

THE BEAUTY OF DANCE & EMPOWERING THE DANCE NATIONS

I am moved by seeing dancers express human emotion in a way that words cannot. When a dancer's body can no longer help a dancer express oneself the way it once did, I am moved to help that dancer learn a new way to share his/her passion with the world.

I am moved to help my many friends who are dancers to have other options when they choose to move on from performing.

I am moved to empower my community to advocate for themselves. I am moved to find new business models that will enable artists and my peers to make work on their terms while earning a decent living.

I am moved by the way that children learn to dance and find

joy in its discipline and rewards.

All of these things drive me to connect with as many dancers as possible. When annually coordinating workshops in six (6) cities for the National Outreach Projects, I thoroughly research all the dancers and former dancers in the community.

Accessing dancers around the country with in-person workshops is imperative to our mission to support all dancers, even if they can only reach us via phone and online. This ambition and passion wakes me up every morning and keeps me focused despite the challenges our industry faces.

- Kaylen Ratto
Gala Coordinator | Client Outreach

THE BUSINESS OF DANCE

Dancing to me was about having fun. Before I called any jobs, I started dancing with a couple of friends and we formed a group called AmountBoyz. Back then dance was not at the heights it is now. We danced on the streets for money, joined talent shows, and performed at local block parties in the summer. Once I started to work in the professional world of dance, I noticed a couple things that I wanted to change. Dancers were not getting paid on time.

The challenge of getting paid a decent amount was also presented to me a number of times. This is when I started to think outside the box. Before agents and managers were a big part of the NYC dance scene, you had to handle your own rates for jobs.

The companies or managers that hired dancers did not care about our rates. You had to be a pest to get paid, so having an agent or manager helped a lot once they were set up in NYC. Being a performer, we look at the business side of things. With a different eye, different ideas filled my head. I knew what dancers and performers wanted, needed, and loved to do, so I started to work on my own projects.

For example when I'm looking for a venue I'm not only thinking how many people can fit inside, I'm also thinking about the sound system at max volume. Does the stage have a sprung wood floor? Where are the dressing rooms? Can you enter and exit from both sides? The list goes on and on. Some of these things are not considered



in popular dance styles, it's left to the performer to make the best of it.

When doing business I look to please the artist and the audience. It excites me that I've been able to learn so much through my experiences of dancing with different artists on tours and that I can help the next generation coming in the door. I can show them how to make choices for both business and artistic development.

Dancers need to give both equal amounts of energy to have success.

- Anthony Rue II
Dancer | Arts Advocate