

# The Innovation Lab for the Performing Arts Round 8 Applicant Project Summaries

**We believe it's helpful for the field to learn a bit about the range of projects which were proposed. As part of the application process, we ask everyone to write a short summary of their project. What follows is each applicant's submission.**

We're very excited to welcome our Round 8 cohort: **Northrop Performing Arts Center, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Redmoon Theater** and **The Theater Offensive**. The organizations will be examining four different adaptive challenges:

- **Northrop**: How can we transform our revitalized facility into a hub of interdisciplinary creativity and innovation at the University of Minnesota that dynamically engages students, faculty, researchers, artists, and the greater community?
- **PICA**: In considering our ongoing model of using temporary, pop-up spaces and alternative venues to site work in spaces appropriate to artists' needs, how can we challenge our assumptions about the value of this model? How can we preserve our practice's core values while reshaping it?
- **Redmoon**: How can we cultivate a well-trained community of collaborators to build the next generation of artists, and invest in individuals in the long-term by scaffolding training from intern to apprentice, apprentice to collaborator, and from collaborator to peer artist?
- **TTO**: What is the impact of our newly formed Pride Youth Theater Alliance (PYTA) — a strategic alliance supporting and encouraging Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth theater in North America? How will this new model affect TTO's work locally as it takes on this new initiative on an international scale?

## FUNDED PROJECTS

**INSTITUTION: Northrop - University of Minnesota | Minneapolis, MN**

**TYPE: Performing Arts Center**

### PROJECT SUMMARY:



**Northrop's adaptive challenge is to transform its revitalized facility into a hub of interdisciplinary creativity and innovation at the University of Minnesota**—a Big Ten, major research university in the United States—that dynamically engages students, faculty, researchers, artists, and the greater community. Northrop aims to create a new collaborative model, framework, and set of practices that will realize and meaningfully sustain this transformation. Northrop's overarching goal is to transform its curatorial practice from "presenting artistic content" to "facilitating social orchestration" that provides meaningful personal experiences and aggregates

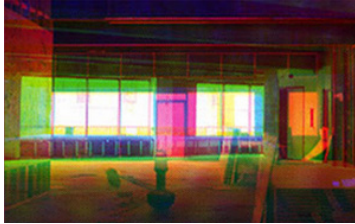
creative energy to deliver greater value to its multiple constituents and create lasting impact in the community. Northrop strives to become an incubator of new ideas: a place where faculty, researchers, students, and the community take intellectual risks, challenge theoretical assumptions, integrate different forms of knowledge, become co-creators of (and participants in) creative content, and take on important questions aimed at reshaping our fundamental understanding of the human condition. The focus prior to Northrop's reopening is to create this framework that articulates how programming, curriculum, partnerships, technology, and physical space will be used to facilitate an interconnected, responsive environment for students, faculty, researchers, and the community. Essential to this strategy will be the creation and organization of a consortium of Northrop's tenants (Concerts and Lectures, Institute for Advanced Study, University Honors Program, and the College of Design's Innovation Lab) tasked with taking on this body of work.

## FUNDED PROJECTS

INSTITUTION: Portland Institute for Contemporary Art | Portland, OR

TYPE: Performing Arts Center

### PROJECT SUMMARY:



#### Changing Spaces: Rethinking PICA's itinerant presenting model

The Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA) champions experimental, interdisciplinary artists locally and globally through presenting, residencies, commissioning, and educational programming. Since our founding, we have pursued a flexible and entrepreneurial model of temporary, pop-up spaces and alternative venues in underutilized buildings within residential and transitioning neighborhoods. This practice of presenting work in abandoned warehouses, cinemas, storefronts, and in partner galleries and theatres has fulfilled our mission of putting artists first, allowing PICA to site work in spaces appropriate to the artists' needs. With lower overhead costs of not having a large facility, we have been able to put more funding into artists' work. Our itinerant practice has also served as a powerful tool for developing new audiences for contemporary art. However, this model is no longer feasible in a real estate market where the unoccupied space that was plentiful in our youth is now becoming scarce. PICA is questioning our ability to find the sort of spaces that we were able to obtain before, and we are challenging our assumptions of the value of this model in its current state to PICA, to artists and to our community. With new artistic leadership in place and an imperative to engage audiences in new ways, PICA wants to preserve our practice's core values while reshaping our itinerant model. The Lab will give staff and board the time, place, and guidance to build on our legacy and plan PICA's future and to experiment with solutions, while bringing us invaluable outside expertise.

INSTITUTION: Redmoon | Chicago, IL

TYPE: Theatre

### PROJECT SUMMARY:



For 23 years Redmoon has cultivated innovative thinking in creating community and activating public space. As the artistic and civic practice of creative placemaking and the power of art in public space are gaining national and international traction, Redmoon is identified as a leader in the field. We feel it is our responsibility to be leaders not only in the Spectacle artform, but in how we train and nurture the next generation of Spectacle artists. Currently we train our community of artists and administrators through Redmoon's traditional arts internship model. Participants receive short-term training and collaborative experiences with the expert engineers,

designers, administrators, and educators integral to any Redmoon production. However, this model of training does not offer the scope of art making, social practice, and repeat engagement in public space needed to truly prepare Spectacle artists, and it does not attract participants that accurately represent the diverse community that Redmoon serves. Redmoon faces the need to invest in individuals in the long-term, scaffolding training from intern to apprentice, apprentice to collaborator, and from collaborator to peer artist. In re-imagining this process to create a Spectacle Academy, Redmoon has the opportunity to benefit from cultivating a well-trained community of collaborators. The institution faces the following adaptive challenge: **how can we realize the full potential of our social mission and 23 years of history as artists in public space in the creation of a training model that builds our artistic community and diversifies who and how we train the next generation of Spectacle artists?**

## FUNDED PROJECTS

INSTITUTION: The Theater Offensive | Boston, MA

TYPE: Theatre

### PROJECT SUMMARY:



#### Can a Continent Be Our Neighborhood?

The Theater Offensive (TTO) has initiated the newly formed Pride Youth Theater Alliance (PYTA), a Strategic Alliance, to bring a national organizing model to support and encourage Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth theater nationally. A decade of evaluative data demonstrates that True Colors OUT Youth Theater's creative work dramatically and positively impacts these risk factors for individual youth and builds safer, more welcoming communities. Our Strategic Partnership with the

PYTA will support similar art work by partner organizations in 18 cities with almost 10% of North America's population. For the very first time—TTO is entering into a Partnership with the PYTA, which entails our administration of the operations. More than just a contracted service, this Partnership has an Equally Shared Leadership Structure that oversees the administration, as well as a mutual recognition of our Overlapping Missions and Institutional Goals. This is a completely new model for TTO; and raises several questions:

**1) Can TTO's model of Queer-arts-as-local-community-organizing have impact across North America by effectively leading the Pride Youth Theater Alliance?**

**2) Can TTO execute this change in scale as it continues growing and deepening its own work locally? Through our limited experiences trying to execute more national programs, TTO learned that being a national leader required more than just "scaling up" our local skills; it required a whole new skill set, an Adaptive Change! And TTO is looking to work with the Innovation Lab to ensure this adaptive change is done in a way that ensures a strong PYTA and a strong TTO.**

## APPLICANT PROJECT SUMMARIES

INSTITUTION: American Repertory Ballet | New Brunswick, NJ

TYPE: Dance

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

American Repertory Ballet (ARB) believes that it bears a responsibility to its dancers to provide them with opportunities for practical training that would enable them to be better prepared for the workplace prior to the end of their dancing careers, while also facilitating the strategic goals of the organization. ARB's innovation comes through discontinuing certain unsuccessful past practices, created as a result of the dichotomous paradigms held by the administration, on the one part, and the dancers, on the other. Building on the success of its Emerging Artist Workshop, and creating additional pathways through a veritable "recipe book" of other activities or events (for use during additional layoff periods) ARB seeks to maintain the dancers physical and artistic momentum, and also spark interest and activity for administrative tasks, leading to objectively measurable results. By adapting a successful model, ARB will create an environment of greater mutual understanding; the administration will be able to creatively nurture its dancers while also preparing them for successful career transitions in the future, and the dancers will providing the organization with the benefits from broader social media exposure, leading ultimately to increased ticket sales, and greater revenue. Moreover, the administration would also be creating an environment that is more attractive to dancers in a variety of career stages by demonstrating an active understanding of a dancers needs beyond dance, and the willingness and infrastructure to foster their current endeavors with an eye toward their futures.

## **INSTITUTION: Arena Stage | Washington DC**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

As the community engages in the art at Arena Stage, Arena engages in its community. Arena welcomes all to experience the art of theatre with the belief that theatre can incite intellectual curiosity, bridge communities and cultures, and provide currency for ideas that spark discourse, reflection and growth. For more than sixty years, arena has drawn audiences almost entirely through compelling work on stage. This has provided the theatre with a long and illustrious history bringing upwards of six decades of art to audiences in our nation's capital. With the opening of the Mead Center for American Theatre, Arena Stage stands on the precipice of a new era dedicated to maintaining a legacy of excellence while adapting to evolving expectations from our regional community and the national theatre community as a whole.

The Public Arena Initiative aims to create pioneering avenues of engagement that incorporate audiences into the art and process as never before. Building on pilot activities including dynamic post-show conversations, interactive lobby activities, panel conversations, and newfound community partnerships, the EmcArts Innovation Lab will allow Arena to finally integrate these ideas into our core mission, to produce, present, develop and study American theatre, while heightening the participatory experience of theatre-going. Such activities are unsustainable without new strategies to better situate them with sufficient support within the organization. The Public Arena will allow us to fulfill the capacity and potential of our new home, activating the Mead Center as an interactive artistic space and forum for exploration and creation.

## **INSTITUTION: Arts Center Carrboro | Carrboro, NC**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The leadership of The ArtsCenter and several resident theatrical companies using its venues share frustrations with past practices that leave them sharing stage but little else. Rather than collaborating to expand public engagement they work in audience development and creative silos.

The leaders desire to shift this paradigm so that The ArtsCenter and the companies can collaborate in teaching, sharing, marketing and audience development, and, ultimately, creating theatrical art. The adaptive change is to integrate the artistic and business strengths of resident companies with educational, theatrical, and marketing assets of The ArtsCenter to partner on projects that engage the public and the artists in new and exciting ways. As the West End Presenting Laboratory, the resident companies and The ArtsCenter will use the resources of the Innovation Lab to provide the time, facilitation, and structure to develop and test assumptions about how to do this. Coming out of the intensive, we shall test tactics to:

- Integrate artists and technicians from these companies into adult and youth classes offered by The ArtsCenter
- Create workshops for adults and youth that will result in staging or reading of pieces created by and featuring class members in collaboration with members of resident companies
- Engage the community by using their stories to create new, discipline-crossing pieces shaped by a dramaturge and using the methods and members of ArtsCenter Stage and the resident companies
- Collaborate with a local newspaper, community radio station, and filmmakers to document and disseminate the experimentation in traditional and internet media.

## **INSTITUTION: Barter Theatre | Abingdon, VA**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The Everyman project is designed to engage a broad array of new patrons outside our walls by focusing our organization on the exploration of new technologies, including interactive live-streams, mobile applications, instant messaging and visual arts to provide new ways to increase and retain first-time ticket buyers, make our programs more available to a wider audience, market our programs through new mediums and convince Everyman of the relevancy of our programming. Barter will use this process to develop a plan of action to reach patrons in the community that are not being served, develop the content that engages those populations, and use the appropriate technologies to deliver the content to those populations while creating exchanges with Barter's actors, artists and programs.

## **INSTITUTION: Bedlam Theatre | Minneapolis, MN**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Bedlam's key strengths include flexibility, adaptability, inclusion, and fun, but our innovation project might seem like an entirely mundane hurdle. To understand it as an innovation, it helps to understand the context; the best way loyal fans, artists, and stakeholders have found so far to differentiate Bedlam as a theatre, is to say that it's theatre for people who don't like theatre. We think the difference is not that Bedlam is non-theatre, it's that it is more theatre than people are used to. But this common and celebrated elevator speech well illustrates the impact this project could have in helping us find new ways to meet clear demand between potential audiences clamoring for more Bedlam and artists clamoring for support by creating new connections between the two.

The timing is right for EmcArts to help us gain unprecedented clarity in what has remained our most vexing challenge in our company's 20 years: how to understand, articulate, and anchor the role of and our relationship to individual artists in the Bedlam Universe. Building on past Bedlam practices, our dedicated artists are poised to take a great leap forward to encompass the flexibility and freedom of a network of collaborative freelance artists, while preserving and expanding on the creative aspects of a traditional repertory theatre company. Participation in the EmcArts Innovation Lab will provide incubation and clarification for the language, ideology, and methodology which may be encompassed by this organizational and artistic restructuring.

## **INSTITUTION: Brooklyn Arts Exchange (BAX) | Brooklyn, NY**

**TYPE: Performing Arts Center**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The BAX Between challenges underlying assumptions about linking educational and artistic programs. It is an opportunity to question deeply what we have held to be true – that it is mutually beneficial for both young (student) artists and professional artists to learn, create and be fostered by the same organization in a shared artistic home. We have made the assumption that because our building houses both educational and artistic programming, the benefits of both groups are obvious and transparent. By not critically questioning our assumptions, however, we may be missing opportunities to fully realize our potential.

This project innovates by:

- Distinct breaks from past practices – a new commitment to rigorous analysis and testing. Historically, we think, plan and produce with an emphasis on produce.
- Interrogating our assumptions. We have taken it for granted that young and professional artists benefit each other and that each group is aware of these benefits.

- Creating value for young artists, professional artists and artist supporters (parents, donors) outlined in detail on page 3.

The scope of these activities include:

- Analyzing three strong existing programs
- Piloting one or two programs based on our findings
- Cultivating partnerships between artist Services and Education departments.
- Examining our physical space for its potential to cultivate The BAX Between.

This project addresses an urgent, well-timed issue fundamental to our mission. We've identified the challenge, built our capacity, and are ready to work outside our organizational comfort zone to create a new expression of our mission.

## **INSTITUTION: California Shakespeare Theatre / Intersection for the Arts | Berkeley, CA**

### **TYPE: Theatre**

#### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Cal Shakes seeks to radically shift who participates in theatre-making at our organization and how they participate. Building on community-based experiments of The Triangle Lab (Cal Shakes' long-term partnership with San Francisco's Intersection for the Arts) we will develop new models that expand and diversify who participates in theatre-making – then prototype and replicate successful models with the goal of integrating them into core Cal Shakes programs and operations.

This initiative is spurred both by our commitment to making theatre that is relevant and accessible to everyone, and in response to the shifts in demographics and technology that are reshaping the cultural landscape. We need to respond to the evolving cultural context, in which people desire to engage in art-making as active participants, and do this while embracing the full diversity of the san Francisco Bay Area.

Such outreach by cultural organizations is often distinct from core programming. We are breaking from that practice in the belief that this shift is not only the right thing to do from the perspectives of our artistic and education program quality, but that it makes good business sense as well. We believe that Cal Shakes plays a unique role as a Theatre nimble enough to experiment with how we produce our work and with whom, and to be responsive to what we discover, while at the same time being a regional theatre of consequence with the resources and reputation to influence the field.

## **INSTITUTION: Dallas Theater Center | Dallas, TX**

### **TYPE: Theatre**

#### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The Neighborhood Initiative is a three-year, interdepartmental, multifaceted effort to increase audience diversity through deep-rooted community engagement with two distinctly different, under-represented Dallas neighborhoods. The project will study the efficacy of community-based engagement on growing and diversifying our audience.

Research for The Neighborhood Initiative began in June 2012 with a zip code study of current ticket buyers, to determine current audience. With this data, a process is underway to identify and work with two communities: one that looks exactly like DTC's current audience but is geographically distant (northern suburban zip code); the other that looks dissimilar to its current audience, but is within an urban geographic (socio-economically diverse zip code). Once identified, DTC will develop a uniquely-tailored engagement plan with each community, using its current programs and testing new strategies and marketing approaches developed in consultation with local partners, to cultivate relationships and increase participation. Impact data



will be analyzed and project findings made available to arts organizations seeking diversity and audience growth.

The Neighborhood Initiative is a radical shift from the assumption that interest and affordability are the primary barriers to diversifying and growing audiences. Instead, it assumes that the barriers are unknown, and seeks to uncover and address them. It is a targeted and measured approach to a long-standing and critical problem, providing community feedback, demographic information and impact data. This ability to measure and assess impact with new audiences will shed new light on how DTC creates public value and will profoundly influence both policy and practice.

**INSTITUTION: Dixon Place | New York, NY**

**TYPE: Theatre**

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The purpose of Operation Adaptation is to develop new strategies that will help Dixon Place (DP) continue to provide vital performance opportunities to the downtown New York arts community while securing our financial and organizational health and stability. After 23 years as a grassroots service organization based in Founder Ellie Covan's living room, we moved into our beautiful, professional space on Chrystie Street. We have more than doubled our programming and our budget, but are still experiencing growing pains as we navigate how our founding mission best translates in the new space. We are at a crossroads: can we continue to successfully serve artists by booking 10-15 shows a week with a heavy focus on works-in-progress? Should we change our programming structure, and if we do, will we be financially stable? Or is there a way to involve our artists more significantly in our current organizational structure? Can we break down the "us vs. them" barrier and help them to help us on an organizational level? Our Innovation Lab project would allow us the resources and time to stop and examine these questions, testing both theoretical and practical steps that could distance us from established habits and patterns, and set us on the path to most effectively serve our artists and audiences.

**INSTITUTION: Everett | Providence, RI**

**TYPE: Theater / School**

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Everett will create the BRAINSTORM LAB, which will address a challenge we face and an opportunity. The challenge is to effectively leverage the knowledge gained, and the relationships fostered, during the three-year development of BRAIN STORM, Everett's latest multimedia theater production inspired by current neuroscientific research. The opportunity is that Nathan Bishop Middle School is seeking Everett's help in addressing an achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students, and behavioral problems stemming from issues related to poverty. At our school, Everett has a long track record of working with low-income and disadvantaged students who face impediments to learning. Many current Everett company members have faced similar challenges and bring their personal experiences to this work. The BRAINSTORM LAB will bring together Everett's artists, experts in brain-related fields from Brown University, and educators from Nathan Bishop Middle School, to design arts education programs informed by science. The participants will meet regularly to combine our areas of expertise towards the goal of improving student engagement and achievement. Everett will bring their innovative educational techniques and twenty-two years of experience working with low-income youth; scientists, doctors and therapists will bring the latest insights into the brain and the ways we learn; and educators will give us a complete picture of the Nathan Bishop students and their needs. The curriculum ideas we devise will be tested on students at Everett's school as well as on a test group at Nathan Bishop. The BRAINSTORM LAB's findings have potential to reach well beyond our target school.

## **INSTITUTION: FirstWorks | Providence, RI**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

FirstWorks presents world-class performing arts and arts learning programs in venues throughout Providence and Rhode Island that build the cultural, educational, and economic vitality of our community. Through the Community Co-Creation (working title) program, FirstWorks aims to change the culture of arts literacy and participation in our state by radically shifting our program model to involve the community as co-creators—active participants in the creation of new works. While Providence is home to a robust and dynamic arts community, a significant portion of the local population still lacks access to sufficient opportunities for gaining arts literacy. FirstWorks' new initiative to include community voices in the creative process will challenge traditional artist/audience and presenter/artist relationships. Programming efforts will be shaped around structured interactions between artists and the community that guide the creative process for a commissioned performance piece, both in face-to-face settings and aided by a web portal. The portal will be designed for presentation of content generated by the artists and for artist-constituent exchange via live-streaming, podcasts, blogging, and video. Expanded programming outside of traditional venues will encourage the contribution of ideas as part of incubating world premiere performances. These strategies will ultimately expand audiences for FirstWorks' offerings throughout the year and have implications for replications in similar communities throughout the country. For the first time, the creation of "first works" will be part of our annual season, generating first-hand experiences and direct audience input that in turn creates engaged, invested, and appreciative audiences, whose arts experience will begin well before a performance and last long after.

## **INSTITUTION: Hill Dance Academy Theatre | Pittsburgh, PA**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Bodaciously Bold seeks to increase opportunities, for children, to perform and experience the artistry of dance as dancers/performers. The scope of the project activities includes the following areas that are required of companies to move to performance and production:

- Develop the discipline of dancing as an ensemble and what it means to perform repertoire pieces as a pre-professional company
- Expose students to a resident dance artist who will set an original piece based on a selected Black children's book such as Debbie Allen's "Dancing in the Wings" or Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters by Joe Steptoe
- Developing the discipline and business of dance or what is known in dance as Business Show
- Knowledge of the artistic challenges of working together as one in a company
- Developing collaboration with choreography
- Creating a Culture for Dance Artistry with children, youth and teens

It is hard for HDAT to believe that setting high expectations for children, youth and teens or believing that children, youth and teens can indeed create extraordinary dance artistry with the appropriate support and development is innovation. However, it is and our hunches lead us to what is occurring or not occurring in educational settings. HDAT sees its organizational and arts education philosophy as one that uses the arts to enable creativity, growth, out of the box thinking, and innovation or new ways of helping students to be transformative or push the envelopes with new ideas and ways of seeing the arts as providing careers that are full of 21st century possibilities.



## **INSTITUTION: Jazz St. Louis | St. Louis, MO**

**TYPE: Jazz**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Jazz St. Louis has taken a plunge into completely new territory: Phil Dunlap, Jazz St. Louis Director of Education, in collaboration with a number of national and regional educators, has developed a jazz curriculum, Jazz Concepts for the Young Beginner (JCYB), designed to educate students in the general music classroom. This is unlike anything we've ever done, and it perfectly aligns with EmcArts's definition of organizational innovation, as it 1) has resulted in a shift in our underlying assumptions about the advancing age of jazz audiences, 2) is completely different, and substantially weightier than any of our existing education programs, and 3) provides a brand new pathway for us to create public value by effectively augmenting the education of our students and widening the knowledge base—and thereby the future audience—of jazz. We would like to combine this curriculum with an interactive, online component; and this is where we hope to receive guidance from the EmcArts innovation lab. We have created a 12-lesson, hard-copy curriculum and have entertained proposals from several web development companies willing to create the interactive, online component for this. But we are unsure exactly how the curriculum material can most effectively be taught in the classroom and how the in-class learning should be augmented with the interactive, online component. Essentially, what is the most effective way for the two elements to work together? Ultimately, we would like this innovation lab to help us fully prototype one (1) lesson plan from our curriculum that can be used to illustrate the capacity of this new education tool.

## **INSTITUTION: Kelly Strayhorn Theatre | Pittsburgh, PA**

**TYPE: Performing Arts Center**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

#### **Sync the Community with Technology**

We need to change the way we communicate with our audiences, replacing one-way communication based in print and social media with a new approach that is participatory—in which we're hearing more from our audiences (not only demographic and traditional marketing data, but their responses to our programming). We envision new ways to use smartphone technology and social media to increase connectivity between artists and audiences, while establishing long-term relationships that will boost brand loyalty and contributions.

#### **Artists are doing it.**

Contemporary artists use technology and social media more than ever to create artwork. Increasingly, everything from video projection, live feeds, texting, social media apps, and more, are part of artistic expression. Our commitment to emerging contemporary artists centers us squarely in this world of art, design, and social media.

#### **Audiences are doing it too.**

We are living in what economist Nilofer Merchant calls the "social era." There is lots of sharing happening (Pinterest, Twitter, Tumblr, Vimeo, YouTube, Facebook). We have profiles with several of these platforms, as do the artists we work with and our staff. We know our audience is overwhelmingly young and creative (based on survey comments and social media posts). In a recent article, a dance critic referred to our audience as "effortlessly chic and mostly young."<sup>1</sup> We imagine that this creative group has ideas about programming—more than they will share on a survey card.

## **INSTITUTION: Labyrinth Theater Company | New York, NY**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Labyrinth Theater Company requests support from the Innovation Lab to help us transition to a new form of artistic leadership. After 21 years of collective decision-making in keeping with our ensemble structure, it has become clear that we must strengthen our leadership during a time of expansion. Having grown to 137

members, Labyrinth recognizes the need for a more unified and effective artistic voice, not to dictate our vision, but to funnel and amplify the many voices and perspectives that already exist. The main challenge is to institute this change without sacrificing the collaborative community and sense of artist ownership at the heart of who we are. We are a community of artists, many of whom have worked together for years, who experience Labyrinth as their artistic home. There is an inherent sense of trust and safety—writers can flesh out new works and actors can try their hands at playwriting, while receiving honest feedback in a nurturing environment. It is crucial that this sense of community remain Labyrinth’s focal point. We are making a conscious choice to break from previous practice by seeking a single artistic leader. This innovation results from a partially completed shift in underlying attitudes about collective leadership that began several years ago with the decision to bring on, for the first time, a professional, nonmember Managing Director. This process creates public value for other theaters, as well as the nonprofit community more generally, as we hammer out how to balance artistic leadership and community values.

**INSTITUTION: On the Boards | Seattle, WA**

**TYPE: Performing Arts Center**

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

On the Boards (OtB) is excited to increase artistic programming capacity through the development of an Artistic Excellence Fund that uses working capital to fund artistic projects. We currently envision an Artistic Excellence Fund of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 that could be spent down over a period of five to ten years, allowing us to pursue organization-defining programming and take advantage of opportunities that would push us beyond our current budget constraints. This new model is a structure that is particularly suited for OtB because it allows us to: 1) grow without jeopardizing the stability of the organization; 2) raise new funds over a longer period of time using our very successful artistic track record in aggregate, rather than focusing on project-specific funding; 3) use the capitalization business model that we are familiar with and that we know we can manage and administer; and 4) invest more in art of a higher quality and impact and be responsive to new artistic opportunities as they arise. This fundamental change in approach allows us to address our core product (art) by adopting techniques that have successfully propelled the other aspects of our organization. We are interested to explore how to revamp a model that works for concrete management issues so that it also works for the subjective and shifting needs of artists and programs. We know the process will allow us to create new tools and new ways to fundraise, manage our budgets and evaluate our artistic programming goals.

**INSTITUTION: Palo Alto Children’s Theatre | Palo Alto, CA**

**TYPE: Theatre**

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

For over 30 years the Palo Alto Children’s Theatre has partnered with Palo Alto schools to bring theatre education to students in grades 3-5. School populations in Palo Alto are at historic levels, and in the decade to come the population is expected to be the highest ever. This presents us with both a challenge and an opportunity. Our goal is to adapt the Outreach program in ways that will promote an expansion of the participant base, especially in underserved middle school populations, without a substantial increase in resources. This matter takes on a greater urgency in light of the suicide cluster that took place in Palo Alto between 2009 and 2010. Strengthening its commitment to teen wellness, the City of Palo Alto instituted Project Safety Net, a collaboration between various community organizations, of which the Children’s Theatre’s Teen Arts Council is a part. Our hope is that the Teen Arts Council will mobilize to participate in Outreach 2.0 by producing shows that tour to area middle schools. As part of this undertaking, we seek to integrate traditional performance methodologies with new technologies in way that will reach adolescent audiences in fresh and inventive ways. Maintaining relevance will lead to increased demand from schools, a more diverse participant base and program sustainability for decades to come. Outreach 2.0 will model the most progressive approaches to interdisciplinary education, and demonstrate to participants the way in which all aspects of learning can contribute to the process of performance creation.

## **INSTITUTION: Perseverance Theatre | Douglas, AK**

**TYPE: Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Perseverance Theatre proposes to develop a new artistic company as part of the theatre's Fourth Decade reinvention plan. Alaska is remote from centers where most professional American theatre artists train and reside, and is also a unique place whose stories and audiences can best be understood only after spending some time here. To be a theatre about our place, PT seeks to develop and employ artists, especially actors, who live in and know Alaska. We consider developing these artists to be mission driven work just as creating productions or establishing audiences. In the past, PT has employed artists part time and seasonally. As the Fourth Decade Plan seeks to develop added audiences for PT through performances in multiple locations in Alaska, we believe that our greater reach will create a more economically capable theatre, but which relies on artists to divide time between Anchorage and Juneau. We seek to develop an artistic company with a greater commitment to the theatre, and a greater commitment from the theatre, who can work regularly on productions and other activities across the state. The end result will be an artistic company that is, like our mission, by and for Alaska. We believe that this project is an adaptive challenge based on a shift in the underlying assumptions that PT can serve an audience outside of the City of Juneau regularly, and that doing so makes regular professionalized work for theatre artists economically possible in Alaska where it has not been before.

## **INSTITUTION: Quick Center / Fairfield University | Fairfield, CT**

**TYPE: Education / Performing Arts Center**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Our strategic innovation is to partner with faculty to develop educational content for performances hosted at the Quick Center. This shift in practice will allow us to create a new model for connecting audiences to performances, meeting the changing needs of artists and audience:

1. Presentation: Providing programming of the highest artistic integrity
  - Offer multiple platforms for the exploration of important issues
  - Artistically celebrate the cultures contributing to the American experience
2. Education: Serving on and off campus populations as a place for shared learning
  - Fulfill mission to develop the intellectual potential of students and life-long learners
  - Reach out to those with limited access to the arts
  - Use diverse platforms, live and digital, to deepen audience engagement with artists and ideas
3. Innovation: Becoming a catalyst for ongoing artistic development
  - Commission new works
  - Create a new residency model to serve both artistic and education needs and support outreach to underserved populations
  - Encourage deeper audience interaction with art

The stability and expertise of faculty and the Quick Center staff are critical assets, and the University mission requires us to consider innovative ways to engage and promote the performing arts. We have tremendous freedom and flexibility in programming, but this requires careful stewardship and a long-term vision of the changing role of the performing arts in America.

## **INSTITUTION: The New Group | New York, NY**

**TYPE: Musical Theatre**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The New Group is an established off-Broadway theatre that annually produces 3 mainstage productions alongside theatre education and play development programs, and a series of platforms for discourse and presentation at our current home in Theatre Row where we rent out offices and the Acorn theatre. We are in the process of creating a long-term strategy toward owning our own space with the guidance of an outside consultant and have identified 6 initiatives to move us closer to our ambitions. Our first plan is to establish a musical theatre development program that would commission new work and hold workshops with a view to development for our main stage season or that of another theatre. Although we have successfully produced 2 musicals to high acclaim – ‘Avenue Q’ and ‘The Kid’- and will be producing a new musical *Bunty Berman Presents...* in 2013, we have been challenged by the prohibitive costs of mounting full scale musicals on a regular basis. Our play development program, New Group/New Works, is long established as a way to nurture the next generation of playwrights and we believe we can do the same through a musical theatre development program. This initiative would ultimately introduce a fourth show to each season (another desired initiative) and that helps sales revenue. The development of new musicals also introduces a different audience to The New Group, which is constantly part of our strategy to expand our audience and reach more people.

## **INSTITUTION: Trisha Brown Company | New York, NY**

**TYPE: Dance**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Trisha Brown, the most prominent woman choreographer of our time, has completed her last new work, which will premiere at BAM on January 30, 2013. Brown is committed to continuing the Company beyond her tenure in a way not previously achieved by other dance companies, a testament to Brown’s nature as an explorer and innovator. Trisha Brown Dance Company (TBDC) Board and key stakeholders recognize that Brown’s work maintains an original and opportune place at the intersection of dance, performance, and visual art. Additionally, the dance field needs a viable model to permanently institutionalize dance works as masterworks within the arts canon.

Through the EmcArts Innovation Lab, TBDC seeks a supported process of excavation and a forum for in-depth analysis and brainstorming around innovative solutions to our position. We will incorporate the participation of the Lab consultant, who will assist us in more readily determining the guiding principles, initial activities, and flexible format with which we will operate into the future. TBDC aspires to reinvent its organizational structure and programming, creating a new and vibrant pathway to our mission, while also providing ideas and information for other dance artists and companies who face legacy issues and hope to remain viable beyond the involvement of their Artistic Director. Our aim: to create and share a new organizational model for extending the lifetime, impact, and understanding of Brown’s work – one that departs from the current, codified legacy model – and which implements new forays into creative development with key partners.

## **INSTITUTION: The Valley Performing Arts Center | Providence, RI**

**TYPE: Education / Performing Arts Center**

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The Valley Performing Arts Center proposes Teaching for Tomorrow, a collaboratively designed and tested teacher training program that increases access to the performing arts for higher education and public schools to encourage solutions to California’s crisis in arts education.

Despite No Child Left Behind’s definition of Arts as core curriculum, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the nation’s second largest district, has decimated arts programming and arts educator positions. Furthermore, a glaring omission in California’s 1970 teacher licensing law allows teachers who may be wholly untrained in arts disciplines to be responsible for delivering specialized arts instruction.

The Center is uniquely positioned to use the performing arts to change how these educators are trained. Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, the state's largest teacher credentialing institution, the Center envisions enriching teacher training programs with performing arts experiences and arts integration strategies. Engaging future educators with the arts, perhaps through theater-based service learning programs, is an untested approach to providing teachers and teaching artists with experiences and skills that will enhance their ability to deliver standards-based curriculum and support student achievement in diverse subject areas.

The Center seeks new University-based partnerships to overcome adaptive challenges in organizational and enrollment systems and with local LAUSD secondary schools to test experimental classroom programs. Networking creative and academic resources in new programs that make the performing arts relevant at the student teacher level will support the Center's mission to serve the educational and professional needs of the campus and community.

**INSTITUTION: Xilin | Naperville, IL**  
**TYPE: Asian Performing Arts Center**

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

After experiencing the same crisis twice within a small three year period, Xilin realized it needed to create and implement an innovative and adaptive internal structure change. Within three years of being hired, its first artistic director decided to exit Xilin and leverage the programs' strong reputation to start his own dance business. The program suffered as it then realized its dependence on a single individual for its arts program. Xilin found itself in the same position only three years later. As a result, the leadership team accepted what it already new; Xilin needed to further develop and implement a non-traditional model if it expected to remain relevant and compete for resource.

This innovation is vital to the health of the Xilin Arts Center to ensure the community will enjoy and learn from multiple forms of art. Xilin wants to shift from a teacher structural model to a model that separates the responsibilities into two departments that collaborate and work as a team. This grant will help Xilin to achieve sufficient organizational consensus for the implementation of this genuinely far-reaching structural change. As a result, Xilin will develop significantly new adaptive capacities and strategies and remain artistically vital, competitive and valued by the communities Xilin serves.

**INSTITUTION: Z Space | San Francisco, CA**  
**TYPE: Performing Arts Center**

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Since its inception, Z Space has been an artist-centered organization. For nearly 20 years, Z Space has been steadfastly focused on the development of artist and artistic work over production of work, in order provide the artist the absolute flexibility necessary to create the work s/he intended to create in its fullest and truest form. We have been able to do this by funneling completed or nearly completed work to other partner organizations, mounting occasional productions in small houses for limited runs and cultivating a small but loyal group of new work enthusiasts who are willing to wait until the work is fully baked. Now that Z Space has its own theatre, we need to discover its fullest potential and not only fulfill our mission to help artists, but bring in an audience for them as well. After all, theatre as an art form ultimately needs an audience to be complete.

While maintaining our core value to provide time and space for truly unfettered artistic process as the method for generating the best and most impactful work, we are now turning outward and engaging a community to be bettered and impacted by that work. As we are evolving, we will be innovative.

We will shift our underlying assumptions by focusing on audience, we will change what we are doing fundamentally from previous practices, and we will provide a new pathway to creating public value in that we are increasing the demand for theatre and engaging new audiences.