

**Kronkosky Charitable Foundation**  
**Roundtable Discussion**

**Topic:** Dance

**Date:** Friday, June 11, 1999

**Prepared by:** Erich Dethmann

**Participants**

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Susan Beil Connally	SA Metropolitan Ballet	Executive Director
Josie Neal	CityDance/Danza Hispana	Executive Director
Rachel Puentes	Ballet Folklorico de Navarro	Director, Parents Association
Mario Trevi o	Ballet Folklorico de Navarro	Artistic Director
Peggy Hadley	Clogger's Showcase of San Antonio	Executive Director
Georgina Morgan	SA Dance Umbrella	Executive Director
Jorge Pimentil	Ballet Folklorico de Mexico	Executive Director
Nina Pimentil	Ballet Folklorico de Mexico	Executive Director
Doss Ramadoss	Natyanjali School of Indian Dance	Funding Director

**Foundation Staff**

Mark Carmona	Kronkosky Foundation	Grants Manager
Florence Macdaniel	Kronkosky Foundation	Communications Manager
Erich Dethmann	Kronkosky Foundation	Research Assistant (Intern)

**Overview**

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**San Antonio Metropolitan Ballet**

- *Mission:* Teaches local students ages 12 and up how to perform ballet. Aims to produce High Quality, Low Cost performances (many are free)
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* 2 major performances a year at the Carver; Have collaborated with SA Symphony, Youth Orchestras of SA, and the Children's Chorus; Rehearse at Private Dance Studio and Ballet Artes
- *Budget:* Operating Budget: typically \$70-80,000; this year (with the festival): over \$140,000.
- 14 students applied for scholarships and workshops throughout the country last year. All were accepted.
- Hosted a Festival (Regional Dance America) this past year that brought 23 groups to San Antonio.

**Danza Hispana**

- *Mission:* To preserve traditional Hispanic styles of dance from Mexico, Spain, and the United States. Performs Mexican and Spanish traditional dances.  
3 main goals and purposes:
  - 1) Preserves, Promotes, and Presents traditional Hispanic Culture — No mix of styles.
  - (2) Keeps dancers in San Antonio,
  - (3) Presents Free Performance on the South side, through Parks and Rec, at the Missions.

- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Have had successful and well-attended concerts at Mission San Jos (will not be able to perform there in coming year due to renovation)
- *Budget:* Operates under the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department. SA Parks and Rec pays salaries of Executive Director and two Artistic Directors, and provides sound and light at the performances.
- Employs Dancers from age 18- early 30's; Pays dancers for every performance.
- Membership in Dance Company is through audition; Dancers audition as needed, male dancers are accepted when they show up (not many men want to dance)

### **City Dance**

- *History:* Presenting Agency, 501 (c)3
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Presented 10 performing groups at the King William Fair.
- *Budget:* Annual budget is between \$75,000-\$100,000; 1/3 of budget through earned revenue.
- 75-100 people work for City Dance.

### **Ballet Folklorico De Navarro**

- *Mission:* Teaches Mexican dancing to over 100 students, ages 3 - adult
- *History:* In 25<sup>th</sup> year; Began at home — now based in large studio.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Big Recital at the Arneson Theatre; money must be raised to present this; Perform in a variety of venues, including: Parades, at Market Square and festivals.
- *Budget:* \$20/month for dancers to take lessons; Parents' Committee raises funds to keep the dance organization running.
- Students have performed locally and nationally — most recently in Louisiana.

### **Cloggers' Showcase of San Antonio**

- *History:* Formed in 1989 — the showcase is the only one of its kind in the U.S.; They hold Workshops in Waco, Houston, San Antonio; Member of the Texas Clogging Association
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* The Showcase is held at the Arneson River Theatre in May; 800-900 people participate; Includes music and 22 Clogging groups from all over the U.S. and several foreign countries.
- *Budget:* Budget for the festival is \$21-25,000; Dancers pay for everything, volunteer their time to clogging.
- Cloggers begin at age 3 and continue well into adulthood; One year's training is required to become proficient at clogging.
- The Showcase is a Family Affair and draws tourists as well. Have brought in Hotel/Motel revenue for the city.

### **San Antonio Dance Umbrella**

- *History:* A service organization formed in 1992 for all groups, studios, and individuals involved with dance; Membership base of 50 individuals and organizations. The organization sponsors the following programs:
  - Dance Partners Project
  - A Dance Artist in the school (Teaches a variety of dances such as Indian, Afro-Brazilian among others)
  - Works in Progress (Venue for other Artists to present something new)
  - SA Dances (now a part of the umbrella) Festival during the month of May (usually will have national or international dancer to "kick" it off.)
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Works in Progress - Performances are on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month at the Jump Start Theatre (40-50 people are in the audience for most of the performances); SA Dances - Adjudicated festival to ensure quality and balance of styles at Carver with continuous dance performances all over the city.
- *Budget:* up to \$100,000; the Festival costs \$50-60,000
- During the SA Dances festival several performances have the audience guided through a response to the new art (Critical Response Format)
- Co-sponsors events, acting as the Fiscal Agent to stimulate collaborations.

### **Ballet Folklorico de Mexico**

- *Mission:* Teaches traditional and contemporary dance to students age 3 and older; Ties in history of area so students can understand the dance styles.
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Performs at Beethoven Hall among other venues.
- *Budget:* \$15,000; must also pay for teacher to come from Mexico; \$35/month for students to learn dance.
- Is bringing a renowned teacher from Mexico to teach new contemporary dance styles.

### **Natyanjali School of Indian Dance**

- *Mission:* Recognized form of art among Indian Community. Teaches girls age 3-18 Indian Dance (and also one male around 30).
- *History:* 15-16 years ago, Indian Community organized school around Bana Ramanath, the only dancer in the community well-trained in India. The school has approximately 20-25 students
- *Performance/Rehearsal Venues:* Have performed throughout city at fairs, festivals, and more; Rent space to rehearse and perform, usually performances are at a large venue such as an auditorium or theatre.
- *Budget:* \$15-20,000, but does not include costs of graduation; Parents of the students pay for everything.

- All students have a Formal Graduation - Solo performance for one dancer when she is accomplished in dance, with a live orchestra; \$25,000 total cost, all paid by parents of graduating student; 1 or more of these is held a year, when student is ready; Open to Public
- Experts from India host a special camp

### Topics of Concern

- San Antonio is not a "dance community" as are other major cities (New York, Los Angeles)
  - There is a general feeling that dance is not always taken as a serious art form.
    - Some forms of Mexican dance are always associated with Fiestas and perceived as part of the "party"
  - Community does not reward the dancers financially, but with applause.
    - Hard to keep good dancers in area.
- None of the colleges or universities in San Antonio have a dance program
  - Trinity University offers dance in its Physical Education Department
  - Dance Programs typically don't thrive until they are recognized as art.
  - UT Austin has had success and international recognition with their dance department and companies spinning off from the department.
- High school arts magnet programs are relatively new and are still developing.
- It is difficult for groups to get publicity.
  - Cloggers' have a fairly comprehensive list of media sources, as does the Dance Umbrella.
  - The city of San Antonio has an arts listing (<http://www.ci.sat.tx.us/daca/>), as does Artco (<http://www.artco.org/core.html>)
  - The San Antonio Dance Umbrella publishes a Journal for the Dance community to publicize itself.
    - These lists can facilitate the collaboration and networking necessary to increase audience and publicity
- Funding is a problem
  - Grantmaking organizations take longer to make funding decisions — often after deadlines for publicity.
    - Often, companies must publicize events before funding is secured and then cancel the event if the funding doesn't come through.
      - Companies gain a negative image with people in the media and the public as a result.
  - Many companies must have their instructors or lead dancers divide time between administrative duties and dancing.
  - Money is needed "up front" to allow dance companies to plan for the future.
- Performance venues are hard to come by.
  - Carver is a favorite, but since it is closed for renovations this coming year, groups have to look elsewhere.

- Theatres are either too small to make it financially feasible or too large for the audience to fill; dancers get energy from the crowd, and an empty house hurts the quality of the performance.
- Ideal: a big theatre that can be walled off to give the option of smaller seating capacity.
- Collaborations with other dance organizations and art organizations are frequent, but not frequent enough.
- Many people in the community want to learn about dance and attend dance, but don't know where to go.

### **Ideas for Positive Change**

- Serious interest in Dance in San Antonio has arisen during the last 30 years or so. Groups have accomplished a lot of work in that time
- The dance organizations that do exist have had an immense impact on San Antonio
  - The Cloggers' annual festival at the Arneson Theatre draws 800-900 people from all over the United States and several foreign countries; and contributed more than \$3 million over the past ten years to the city and businesses of San Antonio.
  - Several hundred dancers work for these represented groups, not mentioning the number who work for other groups.
    - Many dancers work for more than one group or company to learn new styles of dance and also earn more money.
  - Some festivals and concerts (put on by the Dance Umbrella, City Dance, Metro Ballet, and Ballet Folkloricos) draw sold-out crowds night after night, year after year.
- Dancing serves more than just an artistic role in the San Antonio Community
  - The San Antonio Metropolitan Ballet has widened its audience by cooperating with English Professors to perform ballets of selected Literary works to educate students while also exposing them to a wider form of communication.
  - The Cloggers' Showcase, DanzaHispana, City Dance, BalletFolklorico de Navarro y de Mexico, and the Natyanjali School all perform traditional dance from other countries that educates the audiences about the cultures from which the dances originate.
  - Several groups have Arts in Education programs, going directly into the schools to teach students about dance history. Some are associated with Class Acts (an AIE booking agency)