

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 171

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?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

115109-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

960 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<https://soniaplumbdance.org/>

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Amount requested this application

\$10,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Our mission: ***To enrich and educate the community through innovative modern dance.*** We fulfill our mission through performances, classes, workshops, community outreach, arts integration residencies and collaborations with musicians and composers, artists and actors, puppeteers, poets and educators. SPDC is known for reaching beyond the arts community with a diverse repertoire that often reflects upon larger societal issues in order to create a transformative perspective of the world.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

SPDC annually (non-pandemic) serves more than 7,500 audiences of all ages, abilities, cultural, societal and economic backgrounds. From the inner cities of Greater Hartford to small towns throughout New England, to international venues, our programs inspire and educate in the classroom, in the community and on the stage.

Programs: Sonia Plumb Dance Company has four primary program areas: Performance, Training, Arts Education and Community Outreach.

Performances: Our season includes two main-stage performances that feature the Company's high caliber, innovative work. Throughout the rest of the year the Company tours to a variety of venues including: colleges, festivals and other theaters.

Arts Integration and Arts Access: From November through May we bring our arts integration residencies for grades K-8 and grades 9-12 and student matinees, We partner with local colleges and universities engaging young adults connecting contemporary dance to studies such as the humanities, mythology, privacy and privacy laws, science and much more.

Apprentice Training: In 2016 we implemented our Apprentice Training Program for talented high school graduates who wish to pursue a career in dance but cannot afford to attend a traditional four-year college degree program. Apprentices rehearse, teach and perform alongside Company members, learning dance and life skills along the way. Our graduates have gone on to teach and perform with a variety of dance companies and studios throughout Connecticut and beyond.

Community Outreach: We offer a multitude of programs (both free and low-cost) such as mini-performances, open rehearsals, lectures, webinars and Q&A's with local professors and library talks that link our performance work.

Classes for ages 4 to 104+: We are the only dance company in Connecticut to offer a formal training program in modern dance. Scholarships are given to disadvantaged Hartford students ages 6-16 to participate in the training program.

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

50% of the people we serve are minority – a majority through our work with Hartford Performs, Capital Community College, Dance in the Parks, Apprenticeship training and classes

50% children

25% Adults

25% Senior

75% in State

20% out of state

5% international

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Describe your organization's governance.

The Board meets every six months. During the pandemic we have been meeting virtually. 75% are always in attendance. Since we last applied we lost three board members and gained three. Claude Mayo went from Vice President to President. Generally, 100% of our Board makes personal financial contributions. During the pandemic we have let this requirement go in a response to financial hardships. At this time, 80% of the Board contributes financial and the other provide valuable in-kind services.

Describe the diversity of your board.

The SPDC Board has been minority led since 2012. We take great effort to represent the community we serve. Our Board President, Claude Mayo is African-American male and has been on the Board for seven years. Our other Board members include Kim Stroud, African-American female (1) and former principal dancer with Martha Graham, white Caucasian male (1), white Caucasian female (2) and advisory board Latino female (1), Asian female (1).

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

Generally, 100% of our Board makes personal financial contributions. During the pandemic we have let this requirement go in a response to financial hardships. At this time, 80% of the Board contributes financial and the other provide valuable in-kind services. Advisory Board Members are not required to donate funds. They are on the Advisory to provide guidance and insight as their time allows.

Project Name

The Pearl - A multimedia dance project celebrating women

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

Yes

Will the artists associated with this project be financially compensated?

Yes

Project Description

Photographer Rob Goldman and choreographer Sonia Plumb create and present "The Pearl" – a poetic interweaving of photography and choreography that celebrates women while shining a light on the personal, interpersonal and collective suffering brought on by social expectations, constructs and taboos, and the joy and freedom of transcending them.

The live performance offers dancers of all shapes, ages, ethnicities, sizes and sexual orientation to share aspects of their real life struggles of their conditioned selves versus their true nature. The piece is designed to provoke challenging dialogue by boldly confronting the destructive power of commercially and culturally propagated norms.

Free educational forums and panel discussions are being offered to the community while dancers will engage with the community through social media platforms. A closing panel discussion will take place no later than one month after the final performance.

Total estimated project budget

\$39,565.00

Project start/opening

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05/10/2022

Project end/closing

06/21/2022

Project venue

Columns Dance and Wellness Centre

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

\$50 General Admission, \$45 Senior/Veteran, \$25 Student, \$20 College and Faculty with ID, \$5 OneDance (Capital Community College), \$45 Streaming. Free open rehearsals, workshops and webinars.

Capacity with social distancing is 30. 12 performances. Estimate attendees: 360. Comp tickets: 10.

- Two panel discussions with expert educators and local panelists;
- ASL interpreters for two Q&A's;
- Open captioning available;
- Pre-performance workshops
- Open rehearsals
- Social media on-line forums

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok)
- Press releases to local publications and networks (event listing and story pitch)
- Press releases to dance publications (event listing and story pitch)
- Printed posters installed in local establishments
- Email campaign
- Posts on appropriate arts and events websites
- Promotion by local arts organizations

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Funding will go directly to the dance artists, choreographer, photographic panels, and the photographer.

- Five diverse female dance artists will be paid \$25/hour for their time. This is a respectable earning wage of \$1,000 each.
- Choreographer, Sonia Plumb, will be paid \$50/hour to create solos for each dancer chosen.
- Rob Goldman will be paid \$50/hour to create photographs of each dancer and program digital projections.
- Large screens to project the digital images onto.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

- Website Landing Page for the event
- Shoutout at each event
- Promotional materials including printed, digital, social media and public relations
- "Sponsor Cards" on all streaming activities including performances, webinars and Q&A's
- "Sponsor Cards" on all recorded events for YouTube and Vimeo
- Banner/Poster for the performances at Columns Dance and Wellness Centre

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- Press releases
- E-blasts

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

SPDC has set the highest standards of artistic excellence in all of our work. With modern dance as our cornerstone, we often take risks with our art, creating new works that can often challenge our audiences and ourselves. We define artistic excellence as though provoking, inspiring and able to connect with the audience artistically, intellectually and emotionally. We achieve this with dance choreographed with skill, using artists who are accomplished in their craft. We seek not only to perform, but also to educate and inspire our audiences and the students we teach through our educational and community outreach programs.

Excellence is seen in action as: Adapting to the needs of our community both internally and externally. Maintaining caliber. Holding people responsible. Being empathetic and also firm. Recognizing and supporting talent. Acknowledging mistakes due to lack of knowledge and/or miscommunication. Pursuit of truth and integrity. Seeking answers when a problem arises.

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

Our mission includes the following deeply regarded thoughts and actions: Transformative perspective – seeking to collaborate – educating selves and others along the way – understanding – diverse perspectives. This project embodies ALL of these initiatives.

- We are helping to transform a perspective of women's beauty by collaborating with dance artists to create interwoven biographical performances, an open forum and an ongoing dialogue.
- We are working with experts in the fields of sociology and psychology to offer panel discussion in order to educate ourselves AND the community.
- We are probing issues of integrity and truth as dancers confront their "shadow selves" in projected photographs of themselves
- We are providing a diverse perspective by collaborating with dancers of ALL nationalities, backgrounds, sexual orientation, shapes, sizes, and abilities who have a story to tell. We are sharing their stories with both in-person and virtually.

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

The Pearl is designed to probe the challenges of what it takes remaining true to oneself in a world that is choking us with media insisted, preposterous expectations of beauty, success, relationships, etc. We are asking people to consider what it means to find "home" within themselves, to cultivate confidence and self-worth by staying true to their integrity? We aim to create a safe, bold arena for authentic expression as dancers and community members are empowered to share their struggles regarding appearance, behavior, and identity.

Following each performance, audience members will be invited to share personal stories of their experiences regarding the subject. Through this work we aim to soften judgment and build empathy as people realize our common human struggle to belong and to feel okay about ourselves, and to do so amidst the challenges of twenty-first century life.

How will this project be evaluated?

Effective data is intelligence with stories. We will gather information at the beginning of the project with opening dialogues, tracking views, comments and engagement on multiple social media platforms. A special FaceBook group page will be set up as well as a YouTube playlist on the SPDC channel. We will use LinkedIn, Instagram and TikTok. We will then compile this information in a final survey. In addition, our volunteer Anita Baker, from Evaluation Surveys, who has created many effective, multi faceted surveys for us in the past, will create a survey that includes both subjective, objective responses as well as standard DEI questions. This survey will be used at three key points during the project – the beginning, first panel discussion and final panel discussion.

Cover letter

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- [Cover-Letter-SPDC-Roberts-Foundation-The-Pearl-signed.pdf](#)

Board list

- [Board-List-2022.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [IRS-Determination-Letter-20201.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [IRS2020-SONIA-PLUMB-DANCE-COMPANY-INC_Form990-EZ.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [SPDC-COMPARISON-FINAL-OPERATING-FY-2021_.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [FY-2022-Operating-Budget.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [SPDC-Reports-for-1-31-22.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [Budget-Summary.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Does your organization have a formal policy or organizational commitment to ensure that visual artists are financially compensated?

No

Grant Report

- [Sonia-Plumb-Dance-Company-Grantee-Reporting-Form1.pdf](#)

Other materials?

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- [Rob-Goldman-Resume-Community-Engaged-Art-first.pdf](#)

During the pandemic is the first time SPDC experienced a deficit. In early 2021 we hired a bookkeeper and changed from cash to accrual. A majority of our expenses were for contracted artists and operating support. Thus we secured a larger IEDL and smaller PPP. Most of the PPP was forgiven. In September 2021 we were awarded an EIDL increase however due to back-log the funds have not arrived in our bank account. For the majority of 2021 AD Plumb was on pandemic unemployment in order to be able to pay artists, staff and operating expenses. In late December 2021 we received awards from CTHumanities and subsequently COA. Some of these funds are still being processed and/or the check is in the mail. We have numerous bookings through Hartford Performs which are presently underway. The School of SPDC, set to open in March 2020 is now open, an initiative supported by the HFPG. Numerous opportunities have opened up for us including Operating Support and Access grants through HFPG and GHAC.

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