

July 5, 2019

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are New York City theater-makers and choreographers, and we are writing today on behalf of LUMBERYARD, a women-founded and -led performing arts center in Catskill, NY.

LUMBERYARD has been a savior to New York City's performing arts ecosystem, and it urgently needs support. Having opened a state-of-the-art new center in the mid-Hudson Valley, becoming the only facility in the United States dedicated solely to technical rehearsals for major new theater and dance productions, the organization must now raise \$1 million by December 31 to continue doing this essential work.

As most of us know first-hand, New York City remains this country's foremost artistic hub against considerable and rapidly worsening odds. The cost of merely living here climbs at a breathtaking pace. Meanwhile, paradoxically, the art forms of theater and dance are advancing in thrilling ways, and performing arts venues are being built or renovated to realize and showcase design and technology as never before. A critical step is missing in the process from conceiving our most imaginative ideas in simple studio spaces to putting them on major stages for New York City audiences: a place for directors, choreographers, and their collaborators to incorporate and test the technology and various production elements included in our new works. The few days that theaters can afford to close their doors for these technical rehearsals in advance of a premiere are simply not enough.

LUMBERYARD, crucially located just 101 miles outside the City, is that place. When Adrienne Willis became Executive and Artistic Director in 2010, she decided the organization would address a dire issue confronting almost every artist in our field: the absence of space, time, and technical resources to ready our works for their premieres. Adrienne and her team have worked with remarkable ambition, speed, and audacity to meet our needs. They've built a 7,000 square-foot, flexible space that can be reconfigured to replicate the layout and technical specifications of any NYC performance venue. For the tech rehearsals and work-in-progress performances they host, they provide a production team that is unsurpassed in its expertise and commitment to fully realizing artists' visions.

LUMBERYARD has developed over 80 New York City premieres from some of the United States' boldest and most revered artists—Wendy Whelan, Maya Beiser, and Lucinda Childs; Pam Tanowitz; Urban Bush Women; STREB; Yvonne Rainer; Kyle Abraham; Raja Feather Kelly; David Gordon; David Neumann; and Big Dance Theater, to name just a few. Among the prestigious institutions who have presented the resulting works is BAM, for which LUMBERYARD has been the first residency partner in the institution's 150-year history. LUMBERYARD's upcoming summer season lineup is evidence of the range of artists who need LUMBERYARD's unique and timely performing arts program: Ephrat Asherie Dance, 600 HIGHWAYMEN, Machine Dazzle, Elevator Repair Service, Tony Award-winning director Rachel Chavkin and The TEAM, and Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane Company.

LUMBERYARD has created this vital program and built the ideal facility for it with its own resources. Now, having exhausted its seed funding, they need partners in order to sustain this invaluable contribution to the field into future years. It would be devastating to the NYC performing arts community if LUMBERYARD were to suspend its program. Please share this letter with friends—or friends with friends—at philanthropic foundations or agencies that support the arts.

Thank you,

Ephrat Asherie
Ivy Baldwin
Kimberly Bartosik
Gordon Beferman
Maya Beiser
Ilona Bito
Oana Botez
Brian Brooks
Sara Brown
Art Bridgman
Rachel Chavkin
John Collins
Jane Comfort
Machine Dazzle
Thomas F. DeFrantz
Heidi Eckwall
Jerome Ellis

Jack Ferver
Katherine Freer
Jill Frutkin
David Gordon
Zvi Gotheiner
Neil Greenberg
Miguel Gutierrez
Joshua Higgason
John Jasperse
Modesto "Flako" Jimenez
Bill T. Jones
Kathy Kauffman
Scott Killian
Ian Lassiter
Seung-Jae Lee
Joe Levasseur
Deborah Lohse

Mark London
James Harrison Monaco
Jake Margolin
Kyle Marshall
Susan Marshall
Cori Marquis
Robbie McCauley
Roderick Murray
David Neumann
Petra van Noort
Donnell Oakley
Myrna Packer
Annie-B Parson
Doron Perk
Gavin Price
Katherine Profeta
Dana Reitz

Steven Reker
Amanda K. Ringger
Chris Schlichting
Eric Southern
Elizabeth Streb
Clifton Taylor
Jennifer Tipton
Ariana Smart Truman
Nick Vaughan
Laura Selle Virtucio
Kathy Westwater
Wendy Whelan
Jawole Willa Jo Zollar
Pavel Zuštiak