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Dancers' Group Announces Spring 2023 CA\$H Dance Grant Recipients



SAN FRANCISCO—[Dancers' Group](https://dancersgroup.org), a service and presenting organization in the San Francisco Bay Area, is pleased to announce it has awarded \$100,000 in grants to 20 Bay Area dance artists/partnerships and organizations. Each grantee will receive \$5,000 as part of the Spring 2023 round of CA\$H Dance.

The CA\$H Dance program has supported dancemakers since 1999 and was designed by artists for artists. The program seeks to support artists and organizations that represent the many diversities of Bay Area dance.

Dancers' Group received 104 applications for this round of funding—72 applications from individual artists and partnerships, and 32 applications from organizations. After 24 years of grantmaking, this total is second only to the number of applications received in last year's round of CA\$H Dance.

They were able to provide grants to 12 individual artists/partnerships and 8 organizations, highlighting dance forms such as hip hop, Bharatanatyam, Philippine folk dance, African American/LatinX movement art forms, Danza del Venado (Deer Dance), body music, kathak, contemporary, salsa, dance theater, Oaxaca traditional dance, ballroom, Japanese performing/martial arts, and more.

Two panels (one for each application category) of working artists and artist administrators reviewed applications this round. The panelists were Alice Hur, Carmen Roman, Jocelyn Reyes, Joti Singh, Rowena Richie, and Wayne Hazzard.

"As a CA\$H grant panelist, I feel I just got a fresh wave of the current Bay Area dance scene, so rich." — Carmen Roman

The CA\$H Dance program is funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation with additional support from the Fleishhacker Foundation and the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation.

The 20 Spring 2023 CA\$H Dance grantees are:

Links to artists and organizations as well as project descriptions follow the list of awardees

Organizations

1Up Crew
Bahiya Movement
Dance Generators
inkBoat theater and dance company
Megan Lowe Dances
melissa dorothy lewis wong [the sardine]
Oakland To All
Oaxaca Tierra del Sol

Artists/Partnerships

Andrea Rodriguez
Antara Bhardwaj
Audrey Johnson
Bis-Millah Muhammad
Conni McKenzie
Evie Ladin
Gabriele Christian
Jesús Cortés
Karla Flores
Kim Requesto
Surabhi Bharadwaj
Tammy Johnson in partnership with
Deborah Slater

Organization Projects:

1Up Crew is a hip hop dance organization from Oakland, CA that promotes creativity through visual entertainment and provides opportunities for dancers and emerging artists through professional productions and events. 1Up's vision is to further grow the hip hop scene in the Bay Area and bridge the gap between freestyle and choreography, while teaching the culture, foundation, and history to the youth.

CA\$H Dance will support: the development of 1Up's partnerships with middle schools and high schools in the Bay Area that will consist of performances, workshops, and a scholarship program. In Dec 2023, 1Up will also host their annual Double or Nothing (DON) event which includes exhibition battles, showcases, and tournaments.

Instagram: [@1upcrew](#)

Facebook: [1Up Crew](#)

Founded by mother/daughter duo Afia and Nafi Thompson, [Bahiya Movement](#) is a dance company and community grounded in the belief that dance has the power to heal—physically, emotionally, and spiritually—especially those traditionally excluded from artistic spaces.

CASH Dance will support: Bahiya Movement's programming with general operating funds. Their Believe In Self (BIS) mentorship residency program is transitioning to become the QUEERspace residency program. While BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities continue to be under attack, QUEERspace will provide a safe artistic space and resources for young queer and trans people of color. Bahiya Movement will also be producing their annual repertoire concert and a day-long dance workshop conference as part of their BoDi ROC dance program. They continue to advance accessible programming by offering online and in-person options.

Instagram: [@bahiyamovement_dance](#)

Facebook: [Bahiya Movement](#)

[Dance Generators](#) is an intergenerational dance company housed at the University of San Francisco that fosters artistic collaboration across generations. Ranging in age from 18 to 91 years old, Dance Generators artists and collaborators come together through a shared commitment to using dance as a vehicle for bridging divides, social action, and community building.

CASH Dance will support: a new public facing workshop series that offers drop-in Intergenerational Dance Labs open to people ages 18+. Director Liv Schaffer and Guest Artist Dazaun Soleyn will also collaborate on a work that seeks to bridge cultural and racial divides while examining and interrupting the whiteness that anchors the creative aging field.

Instagram: [@dancegenerators](#) / [@livschaffer](#) / [@dazaun_s](#)

[inkBoat theater and dance company](#) researches the interplay of multiple artistic disciplines and viewpoints, drawing primarily from the Japanese performing/martial arts, and improvisational arts. Founded by Shinichi Iova-Koga in 1998, inkBoat members are based in San Francisco, Luzern, New York, Paris and Berlin, performing throughout North America, Europe, South Korea and Japan.

CASH Dance will support: *Clouds from a Crumbling Giant*, a community-engaged dance project that combines the traditional practices of Daoist internal arts with inkBoat's theater and performance-devising traditions. Working with David Wei of Wudang West, inkBoat will engage the elderly and disabled participants of SF Community Living Campaign (SFCLC) and Elder Ashram to create *Clouds* – a fully staged hour-long work featuring 13 artists from inkBoat, 6 musicians, and the voices of members of the SFCLC and Elder Ashram.

Instagram: [@shinichiiovakoga](#)

Facebook: [inkBoat](#)

With an affinity for dynamic places and partners, [Megan Lowe Dances](#) (MLD) shifts your perspective. Directed by a choreographer of Chinese and Irish descent, MLD explores complex

identities and experiences by tackling unusual physical situations and inventing compelling solutions, opening up the imagination to what is possible.

CASH Dance will support: *Gathering Pieces of Peace*, a project exploring how AAPI power is rooted in cultivating solidarity among our BIPOC communities. With a cast uniquely made up of mixed-race artists, the project features three BIPOC-centered workshops and culminates in a 60-min dance theater production premiering at ODC Theater (Sep 2-3 & 8-9), free to the public.

Instagram: [@mloedancekitty](#)

Facebook: [Megan Lowe](#)

melissa lewis wong's project-based artistic practice is situated at the intersection of their forms and communities in San Francisco: Asian American performance, martial arts and drag. Their maternal Chinese lineage is the place from which they create—in conversation with their experiences in the world of queerness, mixedness and diaspora.

CASH Dance will support: 花和霧 *flowers and fog*, which began in 2020 as a film featuring Melissa's mother, Joy Chenyu Lewis. In this next phase, Melissa and Joy will shift their personal film process into a public engagement with broader queer and Asian American communities by developing the work as an in-person show. The project is a process with maternal lineage for Joy and Melissa to discover new, creative ways of relating to one another with expression/joy at the center.

Instagram: [@lemelissa](#)

[Oakland To All](#) is a collaborative that seeks to continue to foster an inclusive space for the ballroom community of the Bay Area and surrounding areas. They create an inclusive atmosphere for LGBTQ+ black and brown individuals, and their allies, to express themselves in a fun, safe, and creative way, while integrating access to resources and linkage to care through their partnership with local LGBTQ+ community-based organizations.

CASH Dance will support: a ballroom conference with an emphasis on conflict-resolution and mental health followed by their annual free Ball ~ Hella Hyphy Ball pt. 2 ~ on Sep 9, 2023 at Oakland Lake Merritt Amphitheater.

Instagram: [@OaklandToAll](#)

Oaxaca Tierra del Sol is a nonprofit organization that preserves, conserves, teaches and defends the culture and arts of the Oaxacan communities that are based in Northern California.

CASH Dance will support: La Guelaguetza Sonoma County 2023, which will take place on July 16 at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts. The festival brings together Oaxacan residents living throughout California and Oregon to participate in Oaxacan culture and traditions. Their activities have expanded to also provide access to information and community services relating to natural disasters, public health, translation and more.

Facebook: [Guelaguetza Oaxaca Tierra del Sol](#)

Artist/Partnership Projects:

[Andrea Rodriguez](#) is a Latina-Xicana-Mexican American multidisciplinary dance artist, choreographer, pilates instructor, actress, and filmmaker. Her artistic process stems from breaking the silence of substance abuse and mental health in the Latinx community by healing generational trauma through dance, theater, spoken word, video, and technology.

CA\$H Dance will support: the development of *La Rumba No Para (The Rumba Doesn't Stop)*, a dance theater production and salsa love story about growing up in San Francisco, La Misión. A work-in-progress showing will take place at the end of 2023, with the goal of eventually developing a full-length production.

Instagram: [@supafly_budafly](#) / [@thebudaflymethod](#)

Facebook: [Andrea Rodriguez](#)

[Antara Bhardwaj](#) identifies as a storyteller through kathak, film, and writing. She works in artistic spaces beyond the traditional Indian classical—choreography for the opera, math in dance lecture-demonstrations, and dance video production. She also mentors young women in the art of kathak, in a contemporary adaptation of the guru-disciple tradition through her dance company and school, Antara Asthaayi Dance.

CA\$H Dance will support: in-depth study of taal (rhythm), the foundation and language of kathak, with percussion master Pandit Sandeep Das. Bhardwaj will spend two weeks living and studying with Das, imbibing music and rhythms in the way it was passed down to him—through one-on-one study in an oral tradition.

Instagram: [@antaraasthaayi](#)

Facebook: [Antara Asthaayi Dance](#)

[Audrey Johnson](#) is a queer, Black, mixed-race dance artist with roots from Detroit, MI/Anishinaabe land, currently based in Oakland, CA/Ohlone land. Audrey's performance and teaching work experiments with improvisation and embodied time travel, in refusal of colonized time and space.

CA\$H Dance will support: research and development of the performance project *land|body|memory*. The work is a call and response between the land and the body, emerging from Black American relationships with land. The performances will be place-based movement prayers, each iteration offering performers and audiences space for ritual, rest, and imagination.

Instagram: [@the.aud.tm](#)

Bis-Millah Muhammad, a native of California, is a professional performing artist, dancer, choreographer, actor, drummer, and educator. Muhammad has traveled, studied, performed and taught West African drum and dance with renowned companies and artists across the US and West Africa.

CA\$H Dance will support: dance research in Ghana that will be adapted into a traditional African musical drama for the stage. Muhammad's focus will be based on the calling of the

Motherland, an innate connectivity felt by many African-Americans to find themselves, to learn about their culture, to heal trauma, and to feel a sense of belonging and pride in knowing where their strength comes from.

Instagram: [@dancing.bismillah](#)

Facebook: [Uwannacme Dance](#)

Conni McKenzie is a versatile dancer with extensive training in Jazz, Hip-Hop, Ballet, Tap, Modern, Contemporary, and West African. As a dance educator and freelance video editor, Conni works with various organizations in the Bay Area.

CA\$H Dance will support: *Flow*, which explores the idea of achieving and sustaining states of flow in our daily lives and in relation to our environment as told from the perspective of Black women. The work will integrate nature-inspired visuals, sound, spaces for reflection, and dance performance. It will be presented as part of the DEAR Residency at the Dresher Ensemble Studio, Oct 4-15.

Instagram: [@lady_dancelot](#)

Evie Ladin is a percussive-dancer, choreographer, vocalist, songwriter, banjo player and square-dance caller whose intercultural music/dance performances, recordings and teaching reconnect Appalachian arts with other African-Diaspora traditions. She is Executive Director of the International Body Music Festival, Artistic Director of MoToR/dance, and an ace freestyle flatfooter.

CA\$H Dance will support: the restaging of *Water in the Kettle*, a Body Music-based performance piece for a diverse, cross-generational cast of women raised on feminist ideals by working mothers to be working women, facing a breach of promise - in personal, professional, and public life.

Instagram: [@evieladin](#)

Facebook: [Evie Ladin / Band](#)

Gabriele Christian is an Oakland-based conceptual artist and descendent of stolen folk experimenting within somatic practices, language, performance composition, video production and community arts facilitation to locate and center BlaQ (Black and Queer) experience, vernaculars and aesthetics as wellsprings for radical futurity. They are a founding member of BlaQ-led projects: &theruptureisnow; OYSTERKNIFE; and blaQyard.

CA\$H Dance will support: the participation fee for the ATLAS program of ImPulsTanz, an international dance festival held in Vienna. Their research for ATLAS will focus on public space, cruising and black American folk games—particularly spades—and their lessons in revelry and revolt.

Instagram: [@gabriele.mov](#)

[Jesús Cortés](#) is the founder and Artistic Director of Cuicacalli, a cross-cultural, dance educational institution providing Indigenous, Mexican Ballet Folklórico, and Contemporary Dance programs. As an individual artist, he is a cultural ambassador of Ballet Folklórico Mexicano and continues to explore his Indigenous and African roots through music and dance.

CA\$H Dance will support: training to learn the traditional, ceremonial version of the Deer Dance under the direction of culture bearer and traditional Deer Dancer Abel Roman Amador Rodriguez of Sonora, Mexico. Danza del Venado, or Deer Dance, is a traditional dance of the Yaqui Indigenous people from the states of Sonora in northwest Mexico. The dance is a reenactment of creation itself and honors the sacred relationship to the light.

Instagram: [@cuicacalli](#)

Facebook: [Cuicacalli Escuela de Danza y Compañía](#)

Karla Flores is a Nicaragüense-American multidisciplinary artist and community leader based in Oakland, California. Her artistic practice focuses on two components: 1) Researching and learning from pioneers of African American/ LatinX movement art forms (e.g. waacking) and 2) Building conversations that center intercultural exchanges of African American/ LatinX freestyle art forms via workshops and community dance festivals.

CA\$H Dance will support: the third installment of AfroRooted (anticipated Spring 2024, Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts), an annual multicultural and multigenerational dance festival focused on African diasporic and African American cultural art exchanges. The 2-day event will include dance battles, accompanied by Afrohouse and Afrobeats DJs, live African drumming, as well as an Afro Fusion panel discussion.

Instagram: [@karlita_creates](#) / [@afrorooted](#)

Facebook: [Karla Patricia Flores](#) / [AfroRooted](#)

[Kim Requesto](#) is a Philippine born, Mission District raised Cultural Worker and Interdisciplinary Artist based in unceded Ramaytush Ohlone Territory also recognized as San Francisco, CA. With an artistic foundation in Philippine folk dance, Requesto has dedicated herself to cultural expression and advocacy through movement, photography, and community outreach. Requesto has been part of the Philippine Folk Dance community since 2005 and is currently with Parangal Dance as part of their Artistic Team. Requesto is the producing artist behind Pangalay Circle, a workshop series focused on providing accessible resources and creating in-person dance circles with hopes of connecting community members with seasoned practitioners who specialize in Pangalay dances and other related forms.

CA\$H Dance will support: artist fees and operational costs relating to *Pasalamat Sa Mga Ina*, a work that interweaves two styles of Philippine dance—Binasuan from Pangasinan and Pangalay from the Tausug of the Sulu Archipelago. The project explores creating dance and ritual inspired by the joy inherited through our matriarchal lineages and chosen mothers.

Instagram: [@kimrequesto](#) / [@pangalaycircle](#)

[Surabhi Bharadwaj](#), Artistic Director of Siddhi Creative, is a seasoned Bharatanatyam dancer, teacher, choreographer, and a lighting designer based in San Ramon, CA. Her pursuit as a dancer and teacher is to reimagine Bharatanatyam as a more inclusive and accessible art form.

CA\$H Dance will support: the development of the next iteration of *The Maze*, which is a devised work that explores the political through the personal. While drawing from Bharadwaj's lived experience as a woman navigating through structures of patriarchy, she intends to use text, movement, poetry, music, theater, and technology to challenge the notions of beauty, femininity, motherhood, and the deification of womanhood.

Instagram: [@surabhi.bharadwaj](#)

Facebook: [Surabhi Bharadwaj](#)

[Tammy Johnson](#) specializes in raks baladi, also known as Egyptian style bellydance. She is a performer, writer, and racial equity consultant who strives to facilitate community building and connection through her work. Johnson will partner with **Deborah Slater**, a director/choreographer/performer who has worked in dance and theater for over 40 years.

CA\$H Dance will support: the In the Presence of Chaos workshop series that provides space to explore how people processed the first two years of the pandemic and how it has imprinted itself on our bodies. This is a companion effort to the [IN THE PRESENCE OF ABSENCE](#) project, a full-length piece with dance, theater, and spoken word that will premiere in November 2023 at Dance Mission.

Instagram: [@tammy.johnson.510](#) / [@debslaterdance](#)

Photos (left to right): Oakland To All (photo by Estefany Gonzalez), Kim Requesto (photo by Ralph C.R), Bahiya Movement (photo by Chani Bockwinkel)