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## **Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2015**

**Chair**

**Mr. Gordon Brown**



## Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC)):** Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to call meeting number 47 of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to order. Today we are continuing our study of dance in Canada, and we have a number of witnesses with us in the first hour.

Before we get to that, I'd like to thank vice-chair Monsieur Dion for stepping in. I had to table some reports in the House and made it just in time.

Thank you to our witnesses for coming today. First, from the Canada Council for the Arts, we have Caroline Lussier, who is head of the dance section, as well as Alexis Andrew, who is head of the research and evaluation section. From Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet we have Jeff Herd, who is the executive director. From RUBBERBANDance Group we have Victor Quijada, choreographer and co-artistic director, as well as Fannie Bellefeuille, who is the general manager.

Each of our three groups will have up to eight minutes.

We're going to start with our friends from the Canada Council for the Arts. You have the floor.

[Translation]

**Ms. Caroline Lussier (Head, Dance Section, Canada Council for the Arts):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It is my great pleasure to present to you the work that the Canada Council for the Arts is doing in the area of dance. I would like to thank the committee for giving us this opportunity.

The mandate of the Canada Council for the Arts is to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts. In the area of dance, the Canada Council for the Arts supports professional dance in Canada, in all of its forms and expressions, through policies, programs and initiatives that contribute to the development of a healthy ecology of this art form and fosters a strong presence of Canadian artists in dance across the country and abroad. The Canada Council for the Arts shares with Canadian Heritage in supporting the various stakeholders in the area of dance. The council supports artists and dance companies in their research, creation, production, performance and touring process.

The programs of the Canada Council for the Arts are currently undergoing an extensive review. The design of the programs is based on the council's convictions and core values, including respect for diversity in expression. What comes to mind is Canada's regional

diversity, the contemporary practices of aboriginal peoples, as well as the diversity of cultural and racial origins and traditions.

The council supports all stages in the creation of a choreographed work, from the concept to its performance before an audience, in a way that fosters the creation of quality works so that the interaction with the audience is as rich as possible. In terms of the working conditions of dance artists, it is important to know that adequate compensation of artists is one of the evaluation criteria for files submitted to the council.

To illustrate this support, let me share a few numbers from 2014-15: 64 dance companies — professional, of course — spread out across the country, from east to west, received recurring support. We have also supported 68 projects to produce choreographed work, 40 research projects and 28 professional development projects, all led by artists who have shown excellence in their approach and artistic merit in their projects.

Few dance companies have been established in the regions. So it is important that the Canada Council for the Arts support the spread of choreographed works so that audiences from all regions across Canada has access to professional dance productions. Through the council's support for dance tours, it extends the lifespan of dance works and, in so doing, prolongs and increases job opportunities for dancers.

National tours promote access to dance across Canada and increase the knowledge and appreciation of different forms of dance by Canadian audiences. Last week, several stakeholders highlighted the importance of developing dance audiences in Canada.

Through its support for international tours, the council develops the knowledge and appreciation of dance in Canada beyond our borders and encourages a dialogue and exchanges between artists from Canada and other countries. In 2014-15, the Canada Council for the Arts supported 27 national tours and 23 international tours.

Let me give you a few national examples: the Marie Chouinard Company in Montreal toured five cities, which provided employment for 20 days to 16 dance professionals. Kaha:wi, an aboriginal dance company from Toronto, did a tour of western Canada for a families and schools and provided jobs to 10 people for 37 days.

Internationally, the National Ballet of Canada shone in New York City, the dance Mecca, for six shows. Two companies distinguished themselves in China: the Royal Winnipeg Ballet — and Jeff Herd will be able to tell you about that — and Sherbrooke's Sursaut, a dance company for young audiences. Sursaut also did a two-week tour in Mexico, providing a tour contract of 15 days to 10 dance professionals.

To facilitate tours of shows throughout our very large country, to build stronger and more efficient tours, the presenters formed a pan-Canadian network and a number of regional networks. We recognize the importance of these networks and support their projects regularly.

Over the years, to make up for a lack of resources, the dance community has created and equipped itself with some remarkable tools.

• (1535)

Dancers are champions of sharing resources, including human resources, equipment, studios and choreography centres. Their inventiveness knows no bounds.

The council recognizes the need for organizations and support projects in the community and provides these organizations financial support within its means.

This is a very broad overview of the support that the Canada Council for the Arts gives to professional dance in Canada, but the council's actions extend beyond the professional reality of dance and covers the entire ecosystem, as my colleague, Alexis, will tell you about.

**Ms. Alexis Andrew (Head, Research and Evaluation Section, Canada Council for the Arts):** Thank you, Caroline.

[English]

The Canada Council, in partnership with the Ontario Arts Council, has undertaken a multi-year study of dance in Canada. The purpose of the dance mapping study has been to get a clearer picture of the ecosystem of dance in Canada and to understand its social impacts.

An important aspect of the dance mapping study, which sets it apart from other Canada Council research, is that it has been holistic in looking at both professional and non-professional or leisure dance. This helps to situate what the council supports, professional not-for-profit dance, in a much broader and engaged ecosystem.

So far there have been six research projects undertaken, with the seventh and final project currently under way. I will focus my remarks today on the findings of the Yes I Dance survey, which was released earlier this year, as it responds to the committee's interest in understanding how dance affects Canadian society.

This landmark study, while not statistically representative, gathered data from over 8,000 respondents aged 16 and older who dance, teach dance, and choreograph dance in some type of organized or ongoing way. Questions captured the breadth and diversity of dance in Canada. In many ways the survey showed how important dance is in the lives of those who engage in it, whether they are professionals or leisure dance participants. This can be seen

in the amount of time spent on dance, the history of involvement, and the variety of dance forms that respondents are engaged in.

The survey revealed that 80% of respondents engage in more than one form of dance. Notably, 190 forms are represented, from ballet to Bollywood. Leisure dance participants spend an average of six and a half hours per week dancing, while professionals spend almost 18 hours. Survey respondents have a lifelong involvement in dance, ranging from almost 17 years for leisure dancers to almost 24 years for professionals.

Why do people dance? Motivations include enjoyment, artistic expression, fitness, and social connection. In fact, three out of four respondents say it is part of a healthy lifestyle, bringing exercise and fitness into their lives. It provides them a sense of mental and physical well-being, stimulation, and escape from the stresses of daily life.

The survey findings have been visualized in an online interactive dance wheel that allows viewers to learn about different dance forms, where they are practised, and about the people who dance them. The full survey report is available on the council's website. It helps to illustrate the impact of dance on people's lives, and helps to raise awareness of the incredible diversity of Canadian dance.

The final component of the dance mapping study is a look at the social impacts of dance organizations, such as the benefits to health, identity, and social cohesion among other factors. The results will be available later this year.

As Kate Cornell of the Canadian Dance Assembly said last week in her presentation, the findings of the study are of vital use to the sector in understanding and articulating its impact. We hope they will be useful to you as well. A handout has been prepared that outlines the major research components.

Thank you.

[Translation]

Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We will now move to Mr. Herd. You have the floor for eight minutes.

**Mr. Jeff Herd (Executive Director, Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet):** Thank you very much.

I want to begin by thanking the committee for its interest and for the unique opportunity for us to talk about Canadian dance.

Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet is the oldest ballet in Canada and one of the oldest in North America. We used to call it the oldest continuously operating, but there are too many qualifiers there.

First established in 1949, we are celebrating our 75th anniversary and have been named a "national historic event". We received our royal charter in 1953, and we are also the first royal ballet in the British Commonwealth and the first charter given by Her Royal Highness.

We recently commissioned a piece in honour of our 75th anniversary based on the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and are about to tour it throughout Canada, bringing the arts and indigenous communities closer together to continue the discussion and understanding of reconciliation.

Dance tells Canadian stories by reflecting our society on its stages. Many classical dance forms in Canada are narratives and tell universal stories within the Canadian context, such as the beloved story of *Peter Pan*, as told by our Canadian choreographer and RWB graduate, Jordan Morris. Canadian choreography does convey the Canadian experience. When we tour Mark Godden's *Going Home Star - Truth and Reconciliation*, a story by Joseph Boyden about Canada's residential schools, the issue will be shared and subsequently discussed.

Dance encourages and engages in cultural, sociological, political, and ecological discourse. Based on these few examples, and many more, it's clear that Canadian choreographers excel at telling stories that reflect many Canadian issues.

First and foremost, we need to better recognize the work of Canadian choreographers by supporting the Canada Council for the Arts.

In terms of healthy Canadians, dance is a communal experience that revolves around teamwork, discipline, and sheer joy. For many researchers the health benefits of dance are tangible and measurable. To dancers at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School it's about the immeasurable value of dance. Regular dance lessons, regardless of the form, are good for the heart and the soul. Dance reduces the occurrence of obesity and helps children to develop focus and confidence. It also helps seniors with dementia and Parkinson's to better communicate.

For example, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has partnered with the National Ballet School on the sharing dance initiative, which you heard about on May 4. In 2017 the RWB will work to get one million Canadians dancing on Sharing Dance Day.

The connection between dance and health is evident and makes dance unique amongst many art forms. Dance can be extremely valuable to us because it can provide movement to segments of the population not necessarily motivated by sport. In short, dance promotes a healthy lifestyle, but you don't even have to get up because experiencing the dance performance also contributes to better mental health and stability.

In Finland, a recent study found that people who attend dance or classical concerts are more likely to report good health and quality of life, even after adjusting for other factors. Fit Canadians means less money spent on health care. We hope the federal government will encourage Canadians to dance and attend dance, such as performances by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, because benefits are tenfold.

Another interesting initiative illustrating the power of dance beyond the arts is Les Grands Ballets' creation of the national centre for dance therapy. This centre, based on clinical and medical research, training, and front-line services in dance movement therapy is the only one of its kind on the international scene. Created two years ago, this unique centre pilots some 14 projects in criminology,

eating disorders, aging, oncology, rehabilitation, pediatrics, and adolescent and adult psychology. So far it's rallied the services of 30 Canadian partners to include hospitals, medical research centres, universities, school boards, and seniors homes. The success of this centre is such that the Wall Street Journal has echoed its impact for the community.

A little bit about jobs in dance.... The Royal Winnipeg Ballet employs hundreds of Canadians throughout the course of the season, but it also employs some temporary foreign workers. Often the temporary foreign workers begin their relationship with the company at the school of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. The high calibre of teaching attracts international students who then contribute to the Canadian economy, on average, for two years. At the school, these international students will be seen by Canadian artistic directors and choreographers. If suitable, these students will be offered contracts within our company and companies throughout the world.

● (1540)

This important cultural exchange, which is at the heart of the dance community, is obviously very expensive. We're spending thousands of dollars per year, as we all are, on the temporary foreign worker program, and we hope that we will see something moving into the area of the international mobility program instead of the temporary foreign worker program.

The importance of arts on the Canadian stage and the international stage cannot be underestimated. Our reputation as a society is exemplified by our business, our sport, and our culture. The ability to take our artistic products into the world reflects on us as a nation. The recent initiative by the Canada Council to support international touring is very helpful in addressing this aspect for the arts. I encourage more such initiatives for this export, as well as, and very important in our thoughts going forward, the ability to import foreign companies.

The transition from dance to other careers is a fact of life, based on the athleticism of the dancer and the relatively short career. Many years ago, the creation of the dancer transition centre aided the retiring of dancers with support and training for their next careers. As in major sports, the career is very short, and the second career benefits immensely from the teamwork, discipline, and focus of trained dancers, along with their new skills, and aids in the evolution of the person into their new career.

Also, the continued support through the Canada arts training fund and the tax exemption for young artist training are important initiatives for the continued evolution and growth of the arts in Canada.

I thank you very much for your time and attention.

•(1545)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. We'll now move to the RUBBERBANDance Group.

You have the floor for up to eight minutes.

**Mr. Victor Quijada (Choreographer and Co-Artistic Director, RUBBERBANDance Group):** Thank you, and thank you to the committee for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I'm a choreographer and the co-artistic director of RUBBERBANDance Group, a Montreal-based company that creates, produces, and disseminates stage works and film works. The company tours extensively, performing full-length stage works and repertory programs across Canada and internationally. Our award-winning short film projects have been screened around the world.

What has distinguished me as a choreographer is a melding of influences that come from contemporary, classical, and hip hop or street dance forms. I'm recognized for not simply cutting and pasting these influences together, but for deconstructing and developing these forms into a new, distinct aesthetic. My artistic vision is a result of my personal background.

I grew up in Los Angeles and I was surrounded by a hip hop culture from a young age. My first exposure to dance was through street-corner breakdance battles and freestyle circles in the clubs. Late in my adolescence I began a more formal training at an arts high school and was introduced to classical and contemporary forms of movement and composition. I became familiar with conceptual art and notions such as cubism, surrealism, and minimalism. This is where a cross-pollination began inside of me where high art would influence what I had experienced through hip hop.

But only after securing contracts as a dancer with top choreographers and performing with major contemporary ballet and post-modern companies in New York and in Montreal would I eventually take on the role of choreographer myself. So since 2002 I've created over a dozen works for my company, RUBBERBANDance Group, and taken on a dozen commissions from other dance companies in North America and in Europe. From 2007 to 2011, I was an artist-in-residence at Place des Arts, which is where we've created and premiered the past four RUBBERBANDance creations.

These creations are partly funded by various types of co-producers, including presenting organizations like Montreal's Place des Arts; Danse Danse; or funding programs like CanDance here in Canada or the national dance project in the United States.

Depending on the show we are touring, the company employs about six or seven dancers by project, usually totalling 35 weeks of work. We average about 50 performances a year, typically performing in theatres that seat between 300 and 900, and we'll perform between one and five shows in each venue. We often hold post-performance sessions so we can exchange with the audience. In each city that we perform in we also offer master classes and workshops or lectures and demonstrations to young audiences.

As a medium-sized established company, we receive support at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels. The real challenge for me in the past years has been finding the right dancers to work with. Up to this point it's been extremely rare to encounter a dancer who

has a background like mine with extensive experience in classical, contemporary, and street hip hop forms. This has forced me to become an expert at training dancers who come from one side of the dance spectrum or the other. It becomes necessary to transmit information that a dancer might be missing and through a rigorous training process prepare them to work in my style. In this way, being pioneers in a new, burgeoning genre of contemporary hip hop means that the formal academic dance institutions have not yet been equipped to train the dancers in an updated manner and that responsibility has fallen on me.

The RUBBERBAND movement method is a technique that I developed to do just that, and it prepares dancers in a new way that considers all the advancements in movement invention that we've seen in recent times. In financial terms, this adds several weeks to a normal choreographic process for us, which is already one of our most costly activities.

I would compare the training that is necessary for our work to the equivalent of an actor needing to learn a new language to perform a new role. Only, in our case, without knowing the physical language that we work in, meaning the training of the body to work upright as well as in the inversions, not only does the choreography not read but it is also dangerous for the dancer.

Now, even though I've developed the RUBBERBAND method to prepare dancers to work in my signature style, on the flip side I've seen how the method has a transformative effect on dancers, whether they work in my choreographic style or not. In a way, it's upgrading a computer's operating system, so I've begun teaching RUBBERBAND method master classes in dozens of universities and conservatories and I recently spent a semester training and creating a work in the dance department at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

•(1550)

Next year I will serve as a visiting artist on faculty at the new Gloria Kaufman School of Dance at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Typically, the academic institutions are behind the curve as to what artistic innovations are happening on the front lines, but they are slowly catching up.

It is because the dance world in general has felt the appeal that hip hop influenced contemporary dance has that companies like ours have shown that hip hop influence doesn't need to remain only in the flash and the fireworks, but that it can be used in subtler ways and even to speak about the human condition.

As dancers are expected more and more to have skills that come from all ends of the dance spectrum, it is important to consider that for a company like ours especially, grants that allow for apprenticing and training are extremely important.

Le Conseil des arts de Montréal has the DémART program, which encourages internships to newly arrived or first-generation Canadian citizens. There are grants available at the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and also at the Canada Council for the Arts that support professional dancers in continuing training in their professional development.

Our company dancers and apprentices have benefited very much from this assistance, and I believe that this support for dancers is more important than ever.

Thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much for your presentations. We're now going to move to the questions.

It will be a seven-minute round and we're going to start with Mr. Hillyer.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Thank you, everyone, for coming today.

Victor, I have a couple of questions for you.

One thing that has been on my mind is how we can get more young men or boys involved in dancing. I just went to my daughter's dance competition, and there were lots and lots of girls; probably two out of 100 were boys.

Do you have any thoughts on what we can do to help boys see dance as a legitimate way to enjoy themselves? Right now I think there's a problem, with their thinking that it's not manly or something. Do you have any thoughts on that?

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** How long do I have to respond?

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** You have six and a half minutes.

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** Okay.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** I don't mind if you take the whole time on that question, because that's what's on my mind.

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** The good news is that it's already happening; we don't have to do much to help it along.

What I mean by that is that we're in a new era. I'm part of what I call a post-hip hop generation, and the biggest shift in the landscape of dance that I've seen involves two things. Number one is the proliferation of hip hop, which was at one time a subculture and is now everywhere in mainstream pop culture. For those forms, the dance specifically, it is a male-dominated world. Break, breaking, breakdance, krumping are historically male-dominated. It's very hard to imagine those styles of dance as anything other than the most manly exhibitions of power, dynamicism, and expression.

A wave has already begun, and it's not just at a street dance level. I started the company in 2002, and at that time it was a very innovative, I would say provocative, idea to put hip hop dancers who were not formally trained through ballet schools on stage in a contemporary context. Fifteen years later I teach a master class at the École de danse contemporaine de Montréal. What used to be the case—for every 30 women there might be two men—is now a case of having 15 men and 15 women, and those young men are coming from hip hop backgrounds. There's a big shift happening.

How do the institutions that have for so long followed the traditional path of classical ballet, contemporary dance update themselves? It's already happening. I think the private dance sector is a bit ahead of some of the institutions. Whereas a private dance studio in the past might have taught ballet, tap, and jazz, twenty years later—now, in the present day—they're teaching ballet,

contemporary, and some sort of hip hop: sometimes break, sometimes one of the funk styles. You have these young boys finding a way, and the bridge is instantaneous. As soon as they begin to train their body, they are already exposed to these other forms.

That's my story. My story at a certain time was very rare, but it will become less and less rare. I see it happening. In Montreal it has already happened.

● (1555)

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** Mr. Herd, would you say that it's starting to happen in the non-hip hop world as well?

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** We're seeing an increase. There was recently an article on the National Ballet School in Toronto about its seeing an increase in attendance by young men.

One thing we've been doing in the larger institutions is subsidize training for young men. There's a lot of hip hop—it's probably our fastest-growing form. We have three units in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet: a recreational school, a professional school, and the company itself.

We're seeing an uptake in the recreational school. We also did movement and dance for sport, and it has proven very valuable. We didn't continue it this past year, but it is something that will grow back. What it gives you is strength, agility, and ability to move. It's especially useful for things such as football and hockey. Once you get hit too many times in football, I think it loses its impact, though.

We find that there's a lot of de-gentrification of the ballet image, and I think this has improved attendance. We are seeing an upswing. This is anecdotal information through the Canadian Dance Assembly, but we did start seeing an upswing in attendance among both people in the audience and also the practitioners in dance, as was mentioned.

We are seeing a slight improvement, but I think the biggest thing is to continue to make it accessible and acceptable. A lot of the contemporary dance that see on television and in film has opened it up and helped to de-gentrify it as well.

But we are seeing more and more.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** I'll ask another quick question then. Part of the problem, and we've found this with film as well, is the marketing. I've never heard of your group, but you seem to perform quite a bit. How do we get more people to be aware of performances like yours? How much would it cost for the general public show and how do we get people to show up?

● (1600)

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** I don't know if we have that much time, but there is really a commercial side to dance. There's *So You Think You Can Dance* and the dance competitions that are happening and the dance films. Talk about an upswing in the presence of dance in film. There's a new dance film, a feature film like *Step Up* or *Save the Last Dance* or whatever the titles are, every year. There are all these films. That on the commercial side brings interest and then the grass-roots....

We're talking here about classical ballet and contemporary dance. Of all the performing arts disciplines, music and theatre and so on, dance is really the most marginal. Neither overnight nor in the next 10 years will contemporary dance be as accessible as theatre, because there are no words, because music is universal, and—

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We're going to move to Ms. Sitsabaiesan for seven minutes.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):** Thank you all for being here.

Ms. Andrew, you were speaking about the Yes I Dance survey.

Having been a professional dancer for over 25 years, I thought it was really good to see the dance survey and I checked that out on your website before as well. It's very exciting to see that dance and the many different forms of dance are now part of mainstream talk. That includes krumping and so on. Who knew what krumping was 10 years ago? The average person didn't know.

That's great. We're seeing the dance wheel. The dance form that I did for 25 years, bharatanatyam, is on the dance wheel, which is amazing. Thank you for doing that and bringing the other types of dance forms, which tell the immigration story of Canada. I guess it started off with the aboriginal art forms and went on to ballet being introduced and so on.

How was the sample chosen? Did you just do a call-out?

**Ms. Alexis Andrew:** There have been a few stages to the study. Part of it was an inventory, essentially, of membership-based associations and different organizations that supported dance at both the professional and non-professional levels. The survey was sent out through those contacts.

As we said, it's not representative. There were over 8,000 respondents, which is a great response rate, but because we don't know what the total population is, we can't extrapolate from that to a broader Canadian stance. This was for these respondents.

However, the depth of information drawn from the survey was quite astonishing, because it wasn't just the 8,000 responses but also the literally hundreds and hundreds of open-ended comments about what dance meant to people in their lives.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** I was trying to figure out how you could have gotten the sample, because the 8,000 respondents would have come from, I guess, your membership organizations, and there are so many other dance companies I know of in little Toronto itself that are not membership-based and that are probably not part of any larger organization. It would be really amazing to see if we could actually somehow capture that real snapshot of dance in this country.

Mr. Herd, you had mentioned the international mobility program, rather than the temporary foreign worker program. I know that labour mobility is part of NAFTA and it was a priority that was mentioned even when NAFTA was signed. Just to make it clear for everybody else, what do you mean when you say you would prefer to see the international mobility program rather than the temporary foreign worker program for our dancers?

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** In dealing with members of the government, we've talked about the inadvertent byproduct of the recent problems

and issues they've had to face. What we are looking for... When people come here to train and dance, or to practice dance, we do have all the regulations under the temporary foreign worker program. After a period of time, the only way for someone to stay here is to become a Canadian citizen, and many of our people have gone on to that track.

What we are looking for is something that gives us a bit more flexibility. There are people here from eastern Europe, Asia, and all over the world who intend to dance here to be part of it, but will also pursue careers throughout the world and don't necessarily want to become Canadian citizens, and vice versa across the U.S. border, etc. I've had the good benefit of working for a Canadian company in the U.S., and we come in under a different kind of petition, which is people of unique ability and things like that. I did have experience at Cirque du Soleil, where we had very special criteria for artists coming into Canada.

We are not looking for anything in terms of special treatment and all that. We are just looking for something that really reinforces our ability to bring in artists reasonably quickly. I had a great deal of difficulty bringing Twyla Tharp, a very famous choreographer, into Canada to create a ballet.

●(1605)

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** The flip side of that, and I am going to throw this out to any of you who would like to respond, is whether we are doing enough to develop our own domestic artists. In order to get good choreographers, you are looking all around the world. What do we need to do to develop our own local talent and make sure that we have the professionals we can rely on, rather than looking to the world all the time?

Anybody can jump in.

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** I think that's also a long-term process. There are institutions and conservatories that are recognized for providing the best training, and you look to those schools, the Juilliards and those types of schools. Many Canadian dancers who are born and trained in Canada will go to Juilliard and receive training there. Then they will go on to European contracts, stay in New York, or work elsewhere in the United States. I believe that training, and upping the training, is a big part of keeping dancers here. In the meantime, I do think that being insular about how we hire is not necessarily the way to go.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** I hear you on the short term. I am going to cut you off a little bit because I have less than a minute right now.

We see teaching language totally integrated into our schools, and sports are integrated into our schools. What do you think are the benefits of implementing partnerships with local dance companies, or larger Juilliards or whatever, into our school system?

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** The initiative of sharing dance is exactly that. It's to bring dance into the schools and into the community on a larger level.



The training is very important. The training program through Heritage is very important. I've gone blank on the name. The other thing is that this actually facilitates some of the larger cities. We benefit from that at our school, but it's also getting out into the smaller communities. There is a young gentleman from a Métis community in Saskatchewan who trained with us, trained in Toronto, and is a famous dancer in London. We'd like to keep them. We'd like to see more people from the indigenous communities around the country, etc. I think the training fund is very important.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Mr. Dion, you have seven minutes.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mrs. Lussier, Ms. Bellefeuille and Mrs. Andrew, and Mr. Herd and Mr. Quijada, thank you.

Mrs. Lussier, I really liked your presentation, but it seems to me that one sentence remains a little incomplete and is out of step with the rest. Things seem to be working well. You have programs, and you help companies. We don't know whether its more or less than past years, but we could ask you that.

The sentence in question is the following, "The programs of the Canada Council for the Arts are currently undergoing an extensive review." Why is an extensive review being done if everything is working so well?

**Ms. Caroline Lussier:** Indeed, everything is going well.

These reviews are taking place for a number of reasons. We support a group of companies in all areas, in creation, tours and support organizations, but there is room for improvement.

The community is changing. Victor spoke to you about his personal experience and the differences he has seen in dance schools in the past 15 years. We are reviewing our programs to adapt to these changes. Changes are taking place, not just in the world of dance. I'll talk about Victor's experience because it is perfect for illustrating my remarks.

• (1610)

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Of course. We're listening.

**Ms. Caroline Lussier:** Before, we had dancers who did hip hop, classical ballet and contemporary dance. Now, one dancer does everything, and Victor is a good example of this. The same is true in other disciplines. Productions are increasingly hybrids, meaning a dancer will work with a visual artists or a media arts artist. It can also be presented by a theatre presenter. The boundaries of disciplines aren't what they used to be. One of the reasons we are reviewing our programs is to adapt to these changes and to remain relevant in a sector that is shifting enormously.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** So that we can help you adapt, do you have any suggestions for the committee?

**Ms. Caroline Lussier:** Certainly to continue to support the Canada Council for the arts.

My colleague will answer.

**Ms. Alexis Andrew:** We are changing things because we want to lighten the administrative burden for the artists. Caroline said that the disciplines are changing, but how the artists want to interact with the Canada Council for the Arts is changing, too. We are also looking at our administrative processes to simplify them and make them less demanding for the artists. All the agencies would like to give the artists services and grants in the simplest possible way so that they can spend time doing their art rather than drafting reports and filling out grant applications.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** The goal of the reform you are preparing is two-fold. You want to adjust to new practices in dance and lighten the administrative burden on everyone who applies for grants so that they do not have to spend half their time filling out reports or work plans.

**Voices:** Absolutely.

[English]

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Mr. Herd, Mr. Quijada, Madame Bellefeuille, you deal with the arts council, I guess. You have an opportunity now to tell us what you want to see in this review of their program, and what you don't want to see.

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** If I may, I've had the good pleasure to work in Europe. The interesting thing is that in Europe, arts are very accessible at 39 euros or 39 pounds for a ticket. In Canada our tickets are very expensive, because we have to find money to produce our art and so on. I think all of us also in Canada have a very high earned revenue ratio. Of course, we're always in the room asking for more money—not today, but we're always asking for more money.

I was thinking about initiatives, very outlandish ones, where support for our cultural industries could be part of making, I don't know, tickets tax-deductible—or something ridiculous in that area—so that people could get to the arts. I'm looking forward to the day when I can be like Walmart and roll back my prices, but right now I don't have the guts for that. I think we need something to make things more accessible. We have these wonderful theatres across Canada and we have the wonderful infrastructure of the Canada Council. The council is an amazing entity and very supportive, but we're still looking for areas of access. This is, I think, the biggest thing we struggle with in terms of the business end.

For independent artists, I think it would be the same thing. What would make it possible for people to walk in off the street and go see a show? If we could be comparable to the movie theatres, even.... Mind you, Cineplex has gone up a little bit.

Those are the kinds of things, those outside-the-box initiatives, that I'm looking at.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Thank you.

Mr. Quijada.

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** I applaud the Canada arts council for continuing to try to streamline the process to also be malleable with the shifting landscape of dance. I mentioned already about how hip hop has changed, but that's just one part of this new generation that I was talking about. Because the Internet and the way that we share information and the way that we share dance has changed so much enormously, and at all tiers—the way that we receive it, the way that we're inspired, the way that we create—are being affected. They are attempting not only to streamline the application processes but also to redefine who does what and how, which is very important.

I think the Canada arts council has a difficult job. Most—not all—of the juries on who gets money are peer assessments. The Canada Council also has a very important role in.... It's something that is to be exercised with caution, but they can massage things to go in a certain way. That's not to mention common-sense management. If figuring out if resource sharing is an important thing for us in order to do more with the funds that we have, then that would come from the arts council.

It's a tricky area, because then we start doing their bidding and we start doing what they want us to do. That's a very dangerous place, of course. But there are ways that possibly they can help certain things happen—without going into any specifics.

•(1615)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We're now going to move to Mr. Young, for seven minutes.

**Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you very much for coming here today. It's very interesting. We have one of the oldest dance forms ever here with us with one of the newest, and you're saying many similar things, which is fascinating to me. I really appreciate hearing about it.

What I thought was really fascinating—and I think it was Mr. Herd who said this, or I beg your pardon, it might have been Alexis Andrew—is that dance is about expression, fitness, social connection, and physical well-being. Was that you, Alexis?

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** I think we all said it.

**Mr. Terence Young:** We're all sort of saying the same thing.

It's interesting, because in the Standing Committee on Health right now we're doing a study on the mental health of Canadians. It's a very serious issue and it seems to be getting worse for a whole range of reasons, yet what a lot of people who have mental health issues need is to express themselves, to get better physical fitness, to have better social connections and physical well-being. Dance could be a cure for many people, or at least benefit a large number of people who are suffering from a whole range of mental illnesses. The health side of it is absolutely fascinating to me, because it could help their hearts and their minds as well. So it's really great to hear, but difficult to measure.

I wondered, Mr. Herd, did you want to expand on that at all? Did you have enough time to comment on physical and mental health of dancers?

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** Certainly. We see that in our recreational division, just kids who come—my daughters, for example. Hopefully they'll

never be performers; they should go for higher salaries. The well-being is something that a lot of people embrace. There's something about the human animal. We've always sung, we've always danced, we've always told stories.

We've run a program about physical disability called.... I've gone blank on the name of the program. This is people, young and elderly, who come in with disabilities and learn movement. Most of them are challenged physically as well as mentally. We're looking at expanding these programs.

We've been in discussion—and we're going to follow a little bit on the heels of Les Grands Ballets—with the regional hospital about mental health and well-being issues and how we can use movement along those lines.

But we do see a change in discipline and behaviour and things like that, certainly in young people, and we'd like to explore that much further. I know that with what Les Grands Ballets has been doing and the practitioners they're working with, they are seeing the value of movement and rhythm and all that in many factors of health.

But I agree—other than working in the industry—mental health is something that I think is critical, and we do have a role to play beyond the presentation of dance on a stage.

•(1620)

**Mr. Terence Young:** We heard that grants are key, the Canada Council grants are—

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** I beg your pardon?

**Mr. Terence Young:** The Canada Council grants are key to dance.

First to Mr. Herd and then Mr. Quijada. I want to make a reference here. I have a list here of Canada arts training fund grants from 2011-12, and they are very varied: Ballet Creole, \$40,000; Canada's National Ballet School, \$6 million; Toronto School of Dance Theatre, \$300,000; Native Earth Performing Arts, \$50,000. I notice that in 2013 the Canada Council funding for dance as a package was over \$18 million.

Mr. Herd, what would happen if there weren't any Canada Council grants? What would happen to dance in Canada?

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** It's interesting, because myself and my board chair talk about this all the time. I come from the commercial sector as well as the not-for-profit.

I think definitely there would be a change of the ecology. There are successful profit-oriented arts organizations, Cirque du Soleil being a perfect example of that. The ecology as we know it now would be different. The big institutions, as we know them now, would be very different.

Would it die totally? The American model is out there. All of us are going after philanthropic and commercial corporate money. We're looking for earned revenue and new sources. We've done film as well. *Moulin Rouge* has gone around the world as a Cineplex project. We'd all have to find different ways of exploiting and disseminating dance, but I think the ecology would break down very quickly and I think there would be few survivors.

**Mr. Terence Young:** I think that about says it.

Mr. Quijada, may I have your reply to that?

**Mr. Victor Quijada:** We've heard from our liaisons at the Canada Arts Council—and here's an example—about massaging our company to look at the percentage of grant money and income that's coming from other sources and pushing us to become ready to go into bigger fundraising projects which, as probably everyone here knows, is a big endeavour.

The American model... When the bottom line is the most important, when selling tickets is the most important, something gets lost. Something that is very particular about Montreal is that there is an audience for all different types of dancing. Here we come talking about dance, and maybe some of you have very limited exposure to dance and you think, what is that dance and you imagine a ballet—and it is that. Or if you think modern, you think of people rolling around on the floor. It is that. If you think hip hop, you see people standing on their heads and spinning on their heads. It is that. You might think folkloric dances and ethnic. It is that. It's such a wide range and within all of those different ranges there is a space for it to be...we talk about these programs able to heal and to be about health.

There will be the money-makers who are all about the commercial aspect of entertainment for entertainment's sake. There also needs to be the freedom to explore artistically, where it's not so important if this is the next blockbuster.

What's special about Montreal, and I say this very often, is that there are audiences to go see the symphonic orchestra. There are also audiences to go see the most experimental digital musician. It's not in the same hall. You're not going to fill 3,000 seats with a guy on a computer experimenting with filters. But you will find 30 to 40 people in a studio loft listening, and that's their entertainment.

When you make the bottom line, do we sell tickets and is this the only way that we can make things happen... I've seen that American model, and instead of this vast panoply of different aspects of dance, it becomes whittled down and it becomes one aspect of whether we can make it profitable.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll go to Ms. Nash for five minutes, and you'll be the last.

•(1625)

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** Okay, thank you.

I'm very appreciative to hear all of the witnesses today. Thank you for being here.

I'm a big fan of dance. I'm from Toronto, and I love to attend performances by a variety of dance groups in our city. I'm thrilled to know that it's actually healthy for me to just be a spectator. Thank you. I've learned several things today.

I also want to give a shout-out to a local company from my riding, the Pia Bouman School for Ballet and Creative Movement, which is a not-for-profit school that not only engages people of all ages as students but really gets the community involved. They've even had me dancing *The Nutcracker* for a couple of years. They do an amazing job.

I want to ask a question about community engagement in a minute, but I want to pick up on something that was discussed earlier around the temporary foreign worker program. It was also raised that there seemed to be a preference for the international mobility program. I would like some clarification, and maybe I'll address this to the Canada Council for the Arts.

Is there a feeling that the temporary foreign worker program could actually be an obstacle to the development of dance companies in Canada?

**Ms. Caroline Lussier:** I would say that “obstacle” may be a big word; certainly, it's *un frein*.

Kate Cornell was giving an example last week of the Kidd Pivot company from B.C., which is working with dancers from different areas of Canada. It was getting a bill of \$9,000 because for every dancer who is coming from outside... I must say, Kidd Pivot is a company that has benefited from co-production money from Europe and Germany. She has been receiving a lot of money, so Canadian dance has been blessed with money from foreign countries.

Crystal Pite is the choreographer and she's working with foreign dancers. She is invited into residencies in three different provinces in Canada. The bill to get her foreign dancers to come is \$9,000 in one year. The grant she receives from the Canada Council is \$80,000 for one year. The cost for the permit is more than 10% of the Canada Council grant.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** It's not helpful.

**Ms. Caroline Lussier:** It's not fruitful for the Canada Council's money, shall we say, if I look at it from our side of the fence. That's just one example. I hear from the dance companies that it is a huge burden.

We're trying to simplify our processes, but if we manage to give less work but there's more work coming from another side that is not artistic work, it's certainly a break in their development.

**Ms. Peggy Nash:** Okay, thank you.

I want to pick on a comment made by Mr. Herd around accessibility. I think that is really important. There's the Harbourfront dance program in Toronto, which I think is more accessible for people.

There's a program in film that runs across the country. I'm very familiar with it: Reel Canada. It partners with schools across the country to promote Canadian film. It tries to engage young people in the amazing Canadian films that we have, which you don't always see at the Cineplex because we have such a rich diversity of film.

Is there something we can do in a similar vein with dance? Mr. Quijada said, and I agree, that more and more people are being drawn to dance. It is in the mainstream media. I don't always know that it's engaging people with Canadian dance companies. Is there a way that we can partner with schools or in community centres that would step it up to another level of interest in our Canadian dance companies?

I will throw that out to anyone who would like to answer.

• (1630)

**Mr. Jeff Herd:** I'll take a moment.

Speaking for the large institutions like ourselves, like Les Grands Ballets, Alberta Ballet, and the National Ballet, we all run school programs of one sort or another. Through my recreational school I have Concert Hour Ballet that goes out at a loss throughout the province to schools. We basically do a little presentation but also the behind the scenes of what it takes to become a dancer.

We have another program that we've kept low key and we're just developing it. Basically, it's a retired principal dancer, Jaime Vargas, from Mexico, who's now a Canadian citizen—I'll just push that. He comes from both an indigenous and a Mexican-Spanish background. He's working with youth at risk, youth in care, aboriginal communities. We send him throughout the province and into Saskatchewan to promote movement for the sake of well-being and self-esteem. That one is at no cost at the moment, although that may have to change in the near future.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. That's going to have to be the last word. I hate to cut you off.

We do have another panel in the next hour. We are nearly finished hearing from witnesses on this study. We do have one more meeting on May 25, so if you have any further contributions, please get them in to us as quickly as you can.

Thank you again for coming.

We will briefly suspend.

• (1630)

(Pause)

• (1635)

**The Chair:** All right. Good afternoon again.

We're going to call this meeting number 47 of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage back to order.

For the second hour, we have a number of witnesses with us. First of all, as an individual we have Gregory Hines, who is the owner of the DOAHL Academy. From the Confederation Centre of the Arts, we have Peggy Reddin, who is the director of arts education. As well, from the School of Toronto Dance Theatre, we have Patricia Fraser, who is the artistic director.

Each of you will have up to eight minutes, and we're going to start with Mr. Hines. You have the floor.

**Mr. Gregory Hines (Owner, DOAHL Academy, As an Individual):** Thank you. I'll start off.

An American modern dancer and choreographer, Martha Graham, once said, "Great dancers are not great because of their technique; they're great because of their passion."

Members of Parliament, artists, and fellow colleagues, I bring you greetings from the greater Toronto area. My name is Gregory Hines—no relation to the tap dancer, just throwing that out there—and in the field of—

**Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC):** On a point of order, Chair, Mr. Young had indicated that it was going to be Gregory Hines.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** I'm still alive; I'm very much alive.

**Mr. Rick Dykstra:** I have to withdraw my point of order.

**Mr. Terence Young:** Welcome. He gets his time started over, Chair.

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** I knew I would have to clear the air first, because everybody says, "Gregory Hines?"

In my field of hip hop dance I'm considered a great dancer because of my passion, which was lit by my colleague and mentor Luther Brown, who also started on his path to hip hop dance with no funding and solely with passion. He started the dance agency Do Dat in the 1990s, when hip hop dance was a little marginalized. Fast-forwarding to today, hip hop is now mainstream but the funding remains marginalized.

Brathwaite and Branker's research paper, "The Northside Research Project: Profiling Hip Hop Artistry In Canada", was presented to the Canada Council for the Arts, and there is an excellent summary offered of hip hop dance in Canada:

[It]...is energetic, committed and ever-evolving. Its cultural roots are based in African oral traditions; it is grounded in community relations and activism. Currently, in Canada, hip hop artists work in a number of art forms, including music, dance, visual arts, spoken word, and inter-arts.

Hip hop dance has multiple strengths and benefits at both the community and the institutional level.

In my experience as a hip hop teacher and dancer, I have seen hip hop teach people with mental health issues such as ADD to thrive and to adopt an alternative identity. Such individuals have reported how their symptoms have minimized or have become manageable through hip hop dance and teaching. I have seen shy students evolve to outspoken individuals with self-esteem. I've seen hip hop teach individuals who had conflict with both the law and community members to build communication skills and positive behaviours and alliances.

Other significant strengths outlined by Brathwaite and Branker include the sheer amount of talent, diversity in style and sub-genres, and uniqueness of Canadian talent, and the list goes on.

After engaging in hip hop dance for a year, one of my students at DOAHL Academy stated, "I want to pursue dancing as a career. I want to be just like you." Seeing the passion and the potential in his eyes, I was reluctant to also share with my student the social and economic realities of 21st century hip hop dance and tell him that, similar to Luther and me, he would have to find additional employment outside his professional craft in order to maintain his livelihood and family. As such, alongside the strengths of hip hop dance and culture in Canada, Brathwaite and Branker devoted a section in their research paper to "The Struggling Artists".

As a hip hop dance artist myself, I have witnessed some of the challenges inherent in the profession. One of these challenges includes the stigmatization of the hip hop culture and dance profession. When compared to other art forms, hip hop dance was not equally respected or valued and paid less than other genres of dance. In addition, at times, work contracts were not honoured and artists were subjected to unfair working conditions. Some of these challenges were also echoed by Brathwaite and Branker in 2006; however, some additional ones that emerged through their research include the ones listed in my presentation.

Similar to the support from Canada Council of the Arts for the Northside Research Project, I am confident that additional federal funding used to support hip hop dance education and programs would accomplish the following four things.

First, it would assist in realizing the recommendations from the Northside Research Project. These recommendations from the study include: invest in organizations with mandates to develop and train hip hop professionals, and achieve this through already existing Canada Council programs; support a national federation with networking, advocacy, and service capabilities regarding hip hop arts; and develop a support program specific to the needs of hip hop touring and help build a sustainable fan base.

● (1640)

Regarding newcomers and immigrants, additional federal funding for hip hop dance education would also expose new immigrants and low- to middle-income class Canadians the opportunity to integrate in their communities, a great sense of belonging, and participation in building the Canadian heritage.

In the 21st century, most of the youth population have a keen interest in pop culture and social media, and this allows hip hop dance to be accessible, inclusive in Canada and globally. This art form engages youth, promotes community development, and provides great fitness and health benefits. Creating accessibility to hip hop dance art through additional funding encourages youth to participate in the uniquely diverse and welcoming craft. Hip hop dance provides the qualities and characteristics to develop, prepare, and equip young Canadians to be socially responsive and engaged citizens.

I am confident that hip hop dance develops the 21st century skill set that includes self-esteem, team-building skills, critical thinking, problem solving, excellent communicators and collaborators, flex-

ibility and adaptability, innovation and creativity, global competence, and financial literacy.

Concerning youth and crime, in addition to developing the 21st century skill set, hip hop dance, education, and programming also contribute to reducing youth crime levels. According to the report in 2006 of Crime Prevention Ottawa, a project funded in the Hintonburg youth outreach program, a recreation program based on hip hop dance aimed to teach 28 participants respect, team work, and the significance of engaging in positive and productive activities such as public performance at festivals and fundraisers, events that contributed to building safe, healthy communities.

I'm just going to move on right to the end.

According to the Canadian Council for the Arts, Ontario received \$47 million of federal grants—and we all know that—\$6.5 million of which was given to dance in Ontario. Compared to other art forms, dance genres like the National Ballet of Canada received the highest level of support at \$2.6 million.

Hip hop dance educators and students would like it to be recognized as a valued art form similar to ballet and be given equal opportunity to receive funding as well. Without funding and awareness, making hip hop a career and a livelihood is difficult to do. Therefore, increasing federal grant investment and involvement would contribute to the higher success rates of those hip hop grants applicants and increase the quality, standard, awareness, and relevance of hip hop dance education and culture in Canada's heritage and society.

Despite these challenges and the lack of funding, a few individuals, such as Luther Brown, creator and founder of Do Dat, went on to become one of Canada's leading hip hop dance choreographers. Today, Brown continues to create choreography for today's Canadian and American artists, including hip hop choreography for the 2015 Pan Am Games opening ceremony. Because of Brown and other prominent educators of the hip hop dance community, from a global perspective all eyes will be on hip hop dance and have an opportunity to perceive what hip hop dance looks like on a national scale.

● (1645)

**The Chair:** Thank you. I'm going to have to cut you off there. You will be able to expand on it.

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** I'm just trying to rush, sorry.

**The Chair:** I appreciate that.

We'll now move on to Peggy Reddin.

You have the floor.

**Ms. Peggy Reddin (Director of Arts Education, Confederation Centre of the Arts):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Confederation Centre of the Arts is Canada's only memorial to the Fathers of Confederation and is located in Charlottetown, Canada's birthplace. Confederation Centre's educational programs are many and varied, with the aim of providing learning opportunities in, about, or through the arts, and sometimes an amalgam of those three.

My remarks today are shaped by my experiences as the founder of our dance umbrella program, which was in fact my private business for 17 years prior to becoming part of the centre, and also the experience of developing and implementing the dance performance program of the Holland College School of Performing Arts, a partnership between Holland College and Confederation Centre of the Arts and the only fully accredited post-secondary dance program in Atlantic Canada.

First, let me say how grateful I am to have the opportunity to speak with you today, presenting the experience of private studio owners, the portal through which the vast majority of Canadian youth will encounter dance. I will include in this presentation some quotes from students and parents I have had the privilege of knowing over the years, because I believe their voices can capture the value of dance in a more direct way than all the statistics in the world.

I am very excited that the committee recognizes the importance of dance in nurturing young Canadians' skills, and also its role in creating a healthy nation. Dance provides physical, psychological, and social benefits. On the physical side, dance offers an excellent aerobic activity, improving heart and blood vessel function. It improves coordination, balance, and flexibility, and can help with weight loss.

It is also good for brain function. A study reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concluded that dance is the only physical activity to offer protection against dementia. Similar results were reached in studies of Parkinson's disease. From the brain's point of view, there seems to be a special alchemy achieved with the combination of movement and music that is dance.

Very importantly, there is also a greater likelihood of continuing with a dance program over time versus other physical activity, as reported in various studies and also reflected in this comment from one of my former students several years after she graduated from our program, "I think dancing has ingrained the benefits of staying physically active. Fitness is very important to me. I continue to be active, and still take dance classes."

Another area where dance contributes to the health of young Canadians is as an activity that teens, particularly girls, will embrace even as they become less inclined to participate in organized sport. This is something we encountered many times, to the point where we established beginner teen programs so that people who came relatively late to dance would be able to participate with their peers, rather than trying to fit into a class with much younger students. Feedback has been very positive. This example is from a note received recently from a mother, "My daughter began taking dance at dance umbrella three years ago, at the (it seemed to me) somewhat advanced beginner age of 14. I am so thankful that she had this opportunity. She has grown so much in ability, in confidence, and in

comfort with herself and her own body in those three years, and I am sure that much of it has to do with dance."

This leads me to the psychological benefits of dance, from improved self-esteem to stress reduction. A study published in the *Arts in Psychotherapy* concluded that dancing should be encouraged as part of treatment for people with depression and anxiety. Over my 30 years of teaching, I have seen first-hand the positive emotional and psychological effects of time spent in the dance studio for so many people, from young children learning to express their feelings through dance to our "Dance for the Health of It" ladies, a group ranging in age from 28 to 68.

Again drawing from the words of a former student, "The number one contribution from dancing is the gift of self-confidence. As a teacher, I consider every lecture I give to be a performance. I...am frequently complimented on my communication skills and ability to command the attention of a room. I 100% believe that this is largely due to dance classes!"

And another, "Thank you for teaching me how to dance. To this day, it has remained one of my only forms of true expression, a place I feel most at home. Whether I am stressed, sad, upset, nervous, I can always express it through dance, without fear of judgment. When I dance, I feel I am totally in control. I have found the feeling of dancing to be one that is impossible to recreate or replace; that feeling of strength, purity, and peace."

• (1650)

And from a parent whose daughter was going through a particularly difficult time, "My daughter has gotten lost, and dance has been her one constant. She is very much a stranger to me much of the time these days, but every now and then I see my girl, and it makes me hopeful that she will come back to us. After dance class was usually when I saw MY girl, and at home afterwards when she was whirling around the house, and leaping down the hall."

Beyond the personal health benefits, there are many other skills developed by studying dance. Dance is a collaborative process, whether it is developing a new creation, or simply working toward the same goal in a class. It develops self-discipline and an ability to focus. Just the fact of balancing full-time academic studies with after-school dance activities enhances organizational skills. I can tell you that there is a noticeable difference between the dance and theatre students within the school of performing arts, in their work ethic and ability to see a project through to completion. Dancers will outperform, every time.

Looking at the broader ecology of dance, there are a few points I'd like to make before wrapping up. One is regarding the economic impact of dance. The dance mapping study reports 1,285 schools or places of instruction in our country. In Charlottetown alone, there are four studios focusing on what I would call theatrical dance—that is, ballet, jazz, and contemporary/modern—plus even more traditional dance studios, primarily Celtic, but increasingly more diverse as our population has become more diverse. The economic impact of these schools includes supporting a local dance supply shop. Studios pay rent for space, SOCAN fees, insurance premiums, and support staff. Teachers' salaries go back into the economy for food, accommodation, health treatments, etc. Even local flower shops and the Dairy Queen feel a significant impact, particularly on performance days. While it has not been studied in detail, the economic impact of dance schools is significant.

When considering how the federal government can best support dance activity, one area that has benefited dance schools was the creation of the children's fitness and arts tax credits. But please consider the unspoken message of doubling the fitness tax credit to \$1,000 while keeping the arts tax credit at \$500. For those of us in dance, our clients can choose to claim under either activity, although when the tax credit was first introduced it did take significant argument to convince policy-makers that dance was, in fact, an activity that promoted fitness. However, other arts activities can contribute equally to overall well-being. We can't separate physical and emotional or psychological health. All are necessary, and an absence of either is equally costly to health care budgets, so I would encourage the committee to ask policy-makers to double the arts tax credit, thereby recognizing the value of all arts activities for youth.

Also, in discussions of the temporary foreign worker program, certainly the changes have had a major impact on professional dance companies, but they have also had an impact on amateur dance schools. While I am fortunate at the present time to be able to fully staff with Canadians, I have had to use the TFWP for seven of the previous eight years. I have always aimed to hire qualified instructors, but it can be hard to get people to relocate to smaller centres where there are not such well-developed dance communities. I am not alone in this predicament.

Finally, federal support for national service organizations is extremely important for a healthy milieu, whether one is in early training or full professional career. Provincial service organizations help build a strong dance community locally, but not all provinces have one—mine doesn't. The work of the Canadian Dance Assembly and the Dancer Transition Resource Centre ensures an overall healthy dance environment, one where talented young dancers can follow their dreams without fear of financial insecurity, and where there are exciting opportunities for them in their home country.

Thank you.

• (1655)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll now move to Patricia Fraser. You have the floor for eight minutes.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser (Artistic Director, The School of Toronto Dance Theatre):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you all for the opportunity to speak with you today. I'm honoured by the invitation

and I am heartened by your interest in the art form to which my colleagues and I are so dedicated.

I am the artistic director of the School of Toronto Dance Theatre, and like so many others you've already heard from already I share a passion and concern for the art form of dance. My purpose here is to provide you with some background information on the school, and to tell you about the issues that are specific to those of us who are training the next generation of dancers.

The school provides excellent training at international standards and prepares young dance artists for careers performing, creating, teaching, and directing. The school provides a quality educational experience that can serve them in any future career and prepare them for life. Through the training of new dance artists, the school plays a significant role in the development of contemporary dance in Canada and contributes to the articulation of a distinctive Canadian dance aesthetic.

The School of Toronto Dance Theatre serves all of Canada. Dancers in our program come from across the country and around the world. The 55 dancers currently in our program come from L'Acadie; Aizawl, India; Anjou; Ajax, Ayr, and Belleville in Ontario; and Bogota, Colombia. The recent winner of our tuition prize this year is from Burnaby, B.C. They come from Calgary and they come from Cancun, Mexico. We have a first nations dancer from Chilliwack. They come from Corner Brook to Cranbrook. They're from Edmonton; Freeport, Bahamas; Kingston, Kitchener, and London, Ontario; Madrid, Spain; Manilla, the Philippines; Moncton, New Brunswick; and Montreal. We have wonderful dancers from Oakville, Ontario. One of our dancers from Oakville just won our teaching prize by gaining 100% in her course work. They are unbelievable dancers.

Oakville, Orangeville, Oshawa, Ottawa.... There is a great program in Ottawa at the performing arts high school and that's a feeder school for us. They do fantastic work. They're from Penticton, Port Alberni, and Port Credit. They're from Prince George, Quebec City, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They're from St. Catharines—our valedictorian this year is from St. Catharines—Saint-Hyacinthe; Saint John and St. John's; Sydney, Nova Scotia; Toronto; Utsunomiya, Japan; Varennes, Quebec; and Whitby, Ontario.

It's a real cultural melting pot in our school. These young people are learning at this age who they are, they're learning who they are as Canadians, and they're learning to tell their stories as Canadians. They're learning from people from around the world to tell their stories and learn from their stories as well.

A few of our dancers are going to India this summer with one of their fellow classmates. One is from Varennes and one is from Quebec City, and they're going to Mizoram, India, to teach, perform, and travel with their classmate. That classmate from India is going to join another classmate from London, Ontario, to enter the master's program at the London Contemporary Dance School in England. It's a very prestigious program.

They will speak and tell their stories all over the world of what it is to be a Canadian. These students have made connections that will last them a lifetime, and they have opportunities to contribute to the Canadian artistic continuum. As you can see, we have a very strong pan-Canadian and diverse community in our school of which we are very proud.

We want to maintain that strength and search even further for talented students. Outreach to communities where there are dedicated teachers, like those Peggy spoke about, and gifted pre-professional dancers would provide incentive and encouragement to young dancers who might be drawn to a career in dance. A strong and vigorous professional field that provides inspiration to young dancers is absolutely critical. In order for our best dancers to remain in Canada once trained, the professional field must be robust and healthy. Support to the professional community is absolutely essential.

• (1700)

In addition to its own remit, the School of Toronto Dance Theatre is part of a like-minded consortium of five contemporary dance schools across the country. We are a very lean, organized institution staffed by very dedicated people. In terms of collaboration, I like to think of us as a very good news story. We work hard, and given limited resources, we have developed an extremely cooperative working relationship. We are engaged in developing young artists who are defining and expressing various aspects of Canadian culture, reflecting the society in which we live by telling Canadian stories.

One way in which we do this is to present our schools, individually and in collaboration, at the Canada Dance Festival here in Ottawa at the National Arts Centre theatre, where they are each able to express their artistic point of view in the national context, representing their regional signature and expressing their diversity.

This is a mammoth endeavour, but it's critical in helping our dancers to build a cross-generational network for the future, to meet directors and artists for future projects and potential employment, and to attend performances by companies and artists from around the country. Given the project's importance and impacts, more support to this consortium of training programs for this undertaking would be extremely beneficial.

We understand that our job as trainers does not end with dance training. We help our students acquire the necessary transferable skills to enable them to forge many careers. These skills include commitment, compassion—all the things that Greg spoke of already—discipline, creative thinking, collaboration, being able to take direction and to lead, to learn how to learn. All of these will stand them in good stead in their careers and in their lives.

We're also keenly aware of a need for a broad education to complement the rigour and intensity of physical training. The members of our consortium are all colleges, CEGEPs, or have affiliations with university programs. Just to be clear, they are not grant-generating organizations—that would be the purview of the provinces—but we're affiliated with higher education.

These educational links provide a far-reaching foundation for these dancers. We also offer career planning and are assisted in this work by the Dancer Transition Resource Centre.

A witness in the earlier panel, Alexis Andrew, who is head of the research and evaluation section of the Canada Council, is a graduate of the School of Toronto Dance Theatre. A previous speaker you met via teleconferencing, Dr. Coralee McLaren, is an excellent example of the success of career transition planning provided by the DTRC. Dr. McLaren is also a graduate of the school. Both are a testament to the value of transferable skills learned in a dance training program.

Although the professional training program at the school is our priority, we also work very hard within our local community. The school provides classes for recreational dancers of all ages. These allow us to reach out to the general public, providing health benefits like Peggy has spoken of, artistic fulfillment, and joy in movement. Our young dancers program is focused on developing creative movement with children and young people, including those with mixed abilities, making dance more accessible and broadening its scope.

In closing, we're very grateful for the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Canada arts training fund, and with their help we have built excellent training programs that develop young artists.

Thank you.

• (1705)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We're going to move to Mr. Weston for seven minutes.

I know Mr. Hines had a few more words to say, so I'm going to throw that out to members of the committee if they want to let him finish up.

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** Thanks, Chair.

Ms. Fraser, you mentioned you had great dancers from St. Catharines, Oakville, and Burnaby, all of whom are represented on this committee, so I'm wondering if there might be some direct genetic lineage to those superb dancers we have on our committee. Who knows?

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** Clearly.

**Mr. John Weston:** You all spoke with great passion about your dedication to dance. Ms. Reddin, I think you said you have been at it for over 30 years. Mr. Hines, it was really interesting to hear the different benefits you see coming from dance.



I wonder if you could close out your remarks by letting us know what brings people into dance in the first place, especially given what we heard you say, that you're going to have to have another area of employment to support yourself. It's not an easy road.

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Speaking as a hip hop dancer, it is really hard. Hip hop dancers are not looked upon as having the same styles that others do, or as having strong dance styles. Because there's no written syllabus for hip hop, sometimes the foundation that's already been set there is not seen. For example, when I was dancing hip hop at 18 or 19, I was getting \$200 from a Canadian artist that I danced for. Fast-forward to 2015, and I have students who are still getting the exact same amount right now. That doesn't make any sense.

Do you understand how it's...? That's why, for me, hip hop is a little bit different, as are the people engaging in it. They love it. Hip hop is vibrant, it's alive, and a lot of people are gravitating to it. We'll see that at the opening ceremonies of the Pan Am Games. At the same time, the financial payout is not the same. Sometimes that's a hardship for any dancer. Most dancers already, if they even want to pursue Juilliard, have to....

You know, we all watch movies where they're waiting tables and doing their art at the same time. They're waiting for that big moment to become that big star. Well, with hip hop it's exactly the same.

**Mr. John Weston:** Speaking as somebody who was a great fan of the movie *Flashdance*, what brings young people into it? Can you give me two or three things?

This is for Ms. Reddin or Ms. Fraser.

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** I think we are born with a desire to move, and for some people, as they get older, they have the opportunity to follow that path. Parents will come to me when their children are three, four, or five years old and say, "She's always moving around the house", or "He's really enjoying everything that he's seeing on TV". I think it's very innate.

You hope that you find a good school where they don't beat that out of them, to be perfectly honest, because dance schools are completely unregulated. One thing I would like to see the public become more educated about is what to look for in choosing a dance school. That's not really your purview, but certainly as a dance organization within the Canadian Dance Assembly, I think it's something we need to raise more public awareness about.

**Mr. John Weston:** Among that array of people you named, what made them want to dance?

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** Oh, I think it's passion. I really think it's passion. It's joy. It's love. It's wanting to move somebody.

My student from Acadie is from a dairy farm, and she desperately wants to move and dance. She wants to move people. She had a very sad event in her life—her uncle—and she did this solo for herself to commemorate this man. We were moved to tears. We were weeping in the audience.

I think in our hearts, viscerally, we want to move people. At 18 she could move an entire audience to weep. I think that's one of the things that gets us—aside from the physical joy of doing it.

• (1710)

**Mr. John Weston:** Yes.

I've brought in a bill to create a national health and fitness day. One of the things I love to do is promote health and fitness. A couple of you have mentioned health and fitness benefits, both physical and mental. I'm wondering if you'd like to elaborate on that and maybe even get into some of the economic benefits you see by making Canadians healthier through dance.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** I can certainly say a little bit about what we do.

One of the programs we have is Creative Movement Made for Me. It's for mixed abilities. We have a really high level of expertise in our faculty for teaching children with various kinds of abilities. It could be Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy, delayed development. That is a very new, burgeoning field that I think could be a huge area for dance to expand into. I think it's been shown to have great benefits.

I think that's one place where we could do a lot more work than we're doing now and be very beneficial.

**Mr. John Weston:** Yes.

You also referred to the fitness tax credit, which I applauded. Then you mentioned the distinction between that and the arts credit, and you provoked a thought in me. Dance is being classified as being an art, and therefore qualifies for the lower tax credit. Is there a case to be made that it's actually a sport, and therefore—

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** In dance, the parents can apply through either, so dance is accepted as a physical.... I'm just saying that's nice for us, but let's not forget the people who are in other forms of the arts.

In coming back to the question of why we dance. Similarly, why do some people pick up a paintbrush? Why do others sing? There's a love that we all have within us. For some of us, it just depends what direction it's going. Whether it's movement or whether it's singing or painting—

That train just completely left.

**Mr. John Weston:** All right. While you're thinking, which of you takes advantage of government programs like the Canada Council for the Arts? I don't think any of you referred to it.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** We don't. We're in the Canada arts training fund. As a training institution we're not eligible for funding from the Canada Council, but the professional field is. That's one of the points I was trying to make. There's no point in training a lot of dancers if the professional field is not healthy. Our support also needs to go to the Canada Council.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We're going to move to Ms. Sitsabaiesan, for seven minutes.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Thank you.

Ms. Reddin, does your organization get any funding, any national...?

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** The Confederation Centre does receive funding from Canadian Heritage, so, yes.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Okay.

We have two organizations that do get funding. Mr. Hines, you didn't mention anything. Do you get funding for your school?

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** No, I don't.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** At the beginning of your comments you spoke of starting from literally nothing.

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Nothing.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Exactly, and building a school and how your mentor did the same thing.

Being in the dance sector, what are the challenges in building a school, and the funding challenges you might have from your experience, Mr. Hines, as well as your experiences, Ms. Reddin and Ms. Fraser?

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Building a school, the difficulty is.... I started the school just teaching hip hop. I didn't add any other elements or any other dance styles when I started. The challenges were that, again, a lot of people didn't know how to receive hip hop, even in a competitive setting. You have judges who judge hip hop, but they're not from that background. They have no background in that. The difficulty of building the school from the ground up was getting people to understand that it could be an art by itself, that hip hop was a dance style by itself. It could be a school by itself.

As I was growing it, that was part of the difficulty but also part of the excitement. A lot of kids, the teenagers right now, the young people in Canada are all about hip hop. Hip hop is a language that speaks to anybody who goes to school. That is the thing they emulate the most. That's the most popular. Again, going back to pop culture. It's one thing that helped to build my school at the same time.

The difficulty comes when it's just solely that. We're still looked down upon, as just a hip hop school. I had to amalgamate other styles to keep up the credibility. That is where my difficulties came.

• (1715)

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Have you applied for funding from Heritage or the Canada Council?

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** No, I have not. That's based on the knowledge of how to go about getting the funding and doing it properly so you are getting the most out of the funding.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Yes. I can totally empathize. I remember when I first started my dance training, it was in the basement of somebody's house. Because my dance teacher didn't have a school or whatever, her school was moving to different people's homes and starting classes. Now she's reached a point where she has a studio and has learned that funding mechanisms are available, and has grown significantly.

As a newcomer, as an immigrant or a newcomer in the industry, you don't know, as an instructor or as an educator, and you don't

understand the avenues available to you. Thank you for mentioning that.

How were your experiences with your funding challenges, Ms. Reddin or Ms. Fraser? Was it perfect, or are you experiencing some challenges? How could things be improved?

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** Although the Confederation Centre of the Arts does receive funding from Canadian Heritage, we are about 35% federally or provincially funded and 65% self-generated. The arts education programs are actually self-sustaining, so I don't run deficit budgets. Honestly, it's the same principles that you put into any business, and you have to be very creative at times. But if I think back to when I was starting the school, it was important that we grew at an achievable rate. Sometimes with younger people coming into the industry, it's like they're going to get this great studio and they, unfortunately, find that they have put more money in than they are going to be drawing out. It's a step-by-step project. For a long time we rented space at Confederation Centre, so that's how we ended up becoming part of the program there. It helps if you do have that kind of connection to another arts centre.

Honestly, there are very few, because we are not a professional school. I can't apply for federal funds for our training programs. We are able sometimes to become involved in programs that are eligible for funding, which are beyond the day-to-day scope for the school. For example, last year when it was P.E.I. 2014 celebrations, we had a great partnership with L'École de danse de Québec, and Harold Rhéaume's company, so we were able to use that funding.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** I think that—I'll just say it—we're extremely fortunate. We're very well assisted by the Canada arts training fund. It is a professional training program—

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Because you are a professional training program.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** It's a three-year program where dancers are coming in full time, every day, for three years, so there's a slight difference there between that and recreational programs. But we're very well funded. We're about 30% government funded from various sources.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Okay. That seems to be also the average from the Department of Canadian Heritage statistics they gave us. It's about 26% government funding generally for dance companies, which are professional dance companies.

I had another train of thought that just left me. Yes, it totally left my brain.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** I can just add to that. We're quite rigorously assessed by the Canadian arts training fund. Our school is quite highly assessed, so we're quite successful. I think the rigour is very important and very well appreciated.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Right. I'm going to follow up with your previous comment, because your school is a post-secondary institution where students can go full time. However, how are they getting to the level where they can pursue a post-secondary degree in dance? I feel like there might need to be more investment at the amateur level so that somebody can graduate at a point where they can reach your school. What is the percentage of your domestic students versus international students who are coming in?

• (1720)

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** International students, I think it's about 10%, maybe, 10% to 16% max, probably.

We look for really good teachers in really good centres in recreational programs. We know where some of them are. As I was saying, Ottawa has a very good program in the performing arts high school, so we know where they are and we go to them. But there are others out there that we don't know about. It would be really helpful to be able to....

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** Would my question that I asked the last panel—

**The Chair:** Thank you. Sorry, we're running out of time.

We have to go to Mr. Dion for seven minutes.

Maybe she'd like to answer?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Do you want to answer?

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan:** My question was about dance in the school system, integration.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** There are some very good programs. There's an Ontario curriculum, for example, but it's not delivered particularly well throughout the provinces. It's delivered in some places quite well, and in other places it's neglected.

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Can I just talk on that note as well? Sorry.

Dance in schools, that's one of the areas I would like to get funding for because there are inner-city schools where a lot of the kids don't have the opportunity to get dance. When I go in, I see some potential and I would like to fund that kind of potential. That's something that we're looking into doing ourselves, but it is a program that I would like to....

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** It's a good bridge to what I want to ask the three of you. Thank you very much for being with us.

I would like each of you to sum up the main recommendations you are making to this committee. We have seen your passion for the activity of dance, for the art it represents, and for everything it gives to the human mind and body.

What should the federal government do differently or do more of to be a better partner than is the case today? That includes Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, and all the federal institutions.

Mr. Hines, would you like to start?

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Sure.

The way that I see that working for us is to have hip hop known as an art form that is as strong as ballet and the rest. It would give a lot of the kids in the inner city, in the middle class, the opportunity to

pursue that. For example, a lot of the Canadian urban dancers or hip hop dancers go to the States, and they find work easily. It's here that we don't have the support. We need the federal government to put something in place so that they can receive the support so they can stay right here on our soil instead of going over to the States and being used by the Americans to fund their artists. We have great performers and great talent right here on our side of the border.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** But concretely, what should the federal government do that is lacking today?

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Allow new art forms to be taken the same as predominant ones or as other ones that have been here for centuries, and make that a part of the heritage. This is new heritage for us. Hip hop is now an art form that can be amalgamated into the new Canadian heritage. That's what I'm saying. There's Bollywood coming. There are a whole bunch of other ones coming. Because of pop culture, we just want the federal government to look at that as potential heritage as well, and put them in place as well.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Thank you. I had the sense that it was already done when I was listening to Madame Lussier earlier. She mentioned hip hop as something that is being encouraged more and more.

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** Yes, it's encouraging, but again, the payouts and the opportunities are not the same. If you're a ballet dancer you train for years. You can go to the National Ballet of Canada and start doing things here in Canada. If you're a hip hop dancer you can only go to the States. There are a couple of schools downtown that offer hip hop, and then you can maybe go on to do music videos, but the market's so saturated with dancers that they have to go across the border. We want to try to keep it all here.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Okay.

Madam Reddin, what would be the main changes that we should recommend to the government?

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** I really believe that a strong professional level in this country is the best that you can do in terms of supporting amateurs, younger students, and emerging artists. It really does have a trickle-down effect. If there are opportunities for professional companies to engage with local communities, particularly smaller communities, in a meaningful way, we always take advantage of them. When companies are coming through to present on the stage, we set up master classes for our children, to give them an opportunity for that exchange. But there are examples of more complete engagement, where a company can come in and spend a month in the community as an outside eye learning from the community, but also helping the community to see something that they may not have seen in themselves. There's a company called Coleman Lemieux et Compagnie that has done some really interesting projects. The one I know best is the Gros Morne project. It's a professional dance company and they spend a considerable amount of time. It creates true engagement that is a two-way conversation. I think funding those opportunities helps my level of student.

• (1725)

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** I agree that to hear from Coleman Lemieux would be very good for this committee.

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** And they didn't pay me to say that, okay?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** We'll see.

I would like to understand. If you mentioned this aspect, I guess it's because you think it's not targeted enough by the federal institutions of today. Are you arguing for a new program or some adjustments to the existing programs, Madam Reddin?

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** My fear of putting that idea forward is that there isn't enough money to go around already. If we are telling the professional companies, "You're going to have the same amount of funding, but you're also going to do this," it's not realistic. To come up with additional funding for those types of activities, particularly in connection with smaller communities outside of the main dance centres, I think has a lot of value for the nation.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Madam Fraser, you seem to agree. Do you want to add something?

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** Yes. There are three things: support for under-represented dance forms is very important, and that goes along with what Greg said; stable funding for excellence in professional training is critical; and absolutely the profession itself must be supported, and as Peggy said, doing that has trickle-down effects. Companies have not been touring the way they used to years ago. It's very expensive to tour, but when Toronto Dance Theatre goes to Newfoundland, we get an uptick in enrolment. If they go out west, we get an uptick in enrolment. It's very important to disseminate stories that we get out into the country and tour. That has been an area that's been really lacking in the last 15 years at least, I would say, and maybe more. It's very important.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We have only a couple of minutes left, but Mr. Yurdiga, you have the floor for about three minutes.

**Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC):** Thank you, witnesses, for being here today.

We focus lots on the art form and also on the funding. I've been told that dance is just as physical as any other sport. I am curious about the type of injuries that are involved and whether there are support programs to ensure the dancer recovers quickly.

My question is for Ms. Fraser.

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** There are injuries, absolutely. They typically are things like sprained ankles, shin splints, sometimes

physical exhaustion. We have a physiotherapist who is one of our faculty members. He's not actually paid as a physiotherapist, but he advises us. We have a whole series of practitioners to whom we refer our dancers. If they have injuries we monitor those over time, and we give them a plan to be off for a certain number of weeks and to come back slowly in a certain way and to progress in a certain way.

We are pretty careful, but that certainly doesn't mean that injuries don't happen.

**Mr. David Yurdiga:** In your programming, obviously you promote stretching and whatever as part of your curriculum. Have you seen an increase in injuries because dance has changed so much over time? We see hip hop. We see all kinds of forms just as we see in the music industry where new forms are always coming up, so are injuries increasing because of the changing art form?

• (1730)

**Ms. Patricia Fraser:** I wouldn't say so actually, although we have to be more careful because when we're introducing something new, then there is a difference in the way dancers work.

In the olden days, actually you would dance on anything. I sprained my ankle on the first day of a nine-week tour. There were five of us in the company. We were all in every piece, so what do you do? You dance. I think we are much better now than we used to be.

**Ms. Peggy Reddin:** I think the science has improved how we teach. There has been a lot of work done on kinesthetic approaches to teaching—kinesiology, how best to train the body so that you don't just say, "There's that move. Do it". You build towards that end result, but there has been a lot of difference since—

**Mr. Gregory Hines:** I also think that the—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, the bells are going now. We have to end the meeting. I really apologize. We do appreciate your contributions.

We have another meeting a week from Monday to hear from a few more witnesses, so if you have any further contributions to this study, please get them in to us by early next week.

Thank you so much for coming today.

The meeting is adjourned.







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