

When The Hatchery Project brought me into its three-year pilot program, the idea was that I would serve as some sort of writer in residence, my duties to consist of a mix of reporting, note-keeping, organizational dramaturgy and commentary—a collection of duties that has proved somewhat unruly, as perhaps indicated by my hyphenated title of evaluator-documenter.

It became clear almost immediately that several of the partners' and my assumptions about what I would be doing around documentation, and how, needed to be reexamined: what, for example, was on and off record for the general public? And who was this public: an arts audience, an audience of the partners' peers, of foundations or artists? And how could my insider-outsider status be best deployed in what was very definitely an experimentation in collective organizing?

One of the answers presented itself in the form of "The Art of Supporting Dance-Making," a daylong convening organized by the Hatchery as part of the Alliance of Artists Communities' 2014 conference in Charleston, South Carolina. The idea was twofold: first, the day would function as a form of live documentation, giving a selected group of colleagues a window into the Hatchery through panels and conversations rather than a series of blog posts (in a world already over-inundated with blogs). And second, four individuals—some proposed by me and some already known to the partners—would be chosen to attend and write whatever sort of response felt useful and important to each of them, their writings to be edited by me for clarity but not content.

The Hatchery's hope in doing this was to get at both the diffuse tangle of interactions that come about when a group of by-and-large (but not entirely!) likeminded associates gathers in a room, and the incisive outsider perspectives that four distinct individuals can bring to what was, essentially, an in-progress showing by The Hatchery Project.

The individuals we chose are Kenneth Collins, Ain Gordon, Jennifer Krasinski and Victoria Marks, four smart and independently minded artists with a wealth of varied experiences in the contemporary performance world. Here are their observations and questions. (As for the diffuse tangle—well, much like dance, you had to be there.)

--Claudia La Rocco
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