

**Andréa Spearman:** Dancers' Group is experimenting with new ways to unify, strengthen, and amplify voices in the Bay Area. We're excited to share a variety of ideas and stories.

Welcome, in today's recording of *In Conversation*, you will hear from David Herrera and Jocelyn Reyes. Please introduce yourselves!

**David Herrera:** Hello, everyone. My name is David Herrera. I am a gay, Latinx, you can also use Latino and Hispanic, choreographer here in the Bay Area. I use the pronouns he and him, and to describe myself I am about 5'9", dark hair, dark features, brown skin, very prominent nose I'm told, and I'm wearing a blue checkered shirt and grey pants. And I am actually sitting in front of the windows of my apartment, overlooking the Bay, looking towards Oakland. I am also the Artistic Director and Program Director of David Herrera Performance Company in San Francisco, established in 2007. I have lived in San Francisco since 2004, but didn't officially begin the company until 2007. I am 42 years old.

**Jocelyn Reyes:** Hi everyone, I'm Jocelyn Reyes. I'm 25 years old. I am Latina and I use she/her pronouns. I am wearing some black leggings and a very warm sweater, and some socks with strawberries on them. I have long brown hair, light skinned, pretty short - that's my appearance now. I am the Artistic Director of REYES Dance. I moved to San Francisco about 3 years ago and I've been choreographing and sharing work for that amount of time.

**David:** For y'all listening, I met Jocelyn a bit over a year ago and we have had the chance to develop a much deeper friendship and comradeship through Jocelyn's participation in my organization's mentorship program, which is called LatinXtensions, a mentorship program for emerging Latinx dancemakers. She was a participant and now what I'm calling an alumni of last cycle. Jocelyn, do you care to talk about how we first met?

**Jocelyn:** Yeah, I remember the first time we met was in Choreographers & Coffee. I think it might have been the first or second time that we ran into each other. After we met at Choreographers & Coffee you came up to me and said, "Hi, I'm David. I am a choreographer, and I'm happy to see that you're also creating work. I'd love to support and talk or meet up anytime you want." Then you gave me your email and your information. I remember being so surprised because until that point I had been the person doing all the reaching out and trying to get help from other people. This was the first time that someone approached me, just trying to support in some way. I was super excited. I emailed David a few days after that, I think September of 2018. Then we met up for coffee and it was super useful. I picked David's brain about production and every part of creating work. It was super useful.

**David:** For me, I always loved networking and I loved meeting new folks and for me particularly it's part of my work now to outreach to other Latinx and Hispanic dance artists, especially people who are just starting out. I didn't know Jocelyn prior to this at all, and I'm not sure that I had seen Jocelyn around, but through that first meeting she was describing what she was starting to do, and what some of her ideas were. I did feel that as someone who has been in the area for a longer period of time, it's part of my duty not only to welcome but to support other

choreographers, particularly BIPOC and even more specifically Latinx and Hispanic creators and dance makers.

In that first meeting I think we spent a little over an hour having a conversation, and Jocelyn without knowing also ended up helping me out. I was in the process of putting together the LatinXtensions program and through the conversation she and I had, she ended up giving me clarity on some of the things that are needed or what people who are just starting out might want from mentorship or support. It was through her questions, that same week, I went back and restructured some small things from the conversation that she and I had. So, Jocelyn, thank you.

[both laugh]

**Jocelyn:** Of course, and thanks for then later on reaching out to be a part of the LatinXtensions Mentorship Program. I do feel like it felt like a little precursor to our meeting and I found the whole program to be so helpful - meeting new artists and finding out about grant writing and marketing and all the different hats we have to wear as artists creating work.

**David:** I'm very happy that you did it because you were a perfect candidate, and obviously I feel like we both got a lot out of it. This works both ways to be honest. I'm learning a lot from the mentees themselves. We started out with five this past year and we went down to four, but I learn just as much from them as I hope they learned from me and the guest mentors.

Something within the program that I really enjoyed was that I got to know everyone a little bit more individually as people, not just as artists, and the combination of both. Maybe we can speak a little bit about some of that. Jocelyn, just so that folks get to know you the way I did, can you for instance describe a little bit about your background, maybe where you grew up, and how you ended up in dance?

**Jocelyn:** Yeah, definitely. I grew up in Highland Park, Los Angeles, which was a predominantly Latino neighborhood at the time. It's changing a lot these days. I grew up, my family was pretty poor, so a lot of my exposure to dance at first was public school programs, free programs that they offered after school. I did, I tried everything out. I did drill team, I did cheerleading, I did hip hop, I did jazz. Prior to that my first exposure to dance was just dancing at Latin social gatherings. Birthday party, baptism, or first communion, or any kind of celebration there was always a DJ and music and parents and kids would stand up and dance cumbia, merengue, and salsa, and punta, and bachata, and just all kinds of dances. That's kind of how I started dancing and why I continued to try and seek dance opportunities when I was at school.

When I went to middle and high school, I actually was chosen out of a raffle and I got into this charter public performing arts school called Renaissance Arts Academy. That's when I was first introduced to modern contemporary dance. It's really funny because prior to that a lot of the dances I had participated in were social dances with lots of smiling and being happy and communicating with other people. I remember my friends and I at first when we started doing

contemporary and modern dance were like, “So should we do any facials? It seems like we don’t really move our faces here. No, we should be really serious. Yeah, everyone looks really serious.” So it was really interesting to transition to a whole new world. From there, I really began to fall in love with contemporary and modern dance. I was introduced to choreography and composition. I actually produced a show at my high school with a couple friends and that was my first experience of putting together a show. Then I went to UCLA to the World Arts and Culture/Dance program where I continued to study choreography, composition, dance theory, and I was exposed to a lot of different dance forms, including West African, bharatanatyam, ballet, and I continued some modern contemporary dance. Then I moved to San Francisco after graduating, and here I am now.

[both laugh]

What was your background like, David? How did you get into dancing?

**David:** We have a lot of overlap, I think, you and I. Like you, also grew up in southern California. I grew up in Hollywood. Because of growing up in Hollywood, I was already enamored with the idea of performance and film and the whole industry. A lot of that was present in my childhood. I recognized that I wanted to perform more when I was in junior high. I happened to be lucky enough to be in the district where the closest junior high school was a performing arts magnet school. While a lot of people came to that school for the performing arts program, I just happened to live in the neighborhood. I went there, but I didn’t actually sign up for any of the performing arts classes immediately. I was a bit shy back then. I just looked at it from the outside. I did bring it up to my parents, letting them know I was interested, but they didn’t really see it as a viable option for somebody like myself, for somebody like us. We were lower class, working class really, making ends meet. Anything that was extracurricular that cost money, that required more time - a lot of these classes even though they were taught during the daytime in the school system, you had to stay after school for programs and rehearsals and things like that. They could not afford to have someone take me or pick me up. They could not afford the fees that came along with some of these items like costumes and so on and so forth. I didn’t really get to perform when I was in junior high; however, I did join the stage crew. I learned about lighting and sets and doing all that stuff. I created sets for the shows, created lighting for the shows. Through that I kept a connection with that.

Unfortunately for me, I ended up moving to Texas the year between my 8th and 9th grade years. When I landed in Texas, I landed in a small country town which didn’t really have any programming like this. They had within their curriculum two theater classes, which were fun, but not really meant for somebody who wanted to go into the performing arts as a career. Honestly, it wasn’t until college that I started taking classes, and I guess what most people would consider formalized classes. With that said, let me backtrack a little bit.

Like Jocelyn, I also learned how to dance when I was younger in a communal setting, in a family setting, in a community setting. At group events - you mentioned quinceañeras, weddings. A lot of cumbia, a lot of salsa. For me, also being Mexican American, especially my parents both

coming from the state of Zacatecas, we did a lot of zapateado and things like that. My preteen years is when I started getting interested in doing it, it just seemed like a lot of fun, and everybody was partaking, adults, men, women, children, everybody was partaking, so it really caught my attention. I have to say, the first time I did it, as awkward and as embarrassed as I was, I also felt for the first time really liberated. It was that sense of liberation that kept calling me back to doing it more and more. Even though I didn't start "formal" (and I'm going to use that word in quotation marks) training until college at the age of 19, I had all this dance background already from the community setting and the cultural setting. It's interesting to think about the difference between those two things. Even though it wasn't taught, it was learned. It is a learned artform. It is a learned genre or genres that we grew up in. It was funny because once I went to college I remember thinking, "Wow there's nothing here but modern and ballet." That was about it. If you wanted anything else you had to go outside of the university system. We would have all these dances, college dances, and I would go to these dances so I could move in other ways, in other fashions, in other forms that I knew that I could do and was happy to be a part of. Don't get me wrong, I fell in love with modern, that's what I do now, but it's interesting to see the two things and how they arrived into my life from very different points of view. We're still doing it! [laughs]. There's something to be said about learning how to do contemporary and modern dance for myself.

With that, Jocelyn, I always wonder - I know why I do it, and I can talk about that in just a second, but why do you continue to dance? Why do you, not only why did you start, but why do you continue to do it now? What continues to inspire you?

**Jocelyn:** When I first started dancing, I had a similar experience where it brought so much joy and I felt so happy doing it. My home being kind of unstable, I feel like dance was kind of an escape from that instability. It was the one place where I would just forget about everything and really just enjoy the experience of moving and, not to be so cliché, also being able to express myself through movement. Now, today, I feel like I still try to hold onto that feeling as much as I can. Remembering how much I enjoy movement. I feel like when we get into creating work and we start to also be the person who is in charge of marketing and the person in charge of grant writing and the person who is doing all the admin work, it's easy to forget the joy that dance brings and the initial reason for doing it.

**David:** Yeah.

**Jocelyn:** I feel like these days, and in general in my choreography, I'm really inspired by family dynamics and lineage and what traditions we continue and which ones we change. My dad is an immigrant and so is my mom. My dad is from El Salvador and he fled war when he was about 15 and came to the US. My mom came from Mexico when she was about 17. They met in a basketball court at the park and then voilà I happened. Something I think a lot about is all the different family dynamics and the ways we've been trying to keep some of our traditions from our homes even though we're so far away and half our family is also far away. Trying to keep that alive. There's also so many things we're trying to question and change, for example, domestic violence. Growing up and being raised believing that corporal punishment was a way.

I'm trying really hard to heal from those experiences and also change that and talk to family members and extended family members and be like, "There's a better way to do these things." I know it all comes down to lack of resources and just trying to make ends meet. That's something that a lot of my work is inspired by. Rethinking about the ways in which we exist here and the ways that we continue to hold onto tradition and also change other things.

What about you, David? What are you inspired by?

**David:** I specifically created the company to highlight and to make visible the experiences of Latinx and POC folk, just because it's something that I noticed was lacking in general, particularly in the modern dance field. I craved it, I craved it from the get-go. I wanted to see more brown bodies on stage. I wanted to not only see them but I wanted to hear their stories and have the concepts and stories be part of the narrative or the idea behind the movement. I wasn't seeing much of that. That's really where most of my inspiration not only came from but continues to come from. Giving voice to the communities that I grew up in, and the communities that now I partake in. With the hope that I'm changing the face and the look of modern dance. It's not, it hasn't been easy, to be honest [laughs], it's been an uphill battle. I have to apologize about those things [some scratchy sounds] I have no idea how to turn that off.

**Jocelyn:** No worries.

**David:** It's been an uphill battle for sure. Trying to do something like this within this field. As open minded as the field is, there's a lot of systems that still play against people of color and uplifting them in the community. It has always been my goal from the inception of the organization that the work I was going to do was meant to uplift those types of communities and voices for sure.

Other things that inspire me are my experience as a first-generation American as well. In college, my other major was American Studies with a concentration in the evolution of culture. I feel like I epitomize what that means. I'm also a son of immigrants, like yourself Jocelyn, so I feel like I'm walking cultural evolution so to speak [laughs]. I speak multiple languages, I'm the first to graduate at the university level on both sides of my family. You know, I'm gay, I'm still religious, to a degree I should say, I've very liberally religious. There's all these complexities I think within myself. And I'm just one person, so I started to think when I'm casting folks I'm always curious about what their complexities are. What they're willing to share within the work that we create together. I love actually asking cast members to look into their complexities and into their layers and bring that out into their movement. I'm more interested in their movement than I am in me putting my movement or my feel onto their bodies. I'm very specific about doing that because I don't feel like I can speak for anybody else necessarily. Even if we have overlapping experiences. I do prefer the collaboration process where we work as co-choreographers instead, with dancers who come into the company. Those are some of the things that continue to inspire me and the reason I keep doing this work. I think it's important, which is also why I created LatinXtensions, to create some lineage and a form to pass down information, also to share it sideways, and also most recently I've created Latinx Hispanic

Dancers United, which is a national caucus, regional and national caucus for Latinx artists with the same idea of creating a space and an environment where we can be authentically ourselves but we can also discuss our needs and discuss our complexities and exchange ideas and resources. That's honestly what continues to drive me forward. I really do feel like that a lot of the work that is going to come from me from this moment onward is going to be driven by that.

[music]

**Andréa:** We're back with In Conversation with David Herrera and Jocelyn Reyes. Thanks for listening!

**David:** But of course, you know, 2020 has been kind of funky [laughs] for all of us. It has done a lot of weird things for all of us, so there's some changes, some slight changes I've made and one of them being that we have postponed any performance opportunity. I myself have not necessarily taken to create work for video yet, or film, but I know you have. I've been following that, so can you tell me a little bit of what happened to REYES Dance when COVID-19 and shelter in place hit.

**Jocelyn:** Yeah, so we were in the middle of a new full-length work that we were going to share as part of a co-production with Joe Goode Annex in May of 2020. We were in the middle of that process and suddenly COVID happened. I felt it was definitely very sad. We were all very excited and we had been at that part of the process when we're all really getting to know each other and finally getting to that awesome collaboration. I wanted something to remember that we worked together and to give us this sort of feeling of closure - something to conclude our time together.

What I started doing is, with my dancers, we came up with some prompts and made a [film version](#) of the beginning section of what was going to be part of *LASOS*, which was the new production. We each just filmed ourselves in our own respective homes with our iPhones and then they all sent me their films and I started editing and put them together, trying to figure out ways in which we could partner but in the virtual space. Sometimes, for example, one dancer might bump into another dancer and then I would cut the clips as the other dancer reacted as if they got bumped into, and just trying to figure out new ways of creating in this new medium.

Since then, I've been kind of just nerding out [David laughs] on using different editing softwares. I started with iMovie and then I recently switched to DaVinci Resolve, and I've been looking up a bunch of YouTube videos on how to do this or how to do that, and how to edit, looking up all the different parts of it, and it's been actually really nice. I feel like I've been doing choreography for so long and the longer I do it, the more things I know that I don't want in my dance work and so I feel like I have a very strict list of things that I do and don't want, and because film is so new to me, I suddenly have so many possibilities and I don't have any internal ideas about what I think it should be. It's just like, "Okay, I'm going to try anything out and see how it goes." It's been kind of liberating in that way.

And I started doing solo work after that and just filming myself, which is really new to me. I definitely prefer to collaborate with artists. A big part of choreography that I really enjoy is, kind of like you were saying David, is getting to hear everybody else's stories and getting to work with other people. The time in the studio is always so fun, like getting to meet other people and dance together, and so it was definitely a transition to start working by myself in my living room.

But it's like starting back the way it all begins. You know, just kind of working on my practice again. It's been kind of nice to go back and reevaluate what it is that I want to continue to create. That's kind of what I've been doing these days.

**David:** I actually have enjoyed having this time to self-reflect, to be honest.

**Jocelyn:** Yeah.

**David:** We had just had our first couple of meet-ups before shelter in place was announced for my new home season, which was happening in Z SPACE. And it's still going to be happening in Z SPACE but now moved to 2021. We had just our first couple of meetings, our first true rehearsal, and then we were locked down. And of course, that's a *huge* disappointment and it just threw everything up in the air. It created a lot of chaos, a lot of uncertainty, but as time kept going, and I think we all started to recognize that this wasn't going to go away anytime soon, I settled into the idea of like, "Okay, this is time for some reflection" - not only about the history I've had so far and what I've done, both wrong and right, but also what I want to do moving forward. And this is when a lot of clarity has come in for me in regards to the community impact programming that I'm developing with David Herrera Performance Company. Now I've really sunk my teeth into continuing the LatinXtensions program but even more so, developing this national caucus, so outside the region, obviously we're now having monthly meetings with Latinx artists...

And by the way, if there's any Latino, Latinx, Hispanic artists out there who are interested in joining this group, there's no membership, there's nothing you really have to do, just contact me and I'll add you to the email list and then just start attending the monthly meetings and you're part of the conversation. Anyhow, please come on in because it's great to know more and more of the folks who are out there wanting to be part of a community like this.

I've sunk my teeth into developing this and working with the artists that are already involved at the moment. There's 35 people within the group and then I've also been building the national level version of this, so I've been connecting with artists across the country. There's connections now in Los Angeles and Seattle, Washington DC, in Virginia, in Puerto Rico, in New York, Chicago, and Arizona. This is really growing and I'm super excited about it! And it's growing at a much faster pace than I anticipated, but I think it's because COVID has also shown us that spaces like this - that provide support and comradeship, especially for people of color - are necessary and are wanted and are desired. I think it's showing us that we're also no longer willing to be on the sidelines of the dance field, and we're looking for changes and we're demanding changes, and demanding that the programming that's out there reflects the

communities that we live in and reflects the cultural breakdown that is in the United States. I'm really putting a lot of my energy into that.

**Jocelyn:** It's been really nice to be a part of that caucus. It was nice to meet so many other artists and hear about their stories and also put our brains together [David: Yeah!] to figure out like: What is needed? What are we missing? How do we support each other and, tapping into each of our communities, try to bridge them together? I think that's been really interesting and I'm excited to see where it goes.

**David:** Well, isn't that the cool part? That we're getting to know each other on a much deeper level and also recognizing what powers we actually already behold, both individually and even more so as a collective. That's really so, so exciting to me to see that kind of happening on a grassroots level. That's where I'm heading with all that stuff.

**Jocelyn:** I feel like it's especially needed to find ways of connecting, and that time to connect, when today we feel so isolated [David: Yes.] like we're literally in our own little square or little cube at our home, so it's really nice to have that time to connect with artists.

**David:** Even though I'm not doing performance work at the moment, this is fulfilling me completely as well in a different way. It's something that I'm very thankful for - it's been a weird silver lining considering how COVID has affected the country in such awful ways and other aspects: jobs being lost, and people becoming sick, and even worse dying. COVID has hit - I'm actually in the middle of quarantining *at this very moment* [laughs] because two people in my inner circle came down with COVID, so it's a very real thing. Having this outlet has helped out a lot. I keep thinking about it - and this is going to sound a little morbid, and I don't mean for it to sound morbid - but I keep thinking like, "If I were to go within the near future myself, what did I leave behind?" And so I hope that programming like this, and what I do with both our performances and with our community impact programming, that it leaves something for somebody else to work with or move forward with and hopefully build some connections with other folks where even if I'm not part of it, it can carry on and continue to create.

I am obviously looking forward to going back into the studio. We have started rehearsals, just with a handful of people, outside at a park right now but let's see how long that lasts because obviously, it's now November, and it's getting colder outside [laughs].

**Jocelyn:** Yeah, I've been working on a new film that we're shooting at Mori Point with two collaborators and we just went for our second film session this past weekend, and it was so cold! It was like 5pm and we were freezing. So definitely, I'm also questioning how it's gonna go as it starts to get colder.

**David:** Yeah, and I do want to get this production that we had slated for 2020 going. I'm really excited about it. It's called *The Tip of My Tongue* and that'll be at Z SPACE. It was a topic that I was really interested in exploring a couple years back and I was able, finally, to put that at the forefront of our production calendar and sady that went away. I am looking forward to getting

back into that, but even with the rehearsals that we have been having, because it's been just one or two people at a time and we're not doing any partnering or anything like that yet - everything is spaced out - it's not quite hitting in the same way as a regular rehearsal would hit I think. We're working on the things we can work on and then tabling those things that we cannot work on.

And it's a whole new process I think as you're recognizing yourself, it's a new process. We're all working through it and figuring it out, but it has been nice to see other people in an artistic fashion.

**Jocelyn:** I totally agree. Something I was thinking about while you were talking about the limitations of not being able to do partner work and having to stay far apart is, in delving into this new medium - film - how do those limitations bring on more possibilities [David: Yes.] and how can I create a relationship between two dancers even though they cannot touch and they have to be six feet apart? It's been challenging, but also it's nice to be open to new possibilities and consider new ways of working.

**David:** Well I think you hit the nail on the head there with: How do the limitations create new possibilities? And that's why I was talking about the silver lining around all this has been like, "Okay, so I can't be in the studio now - what *can* I do?" I feel like a lot of richness is coming out from a lot of folks who are figuring out new ways of expressing themselves - in either an artistic fashion, whether it's going to film or voice work or things like that, or doing other programming such as the ones I described.

I know a lot of folks who are doing collectives and developing groups and programs, either by themselves or through their organizations, and it just excites me to see that happening knowing that when we finally get to go back to studios - if that's ever a thing again - that there's going to be all these other support systems in place already, ready to go and geared up to enrich the lives of so many other artists. At least, that's the way I envision it and that's the way I dream it.

[both laugh]

**David:** I'm hoping it's true...

**Jocelyn:** Trying to stay hopeful!

**David:** And I feel very, very hopeful. It's something I've been holding onto through this entire time - well, through this entire year of 2020 honestly.

[music]

**Andréa:** We're back with In Conversation with David Herrera and Jocelyn Reyes. Thanks for listening!

**Jocelyn:** I also feel like this time has given me a moment to think about all the different aspects of production. Something that I've been thinking a lot about is grant writing, and how I talk about my own work and how I present my work. Something that I was realizing is: Why is it that, as dance movers and people who create choreography and dance, in order to apply for funding we need to submit a full-on essay about the work? And then only one or two minutes of movement of what we've been creating.

It's made me think - I wonder if there are different ways of writing grants, and different ways of selecting artists, different ways of distributing funds that could be more equitable. Because I was thinking, if we're basing it so much on writing, it already makes it an uneven playing field.

**David:** Yeah, fully agree.

**Jocelyn:** Some people, English is their first language, and perhaps they'd have people in their immediate family who can look over grants or they have, within their circle, that access to resources. I feel like, as someone whose first language is not English - and my parents don't speak English fluently, they mostly just speak Spanish - I don't have that extra support from my family to have someone read over my grants and that type of thing. [N.B. Though I do have help from my partner and from my friends.] I wonder if there are different ways of selecting and sharing resources among artists.

**David:** I'm with you 100% on this. I do think it's something for funders to consider, and not even consider, but really look at restructuring their grant processes. Because you're right! We're movers and we do work that's embodied, so it is a little strange that, in order to get some of these funds and some of the support, we have to rely strictly on the writing versus the actual work itself.

Something I do recommend, and something that I'm doing myself, is I am joining more panels and I'm having more conversations with funders in regards to this very specific topic because I do think it needs to change, it needs to be reformatted. I love hearing folks like yourself, especially younger folks, who are saying "Hey! This isn't reaching out to me at all. This is actually putting me on the sidelines, and I see the same people getting the grants and the money over and over." Something's amiss when it's the same folks and so much of the community is left on the sidelines or marginalized or left completely out of the possibility because of access, or the lack of access really, in a lot of communities, particularly communities of color I feel like. Many of us didn't have access to arts when we were young so we don't have those networks that so many folks already come into and, I'm going to say this very clearly, particularly white folk who do have access from the get-go, at a young age. They have networks that are already built into their education of the arts and many of us are learning them really late in life. For myself, it's taken me over a decade to really get myself established. I still think of myself as an emerging artist and yet I am 20 years in, you know?

[both laugh]

**Jocelyn:** That's something that surprised me when we did LatinXtensions and you brought in a lot of different guest artists who had been in the field for a long time. I remember we were talking about grant writing and many of the artists have been creating work for 6-7+ years before they got their first grant.

**David:** I want to say most of the artists actually have been, like myself, in the field for 15-20+ years.

**Jocelyn:** And it was so surprising, so I was like, "What were you doing before then? How were you creating work? How were you paying your artists?" And they were like, "Well, we were just hustling, working many jobs." I wonder if there's a way to support emerging artists. I remember when I was first applying to grants, there were many grants that had a cap where you must have been creating work for 4-5 years to apply to this grant.

**David:** Yes.

**Jocelyn:** And then also I feel like when you also submit work samples, you're expected to show good documented dance and that costs money to hire a good videographer. I was thinking about those caps where it says you can only apply if you've been working for this much [time]. I wonder if there can be the opposite, where you can only apply to this grant if this is your first year, your first two years of making work or something along those lines to help new artists that are just arriving into the city and trying to get started. I think that'd be super helpful. I feel like that's why it's so important to have places like SAFEhouse Arts. When I first got to San Francisco, I was so thankful and happy to have a residency with them because that's how I was able to start making things. If there were more programs and more resources geared towards new artists, I think it would be a great way to bring in more diverse voices into the dance scene.

**David:** Yes, yes, and yes [laughs]. Oof, I mean honestly, we can talk forever about some of those things, but I think we're starting to make some of those changes ourselves. I think it's good that we're creating our own groups and our own collectives and things like that so we can mobilize and unify our voices so that we can then demand some of these changes and ask for some of these changes and hopefully see the cultural dynamics shift, as I said earlier, to reflect the country as is, rather than what used to be, and with that being predominantly white, or predominantly religious, predominantly wealthy, so on and so forth. Those kinds of things. So really working against the systems that have been set up and that have been perpetuated but I really think that the power is going to come from those of us who are doing this type of work and that's why I'm so darn excited about seeing so many people doing this right now because I do feel like the shift is finally here [laughs]. And I'm all for it! I'm embracing it.

**Jocelyn:** Yeah, I do feel very hopeful and slowly seeing things change.

**David:** I love to continue having this conversation, I know we're running short on time here, but this is a conversation I think both you and I are invested in and a lot of other folks are invested in, so let's keep these channels going, let's keep these networks happening, and let's keep

pushing for diversity and access and not just within the arts, but outside of the arts, bringing in other communities to be part of the art world and having the art world go back into the communities as well. I think it's extremely important that it's part of everyday life for everyone.

[music]

**Andréa:** Such rich discussion. Thank you so much David and Jocelyn for joining us today.

**Jocelyn:** Thank you for having us.

**David:** It is my pleasure. Thank you.

**Andréa:** If you'd like to get in touch with David or Jocelyn, please follow the links in the caption below.

We thank everyone who has tuned in for listening to this audio experience. For additional content that reflects our dynamic dance community, please visit our *In Dance* article archive at [dancersgroup.org](http://dancersgroup.org).