



New England Foundation for the Arts Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI)

NEFA's RDDI project seeks to better understand the needs and potential support systems for emerging contemporary dance artists and their communities, and to share this information with other communities in the region and nation.

[Regional Dance Development Initiative/ Pacific Northwest \(RDDI/PNW\) - Seattle](#)

[Regional Dance Development Initiative/San Francisco Bay Area \(RDDI/SFBA\)](#)

[Regional Dance Development Initiative /Pacific North West \(RDDI/PNW\) -Portland](#)

Regional Dance Development Initiative/ Pacific Northwest (RDDI/PNW) - Seattle

RDDI/PNW - Seattle, a pilot project of NEFA's National Dance Project, helped contemporary dance artists reach new markets by improving their ability to communicate with audiences about the meaning of and context for their work, and developing their relationships with dance presenters.

RDDI/PNW - Seattle was centered on a two-week intensive Lab, July 29 - August 7, 2004, at Velocity Studios, in Seattle, WA. The Lab brought together contemporary dance artists, presenters and funding organizations. Ten contemporary dance artists were selected to participate in the Lab through a competitive application process, and each received a stipend for their participation.

The selected RDDI/PNW - Seattle Lab artists were:

- Linda Austin, Linda Austin Dance, Portland
- Corrie Belfort, Seattle
- Laura Curry, Seattle
- Tahni Holt, Monster Squad, Portland
- Cyrus Khambatta, Phffft! Dance Theater Company, Seattle
- Amy O'Neal, locust, Seattle
- Mary Sheldon Scott, Mary Sheldon Scott/Jarrad Powell Performance, Seattle
- Minh Tran, Minh Tran and Company, Portland
- Cheronne Wong, Seattle
- Freya Wormus and Alex Martin, BetterBiscuitDance, Seattle.

Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI) (cont'd)

Faculty and mentors working with the selected artists included:

- Barbara Bryan, dance artist manager, NYC
- Judy Hussie Taylor, Arts writer, curator, CO
- Donna Uchizono, artistic director, Donna Uchizono Dance Company, NYC
- Laurie Uprichard, Executive Director, Danspace Project, NYC
- Reggie Wilson artistic director, Fist and Heel performance Group, NYC.

The selected artists participated in a ten-day dance Lab and an Artist/Presenter Exchange that concluded with a Presenters' Roundtable.

The four major components of the RDDI/PNW - Seattle Lab were:

Intensive dance lab - A five-day lab where core participants could: share their work with peers; gain feedback that would result in stronger work; define market expectations and strengthen market tools; and show work and engage in dialogue with regional and national presenters

Ethnic dance: The Art & Strategies for Support - A one-day facilitated conversation that was held on August 1, 2004 with 45 artists working in culturally specific dance forms, presenters and administrators.

Market Development Workshop - A two-day workshop held on August 3-4, 2004 where lab artists were joined by 15 area artists to examine existing and new marketing tools and strategies. Speakers included members of the core faculty, performing arts presenters and marketing professionals.

Presenter Roundtable & Showings - August 5-7, 2004 presenters came from throughout the Northwest and California to interface with lab artists, watch work and attend facilitated discussions about the creative process.

Advisory committee participants were Mary Sheldon Scott, MSS/JPP performance; K.T. Niehoff, Velocity dance center; Pat Graney; Pat Graney Company; Gaelen Hansen, 33 fainting Spells; Dyna Hansen, 33 Fainting Spells; lane Czaplinski, On the Boards; Diane Ragsdale, On the Boards; Huong Vu, Allen Foundation; Erin Boberg, PICA; Karen Hanan, Arts North West.

RDDI/PNW - Seattle was made possible with the generous support of the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the Fund for Folk Culture and national support for New England Foundation for the Arts National Dance Project from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI) (cont'd)

Regional Dance Development Initiative/San Francisco Bay Area (RDDI/SFBA)

The RDDI/SFBA pilot project was centered on a two-week intensive Lab on February 16-26, 2006, at the ODC Theater and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. The Lab brought together culturally-specific dance artists, dance presenters and funding organizations.

The RDDI/SFBA assisted culturally-specific dance artists in reaching new markets by strengthening their ability to communicate with audiences about the meaning and context for their work, and developing their relationships with dance presenters.

The RDDI/SFBA Lab had three major components: **Artist Intensive:** February 16-23, 2006, an eight-day session for selected dance artists focused on aesthetic articulation -- helping artists communicate about the cultural context and influences for their work to a variety of audiences--; new market development; career planning and infrastructure capacity building. **Presenters Roundtable:** February 24, 2006, a series of dialogues on strategies for presenting dance artists working in culturally-specific genres and diverse communities. **Artist/Presenter Exchange:** February 25-26, 2006, Lab artists and presenters came together to see and discuss artists work.

Additionally, panel discussions about funding resources and opportunities were open to the broader dance community.

Culturally-Specific Dance Artists

Eleven dance artists with work inspired by cultural traditions stemming from locations ranging from West Africa to Korea to India were selected to participate in the Lab through a competitive application process, and received an honorarium for their participation. All artists selected for RDDI/SFBA work in culturally-specific or traditional and tradition-inspired genres and hail from the San Francisco Bay Area, which is one of the most diverse ethnic and multiple immigrant-generation populations in the United States. NEFA's RDDI project sought to better understand the needs of and potential support systems for culturally-specific dance artists and their communities, which are often under-recognized and under-supported, and to share this information with other communities in the region and nation.

The selected RDDI/SFBA Lab artists and the genres in which they work were:

- Charya Burt, Cambodian Classical Dance
- Hearan Chung, Korean Traditional/Contemporary
- Colette Eloi, African Diaspora Folkloric/Modern
- Sabrina Hou, Classical Chinese
- Kyoungil Ong, Korean Traditional/Contemporary



Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI) (cont'd)

- Sharlyn Sawyer, Central Asian Traditional and Innovative Work
- Alseny Soumah, West African World
- Melody Takata, Japanese Classical, Folk, Modern
- Vishnu Tattva Das, Sacred Classical Indian Dance
- Bonifacio Valera, Jr., Filipino folk/traditional
- Luis Valverde, Andean, Afro-Peruvian Dance

Faculty for the RDDI/SFBA Lab included:

- Donald Byrd, Choreographer & Artistic Director, Spectrum Dance Theater, Seattle
- Joan Gray, President, Muntu Dance Theater, Chicago
- Judy Hussie Taylor, Deputy Director, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver
- Lily Kharrazi, Programs Coordinator, Alliance of California Traditional Arts, San Francisco
- Nola Mariano, Circuit Network, San Francisco
- Ranee Ramaswamy, Artistic Director, Ragamala Music and Dance Theater, Minneapolis
- Tony Shay, Choreographer & Founding Artistic Director, AVAZ International Dance Theatre, Los Angeles

Funding support for residencies that took place in western states before September 31, 2006 and included at least one public performance of an RDDI/SFBA lab artist was available from the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF). Presenters were encouraged to use this funding opportunity to develop longer-term relationships with artists.

RDDI/SFBA was made possible with generous support from the San Francisco Foundation, the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation and Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF). Support for NEFA's National Dance Project came from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

RDDI/SFBA was presented in partnership with ODC Theater, Alliance of California Traditional Arts, Fund for Folk Culture, Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC), Oakland Asian Cultural Center (OACC), Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF), World Arts West, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.



Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI) (cont'd)

Regional Dance Development Initiative /Pacific North West (RDDI/PNW) -Portland

RDDI/PNW - Portland helped contemporary dance artists reach new markets by improving their ability to communicate with audiences about the meaning of and context for their work, and developing their relationships with dance presenters.

RDDI/PNW was centered on a two-week intensive Lab, May 18-28, 2006, at Conduit studios, in Portland, OR. The Lab brought together contemporary dance artists, presenters and funding organizations. Ten contemporary dance artists were selected to participate in the Lab through a competitive application process, and each received a stipend for their participation.

All artists selected for RDDI/PNW were from the Pacific Northwest region including Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

The selected RDDI/PNW Lab artists were as follows:

- Paige Barnes (Seattle, WA)
- Tracy Broyles (Portland, OR)
- Gillmer Duran (Boise, ID)
- Agnieszka Laska (Portland, OR)
- Tere Mathern (Portland, OR)
- Sallyann Mulcahy (Helena, MT),
- Zoe Scofield (Seattle, WA)
- Robin Stiehm (Ashland, OR)
- Emily Stone (Portland, OR)
- Kristen Tsiatsios (Seattle, WA)

Faculty and mentors working with the selected artists included:

- Reggie Wilson, artist and artistic director of Reggie Wilson Fist and Heel Performance Group
- Rosanna Gamson, artist Rosanna Gamson/World Wide
- Janet Stapleton, artist manager
- Jill Sigman, artist Jill Sigman/thinkdance
- Ed Noonan, Executive Director, Myrna Loy Center, Helena, MT
- Jon Raymond, author.



Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI) (cont'd)

The selected artists participated in a ten-day dance Lab and an Artist/Presenter Exchange that concluded with a Presenters' Roundtable.

The three major components of RDDI/PNW Lab were: **Artist Intensive:** May 18-28, 2006, a ten-day session for the selected artists to work with mentors of national stature in a variety of areas related to artistic growth and professional development. The artists had the opportunity to share their work with a peer group, to strengthen the articulation of their work and vision, increase capacity, develop new audiences and build relationships with presenters and funders. **Artists/Presenters Exchange and Presenters Roundtable:** May 26- 27, 2006, a series of dialogues on strategies for presenting contemporary dance artists working in the region. This was an opportunity to discuss with peers and artists ways to develop new audiences for dance, instigate meaningful relationships between artists and presenters, and build new networks for the exchange of ideas, resources and opportunities. Presenters also had the opportunity to see and discuss the Dance Lab artists work. **Dance Community Workshop:** May 23 - 27, 2006,, these sessions covered topics including funding sources, marketing, and networking and were open to all interested artists, companies, board members, and supporters.

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RDDI/PNW was presented in partnership with the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC), Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Conduit, White Bird, Reed College, Bodyvox, Oregon Ballet and 2004 PNW Dance Lab artists Linda Austin, Minh Tran, and Tahni Holt.