

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION FOR MANCC:

JENNIFER CALIENES BECOMES SENIOR ADVISOR AS CARLA PETERSON NAMED INCOMING DIRECTOR



Photo provided by Jennifer Calienes

Now in its tenth anniversary year, the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (MANCC), the first, and only, choreographic center of its kind in the U.S., is undergoing its first major shift in leadership. Founding Director Jennifer Calienes, transitioned to Senior Advisor in spring 2014 after leading MANCC to national recognition, as newly appointed Director, Carla Peterson, takes the reins to lead the Center into its second decade.

Calienes was appointed Director after serving as Program Manager for the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project. Upon assuming the leadership of MANCC, named after noted FSU alumnus Maggie Allesee who endowed it, Calienes implemented a methodology emphasizing process not product. She connected MANCC artists to FSU's resources as a major research facility and to the School of Dance as one of the country's premier dance programs and facilities.

MANCC, has grown under Calienes' tutelage to host between 10 – 14 visiting artists and their collaborators per year. To date, MANCC has produced multi-week research and development residencies for over 74 artists and their 500 plus collaborators from across the U.S. and around the world. Such acclaimed artists as Eiko and Koma, Miguel Gutierrez, Deborah Hay, Ralph Lemon, Liz Lerman, Tere O'Connor, Reggie Wilson and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar with Germaine Acogny have come to MANCC. Up and coming artists such as Kyle Abraham, Luciana Achugar, Beth Gill and Emily Johnson have emerged onto the national scene with MANCC's support. MANCC has supported the development of work that has toured to over 150 venues throughout North America, Central America, Europe and Asia reaching over 500,000 audience members. To date, over 82 short films and audio podcasts that document the work at MANCC and provide artists and their partners with a high quality digital toolkit to use in promoting their work, research and creative practice have been created and shared with a wider public.

Along with the work of supporting individual artists, Calienes conceived and hosted the MANCC FORUM in 2009, a convening of MANCC artists and key stakeholders including major funders and national leaders in the field of dance. The dialogue and debate around choreographic research and development that took place at the FORUM has significantly influenced creative practice on the part of funders, commissioners and presenters, and artists and audiences alike. Calienes also forged the development of partnerships in recognition of the need to join leaders and financial resources for contemporary dance. One recent, and significant, initiative, the Hatchery Project, was launched in 2012 with partners including The Chocolate Factory (Long Island City, NY), RED Arts Project (Philadelphia, PA), Vermont Performance Lab (Guilford, VT) and MANCC. Now in its third year, the Hatchery was conceived as a collaborative multi-year residency support structure, with lead backing from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and additional funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Hatchery partners will convene a day-long meeting during the Alliance of Artists Communities (AAC) Annual Meeting in fall 2014 to share research findings around residency support gleaned through the Hatchery initiative and lead a discussion on how the residency field can best support new work in dance and performance.



Photo by Julie Lemberger

By elevating the value of creative process in dance nationally in her stewardship of MANCC, Calienes' has impacted countless artists, the academic community and audiences across the country. Calienes' impressive legacy drew MANCC's new Director, Carla Peterson, who in her own right has been a staunch supporter of creative process for dance makers. After more than twenty years of service and leadership in the New York dance and performance community, Peterson was selected to lead MANCC forward into its second decade. Most recently, Peterson was the Artistic Director of New York Live Arts, a position she also held at Dance Theater Workshop; immediately prior to that she served as Executive Director of Movement Research. Peterson states, "It has been hugely rewarding to work as an artistic director and curator for the past eight years in New York City, but I have always championed the value of artistic research and experimentation. And I align with the value of artists charting their own, potentially unknown, courses, artists as explorers in helping us understand our complex humanity. It is exciting to begin working for an organization that has been at the vanguard of such supportive and important work." Peterson inherits a season replete with remarkable artists and is thrilled to both carry this MANCC legacy forward as she looks to advance its mission into previously uncultivated waters.