



The Kennedy Center

OPENING STAGES

A Quarterly Newsletter for People with Disabilities Pursuing Careers in the
Performing Arts

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READERS' ALERT

Opening Stages is always interested in hearing from our readers about pertinent programs, resources and events, as well as ideas for articles. We can pay a modest fee for articles we accept. Contact us at access@kennedy-center.org.

FROM THE EDITOR REFLECTIONS ON PROFESSIONALISM

In this issue of **Opening Stages** I am delighted to present some thoughts from three of our wonderful Editorial Board members on the meaning of professionalism for actors with disabilities. I thought it might be appropriate to chime in with a few ideas about what it means to be a professional in my field -- writing. Hopefully our reflections will be useful to you, whether or not you are an actor or writer, because they are generally applicable to any field of creative endeavor.

Certainly recognition is one measure for distinguishing a professional writer from a non-professional. If you write poetry, fiction or nonfiction, has your writing been published? If you write plays, teleplays or screenplays, has your work been optioned or produced? The flaw with this measure is that much fine writing never sees the light of day. Stories are legion of fine writers being unappreciated in their time. Getting published or produced doesn't mean that your work is good or bad, only that someone with the power to green light it has done so.

Getting paid for your work is another possible sign of being professional. But the catch here is that much recognized work goes unremunerated. Many fine poetry journals pay little or nothing to their contributors. And there are scads of play competitions that reward the winners with nothing more than the privilege of getting produced.

Getting recognized or paid are outcomes that the writer has no control of. So, perhaps it would be fairer to define professionalism in terms that the writer can achieve on his or her own. The first I would say is to persevere. Don't be deterred by rejection. Keep writing. Keep sending your work out into the world. And the second is to do your best. Treat every assignment or opportunity as important. Present your work cleanly. Have pride.

In short, when you hold yourself to professional standards, you will be a professional.

Paul Kahn

FEATURE FOCUS PROFESSIONALISM IN PERFORMANCE

Editor's note: We on the Editorial Board of Opening Stages have been kicking around the notion of what it means for someone with a disability to be a "professional" actor. What are the standards that define a professional, as opposed to an amateur? What particular pressures are there on a performer with a disability to meet those standards? Does getting paid make someone professional? When does accommodation threaten to compromise artistic integrity? Three of our esteemed members have essayed answers to those and other prickly questions. I am delighted to introduce them and their thoughts our readers. Here they are in no particular order.

Ike Schambelan

Ike founded Theater By The Blind 25 years ago and is very proud to have built it into a \$300,000 off-Broadway theater, which he runs with co-artistic director George Ashiotis. Ike says he started TBTB because his grandmother went blind when he was 6 and lived with his family till she died when he was 10. He has fond memories of their going to the movies together and curling up in her bed to listen to the Lux Radio Theater.

I keep trying to come up with incontrovertible rules and then think of something that contradicts them. So, I only came up with two hard and fast ones: be on time and do what you sign on for.

I once met Ian McKellan and talked a little about Theater By The Blind. He asked if we were professional, and I started hemming and hawing and said, "well we certainly try to be." And he said, "no, do you get paid?" So that is certainly one definition.

But some of the most professional work I've done has been with community theaters, some of the best, some of what I'm proudest of.

And for seven years I directed plays in a psychiatric hospital, Austen Riggs in Stockbridge, where we did plays with patients mixed with non-patients, sold tickets, got reviewed, the whole shebang. And we did some great work, a *Macbeth* that made the Berkshire Eagle's 10 worst list for the year, a wonderful *View From the Bridge*, a super *To Grandmother's House We Go*.

Admittedly Peter used to hallucinate in the wings, but never onstage. Sam was an architect who did one play, fell in love with it and came to New York to be an actor, where he immediately got work because he was so darnn good. I get him whenever I can, but he's busy. On his first try he was excellent, rigorously disciplined, had variety and range, did his homework, was businesslike but friendly. On the other hand, I've worked with professional actors who should be shot for making trouble, being late, blaming everyone else for their problems. Go figure.



Meryl Streep said do your best on the other person's close-up. Which I take to mean be responsive to others' needs. Be collegial, be friendly or at least not actively hostile.

We go to an international blind theater festival in Croatia with companies coming from England, Belgium, Poland, Italy, Slovenia, Spain and our host country. Our host's work was excellent, highly professional, and they have great government support. But you cannot be a "professional" actor in Croatia or Slovenia, if you have vision or hearing problems. You cannot even get into a training academy. You remain separate but not equal.

Rod Lathim

Rod founded and served as Artistic Director of the nationally acclaimed Access Theatre from 1979-96. He has written, directed and produced over 25 original works, many of which have toured nationally. He recently completed the renovation of the Marjorie Luke Theatre in Santa Barbara, CA, and continues to direct, write and consult with arts organizations and foundations.

The issue of professionalism in the world of performing arts, when considered through the filter of disability, can become clouded and confusing for some. Things become prickly when the concept of "professional" becomes tweaked by the presence of a condition that creates a disability. Disability cannot be an excuse for a lack of talent or professionalism. When people have lower expectations of a person living with a disability in a professional setting, this is detrimental to all involved.

As a director, "professional" does not necessarily mean to me that a person has an Equity card. In fact, I have acted with and directed Equity actors who are far less professional than some non-Equity actors with whom I have worked. Being paid for one's work can mean "professional," but it does not guarantee professionalism.

For me, "professional" is defined by one's: training, experience, applied talents, communication skills, passion and commitment for the work; organized and prepared presentations of resume and background material and references; promptness for scheduled work times; ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with the company; ability to perform the role in a quality manner; and ability to take and implement direction.

I often receive calls from individuals living with disabilities who want to work as actors. Often these individuals are in denial of the reality of getting professional work in a theatre, television or film setting. These individuals are also often not trained and have very little experience. My first encouragement to them is to go out and get as much training and experience under their belts as possible. Community theatre is a great way to hone one's "chops" and gain the kind of experience that one can only get by doing the work. Professional workshops where actors work on voice, movement, scene work and characterization are critical as well.

To those who say "I can't get cast," or "I can't get into workshops," I encourage them to keep trying. If one is not going to have success on a community level, chances are success in the professional world is not going to be achieved. The competition in the world of acting is very tough.

It is important to make the distinction between community/recreational performing arts and professional settings. It is a disservice to patronize and create inappropriate expectations of greatness and fame for artists with disabilities performing in recreational or community settings. These are important places for creative expression in the arts, but it should not be taken for granted that experiences in these settings makes one a "professional."

The vast majority of directors are not going to cast a person living with a disability to play a character of a person with a disability, unless the director is convinced that such an actor can step right into the role without great accommodations having to be made. We still see non-disabled actors playing characters with disabilities. This is happening less and less, but it is usually due to an unenlightened director or casting director or the lack of an appropriately skilled artist with a disability auditioning for the role.

Artists with disabilities looking to be cast in roles where disability is not a part of the character must rely on their talents to wow a director and inspire him or her to see the potential the artist can bring to the role. This can only be achieved by being a competitive, skilled professional.

There are a handful of professional artists living with disabilities working today in theatres, on television, on Broadway, and in regional theatres. They are wonderful role models who hopefully will inspire others to follow in their paths. There are also wonderful professional artists living with disabilities who are writing, teaching, directing and working in programs around the country who are not in the spotlight, but who offer their unique skills, talents and resources in important community and educational settings. Many of these individuals have chosen these professional paths to pay the mortgage and have a consistent income, as the life and economy of independent actors is less than stable.

Ultimately, artists -- whether disabled or not -- who have a driving passion to perform will go to any length to obtain quality training and hone their craft in educational, community and semi-professional settings and will become tomorrow's professionals.

Mimi Kenney Smith

Mimi is the Producing Artistic Director of Amaryllis Theatre Company and the new Executive Director of VSA arts of Pennsylvania. VSA arts/Amaryllis produces inclusive professional theatre, touring educational productions and workshops and a cultural access project that helps other organizations to understand and implement accessibility and become more inclusive.

Ever since I helped found Amaryllis Theatre Company in early 1999, I've discovered it necessary not only to insert the word "professional" into any description of the work we do, but also to further clarify what we mean by that. In most instances, a new company describes itself as a "professional theatre company" once, then proves to funders that they are paying their artists. And that is the end of the discussion. In our case, however, the inclusion of artists with disabilities in our mission unfortunately makes our claim of professionalism suspect, regardless of the salaries we pay.

The situation is, of course, not unique to Amaryllis. Neither is it specific to the arts; the prejudice behind it is reflected in society at large. But in a field whose mantra is "Your body is your instrument," a recognizably unusual body puts an actor at an especially distinct disadvantage in any attempt to convey competitive artistic ability. In fact, like all minority communities whose abilities are judged on assumptions, not empirical evidence, the artistic skills of actors with disabilities must be better than normal, at least initially, in order to compete on a so-called "even playing field."

Our work is cut out for us. We must define for ourselves what it means to be a "professional" and understand how that set of standards helps each of us individually and all of us collectively to advance and make a living in this glorious yet cutthroat profession.

In addition, we must begin to create a set of guidelines that addresses the roles, not only of our actors, but of our directors and producers -- those who are bound not only by their desire to create quality art and find the money to pay for it, but also by their responsibility and, in some cases, their mission, to support the work of individual artists and uphold the ADA. Lack of inclusion is not just a matter of prejudice. While it can be enormously exciting and fulfilling, theater is also a complicated, lonely, often frustrating business. The fact is that, if we are going to succeed in making inclusion more widespread, we must find ways of making it easier and more artistically productive.

Let's look at this step-by-step—or roll-by-roll as the case may be. First, what does it mean to be a professional actor? What do producers and directors look for when they cast? And how does that impact an actor with a disability?

Almost anyone responsible for casting will agree that they can learn a great deal of what they need to know about an actor's professionalism in the first thirty seconds of an audition, sometimes less. For me a few things are key: training, talent, experience, attitude and -- perhaps the most tricky and complicated component--ability.

An actor's resume and headshot give me a good idea of training and experience and an initial peek at attitude. Personal introductions confirm or disprove preconceptions and suggest levels of sophistication. Young auditioners, for example, who choose a role intended for a more mature performer or who explain the character or the play signal inexperience or inadequate training. Arriving late or inappropriately dressed also figure into the mix. Finally, though, talent determines whether I call an actor back, and that, remarkably, is evident almost immediately.

Ability, however, takes time to assess. Ability is what an actor does with talent and training; it is preparation, flexibility and connection. It develops with experience and the help of a good director. It is also a combination of physical, psychological and emotional strength. With disability, strength can be accommodated through better accessibility. With all actors, ability is supported and preserved through rehearsal and performance policies and procedures that help actors balance their own lives with that of their characters' -- everything from providing water, maintaining proper temperature and mandating warm-ups and regular breaks to careful monitoring of the intensity of acting exercises and character development. Regardless of accommodation or safeguards, though, acting and life are filled with uncertainties, and abilities can change during the rehearsal process or the performance schedule. Traditionally this possibility has been mitigated by understudies. Since the passage of the ADA, however -- and with good reason -- producers must work harder to resolve issues of ability.

Here's where it gets complicated, though. Producers are not gods, and even with the best intentions not every dis-ability, permanent or temporary, major or minor, can be accommodated by traditionally recognized forms of accessibility. Sometimes it is possible to develop imaginative non-traditional solutions, and I believe that we should use our imaginations, not just to create art, but also to create and maintain opportunities. When, however, does dis-ability become so insurmountable that it interferes with the creation of art and when does art become more important than the ability of any one artist? Does the ADA require that a singer without a voice lip sync, that a dancer who breaks her leg perform in a wheelchair? Is an actor with an established disability that deteriorates in rehearsal accommodated at all costs, even that of the artistic product? If so, does that product reinforce stereotypes of artistic in-ability and inhibit the company's ability to produce more inclusive art? Where does art end and charity begin?

No easy answers exist. Professional art demands formal standards, long established and necessarily maintained. It also demands immediacy, engagement, and irreverence. The tension between traditional standards and innovative vision is what makes art compelling. The ability to balance the two is what makes it successful. Most often the inclusion of professional actors who move, think, see, hear, or communicate in a different way forces innovation and shapes a ground-breaking artistic product. Occasionally, but less frequently, it presents a roadblock to artistic success that feels insurmountable.

Right now only a handful of inclusive professional theatres exist. The goal, of course, would be for every theatre to be inclusive. In order for that goal to be achieved those of us who are working in the field need to develop a more formal support network where we can discuss problems and share solutions, so they can be replicated. We need to participate more as artists in traditional professional conferences and not allow ourselves to be relegated only to sessions on accessibility. We need to make sure that the professional training programs in our communities understand artistic accessibility, include and encourage students with disabilities and hold them to the same standards

they hold for students without disabilities. We need to make sure that joint auditions in every community are held in accessible locations and that the theatre community understands and welcomes artists with disabilities. We need to treat artists as artists, providing accommodations that will allow each to work at maximum ability but not applying a “special” set of standards so that everyone simply “gets a chance,” regardless of ability. Only when we participate as professionals and hold ourselves to the highest professional standards will we be accepted as professionals. And only when we are fully accepted will inclusion become commonplace, not special.

PEOPLE

ROLL OVER, BEETHOVEN—YOUR NIGHTMARE HAS ARRIVED!

by Susan Miller

*After three decades of performing before deaf audiences across the United States of America, the all-deaf rock and roll band, **Beethoven’s Nightmare** made music history in November 15 with the recording of its first album, “Turn It Up Louder” at Ocean Way Studios in Hollywood. The 10-song CD and music video will be released in early 2005. “I want to be an American in a Rock and Roll Band” and “Turn It Up Louder” are the lead songs on the 10-song CD. The album will be released with a music video in early 2005.*

In 1969, the year that the Woodstock, Vermont Festival and Concert changed music history and American society, three Berkeley, California teens launched their own American dream of becoming rock ‘n’ roll stars. “It didn’t matter that we were deaf,” said Ed Chevy, Beethoven’s Nightmare’s original bass player, who now resides in Honolulu with his wife and two children. “We talked and dreamed of becoming rock ‘n’ roll stars. We were just like every other American teenager in the late ‘60s. We were experiencing the underground music revolution visually.” Three-plus decades and five name changes later, lead guitarist Steve Longo, bass player Chevy and drummer Bob Hiltermann have lived their way into being the world’s first and only deaf rock band—Beethoven’s Nightmare.

The original deaf trio, Chevy, Longo and Terry Breckner, started performing for the 100 or so students at their tiny high school, the California School for the Deaf. The band, the first in the school’s history, called itself “The CSD Band” and played at the senior prom, socials and teen clubs. It was an instantaneous success.

After graduating from CSD, Longo and Chevy went on to Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. There, while walking down a dormitory corridor, Hiltermann felt Longo playing his guitar -- very loud -- through an amplifier. Hiltermann followed the pulsing vibrations, until the two found each other, and the 35-year dream that ended in Beethoven’s Nightmare began. The group, with variations in members along the way, built on its rock ‘n’ roll foundation over the years, playing at deaf parties, festivals and

conventions around the country, including the landmark international Deaf Way festivals in 1989 and 2002 at Gallaudet University.

The group's style is a mixture of rock 'n' roll and pop, infused with American Sign Language. Their latest accomplishments—two high-energy concerts at Hard Rock Café Honolulu in 2003—added Hawaii audiences to their list of fans.

Beethoven's Nightmare found its way to Honolulu when Chevy moved to Oahu nine years ago, where he currently works as a University of Hawaii sign language instructor, deaf community leader and entertainer. He is a longtime board member of Hawaii Services on Deafness, and in 2002 was asked to join the newly formed board of VSA arts of Hawaii-Pacific.

Quickly recognizing the uniqueness of an all-deaf band and the impact its success could have in the disability rights movement, VSA arts of Hawaii-Pacific in partnership with the University of Hawaii and Hawaii Services on Deafness made Beethoven's Nightmare the centerpiece of its launch as a university-community partnership to create access to careers in the arts for people with disabilities. Next year the band will be featured at the first Hawaii Deaf World Music Festival and Symposium on "The Implications of Music as a Vehicle for Creative Self-Determination for People with Disabilities" on June 11 and 12.

"'Turn It Up Louder' shows the world what three deaf musicians can achieve," Longo says. The Hawaii International Deaf Music Festival will show the world the status of the global deaf music community. "All these years, we've been waiting to come out into the light and perform for all levels of hearing and deaf fans," Longo adds.

"When Beethoven's Nightmare performs, the music has elements of melody and harmony, but the emphasis is on the rhythm, on the vibrations felt within the body," says Karen Sadie Drozd, University of Hawaii adjunct professor of Music Education. "What you hear is a wall of sound, primarily aimed at feeling vibrations within the body, heart, and soul. As for the amplitude, the title of Beethoven's Nightmare's CD says it all, 'Turn it up louder!'"

Beethoven's Nightmare band members feel they are at a pivotal moment in their own history and in the history of disabilities rights and awareness, as deaf culture expands further into the mainstream. Says Hiltermann, "When we started playing together we had to fight the misconception that being deaf meant we couldn't play or enjoy music."

The band's musical inspiration through all of its incarnations over the years has been the famous deaf musician Ludwig van Beethoven, who first demonstrated that deafness did not preclude musical expression and excellence. "When Ludwig van Beethoven went deaf at the age of 35," Chevy says, "he was already established as an accomplished composer. He was told he couldn't keep composing, but the Eighteenth century artist defied the conventional wisdom of the time."

“Many people ask us why we use Beethoven's name,” Hiltermann says. “We have respect for the guy and carry his legacy and his name. And we do represent his worst nightmare—he became an angry and neurotic man, who died young. And we continue his nightmare by being deaf and playing rock 'n' roll!”

Susan Miller is the Executive Director of VSA arts of Hawaii-Pacific.

PROGRAMS

QUEST: ARTS FOR EVERYONE INTERNSHIPS

Quest: arts for everyone offers internships to deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing individuals. The purpose of the internships is to provide individuals interested in pursuing careers in the arts or arts education with hands on practical experiences. Quest designs internships to meet the individual needs of each applicant. Internships of various lengths and time commitments are available.

Interns duties may include: providing production assistance for Quest shows, serving as an assistant stage manager for Quest's Wings Company, assisting Quest staff in marketing Quest programs, assisting Quest administrative staff, serving as a member of the Wings Company, and assisting Quest's ArtsBridge Coordinator in conducting arts education programming. Internships are available year round, and the Quest staff responds to internship request expeditiously.

Individuals interested in serving as an intern for Quest should submit a letter of interest to:

Tim McCarty, President
Quest: arts for everyone
7414 Newburg Drive
Lanham, MD 20706
or tim@quest4arts.org

The letter should include:

- The applicants goals and objectives for the internships experience
- Starting and ending dates
- Number of hours committed to the internship
- Responsibilities expected of the Quest staff for documenting or supporting the internship

NEWS AND NOTES

DANCING WHEELS TOURS NATIONALLY WITH OTHER CLEVELAND DANCE COMPANIES

Dancing Wheels Company has joined with two other Cleveland dance companies in a unique touring venture: "Cleveland Dances! *The Best of Cleveland on Tour.*"

The project grew out of a collaboration between Dancing Wheels Company, the nation's first professional integrated dance company comprised of stand-up and sit-down dancers, Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theatre, the first professional contemporary dance company in Northeast Ohio that continues the tradition of the African-American experience, and the Verb Ballets, headed by former Paul Taylor dancer Hernando Cortez, a troupe that fuses classical ballet and contemporary dance.

The year-long collaboration of dancers, choreographic works and shared resources culminated in a performance at Cleveland's Playhouse Square Center. The gala concert blended the unique talent and diverse works of each company. Mary Verdi-Fletcher, President/Founding Artistic Director of Dancing Wheels says, "I believe the concert was a huge success! It offered audience members an opportunity to see dance in a new light. And it left them wanting to see more."

The Dancing Wheels Company is a professional, modern dance company that unifies both stand-up and sit-down dancers. Founded in 1980 by Mary Verdi-Fletcher, it promotes accessibility to the arts for all through innovative education programs, cutting edge performances and advocacy, annually reaching over 120,000 individuals throughout the nation.

For more information on this project, contact Lori Bowman at the GG Greg Agency at 216-692-1193. Check out each company's website at www.dancingwheels.org, www.verbballets.org, and www.ccdt.com.

DANCEABILITY OFFERS TEACHER CERTIFICATION COURSE

Danceability will again offer a certification course designed to teach students how to lead mixed-abilities dance, movement, and theater groups. The course will be taught by Alito Alessi, founder of DanceAbility and Artistic Director of Joint Forces Dance Company, and will take place June 26-July 22 at the University of Oregon Department of Dance in Eugene, Oregon.

The training includes:

- Foundations for improvising and performance-making in diverse groups with and without disabilities

- Learning to plan and teach classes for all levels and all abilities
- Learning to lead performance-making projects, including outdoor public space and street performances
- Integrating Contact Improvisation with mixed abilities
- Designing and teaching classes
- Organizational and administrative development and international networking

The cost of the workshop is \$1,425, with a \$100 reduction if paid in full by April 23. Payment is due by June 1. The fee includes the 4-week training and a 150-page manual of DanceAbility methodology and exercises. Space is limited to 25 participants. To reserve a place, send a deposit of \$100 to Joint Forces Dance Company, Inc., account number: 299099 at SELCO Credit Union (Downtown Branch), Eugene, Oregon, U.S.A. 97403.

Alito Alessi is the developer of the DanceAbility methods. He has been involved with the evolution of contemporary dance for the past 20 years and is internationally known as a pioneering teacher and choreographer in the fields of Contact Improvisation and dance and disability. Alessi has received Choreographer's Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and from the Oregon Arts Commission, and Joint Forces Dance Company was awarded an NEA Exemplary Grant for its DanceAbility work. Dance students, people with disabilities, and those interested in working with people with disabilities have gathered in Eugene from 17 countries to study with him for the month-long intensive DanceAbility Teacher Certification courses.

For more information go to: www.danceability.com

KENNEDY CENTER SEEKS YOUNG MUSICIANS FOR JAZZ RESIDENCY

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts invites young jazz artists to apply for the Betty Carter Jazz Ahead, March 23 -- April 1. Jazz Ahead identifies outstanding, emerging artists and brings them together at the Kennedy Center under the tutelage of experienced artist-instructors who coach and counsel them, helping them to polish their performance, composing and arranging skills.

Musicians under the age of 30 who are both jazz composers and performers may take part in Jazz Ahead. The application deadline is December 17, 2004. Each applicant must submit a resume and to an audio recording of his or her work. A panel of jazz artists will review applications, and applicants will be informed of their status in late February. The Kennedy Center for will provide the residency participants with housing, travel to and from Washington D.C., and modest honoraria for meal expenses. For application information go to <http://www.kennedy-center.org/jazzahead> or contact Kennedy Center Jazz, 2700 F. Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20566, telephone 202-416-8348.

APPLICATIONS INVITED FOR SUNDANCE THEATRE LAB

A program of the Sundance Institute, the Sundance Theatre Laboratory is a three-week long workshop that offers playwrights, directors, choreographers, composers, solo performers, and ensembles the time, space, and support to develop new plays and musicals or to explore new approaches to existing scripts. The laboratory, which is held in July in Sundance, Utah, provides professional actors, rehearsal space, stage management, round-trip air transportation, accommodations, and food for the collaborative team working on each project. Up to eight projects will be selected each year. Playwrights, directors, composers, and choreographers are eligible to apply, and playwright/director teams are encouraged. Participants must be available for the entire length of the Lab. The 2005 Sundance Theatre Lab Application is available at the Sundance Institute Web site:

http://institute.sundance.org/jsps/site.jsp?resource=pag_ex_home, click on "programs."

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OFFERS FELLOWSHIPS

The American Antiquarian Society, a national research library and learned society of American history and culture, is calling for applications for visiting fellowships in historical research by creative and performing artists, writers, filmmakers, journalists and other persons whose goals are to produce imaginative, non-formulaic works dealing with pre-twentieth-century American history. Successful applicants are those whose work is for the general public rather than for academic or educational audiences. The fellowships will provide the recipients with the opportunity for a period of uninterrupted research, reading, and collegial discussion at the Society, located in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Performance-related fellowships projects may include

- performance of historical music or drama
- documentary films
- television programs
- radio broadcasts
- plays
- libretti
- screenplays
- costume designs
- set designs

For more information visit www.americanantiquarian.org, or contact the American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-1634, telephone 508-755-5221.

CREATIVE CAPITAL GRANTS AVAILABLE

In the spring of 2005, Creative Capital Foundation will accept proposals for its 2005–06 grant cycle supporting work in the performing arts and emerging fields. The nonprofit arts organization has implemented a new application process: to apply for a grant,

artists must first submit an Inquiry Form, which will be available February 14, 2005 on the foundation's website, www.creative-capital.org. This year, innovative literature has been added to the emerging fields category. According to Sean Elwood, director of grantmaking and artist services, "We define innovative literature as work created by writers who challenge traditional notions of literary forms and concepts. We are interested in projects by literary artists who are striving to express themselves in alternative ways through manipulating language, formal structures, or new processes." Literature may include projects in the genres of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction.

As in past grant rounds, forty funded projects will receive approximately \$400,000 in initial grants. In addition, grantees are eligible for follow-up support in the form of advisory services and additional financial assistance. Founded in January 1999, Creative Capital Foundation is a national nonprofit organization that supports individual artists pursuing innovative approaches to form and content in the visual and performing arts, film/video, and in emerging fields.

The 2005–06 Grant Calendar is:

February 14, 2005 Inquiry Forms available (Performing Arts & Emerging Fields)

March 14, 2005 Deadline for completed Inquiry Forms

June 2005 Notification of results; applicants selected, January 2006 Announcement of awards

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