

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Farmington

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

185322-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Sonia Plumb Dance Company

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

061304412

Principal Contact Name

Sonia Plumb

Title

Artistic Director

Email

sonia@soniaplumbdance.org

Phone

(860) 508-9082

Address

20 Church Street Mezzanine
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<https://www.soniaplumbdance.org/>

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

Amount requested this application

\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Our mission is to enrich and educate the community through innovative modern dance. We fulfill our mission with performances, classes, workshops, community outreach, arts integration and collaborations with artists, educators and community investors. Our vision is to awaken diverse audiences to a transformative perspective of our world by providing audiences of all cultures, ages, abilities and socio-economic backgrounds opportunities to learn, appreciate and incorporate dance in their lives.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Since its inception in 1990, SPDC been on the "move" exciting audiences throughout New England. Our collaborations with musicians, composers, videographers, poets, professors and puppeteers have reached thousands of audiences, young in age, heart and spirit. From the stage to the classroom to the park to the library we inspire.

In 2000, Artistic Director Sonia Plumb made the choice to take a ten-year hiatus to raise her son and teach. In 2011, she returned to the rigors of directing and managing a professional dance company. Working with board members, donors and community partners, she reorganized SPDC to help grow its infrastructure, build greater sustainability, and ensure its long-term future. Since its reorganization, SPDC has served more than 8,000 constituents throughout Greater Hartford and the Northeast. Highlights include:

2012: Joined the Hartford Performs roster of vetted artists to bring arts integration and arts access programming into Hartford Public Schools.

2015: Was one of nine artists to receive a Community Legacy Project award for Arts Integration Programming in underserved communities.

2016: Received a three-year cornerstone grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for the Apprentice Training Program to provide work-study opportunities for underserved, typically minority, high school graduates who could not afford to attend a four year dance degree program.

January 2020: Received a three year grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to the launch the School of Sonia Plumb Dance by providing 23 scholarships for Hartford youth to receive dance training in order to grow and retain Hartford talent.

February 2020: Attended the Connecticut Office of the Arts Equity and Inclusion workshops to better understand racial inequalities develop relationships with diverse communities to implement successful programming.

July 2020: Was one of the first dance companies in the nation to premiere a new dance in-person during the pandemic. Successfully and safely premiered Dance of da Vinci 2.0 at the Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, CT.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

Participants include students, ticket buyers and virtual attendees in a typical year.

24.5%/Black/African American/1500

24.5%/Latino/1500

8%/Asian/500

35%/Caucasian/2000

Native American

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

7%/Other/250 (Middle-Eastern, Native American, Indian)

Describe your organization's governance.

The Board of Directors meets quarterly. During the pandemic we lost three board members due to hardship and time constraints and gained two. 75% of the Board donates financially. Attendance for the past year: May (2020), 3/5, June 4/5, August 3/5, September 3/4, November 3/4, December 3/4, January 3/4, March 3/4, and April (2021) 3/4.

The Board was instrumental in guiding us through #BlackLivesMatter, and finding an Executive Director. We interviewed ten applicants over twelve months.

Describe the diversity of your board.

The Board is presently 75% minority and 50/50 female/male. Our Board presidents have been African American men for the last nine years. The rest of the board includes an African American woman and Indian man and Caucasian woman. We are in the process of looking for a Latino as much of the population we serve is Latinx. Our Advisory Board includes one Caucasian. One Advisory Board recently moved up to full Board Member.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

100% of the Board makes personal financial contributions.

Project Name

Curving Into the Light

Project Description

Curving Into the Light is a project that will bring the community from the darkness and into the light. The idea began in the Spring of 2020 during a virtual event between Cuatro Puntos, Plumb and composer Ameen Mokdad.

Life takes curves, and one can follow the trajectory shallow or wide, straight or not. It is how one chooses to take these curves that informs the next decision, outcome.

Workshops, classes and performance excerpts will take place in six Hartford neighborhood parks throughout the Summer and culminate in the premiere at Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington. Workshops and classes will be geared towards movers of all levels in order to be as inclusive as possible. The performances and workshops will be held outside as much as possible, in deference and respect to the opening up from the COVID isolation period, a symbol for human isolation. The 25-minute dance will include 7 professional dancers, one Apprentice and 2 Junior Company members and the musicians.

Total estimated project budget

\$47,425.00

Project start/opening

07/08/2021

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

Project end/closing

09/17/2021

Project venue

Hill-Stead Museum

Project town

Farmington and Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Free classes geared towards families will be held Thursdays at 4:00pm during the summer in six different Hartford Neighborhood parks (Goodwin, Pope, Highland, Keney, Colt and Elizabeth). The classes are followed by a free performance by SPDC including excerpts from Curving Into the Light. Each event includes a Q&A. Expected attendance for each is between 50-100 for a total of 600.

Tickets for the Hill-Stead premier are: \$20 student, \$50 senior, \$65 adult. Expected attendance = 275.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Leverage combined efforts between SPDC, Hill-Stead, Cuatro Puntos:

Press releases and publicity photos to all local, regional, national and industry media outlets, online calendars and blogs. 100+ media outlets.

Email & Social Media Tactics: 5-6 paid and organic posts weekly (text, photos and videos) on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. Combined social media base includes 20,000+ fans

Showpage on websites; eblast to 20,000+, early access to ticket sales for donors/subscribers.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

\$1,250 Marketing

\$2,500 Choreographer

\$5,000 Dancers

\$1,250 Musicians

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts logo will be on all SPDC website pages associated with the project, email blasts, images for marketing and social media.

The Roberts Foundation will be acknowledged in press releases, email blasts and pre-performance announcements.

The Roberts Foundation logo and information will be shared across all collaborating organizations' websites, FaceBook and Instagram.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

- **high caliber** of the artists;
- It is **creative leadership**, capacity for collaboration and continued relevance of artistic content;
- It is Artistic Director Sonia Plumb's **deep commitment** to exploring the humanities content of each new project with robust education and outreach
- It is SPDC's sheer will in sustaining itself for nearly three decades, by building a **reputation** based on work described as "mystical, electrifying, sensuous and an aesthetic adventure," and "a perfect example of passion meets purpose."
- It is its **unique organizational structure** that allows SPDC to reach its audiences onstage, in the studio, in the classroom, and in the community, garnering recognition that "the Company endures in part because it is so community--oriented."
- It is its **strategy to infuse** classrooms with dance through award-winning arts integration programs that School principals describe as "right on target," "bringing awareness to social issues" and "accurate and age appropriate."

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

High caliber dancers and artists help promote the art form of dance while bringing greater experiential value to audiences. Artists with experience as teachers and performances work efficiently and are an inspiration while bringing value.

Collaborations bring together many communities across cultural, socio-economic and artistic divides. Working with our friends and neighbors in the Hartford parks, Hartford communities and Farmington valley demonstrate to all as well as the organization the value of working together.

Using dance as a healing tool aligns with our humanities content.

Our reputation for excellence and perseverance inspires audiences to endure, continue to create and connect to communities one might not normally work and play with to create a better understanding of our world.

Our reputation for high quality work transfers to safety for both audience, participant and dancer alike. To date, all of our staff and artists are healthy.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

Audiences and the community together will benefit from the healing process of experiencing dance physically, emotionally, socially and culturally.

Students and families have been locked inside all winter, working and learning virtually, often isolated from friends and teachers in a physical space. Professional dancers have had limited opportunities to perform, teach and share their craft. Most of us have been and continue to be on extended unemployment. Many dancers have had little to no contact with their colleagues until recently. We are all coming out of isolation. Numerous studies have shown that anxiety and depression are results of this isolation. The healing potential of the Curving Into the Light project will cross pollinate from dancer to student to audience to musician to community.

Participants will dance in the fresh air together. They will see dance in the fresh air together. They will be in the fresh air and sunlight together. All safe.

How will this project be evaluated?

Success measured in terms of engagement, diversity and audience feedback. Surveys are prepared by Anita Baker of EvaluationServices. She did many of them for us gratis over the past year.

- Demographic tracking through registrations and ticket sales by age, ethnicity, locale/region, gender, etc.
- Qualitative feedback: follow up survey with questions such as: Would you attend another performance of Sonia Plumb Dance Company? Would you be interested in learning more about Sonia Plumb Dance Company? Would you recommend performances to your friends? How did the workshop/classes bring you and your family together?

Internal Evaluation will include:

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

Attendance at pre- and post- show events

- Attendance at performances
- Track increased numbers of followers on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Trace increased Web traffic
- Track increased number of email subscribers
- Track increased donations

Cover letter

- [Signed-cover-letter-Roberts.pdf](#)

Board list

- [Board-List-As-of-May-3-2021.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [IRS-Determination-Letter-2020.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [Statement-of-Financial-Position-May-3-2021-Statement-of-Financial-Position.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [Budget-FY-2019.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [FY-2020-Operating-Budget-with-Comparison.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [StatementofFinancialPositionSummary-2.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [Curving-Into-the-Light.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 115

- [SPDCStrategic-Plan-copy.pdf](#)

Grant Report

- [Sonia-Plumb-Dance-Company-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [Survey-Sonia-Plumb-Dance-Company.da-Vinci-event-survey.top-line-results.v1.pdf](#)
- [Cuatro-Puntos-and-Kevin-Bishop.pdf](#)
- [Sonia-Resume-2021.pdf](#)

This has been a challenging year, but one of many, many gifts as well.

We secured continued funding, and more than expected from COA, DECD, HFPG and GHAC. All acknowledging the importance and value of our work in the community.

We secured an EIDL loan because most of our artists are contract workers and PPP did not qualify for them.

We recently secured a bookkeeper knowledgeable in the non-profit world. Together, we are still working to better categorize and track expenses and revenue. Our apologies for slight discrepancies.

Our Artistic Director has been on unemployment since January as there has been no revenue stream that would offset the cost to produce, teach and perform.

We have received international recognition and followers through our social media platforms and virtual events.

We are grateful for the coming opportunities to teach, perform and be with the community again after a very long winter.

We normally create an Annual Report to share our wonderful work.

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes