University

Christopher A. Miller, Curator

dance.asu.edu

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival
Norton Owen, Director of Preservation
www.jacobspillow.org

The Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University
Nena Couch, Curator
library.osu.edu/sites/tri/

Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center
Jan Schmidt, Curator of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division
www.nypl.org/locations/lpa/jerome-robbins-dance-division

Library of Congress
Elizabeth Aldrich, Curator of Dance, Music Division
www.loc.gov

Museum of Performance & Design
David Humphrey, Director
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A DECADE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT (2000-2009)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Since its founding in 1992, the Dance Heritage Coalition has worked to encourage documentation and preservation of and access to the materials that record the artistic accomplishments in dance. Through direct services to the field, such as distributing publications, providing technical expertise, and initiating projects that further its mission, the DHC confronts the challenge of safeguarding the nation's diverse dance legacy.

In 1999-2000, the DHC conducted the first National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum. The report from this series of meetings, *Sustaining America's Dance Legacy: How the Field of Dance Can Build Capacity and Broaden Access to Dance in the Next Ten Years* (October 2000), served as a blueprint for action for the period of 2000-2010. The primary goals addressed five broad areas:

- Improve dance and dance heritage education
- Build local capacity and regional coordination
- Mediate intellectual property rights issues
- Improve and broaden implementation of dance documentation and archival practices
- Build alliances and advocacy

SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS

The Forum developed key strategies in support of the five goals and these strategies formed the core of the DHC's work over the past decade. Six of the DHC's major accomplishments are:

1. Fair Use Project, which resulted in the publication *Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use of Dance-Related Materials: Recommendations for Librarians, Archivists, and Curators, and Other Collections Staff* (2009). This two-year project investigated the obstacles that copyrights can create for museums, archives, libraries, and dance companies. The Project included a series of interviews, eight focus groups, and a choreographers' forum. Five core contexts – preservation, exhibition, recording, educational support, and digital information exchange – were identified where use of copyrighted materials was mission-critical. The resulting statement describes how the Copyright Act's fair use doctrine can reasonably be applied to ensure that dance materials are preserved and made accessible.
2. Secure Media Network. Now in its early stages, this project will ultimately enable the sharing of digital media among selected libraries in an updated virtual form of Interlibrary Loan. The Network will generate the transfer of analog videotapes and ancillary materials to archival-quality digital formats for preservation and secure viewing. Beta-testing is scheduled to begin this year, and a digitizing hub will be set up at San Francisco's Museum of Performance & Design.
3. America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: The First 100. The list, selected through a nationwide nomination process, was created to heighten public interest in the richness of

America's dance heritage and the materials in DHC collections that document these Treasures. A publication was issued, with an online version available on the DHC website. Funding was obtained to create an exhibition that was mounted in 2004-2005 in San Francisco, Columbus (OH), New York City, and at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (MA). The exhibition was also presented at two sites in Colorado, and its final destination was Hofstra University, where it closed in December 2009.

4. Digital Video Preservation Reformatting Project. This two-part project began with a series of meetings in 2002 to plan for a project that would identify the best method for migrating analog videotapes to digital for preservation purposes. The resulting report, which identified MJPEG2000 as the most likely candidate for migration, was published in 2004. The second part of the project included the creation of a National Dance Heritage Videotape Registry that collected data on the numbers and analog formats of videotapes held by dance companies, individuals, libraries, and other collections. Through funding from numerous sources, the DHC has overseen videotape reformatting for selected dance companies and archives since 2004.
5. Fellowships in Dance Documentation and Preservation. This project places Fellows (typically early-career professionals or graduate students) into a DHC institution for ten weeks of basic instruction in materials handling and archiving. At the conclusion of this mentoring process, the Fellow spends another ten weeks assisting in the archives of a dance company or a dance-related repository. Since 2003, the DHC has funded more than a dozen Fellowships.
6. Guides and best practices for the Dance Community. Since 2000, the following publications have been created and provided at no charge to the dance community:
 - *Statement of Best Practices in Fair Use of Dance-Related Materials* (2009)
 - *Documenting Dance: A Practical Guide* (2006)
 - *Digital Video Preservation Reformatting Project: A Report* (2004)
 - *Dance Videotapes at Risk* (2003)
 - *A Copyright Primer for the Dance Community* (2003)
 - *America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: the First 100* (2000)

In addition to the printed copies, online versions of these publications are available on the DHC website.

THE WORLD OF DANCE HERITAGE

The world of dance heritage, while often defined as a small circle of those whose primary work is focused on documentation and preservation, is actually a world that is quite expansive and includes artists and their companies, colleges and universities, funders and policy makers, and a never-ending roster of individuals such as dancers, lawyers, and scholars. A critical opportunity for DHC is to embrace and engage the abundance of knowledge, perspectives, and resources in this broader definition of the field.



THE APPROACH TO PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The second National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum was led by the Dance Heritage Coalition. Generous support was provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Subsequently, the Institute of Museum and Library Services has provided additional funding in support of VISION 2020 and the Secure Media Network in particular.

As in the first Forum conducted in 1999-2000, the Coalition worked closely with John McCann as Project Director. McCann and his firm, Partners in Performance, Inc. provided program design, survey analysis, facilitation, and strategy development expertise. The work of the consultants was overseen by a three-person Guiding Group of DHC Board members and the Executive Director of the Coalition.

The Forum was launched in February of 2009 with a comprehensive online survey of the field to prioritize key issues facing the field of dance preservation and documentation, identify external and internal forces of significance, and articulate key themes in response to the issues and forces at play. The survey was circulated to educators, archivists and librarians, historians, service organizations, presenters and producers, individual dance artists, and policy makers and funders, and garnered a response rate of 16.1%. The survey analysis provided a clear set of leading priorities: preserving existing archives, increasing capacity through technology, improving levels and expertise, increasing awareness of dance heritage activity. The analysis also provided a clear set of preferred outcomes for the coming decade: more work preserved, more diversity of materials, and broader knowledge of the richness of the American dance legacy.

The survey results, upon review by the consultants and the Guiding Group, provided the basis for the field-wide visioning and goal-setting retreat held in January of 2010, where 30 representatives from the dance, heritage, and preservation fields gathered for three days to articulate the 10-year vision and key goals to guide dance preservation and documentation activities over the coming decade. The Retreat participants articulated a broad vision for the decade – *a new place for dance in the public imagination* – and identified a set of goals that should be pursued if the vision were to be realized: increased awareness of dance and its societal contributions; robust and sustainable systems in support of dance heritage activity; the development of an ever-increasing body of stakeholder value; and connectivity across and beyond the field. To achieve these goals, the participants identified a set of 21st-century values (guiding principles) that should guide the approach to the work ahead. These include increased collaboration and engagement, improved transparency and trust, and systemic, organic thinking by the dance heritage leadership.

The Guiding Group, working closely with the consultants, appointed a 13-member Strategy Development Group that reviewed the vision and goals and met for a two-day strategy development session in February to devise practical responses to the vision and key goals. While many ideas were put forward by those representing the broad field of dance heritage, the DHC Board of Directors chose those goals and strategies most compatible with the mandate of the existing DHC mission.

These robust deliberations opened the Forum process to the perspectives of a wide range of preservation and documentation constituents including choreographers, policy makers, practitioners, and technologists. The result of their endeavors was a draft strategic plan that was submitted to the Board by the consultants in April of 2010. Following a vetting process by the Guiding Group, the DHC Board reviewed the plan at their May 6-7, 2010, meeting at UCLA in Los Angeles, endorsed it in principle, and made final recommendations for completion of the plan. Once refinements were complete, the Executive Director and members of the DHC Board presented the plan and held feedback sessions at a number of national gatherings including the Dance/USA, Society of American Archivists, Congress on Research in Dance, Theatre Library Association, National Dance Education Organization, and others.

“Dream no small dreams...”
Goethe

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marking almost two decades of work, the Dance Heritage Coalition (DHC) in its pursuit of broader access to the richness of America’s diverse dance legacy has engaged in a process of self-evaluation, issue identification, and goal setting. The National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum has been a 12-month journey to identify ways to achieve the bold vision of *A New Place for Dance in the Public Imagination*. While this is a daring aspiration, the Board and staff of DHC firmly believe that its commitment to openness, collaboration, and value creation, coupled with the abundant possibilities offered by technology, emerging best practices, and a new spirit of cooperation developing across numerous fields, the vision is not only achievable, but the only viable outcome to pursue over the coming decade.

In the Field Study survey conducted in 2009 respondents affirmed that technological change was the primary external *and* the primary internal force influencing the future of dance documentation, preservation, and access. Additionally, the survey analysis illustrated the importance of finding equitable ways to solve issues of ownership and rights issues. The third and not surprising priority, again both internally and externally, is a perceived ‘lack of interest’ in the importance of dance documentation. Therefore, it is not surprising that respondents identified three critical outcomes for the work of the Forum over the coming decade: find solutions through rapidly emerging technologies; advocate for greater respect for dance and its legacy; and provide more unfettered access to information that results in greater awareness of the richness and diversity of American dance and greater appreciation of the necessity of preserving it.

IMMEDIATE STEPS

Based on these priorities, a central focus over the next several months is the planning for and creation of the virtual *Digital Humanities Center* for dance. Key components of the Center will be a secure dance archive media network, a national union catalogue, and finding aids for special collections.

The *Artist’s Legacy Toolkit* will be critical to embracing artists and dance companies, presenters, and others into full partnership in the documentation process. This vital resource, providing everything from model donor agreements, to records management and technical assistance, archival assessments, and virtual and onsite documenting and archiving support, all keyed to the stages of an artist’s career, is critical to ensuring artists, their representatives, and their companies recognize the importance of quality documentation and are confident that their archival partners will be trustworthy stewards of their legacy

The third priority for the decade is the development of the *Dance Communications Network*, a robust, organic, facilitated affiliation of individuals, organizations, agencies, and institutions who contribute to dance preservation, documentation, and access. Participation in the Network will be based on a model of reciprocal engagement, where contributions to the network will result in the

building of shared knowledge, access to best practices, and sustained engagement around emerging opportunities and challenges in the field.

DHC cannot and should not attempt to achieve these outcomes by itself. The world of dance heritage is vast, and as illustrated later in the plan, offers an abundance of committed stakeholders prepared to contribute to another decade of significant achievements in the field. New partnerships and collaborations will be essential. While the most informed stakeholder knows that it is DHC's diligence and proven success over the past 20 years that provides a firm platform from which to launch the following goals, it is imperative that DHC continue to increase awareness of what is happening in the field and the impact of those activities on the world of dance, research, and scholarship.

PRIMARY GOALS

Increased awareness of dance and its societal contributions

Whether in its role and value as a vital part of arts education, an expression of religious beliefs or ethnic identity, an investigation into individual creative possibilities, a contributor to physical and emotional well-being, as purely compelling entertainment, or as a means to interpret and better understand our unique histories, dance has significant value within our world. The plan calls for greater visibility for the outcomes of the Forum; a national public service campaign; and an increase in the number of students studying dance history or dance preservation.

An ever increasing body of stakeholder value

Fundamentally, this goal is one of knowledge creation and knowledge distribution: to identify effective practices, then take it to scale across the field; to build capabilities as a prototype, then build a toolkit so it can be replicated; to incorporate lessons learned into improved ways of documenting, preserving, and accessing the richness of the manifold forms of dance. The plan identifies the dissemination of emerging best practices; an expansion of dance heritage training; and capacity-building for dance companies to help them preserve and optimize the value of their legacy assets.

Sustainable and adaptive systems

Rates of change are continually accelerating. This means that systems, while necessarily efficient, must be adaptive in order to be responsive. What makes the system helpful in the moment and sustainable over time is its adaptive capacity. The Dance Heritage Coalition in its founding stage could survive as a closed system, while current realities and future possibilities require it to be open and more expansive. A website that at one time was remarkably useful as a pathway to information now needs to be a place for considerable interchange and engagement amongst its users. Systems must be adaptive in order to be sustainable. The Dance Communications Network will need to emerge organically: at the center of this network will be a highly dynamic and user-friendly DHC website, and advances in technology must be incorporated rapidly and effectively to enhance content discovery and utility.

Connectivity across and beyond the field

The Forum process has provided the DHC with a mandate to open the lines of communication across the world of dance heritage and to incorporate the voices and active participation of those who have fallen outside the traditionally defined boundaries of dance documentation and

preservation. A vital short-term strategy that will reward the field over the long term is the inclusion of younger voices into the dance heritage narrative. A new generation of practitioners and future leaders await being embraced as essential contributors to achieving the goals of the plan. Animating their involvement through expanded internships and fellowships and facilitating their engagement with choreographers and their companies in support of their documentation efforts are but two means of securing their productive participation. In this new and expanded definition of ‘the field’ of dance heritage, the DHC also has the opportunity to advocate for the integration of dance history and dance preservation into other fields of study; and to increase its representation in conferences and activities not dance-specific. The role basically is to break down traditional barriers through increasing broader participation in the rewarding work of increasing the nation’s engagement with the richness of its diverse dance heritage.

Vision 2020

A New Place for Dance in the Public Imagination

Goals for Dance Heritage 2010-2020

Goal 1. Increased Awareness of Dance and its Societal Contributions

There is no new place for dance in the public imagination without greater visibility for its universality and appropriate recognition for its humanizing influence within the wired world.

1.1 Publicize Forum outcomes broadly

- Present the vision and goals document to a wide range of organizations and agencies to develop a shared awareness of the unifying vision and objectives for the next decade
- Communicate the successful implementation of significant strategies for the period 1999-2009, and illustrate their impact on the dance heritage field

1.2 Revive National Dance Treasures Exhibition

- Mount America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: The First 100 as a virtual, interactive exhibition
- Develop the Irreplaceable Dance Treasures: The Next 10

1.3 Publicize dance related resources (including personal papers and new collections)

- Engage college/university educators about the range, availability, and value of dance and dance related materials, and their potential role in dance education
- Publish articles (as appropriate) in dance and non-dance journals

1.4 Foster, through partnerships and strategic alliances, rich public programming and academic content documenting dance's cultural and aesthetic legacies.

Recommended collaborators for Goal 1 and accompanying strategies:

- Academic dance departments
- Artists
- Congress on Research in Dance (CORD)
- Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)
- *Dance Chronicle* and *Dance Magazine*
- Dance Critics Association (DCA)
- Dance/USA and branches
- Library of Congress
- Library and Archival Associations
- National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD)
- National Dance Education Organization (NDEO)
- National Registry of Dance Educators (NRDE)

- Partners in Performance
- Society of Dance History Scholars (SDHS)
- State and local arts agencies and historical societies
- Students of dance programs

Goal 2. Sustainable and Adaptive Systems

- 2.1 Build national network of organizations engaged in dance heritage interests and activities
 - Position Dance Heritage Coalition at the center of a broad range of affiliations of entities and individuals that contribute to dance preservation, documentation and access
- 2.2 Establish and promote a national union catalogue for dance
 - Assure catalogue is placed in broader performing arts and cultural contexts
- 2.3 Create links to the abundance of contextual materials
- 2.4 Adopt, as appropriate, continuing advances in technology
 - Maintain and develop contacts within technology area
 - Appoint a Technology Advisory Group for regular consultation
- 2.5 Launch research fellowships in dance preservation/documentation
 - Expand the funding available for fellowship programs
 - Enhance the existing DHC Fellowship program through more effective partnering with universities
- 2.6 Launch Dance Archive Media Network (currently called the Secure Media Network)
 - Encourage artists to provide video and legacy assets directly to the secure media network
 - Provide model donor agreements and deeds of gift
 - Expand content and links to other collections
 - Provide access tools to promote discovery of information in Media Network
 - Consider new name for SMN, possibly Dance Archive Media Network
 - Conduct Beta-testing of SMN
- 2.7 Update the DHC website
 - Develop a user friendly and topical DHC website
 - Highlight issues, events, and resources with timely content updates
 - Package existing DHC web resources for different type of users (students, artists and dance companies, researchers and faculty, archivists and librarians)
 - Capture website visitor data for use by DHC in refining services
 - Refine DHC listserv
 - Locate and make available resources from now-defunct NIPAD and Preserve, Inc.
 - Showcase DHC mission and tag line on front page

- Promote DHC resources and website aggressively via social networking (e.g., facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and other social media as appropriate)
- Establish reciprocal links and cross-postings with corollary organizations
- Provide avenues for inquiries and solicit frequent feedback from stakeholder groups

2.8 Create database of consultants and others with dance heritage and preservation expertise

Recommended collaborators for Goal 2 and accompanying strategies:

- Artists
- Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA)
- Audio Visual Preservation Solutions
- Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC)
- Dance/USA and branches
- Global Performing Arts Database (GLOPAD)
- Independent Media Arts Preservation (IMAP)
- Los Angeles Dance Foundation
- Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)
- Stanford University
- University of Texas-Austin (UTA)

Goal 3. An Ever Increasing Body of Stakeholder Value

3.1 Develop and disseminate best practices in dance documentation and preservation that are sustainable for the dance field

- Conduct workshops at annual meetings of professional organizations (basic archival practices)
- Establish new partnerships for dissemination of best practices
- Initiate a partnership with Heritage Preservation
- Link DHC constituents to resources provided by other entities

3.2 Expand training in archival practice and documentation

3.3 Promote appropriate copyright legislation

- Develop and disseminate DHC best practices and white papers on copyright issue as it relates to preservation of and access to dance legacy records.

3.4 Increase dance company capacity for documentation, records management, and preservation

- Communicate the value of the works created within the company
- Identify and support dance companies who possess internal capacity and funding potential in documenting and preserving their materials
- Build documentation tool for dance companies
- Build capacity through DHC internships at dance companies

- Construct and publicize a database of regional and national repositories that welcome dance materials to foster artist-archive partnerships

Recommended collaborators for Goal 3 and accompanying strategies:

- Artists
- Colleges/Universities
- Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)
- Dance Companies
- Dance/USA
- DHC member organizations
- Heritage Preservation

Goal 4. Connectivity Across and Beyond the Field

Across

- 4.1 Empower and encourage emerging voices and train the next generation of leaders
 - Expand internship program (e.g. more interns, more repositories served, expand into dance companies) Include digital products, online finding aids, digitized content in their project
 - Encourage students to become stakeholders through new programs matching faculty-student-archivists
- 4.2 Develop database of curricula applying dance legacy content and resources
 - Share syllabi
 - Share lectures
- 4.3 Cultivate existing international links and establish new links as appropriate
- 4.4 Improve collaboration through increased engagement
 - Conduct more focus groups that will improve collaboration and organic thinking
- 4.5 Create mechanisms that connect stakeholders across the field
 - Sponsor workshops
 - Sponsor special events
 - Formalize avenues for stakeholder involvement with the DHC and its work

Beyond

- 4.6 Integrate dance into other studies so it is no longer segregated into a narrow field of inquiry or experience
 - Develop database of dance history and dance documentation dissertations
- 4.7 Investigate the value of dance studies in fulfillment of non-dance degrees
- 4.8 Continue to foster healthy relationships with other sectors and disciplines
 - Make diplomatic missions to other fields where dance is a viable cognate area

- Communicate respect for other fields
- Reach out to non-dance cultural organizations and academic organizations

4.9 Participate in regional/national/international conferences that are not dance-specific

- Develop papers for presentation
- Encourage interns to present papers on their DHC-funded work

4.10 Develop and participate in more joint conferences

4.11 Create mechanisms that connect stakeholders beyond the field

Recommended collaborators for Goal 4 and accompanying strategies:

- American Film Institute (AFI)
- American Society for Theater Research (ASTR)
- Artists
- Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD)
- Colleges/Universities
- Interns, students, early-career professionals
- Media outlets
- Metropolitan Opera
- National Dance Educations Organizations (NDEO)
- NYC Parks Commission
- Students of dance programs

PARTICIPANTS IN THE NATIONAL DANCE HERITAGE LEADERSHIP FORUM

The Forum was a highly inclusive process incorporating the prospective and guidance of more than 200 individuals who participated either in the Field Wide Survey, Forum Retreat and/or the Strategy Session.

Visioning and Goal Setting Retreat Participants

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APPENDICES

Results of Field Survey

Survey Instrument

White Papers

Digital Tools for Expanding Access to Dance, by Glen Worthey

Matrix of the Artist and Archivist's Duet, by Bonnie Oda Homsey

Teaching Dance History with Access to Primary Materials, by Tricia Henry Young