



## CANADA DANCE ASSEMBLY

The Canadian Dance Assembly exists to facilitate the dynamic exchange of information relevant to Canadian professional dance of all forms and aesthetics. It strives to cultivate a strong national voice for Canadian professional dance and to support the development of resources for this field of artistic expression. It is the members of the Canadian Dance Assembly, through their activities, experience and participation, who provide the dynamism and synergy that make the organization vital in the Canadian arts milieu. The Canadian Dance Assembly (CDA) is the voice of the professional dance sector in Canada and promotes for a healthy, sustainable environment in which professional dance practice can grow and thrive.

CDA enables its national membership of dance professionals and organizations to connect with their peers through regular communications, conferences, forums and workshops, and facilitates opportunities for networking, dialogue and exchange relevant to the Canadian dance sector.

The Canadian Dance Assembly is a membership driven organization that, through the design and delivery of its activities, programs and services, upholds the core principles of being a collaborative, inclusive, consultative, non-partisan, proactive, diplomatic and transparent organization that represents the diverse professional dance milieu in all regions of Canada.

## CULTURAL PLURALISM IN THE ARTS MOVEMENT ONTARIO (CPAMO)

Initiated in 2009, Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario (CPAMO) is a movement of Aboriginal and ethno-racial artists engaged in empowering the arts communities of Ontario. CPAMO seeks to open opportunities for Aboriginal and ethno-racial professionals and organizations to build capacity through access and working relationships with cultural institutions across Ontario resulting in constructive collaborative relationships. Through its initiatives, CPAMO has identified several challenges that are impacting the broader goal of equity and pluralism in the arts. To assist in the achievement of these goals and objectives, CPAMO undertakes the following activities:

### 1) Community engagement

(brings organizations / artists together to talk about the arts and pluralism)

### 2) Professional Development

(convenes workshops on demographic changes, curatorial competence resource sharing and collaboration, audience and community engagement / development etc. to address a wide variety of issues related to pluralism)

### 3) Partnerships

(working with like-minded arts organizations and ASO's)

### 4) Research and publication

(research about key issues and strategies in the arts related to pluralism)

### 5) Artist performances and showcases

(promotes / commissioned performances)

### 6) Organizational development and change

(advice and support on how to integrate pluralism into an arts organization)

## THE CDA / CPAMO PARTNERSHIP:

CPAMO's Project Lead and the CDA Executive Director began working together in the spring 2012 with the coordination and launch of the CDA National Dance Week and "I Love Dance" Campaign. Held at the National Ballet School, the dance performances – Carlos Martinez (Red Sky Performance), Olga Barrios (Olga Barrios Dance) and Kevin A. Ormsby and Gabriella Parsons (KasheDance) – who were all CPAMO members and selected for their excellence in dance and the visual evidence of pluralism each brings to her/his work. In the summer, CPAMO's Project Lead convened two focus groups with a total of 12 individuals and 10 individual telephone interviews. These dance artists were from various communities, including: South Asian, Aboriginal, Asian and African descent, Latino and European and were involved in

small-to-medium sized dance companies.

Questions included:

- 1) Are you a member of the CDA? If so, what benefits do you receive or would like to receive as a member? How active are you in the CDA?
- 2) If you are not a CDA member, why not?
- 3) Are you familiar with the CDA's structure and other members?
- 4) Are you familiar with the CDA's activities?
- 5) Do the CDA activities address your needs?
- 6) Are there any past experiences that have influenced you about your relationship with the CDA?
- 7) What do you think the CDA needs to do to include Aboriginal and racially/culturally/regionally diverse dance artists in meaningful ways? Would you be active in the CDA if it were to move in this direction?

The responses to these questions were recorded and synthesized to assist in developing workshops for the CDA Conference *Step in Time: Technologies & Pluralism in Dance*. In collaboration with Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario (CPAMO) and the Aga Khan Museum at the Canadian Dance Assembly (CDA) 6th National Conference October 20-22, 2012 in Ottawa, CDA's National conference was inspired by the intersection of pluralism and technology in a rapidly changing environment.

In preparing for the conference, CPAMO with the full involvement of CDA applied to the Ontario Arts Council's ASO Project Grants as Lead Applicant. The purpose of this application was to enable CPAMO and the CDA to work as partners on building interest in and enabling artists of Aboriginal and diverse backgrounds to contribute to and participate in the Conference. Because of its expertise in pluralism, CPAMO agreed to develop and provide guidelines on pluralism/diversity to the CDA which showed significant interest for this project. In this context, CPAMO and CDA were project collaborators and have been active participants in developing, promoting and coordinating the Conference. A series of recommendations were brought forward to the National Council in a report generated by CPAMO following the conference. The formation of the Pluralism Committee was a direct result of this work done to date. There are three main areas which emerged:

- 1) **Advocacy.** The CDA aimed to undertake raising the profile of diverse dance artists, the value of their contributions to dance and the need for their presence in Canada's dance milieu.
- 2) **CDA Policy and Responsibility of all Standing Councils.** This document is one example of the CDA developing a vision to articulating its commitment to pluralism in all areas. This vision will be developed in consultation with the newly created Pluralism Committee and with all Standing Councils as well as the CDA Executive.
- 3) **Recruitment of New Members.** As part of the roll out of the CDA initiatives to support pluralism in dance, the CDA will also focus on recruiting new members based on the issues outlined.

The Pluralism Committee is open to CDA members and non-members in the broader dance community and aims to include representatives of small, mid-sized and large dance companies as well as individual dance artists.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The CDA is seeking individuals / representatives of dance companies who have knowledge and experience in addressing issues of diversity, equity/pluralism in the dance community. **Are you interested in joining the Pluralism Committee?**

If you would like involved with the Pluralism Committee? Email us at [info@dancecanada.net](mailto:info@dancecanada.net) 416.515.8444

### PROMOTE AND SHARE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

CDA: [www.facebook.com/cdaacd](http://www.facebook.com/cdaacd)

CPAMO: [www.facebook.com/Cultural-Pluralism-in-the-Arts-Movement-Ontario-CPAMO](http://www.facebook.com/Cultural-Pluralism-in-the-Arts-Movement-Ontario-CPAMO)

Twitter: CDA: @cdaacd

CPAMO: @\_cpamo

- CPAMO is also open to new interests and people and/or organizations who may want to get involved in its work. CPAMO encourages presenters – venue operators, publishers, galleries – to become involved in our sessions.