

Kristen Daley
Sabbatical Award Report 2016-2017
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I was awarded a two-semester sabbatical leave at one-half pay for the 2016-2017 academic year. This leave allowed for an extended time period to work on two creative endeavors, a dance performance and a somatic/scholarly project. Most of my leave was intensely devoted to the dance performance. For this project, I undertook the task of creating, re-staging, organizing, choreographing, performing and producing an entire evening of my own work, a retrospective reflecting key pieces from my personal repertoire as well as those co-constructed with SSU students and alumni. The completed retrospective was performed in Sonoma County on February 10-12, 2017 to sold out audiences in Ives Hall, Theatre 119. Part of this concert will also be performed in San Francisco at Dance Mission Theater, September 29, 30 and October 1. The scholarly project morphed into research and study around higher education's implicit bias towards the study of traditional Western dance forms. This work consisted of multi-media research, reading and writing but also *doing*: I attended Urban Bush Women's Summer Leadership Institute at New York University/Tisch School of the Arts, July 28-August 6. I participated fully in the 10 day workshop that culminated in two performances at NYU. The conference was centered around understanding internalized racial oppression and how it manifests in the arts, education and in our communities. UBW will be guest artists in residence at SSU for part of the 2017-2018 academic year, 3 weeks in the fall and 5 weeks in the spring continuing work around cultural identity and equity in the arts and education.

Project One: An Evening of Self-Produced Creative Work

In partnership with Sonoma State University's Department of Theatre Arts & Dance I presented ***Forever in a Second*** an evening length concert of new and renewed dance works February 10 (7:30pm), 11 (7:30pm), 12 (2pm) in Ives Hall, 119 on the Sonoma State University campus in Rohnert Park, CA. This yearlong endeavor started with rehearsals in the late summer of 2016, continued through all of the fall and culminated in a series of performances in Sonoma County and San Francisco. The concert consisted of four dances which I created, along with a dance by internationally renowned choreographer Mark Haim, which I performed. Original musical scores were created for four dances by Sonoma County composer/musician Jesse Olsen Bay. The evening consisted of kinetic, visceral and rigorous dancing, live music and a performance by three Sonoma County singers. The cast included SSU students, alums and Bay Area professional dancers. The concert was a reflection of my 13-year career as a dance educator and artist at SSU, but it was also a celebration of our collective humanity and represented the diverse, complicated, challenging and awe-inspiring world we live in.

Kristen Daley's Forever in a Second featured diverse dance works, including:

***In the Absence* (2016)**

This dance communicates isolation, loss and the fragility of life. Current and personal events in the world have impacted the creation of this work as it investigates how we find solace amongst each other. The dance asks "What will you do in the absence of...?" Featuring an original score composed by Jesse Olsen Bay specifically for the work.

Choreographer: Kristen Daley

Donna Anna Study (2003)

Mark Haim, an internationally recognized dance choreographer and teacher created *Donna Anna Study* in 2003 for Kristen Daley to interpret a portion of "Don Giovanni," by Mozart, the story of a lecherous Spanish nobleman. "The dance is not a translation of the story," Haim says. "It does not have a narrative, but is about communicating the feeling of the opera. Oddly enough, despite the feelings of anger and shock at what has happened, I feel an underlying lightness to the passage." The dance plays on those dualities and emotional contrasts.

Choreographer: Mark Haim

I can see everything from here (2016)

A kinetic and emotional investigation around a group finding solace and safety in a world that seems to be falling or drifting apart. Three Sonoma County singers performed the original score composed by Jesse Olsen Bay live.

Choreographer: Kristen Daley

...the words we have forgotten (2017)

An intimate and physical duet that explores memory, repetition, change and juxtaposition. The duet highlights intricate partnering work, explosive phrase work and abstract gestural nuances.

Choreographer: Kristen Daley

Interface (2013)

As the world, the internet, our lives move faster and faster, we continue to look for ways to stay connected through various virtual sites. Though we have this advanced technology at our fingers tips, 24/7...it seems we still need/desire/crave face to face time, the opportunity to connect through touch (an embrace, a kiss, a hug) and breath, a desire for kinesthetic feedback. Through movement and text the dancers explore what it means, "to be connected" in the 21st century.

Choreographer: Kristen Daley

*Concert Program attached as a separate document

**Video of the concert or individual dances available upon request.

Because teaching has been such an integral part of my dance career, I incorporated both SSU dance alums and current SSU students in restaging and developing these works. This project created a direct connection to students and an opportunity for them to perform on campus and in San Francisco. Having a year to work on a production created a bridge for current SSU students between the university performing experience and a professional one. It is exactly such a bridge that helps our students move effortlessly into dance and performance work in San Francisco, Seattle, New York City and beyond. Presenting work in professional venues in Sonoma County and San Francisco can also help to serve as a marketing and recruitment tool for the Dance Program at SSU. It is expected for seasoned professional choreographers to self-produce an evening length concert of their work.

Project Two: Somatic Exploration and Experiential Work

As in any performing art, experiential work is essential. You just can't read about dance technique or dance composition- you must experience it, facilitate it, have a kinesthetic connection to the ideas being taught and explored. As a full-time faculty member, there has been little time for re-education during the academic year. I take workshops during the summer and find this a necessary step to staying current in the ever-shifting landscape of dance. A two-semester sabbatical leave allowed me to travel to New York City, Seattle, Pennsylvania, and various parts of Northern California, all places where I have a rich connection to the dance scene. In these places, I mostly *participated as a student*

in classes and workshops. I participated in workshops and classes at The Seattle Festival of Dance Improvisation where I studied with leaders in somatic and improvisation studies. I attended the American College Dance Association's National and Regional Conferences in Washington, DC and Modesto, CA respectively. I taught and participated in many dance master classes in a wide range of idioms. I worked collaboratively with my professional dance collective, SoCo Dance Theater on *Into the Heartwood*, a yearlong project integrating sculpture, poetry, live music, spoken word, and film. Working with Bruce Johnson's sculpture garden, *Root 101*, the first set of performances in April and May occurred at Luther Burbank Center for the Arts in Santa Rosa, CA. The other performances were in July at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts in Sebastopol, CA. Lastly, I was a participant in Urban Bush Women's and the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond's Summer Leadership Institute, *YOU, ME, WE: Understanding Internalized Racial Oppression and How It Manifests in our Artistic Community* at New York University/Tisch School of the Arts in NY, NY. Participating in this leadership institute has shifted my perspective on dance pedagogy in higher education. Ignited by this experience as well as a Theatre Arts & Dance Program Review that I co-wrote with my colleague, Paul Draper in 2015-2016 it is clear to me that change is necessary in the Dance Program at SSU. Starting this fall my colleague Christine Cali and I will begin a revision of the Dance Program's curriculum. The goals for the reform would be to create an educational model that cultivates equity, access, and inclusiveness, striving for a curriculum where all dance forms offered are evenly balanced.

I have deep gratitude for this two-semester sabbatical leave which provided a substantial amount of time to work, research, learn, create and process experientially and within an embodied framework. This period of reflection and collaboration with both projects has regenerated and rejuvenated my work as a dance artist/scholar/educator. I look forward to this new academic year.