2021-2024

The Revv Campaign

Photo: Nejla Yatkin by Lois Greenfield
Meet Chicago Dancemakers Forum

Chicago Dancemakers Forum welcomes you.

Sprung from a demonstration project in 2003, we are now Chicago's largest open call source of support for dancemaking, providing over $1.25M in direct funding for artists to date. We advance new dance creation by dancemakers representing nearly every area of the city and elevate the recognition of Chicago as a thriving and diverse center of dance innovation. Our bold five-year vision is to be the Heart of Dance Innovation- Strong and Everywhere.

We are proud that our investment in the creative support, health and wellbeing of the dancemaking community was recently described as work that "... deserves ... credit for the boom in groundbreaking dance in Chicago over the last several years. Chicago is fortunate to have [CDF] and could use a dozen more organizations just like it." Sharon Hoyer, Newcity Magazine 2021

The Revv Campaign – Accelerating Chicago Dance Now

We are eager to share that Chicago Dancemakers Forum

- Transitioned gracefully from an unincorporated project to a fully-fledged organization whose work is amplified by a committed consortium of 9 dynamic dance incubating and presenting organizations.
- Has a track record of raising over $250,000 annually for programs and operations to catalyze new dance creation, led by a staff of three and broadly diverse board of nine.
- Continues its commitment to building and learning by listening to changes within and outside of a dance community that represents all of Chicago, and to responsively activate an agile and innovative approach to supporting artists.
- Is expanding its Fund for artists and the next generation of dancemakers.
- Is thoughtfully planning leadership succession from its founding dynamic Executive Director Ginger Farley to new leadership that will be equitably compensated.
- Is building a strong and adaptive organization that enriches Chicago’s cultural identity, stimulating dancemakers to experiment and create new work that defines their individual artistic growth and success.
- Is raising $1M to fund direct grants to artists and program costs, and support staff compensation and growth.

At 18 years, Chicago Dancemakers Forum is at an exciting and critical inflection point and is poised to expand grants for artists and programs that offer opportunities for Chicago dancemakers to grow their generative practice, and to hire its first paid executive director - a visionary new leader to support dancemakers and their creative process.

Photo: Jumaane Taylor and dancers in “Ugly Flavors” at the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago
The Revv Numbers:
Investing in CDF = Investing in Artists

To prepare for expanded funding for artists and the transition to paid leadership, CDF has launched the Revv Campaign to raise $1,000,000, which will include:

- $625,000 for direct artist and program support; and,
- $375,000 annually for three years to fund the new executive director, health care account contributions, and adjustment/expansion of staff roles.

The funds raised through the three-year Revv Campaign will fully realize the vision and goals outlined in CDF's comprehensive 2020-2025 strategic plan. CDF's average annual budget of $500,000 serves about 2,000 dancemakers a year through grants, public programs, and resource sharing. Always in the black and committed to impact, Chicago Dancemakers Forum invested 77% of its operating fund into program and artist support in 2020. Its direct grants and public programs have now provided thousands of choreographers with the financial infusion, network building, and artistic dialogue they need to reflect, refuel, and develop works of greater depth and scale. Building on the foundation of the successful 2015 Breakout Campaign, The Revv campaign will infuse this work with new possibilities and scale.

Ginger Farley, CDF’s first and current executive director, waives her salary and her in-kind contribution has made it possible for CDF to deliver and enhance its essential programs while planning for sustainability, succession, and fundraising growth. As announced in September 2021, Ginger will be stepping down and CDF’s board has begun a search for a new executive director. A primary goal of the Revv Campaign is to provide the financial foundation for the new leader to take on this key role without having to raise their own salary (estimated at $75k-$80k based on director salaries at comparable organizations) within the first three years. It will secure CDF’s transition and transfer of institutional memory, while providing space for new perspectives. Revv will ensure the success of the new team and continue CDF’s work to integrate principles of equity and inclusion into all aspects of the organization. The campaign will have ways for all to engage in supporting this effort and encourage wide scale community-based participation as it unfolds in 2022.

Photo: BraveSoul Movement at Elevate Chicago Dance 2018, Chicago Cultural Center
Our History, Mission and Impact

CDF was founded on two significant ways of working which are at the root of and what we are and do today – collaboration and responsiveness. Begun in 2003 by a consortium of three key Chicago contemporary dance incubators and presenters – Columbia College Dance Center, Links Hall and the Museum of Contemporary Art, it has evolved into a vibrant 501c3 organization whose work is amplified by the active partnership of nine consortium organizations and many other community partners.

Current Consortium Members

![Logos of the current consortium members]

Photo: Courtesy of the Artist, Irene Hsiao, 2020 Lab Artist
CDF Program Support and Impact for Artists

CDF supports Chicago’s aesthetically and culturally diverse dancemakers in their pursuit of excellence through programs that stimulate artistic innovation, increase dynamic interaction among makers, and build awareness of dance in Chicago.

CDF actively invites and celebrates artists working in all forms of dance and aspires to build diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of activity. It supports artistically and culturally diverse makers who push artistic boundaries in a wide array of dance forms, including Bharatanatyam, Butoh, Chicago footwork, dance on film, Hip Hop, burlesque, West African, Afro-contemporary, tap, Krump, Jingle Dress, Acrodance, Salsa, and other Latin social dances. CDF programs are city-wide and do not target particular demographic groups, but it has successfully encouraged more diverse participation in its programs through partnerships and programming in underserved areas. For many dancemakers working independently, CDF is their only institutional connection. It fills the gap in support for these talented artists with programs that create opportunities and professional connections not otherwise available to many dancemakers from Chicago’s diverse communities.

| **DIRECT CASH SUPPORT TO ARTISTS** |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **2003 - 2021** | **Lab Artists** | **Greenhouse** | **Digital Dance** | **Production** |
| **Program**     | **Number of Years Offered** | **Program** | **Grants** | **Residencies** | **Grants** | **Residencies** |
|                 | 16               | 3              | 1              | 2              |
| **Grant Size to Artists** | $15K-$20K | $5K | $10K | $50K |
| **Total Number of Grantees** | 72 | 13 | 10 | 7 |
| **Total Amount Granted** | $1.1m | $65K | $100K | $42K |

*Photo: Silvita Diaz Brown, 2021 Digital Dance Grantee, in “Visita a Nuestros Muertos”*
CDF Program Support and Impact for Artists

According to one observer, “Either CDF is particularly adept at knowing which choreographers are poised on the cusp of breakthrough, or the [funding] itself provides the fuel ... to jet toward thrilling creations.”

- **Lab Artists Program**: This program supports six choreographers in a year-long period of research, artistic process, and experimentation with $20,000 grants (increased by $5,000 in 2020), mentorship, and creation of new networks of support. Close to 90% of Lab Artists are still living and working in Chicago, demonstrating the value of the program in retaining talent for the city.

- **Presenting Opportunities**: CDF is playing an increasing role in raising the visibility of Chicago dancemakers with presenters and cultivating opportunities for Chicago dancemakers to present their work on the national/international stage. Its Elevate Chicago Dance festivals, for example, have raised the visibility of Chicago dance and cultivated opportunities for Chicago dancemakers by showcasing their work for audiences and presenters from across the globe.

- **Innovating in Response to the Pandemic**: CDF created the Digital Dance Grant Program and awarded $10,000 grants to 10 Chicago dancemakers for their development of new dance works that use digital, online, mobile, and/or virtual technologies. In addition, CDF launched a new Production Residency program, which has created new possibilities for dancemakers to present their work virtually and new ways to work in theatrical venues when doors are closed. CDF is partnering with Chicago venues to provide dancemakers with access to theater space and personnel, who offer creative ideas and problem solving as dancemakers experiment and integrate technical elements (light, sound, projections, film, and video) to fully realize their work. Works developed through these residencies have been livestreamed by venues, such as the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, attracting the attention of audiences and critics.

*Photo: 2022 Lab Artist Kinnari Vora, by Larissa Rolley*

**Improvised, Choreographed and Communal Dance Forms**
SHOWCASES AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS
2003 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elevate Chicago Dance</th>
<th>Anniversary Events</th>
<th>Natural Encounters and Digital Dance</th>
<th>Workshops and Summits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Paid Artists Participating</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Attendance</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>2750</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>3000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partner Organizations</td>
<td>NEPA's National Dance Project, DCASE, Floatlight, Chicago Park District</td>
<td>Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, City of Chicago DCASE</td>
<td>The Natural Conservancy, Chicago Park District, Aukunon Great Lakes</td>
<td>American Dance Abroad, High Concept Labs, Self Help Credit Union, and more</td>
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TOTAL PROGRAM REACH

Number of dancemakers and audiences reached by the organization (note change from in-person to mostly virtual in 2020/21)

* Indicates 501(c)3 incorporation.

Photo: Augmented Reality Dance Mural by 2021
Digital Dance Grantee, B’Rael Ali Thunder
Getting Involved

CDF has been called “the most powerful force for the creation of groundbreaking dance in the city” (Newcity Stage 2019).

The Revv Campaign will provide CDF with the strength and sustainability it needs to continue this important work.

With your help, we can achieve our vision of being

- Chicago’s foremost funder for dancemakers, offering substantial dollars to stimulate research and development by artists that represent Chicago’s diverse citizenry and inspiring others to invest in dance;
- known as the heart of experimentation and creation of new work in every form of dance in Chicago, providing timely support to dancemakers at pivotal moments in their artistic lives and careers
- a leader in creating partnerships with aligned community, cultural, and professional entities, who collectively cultivate an appetite for dance in the city and a curiosity about new work and new dance forms;
- an advocate whose work results in Chicago dance and dancemakers being known and respected locally, nationally, and internationally;
- a gateway to a network of accessible spaces throughout Chicago neighborhoods that are gathering places where any form dance may be created, practiced, taught, shared, and performed;
- a strong and flexible organization with strategic approaches, robust financial resources, responsive and visionary leadership, and a resilient infrastructure that anchors and advances vital work.

The next chapter for Chicago Dancemakers Forum builds the essential capacity to support team leadership and artistic development for a vibrant and sustainable future for dance in Chicago. Our campaign embraces all forms of support, and directly strengthens dancemaking innovation with our vision to be Strong and Everywhere.

Given your connection and perspective on Chicago Dancemakers Forum and the Chicago community, your valued advice, feedback and insight regarding the Revv Campaign are welcome.
Artists 2003-2022

2022 LAB ARTISTS
Star Dixon
Diamond Hardiman
Fabulous Freddie Prodigy
Kia S. Smith
Marcela E Torres
Kinnari Vora

2021 DIGITAL DANCE GRANTS
Antibody Corporation
B’Rael Ali Thunder
Ashwaty Chennat
Silvita Diaz Brown
Annie Franklin
Yoshinojo Fujima aka Rika Lin
Alyssa Gregory
Maria Luisa
Zachary Nicol
ReinventAbility

2021 PRODUCTION RESIDENCIES
BraveSoul Movement
Ivelisse Diaz
La Vuelta Ensemble
Rigo Saura
Yoshinojo Fujima aka Rika Lin

2020 LAB ARTISTS
Bril Barrett
Irene Hsiao
Erin Kilmurray
Christopher Knowlton
Sterling “Steelo” Lofton, Jr.
Christopher “Mad Dog” Thomas

2019 LAB ARTISTS
Anjal Chande
Jane Jerardi
Mitsu Salmon
Vershawn Sanders-Ward
Darling Shear
Nejla Yatkin

2018 LAB ARTISTS
Jenn Freeman aka Po’Chop
Joanna Furnans
Ayesha Jaco
Nico Rubio
Rob Welch
Anna Martine Whitehead

2017 LAB ARTISTS
Victoria Bradford Styricki
Brittany Harlin
Daniel “Bravemonk” Haywood
Joshua L. Ishmon
Yoshinojo Fujima aka Rika Lin
Jumaane Taylor

2016 LAB ARTISTS
Praunita Jain
Carole McCurdy
Onye Ozzu
Catherine Sullivan

2015 LAB ARTISTS
Barak adé Soleil
Jamal “Litebulb” Oliver
Benjamin Wardell
Sara Zalek

2014 LAB ARTISTS
J’Sun Howard
Ginger Krebs
Adam Rose
Ahmad Simmons

2012 LAB ARTISTS
Victor Alexander
Paige Cunningham Caldarella
Kristina Isabelle
Mark Jefferey

2010 LAB ARTISTS
Rachel Bunting
Rachel Damon
Meida Teresa McNeal
Erica Mott

2009 LAB ARTISTS
Julia Antonick
Lin Hixson
Kevin Iega Jeff
Atalee Judy

2008 LAB ARTISTS
Jan Bartoszek
Peter Carpenter
Jonathan Meyer
Nadia Oussenko

2007 LAB ARTISTS
Matthew Hollis
Ayako Kato
Nicole Legette
Julia Mayer

2006 LAB ARTISTS
Darrell Jones
Michelle Kranicke
Margaret Morris
Molly Shanahan

2005 LAB ARTISTS
Asimina Chremos
Margi Cole
Carrie Hanson
Julia Rhoads

2004 LAB ARTISTS
Lane Alexander
Shirley Mordine
Hema Rajagopalan
Eduardo Vilaro

2003 LAB ARTISTS
Ginger Farley
Jimmy Payne, Jr.
Sheldon Smith
Erica Wilson-Perkins

Photo: Christopher Knowlton, 2020 Lab Artist, in ‘Kjell Theory’ by ATOM-r (Mark Jeffery, 2012 Lab Artist), by Grace Duval
**JUMAAANE TAYLOR**
LAB ARTISTS PROGRAM MENTOR 2019
MCA CDF SHAREOUT! 2018
CHICAGO DANCEMAKER-IN-RESIDENCE AT REBUILD 2017
ELEVATE CHICAGO DANCE 2017
LAB ARTIST 2017

Jumaane Taylor, a Chicago native, has been tap dancing since the age of 7 and made his professional debut in 2001 with the tap company M.A.D.D. Rhythms. Taylor has performed with Chicago Human Rhythm Project; with Rasta Thomas’s Tap Stars in Germany (2011); with Tap in2 Peace by Sarah Savelli and Ayodele Casel (2009); with Imagine Tap! by Derick Grant (2006), and at the Jazz Institute of Chicago. In 2014, he created Supreme Love—an evening length tap performance honoring John Coltrane’s A Love Supreme which was presented at jazz music and dance festivals including Jacob’s Pillow in 2017. Taylor is acutely interested in the musicality of tap and its intertwined history with jazz. Taylor was named Artistic Director of the Rhythm World festival in 2021.

During his Lab Artist year in 2017-18, Taylor went “back to school” working in the studio on improvisational ideas for new dance scores with masters in tap Savion Glover and Sarah Petronio and musicians Marlene Rosenberg (bass), Justin Dillard (piano), and Makaya McCraven (drums). Jumaane developed and presented The Jazz Hoofing Quartet, an ensemble performance using improvisation as an expressive exploration of tap and live jazz music. It was presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art as part of Chicago Dancemakers Forum SHareOUT! in 2018.

**JOANNA FURNANS**
LAB ARTISTS PROGRAM MENTOR 2020
LAB ARTIST 2018
ELEVATE CHICAGO DANCE 2018
ELEVATE CHICAGO DANCE 2017

Joanna Furnans is an independent dance artist. Her work has been supported by a Schonberg Fellowship at the Yard, a MANCC Forward Dialogs Residency, an Incubator Sponsorship at High Concept Labs, a Chicago Dancemaker’s Forum Lab Artist award, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Links Hall, the Chicago Moving Company, and the Walker Art Center’s Choreographer’s Evening. Furnans is the co-founder and managing editor of the Performance Response Journal.

During her Lab Artist year in 2018-19, Furnans created an evening-length solo in collaboration with seven artists: Lu Yim (Portland, OR), Deborah Goffe (Northampton, MA), Morgan Thorsen (Minneapolis, MN), Molly Shanahan (Chicago/Philadelphia), Erica Ricketts (NY, NY), Barrie Jean Borich (Chicago, IL), and Christine Wallers (Chicago, IL).
Artist Snapshots

PRANITA NAYAR
ELEVATE CHICAGO DANCE 2018
LAB ARTIST 2016

Pranita Nayar is an Indian classical dancer, choreographer, company director, curator and producer. Nayar has received many accolades in the United States and India. Skilled in the story telling component of Bharata Natyam—where the dancer uses hand gestures and facial expressions to describe the symbolism and mythology of Hindu myths—she has been increasingly drawn to and motivated by the art and symbolism of other faiths and cultures.

During her Lab Artist year in 2016-17, Nayar applied contemporary techniques to Bharata Natyam movement and created "Unwinding" which "truly illuminated the complexity of the form / keeping a thread of timelessness or formal beauty or heritage, while stretching into fresh modes of expression, breathing new life into old forms and keeping them relevant." (Sharon Hoyer - Newcity)

NEJLA YATKIN
PRODUCTION RESIDENCY 2020
LAB ARTIST 2019
NATURAL ENCOUNTERS 2019
ELEVATE CHICAGO DANCE 2018
ELEVATE CHICAGO DANCE 2017

Nejla Yatkin creates award winning and critically acclaimed dance works inspired by issues of feminism, identity, memory and history. She brings an incandescent trans-cultural perspective to her creations. Her recent dances have been traveling around the world, empowering and inspiring local communities to re-imagine themselves in public spaces anew, by incorporating an interactive participatory dance practice. She is a past 3Arts Awardee and a Princess Grace Choreography Fellow. During her 2020 Production Residency at The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, Yatkin created “The Other Witch,” a multi-media and multi-lingual dance performance / film inspired by and references Mary Wigman’s 1914 dance piece Hexentanz. Yatkin’s new work began to tour in 2021.

REINVENTABILITY
2021 DIGITAL DANCE GRANT

Ginger Lane, Ladonna Freidheim (ReinventAbility), and Jon Satrom (studiothread) explored the intersections of inclusive dance, disability culture, and digital art. "The team examined the false promises of digital art and bringing imperfection and distortion forward as they explored the change of stage. They have created a virtual performance piece and a digital dance creation tool that finds its home as a software and is open to the community for participation."
Testimonials

Following BRAVEMONK’s Soul Power Cypher, the artists reflected, “We heard great feedback from the folks who attended. Most had never been to the [Stony Island] Arts Bank and many live just a couple blocks away. It was awesome to have dancers from the open-styles, breaking and footwork communities all in one space. The cross-fertilization was palpable. Lastly, most battles of this type happen on the North side. It was significant, important and beautiful to do this in a South Side community, and in a Black space.”

Roya Amirsoleymani, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA): "I hope to make it to Chicago again soon. You are all doing such great work out there. By the way, we presented NIC Kay at TBA [Time-Based Arts Festival] last year, and I first saw their performance as part of Elevate Chicago Dance in 2017. They've gone on to present at several of PICA’s peer organizations as well. Such a great connection!"

Molly Shanahan: “This [Lab Artist] award prompted a profound shift in my work that kept giving back for 12 years. I applied twice before being selected as a Lab Artist...and I was soooo sad about those rejections. But/and I can tell you that a) the third go-round was the right time, and b) I would’ve done the project even if I didn’t get the grant, so I used the application process for me, first. The grant was meaningful, and more so the connection with artists and consortium members...but above all I got clear about my deepest dance desires and even clearer that external validation was only a small part of the equation. I know this sounds idealistic because financial support is real. But it’s all true. I encourage dancemakers to apply. And make it for you.”
CDF Leadership

THE REVV CAMPAIGN: ACCELERATE CHICAGO DANCE
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Resources:
https://www.newcitystage.com/2019/01/02/players-2019/5/

Photo: 2022 Lab Artist Fabulous Freddie Prodigy by Ernie Lola Pérez