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Proposal for Fund of 10th Anniversary of WMS/ Minority Requirement Celebration

Women's Studies

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PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

PROPOSAL FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S STUDIES/MINORITIES STUDIES

PURPOSE

The Department of Dance intends to participate fully in this Tenth Anniversary of the Women's Studies/Minority Studies General Education Requirements. During the course of the year, our public performance offerings will include only women representing a diversity of ethnic backgrounds and movement vocabularies. Five performances have been specifically selected to illustrate a balance of historical struggle in the development of one's own voice, the current struggle of two powerful women artists (one a soloist/minimalist and the other a post-modernist who works in solo and duet forms), the utilization of movement in the grand sense as a communication tool for political and activist messages, and a culminating performance of student and faculty works inspired by the year long activities.

Our typical departmental budget supports two faculty/student concerts, one guest residency, and one alumni concert or residency. This curricular design encourages our students to engage in the search for their own voices, participate in the faculty research/performance endeavors, and connect with alumni who are making their way through the professional dance world in various capacities. Our departmental budget is unable to accommodate the additional expenses associated with guest residencies and concerts called for in this exciting anniversary year and without a redistribution of our resources, which we are prepared to do. Because of the unique opportunity to contribute to a university-wide celebration, we are asking the President's Fund to augment our curricular interests out of "Departmental Grants" with lesser contributions coming from "Keynote Speakers Fund" as, for instance, Thursday Common Hour support.

RATIONALE

We are specifically asking the President's Fund to support the two curricular offers: Deborah Hay and Bebe Miller (items #2 and #3 below.) Both of these women are recognized professionals in the field of dance, and each presents a very different perspective, historically and ideologically. Our curriculum is designed to encourage students to have experiences in as many areas of dance and with as much diversity as possible. These particular artistic residencies would increase our students' opportunities to participate in a variety of dance experiences while simultaneously providing a much deserved recognition of women and minorities in the field of dance and the performing arts.

We would like to emphasize that we have every intention of taking into consideration as many campus wide activities as possible when finalizing our dates for the artists we choose. The artists discussed in this proposal are those who we feel are the most appropriate to our field and who fit most closely with the fields of women and minority studies.

OVERVIEW OF OUR SEASON

The five concert offerings appear below. Note that dates have not yet been set and hinge around the Women's Studies Programming for the year, the Inaugural Week-end, the Vail Series events, and the Department of Theatre's schedule. Most of these dates have not yet been set and will take a coordinated effort in the next few weeks.

1) Peggy Lyman and Company

For years a soloist with the Martha Graham Company, Ms. Lyman represents the best example of Graham technique in its purest form. She proposes bringing to Denison a company of 5 - 7 dancers who will present three of Graham's most famous works. Her offering illustrates the foundation of modern dance, an American art form conceived uniquely by women. Although men have certainly helped develop the techniques and vocabularies, truly modern dance is a form pioneered predominantly by women to communicate their own messages. The company residency would include one performance and two master classes.

The dates for this concert have been tentatively set for January, 1990, while the company will be in Ohio for another residency. The funding for this concert will come from the Vail Artist-in-Residence fund adjudicated by the four Fine Arts Chairs supplemented by the Department of Dance budget. Total cost for honorarium, travel, production and publicity will run about \$7,500.

2) Deborah Hay

Deborah Hay has been involved in dance since the 1960's and was an original member of the Judson Church group. The Judson Church activities of the late 60's represent a turning point in the history of modern dance and those artists that sprang from this group have come to be known as the "post-moderns". Deborah Hay has established and maintained a high degree of recognition as a dedicated, mature and distinguished artist. We are interested in bringing Deborah in for a series of three workshops. These workshops would include a total of 5 to 6 master classes and a lecture/performance in which she would address her personal views on gender and how she feels about being both female and successful. This residency would culminate in two solo performances. We are fortunate that Deborah Hay will be in residence at Wesleyan College in Connecticut during Fall 1989, and, as a result, will also be available to present workshops in our vicinity.

The dates under consideration include three weekends in September, running from the 14th through the 30th. Deborah's schedule is being filled quickly, and therefore, it is urgent that we finalize our dates and plans as soon as possible. The total cost of this workshop is approximately \$5,925. We are asking the President's Fund to contribute as per the attached budget breakdown.

3) Bebe Miller

As a dancer/choreographer Bebe Miller is also a perfect candidate for this Anniversary celebration. She is one of few black women choreographers to have successfully presented her works around the country with her own company of dancers. In recognition of her choreographic achievements, she was awarded a "Bessie" New York Dance and Performance Award¹ in 1986. In addition, she has received numerous fellowships and commissions. Drawing from her professional perspective as a minority woman, her residency would include one master class followed by a discussion, and would culminate with a full-length evening of dance to be performed by herself and two members of her company.

We are considering mid-February (Black History month) for Ms. Miller's residency. Again, her availability hinges on a rapid response on our part as to the finalization of dates and costs. Her schedule already includes performances at Franklin and Marshall, Bucknell, and Dickinson College. The total cost of this workshop is approximately \$4,450. We are asking the President's Fund to contribute as per the attached budget breakdown.

4) -Crowsfeet Dance Collective or Dance Brigade

Both companies are splinter groups of a now-defunct "Wallflower Order" conceived and created to allow women performers to make statements about their experiences as women "without having to wait to be asked to dance." Wallflower earned an international reputation for devoting their performances to social change. Crowsfeet and Dance Brigade have developed those voices even further, having become quite politically savvy. The company is as diverse in its messages as it is in its collection of ethnic backgrounds and movement vocabularies. In particular these groups of Black, Latin, Jewish, and Asian heritage employ text, dialogue, American Sign language, and other performance techniques to communicate with their audiences.

The Women's Studies Committee has proposed bringing one of these companies here to perform and have asked for and received the support of the Dance Department for administrative, performance, and technical support. The Department of Dance has pledged \$1,000 of its concert budget and \$300 of its student employment budget to offset costs. The Slayter Programming budget has also offered \$200 and Women's Studies had pledged \$1,000. Total cost of producing either seven member company is \$6,150.

¹ Dance's equivalent of an "Emmy"

5) Student/ Faculty Concert

A fine and important way for the year to culminate includes an active commitment from the Department of Dance toward our own students and faculty for the production of their work, especially as it may integrate new and broader ideas assimilated from the previous four concerts and other celebratory activities.

The dates for this concert are as late in the year as possible (end of April) with costs ranging from \$4,000 - \$5,000 depending upon the selection of repertory.

\$2000