

# PRESS RELEASE

## **JEROME FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$530,136 IN GRANTS TO 9 DANCE ORGANIZATIONS/INITIATIVES IN MINNESOTA**

**ST. PAUL, MN, September 21, 2022**— The Jerome Foundation is pleased to announce 9 grants totaling \$530,136 to Minnesota-based arts organizations and initiatives to support opportunities for choreographers and dance makers at early stages in their careers. These two-year grants support new and expanded programs and activities that benefit early career Minnesota choreographers who create original works.

To better understand and assess their needs, the Foundation convened over 50 local choreographers, dance presenters, curators, programmers, dance educators, and leaders to identify the most urgent needs and priorities facing early career dance makers. Participants identified a wide range of concerns, including the isolation growing out of the COVID pandemic, the loss of opportunities occasioned by the shuttering of multiple organizations and dance programs, and the need for equitable environments free of racism. Artists were especially interested in mentorships and opportunities to engage with others with whom they are aligned creatively and aesthetically to share and experience one another's work, experiment and collectively process ideas. A subsequent survey of the dance community affirmed these priorities.

Based on this input from focus groups and survey respondents, nine dance organizations and initiatives, cited for their significant support of early career choreographers and the dance community, were invited to apply for one-time two-year grants.

Program Director Eleanor Savage stated, "The Foundation is grateful to the artists and arts leaders in the dance community for candidly sharing their observations and experiences. Their participation was essential in directing resources to the programs they feel are important for early career dance makers at this moment in time."

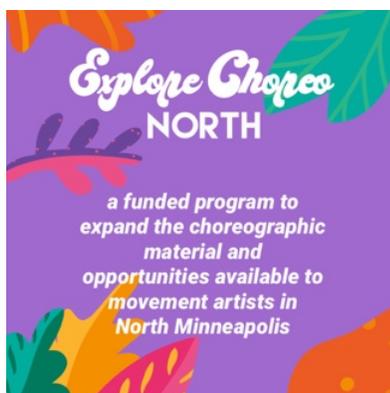
Jerome Foundation President Ben Cameron stated, "This initiative represents a step forward for the Foundation in its support of the Minnesota dance community. The extraordinary potential of these proposals actually led the Board to increase the originally identified allocation in order to more fully support all nine applicants. We are honored to support these nine vital programs and organizations, and look forward to their impact on early career choreographers."

Grantee organizations and their supported activities are as follows:



**Ananya Dance Theatre**

**Ananya Dance Theater (ADT)**, founded by artistic director Ananya Chatterjea, is a platform for Black, Native American, Indigenous, and People of Color to experience cross-cultural solidarity and to create original dance, drawing on social justice themes inspired by the lives and dreams of BIPOC women, womxn, and femmes from around the globe. ADT supports a diverse range of dance-makers working with a multidisciplinary and global aesthetic approach. The company has been in operation since 2004 and acquired its own dance space, Shawngram Institute (Bangla for “resistance”), on University Avenue in Saint Paul in 2018. Chatterjea is launching *Chawrchā*, a next-generation choreographic lab, providing mentorship opportunities for early career Black, Native American, Indigenous, and People of Color choreographers to develop and present new innovative works.



**Explore Choreo North** is a program developed for early career Northside Minneapolis Black and Brown dance makers working in non-mainstream dance forms. This is a new initiative designed and led by Kenna Cottman, a Black non-binary dance maker, storyteller, oral historian, cultural artist, educator, revolutionary, griot, and mother rooted in the Black community in North Minneapolis. This program, fiscally sponsored by We Win Institute with space provided by North High School. will offer early career Northside dance makers professional and artistic development, a stipend, production support, rehearsal space, quarterly cohort meetings, workshop opportunities, and a performance showcase. Cottman sees this as an opportunity to create ongoing structure for supporting and developing dance makers and movement-based artists on the Northside.



**Indigenous Roots Cultural Arts Center (IRoots)** is a Saint Paul Eastside community-based multicultural center founded by Sergio Cenoch and Mary Anne Quiroz. The space is dedicated to building, supporting and cultivating opportunities for Native, Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples in surrounding communities of Dayton’s Bluff. IRoots will develop and expand their intercultural and inter-tribal hub by providing early career dance makers with a multi-year experience that offers artists financial support, space, mentorship, and opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and exchange.

 **MOVO SPACE**  
creative incubator

**MOVO**, fiscally sponsored by Springboard for the Arts, is an incubator space for independent artists to make work learn, risk and share. Based in Minneapolis's Ivy Building, and led by artists Valerie Oliveiro and Morgan Thorson, MOVO plans a suite of programs to support the development of new work; work-in-progress showings; residencies for creative, pedagogical and technical experimentation; mentorship and peer cohorts, providing artists with stipends, rehearsal space, community feedback, mentorship, and tech support.



**Red Eye Theater**, an artist-run creative lab that supports rigorous artistic inquiry for Minnesota artists from a broad spectrum of experiences and expression. Red Eye, founded in 1983 by Steve Busa and Miriam Must, is now led by Hayley Finn, Theo Langason, Emily Gastineau, Andrew Dolan, Valerie Oliveiro, and Rachel Jendrzewski in a collaborative leadership model. Rooted in the core tenets of experimentation, collaboration, critical discourse, Red Eye opened their new artistic home in Minneapolis' Seward Commons in spring 2022. The space is designed to serve as a platform for the Twin Cities' multi-faceted contemporary performance community, offering shared experiences to ignite connections between people and ideas. Red Eye plans a number of new work development and presentation programs to support early career choreographers working in hybrid forms across multiple performance disciplines to experiment with form and facilitated feedback processes.

*Rosy Simas Dance*

Three Thirty One Space  
transdisciplinary arts and dance

**Three Thirty One Space**, a transdisciplinary studio established in 2021 by choreographer Rosy Simas in Northrop King, Northeast Minneapolis, supports Native, Indigenous, Black and People of Color dance artists to develop new works and connect artists and audiences in an inclusive ecosystem, working against capitalist notions of scarcity and meritocracy. The grant will support the Three Thirty One Space's artist-in-residence program that provides stipends, studio space and technical support to early career Native and BIPOC choreographers.



**The Cowles Center** is a dance and performing arts hub located in Downtown Minneapolis that promotes movement and growth for artists through supportive programs and spaces, engages audiences through dynamic performances, and educates learners of all ages through robust and inclusive education initiatives. Led by co-directors Joseph Bingham and Jessi Fett, the Cowles Center will expand Generating Room, an incubator residency program which provides selected early career artists with free rehearsal space, artist stipends for creating new work, a mentor of their choosing and opportunities for skill-building and tech support.



**Threads Dance Project**, founded by choreographer Karen L. Charles in 2011, Threads Dance Nexus opened in 2021 as a new community hub in the Seward Commons in Minneapolis, providing a home for the dance company and programs to strengthen the social and creative fabric of the Minneapolis community. Charles endeavors to help dance-makers hone their craft and connect audiences to new and diverse artists. In expanding the resources offered through their Tapestries program. Threads will provide commissioned artists with creative, production, administrative, and promotional support as they work to develop original works.



**Walker Art Center**, Walker Art Center's performing arts program, helmed by Philip Bither, is internationally known for presenting boundary-breaking performance work that showcases global, national, and Minnesota-based performing artists. At the heart of the relationship between the Twin Cities dance community and the Walker is its annual Choreographers' Evening. Beginning in 1971 as a showcase of work by independent choreographers, the program has featured the work of over 900 artists across its 50-year history. The Walker will direct funds to early career choreographers featured as part of the annual Choreographer's Evening event program.

**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE JEROME FOUNDATION OR THIS PROGRAM CONTACT:**

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**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT A SPECIFIC FUNDED PROGRAM, PLEASE CONTACT THE FUNDED ORGANIZATION DIRECTLY.**

## ABOUT US



**Jerome Foundation** seeks to contribute to a dynamic and evolving culture by supporting the creation, development, and production of new works by early career artists based in Minnesota and New York City. The Foundation makes grants to early career artists and those nonprofit arts organizations that serve them in the state of Minnesota and the five boroughs of New York City.

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