Spook-tacular
Celebration of Dancers and Our Community
Performances / Honorees / Halloween Masquerade
by Cynthia G. Fischer
President, Board of Directors

In this issue you’ll read about the amazing party that CTFD supporters, friends and dancers had on Halloween night.

It was an evening, sponsored by Rolex, of spectacular entertainment and good fun! Not only did we raise much needed funds, we brought the story of CTFD and our dancer clients to new friends and continued to inspire our faithful supporters. For me the most meaningful part of the evening is when we take a moment to hear the heartfelt testimonials of our dancer clients.

Three of those stories are in this issue. Take a moment again to reflect on the significance of what we do and why we had so much to celebrate on Halloween night!
It was a night filled with treats while some of the nation’s best dancers preformed tricks of their trade for A Halloween Thriller. On the great stage of newly renovated New York City Center, patrons were wowed and amazed with seventeen beautiful performances. We watched as legs extended, feet arched and rhythms wrapped us, begging us to join each movement with our applause. And we did.

As the lights dimmed, you could feel your breath still as Bebe Neuwirth with Jennifer Dunne, Mary Ann Lamb, Mary MacLeod, Dana Moore, Brad Musgrove, Brian O’Brien, Mimi Quilllin and Samantha Strum opened the show with ‘Magic To Do’ from Pippin. Their grace and joy readied the audience for a spectacular night. No one could have done it better!

National Dance Institute’s 150 New York City kids performance of an adaptation of Michael Peter’s choreography of Michael Jackson’s Thriller video was a rhythmic, heart singing, beautiful homage to two dearly missed masters. It reminded us that new masterpieces are being created and performed all the time! Kudos to Mary Kennedy for this rendition of a modern classic!

As the room heightened with energy, the great ladies of dance and theater, Donna McKechnie, Carmen De Lavallade and our beautiful host, Chita Rivera, taught us what it means to own the stage.

As Chita introduced our honorees for the evening, Nancy MacMillan, Victor Elmaleh, Michele Riggi and the National Museum of Dance, I thought how lucky we are that such giants from different communities support the world of dance and our mission to support dancers at every stage of their careers.
Carolina Ballet principal guest choreographer, Lynne Taylor-Corbett’s New York première of ‘Dracula’ struck the perfect chord with everyone. Marcelo Martinez and Lilyan Vigo’s performances left your mouth watering.

With a slight of hand, or rather glowing hands, the Tap City Youth Ensemble delighted our audience with their Tap Dancing Skeletons. The youth of the American Tap Dance Foundation really got into the spirit of the holiday. Their rhythmic presentation reminded us of our youthful joy. Thank you to Tony Waag, Susan Hebach, Tammi Sakurai and the young ‘hoofers’ for showing us the way!

Bringing in the fright night feeling, director and choreographer, Ann Marie DeAngelo world premiered her one-act ballet, The Bell Witch. If you were unsure before how to mix ‘spooky’ and theatrical dance; Ann Marie and performers Lynn Cohen, Orlada Ismail and Adam Hundt showed you how.
Peter Pucci’s lighthearted ‘Surfing’ kept the audience in great spirits. Its good natured comical poke at our West Coast siblings in California did not ‘pearl’. Instead, it offered cool refreshment on an evening that dancers were giving their ultimate gift to the world; their dance. Dancers Eric Dunlap, Angelo Laroche, Nick Ross, Tommy Solvens and Elena Valls’ ‘hang-ten’ was a perfect ten, expressed through the audience’s laughter.

When the announcer said that the American Repertory Ballet was presenting something new, we knew it was going to be special. In honor of their board member, Nancy MacMillan, Douglas Martin cast a spell on the audience. Dancers Stephen Campanella, David Dubois, Alexander Dutko, Shaye Firer, Monica Giragosian, Tallin Kenar, Joshua Kutzberg, Katie Moorhead, Karen Leslie Moscato, Marc St. Pierre, Edward Urwin, and Claire van Bever were a dream.

American Repertory Ballet “Pathways” (excerpt)
When Betsy Fisher took the stage, she perfectly articulated the Mary Wigman quote “It was wonderful to abandon oneself to the craving for evil, to imbibe the powers which usually dared to stir only weakly beneath one’s civilized surface.” What an incredible feat.

The spine-tingling and breath-taking execution of David Fernandez’s Raven by NYCB’s Charles Askegard, Daniel Ulbricht and Savannah Lowery was stunning. We were swept us away with the dark motif of The Raven.

Tap...tap... tap...tap.tap.tap... Noah Racey and New York Song and Dance slowly and perfectly tapped their way into the hearts of every audience member. Melinda Sullivan’s voice sweetly balanced the cool, simple, but well-informed sounds of the tapped toes and heels of fellow members; CK Edwards, Danny Gardner and Luke Hawkins accompanied by musicians Jason Yudoff, Ross Patterson, and Alex Beckmann.
What can one say about Lipsinka's performance other than that it was a perfect example of what we call 'New York Iconic'? Bravo!

I sometimes forget the beauty of the ballet Giselle. When classics are done and redone again and again, one can get saturated with every staging, but Al-Gul Galina's staging of Marius Petipa, Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot's choreography made me wonder why I have stayed away so long. Houston Ballet's Karina Gonzalez and Conner Walsh hushed the audience in quiet excellence as they danced to Giselle Pas De Deux Act II.

Who said contemporary art lacked artistic value? Mark Stuart Dance Theatre's Interference was fun, lively and challenged the original video choreography of Ne-Yo's music video 'Beautiful Monster'. Dancers James Brown III, Rosie Lani Fiedelman, Reed Kelly, Yanina Marin, Tiger Martina, Morgan Matayoshi, Mark Stuart and Jaime Verazin showed strength and demonstrated how skilled artists are revitalizing dance audiences in popular culture.

Michael Fokine's Dying Swan is comedic genius. As Ida Nevasayeva & Paul Ghiselin danced on perfect point, we witnessed how revolutionary this dance is.

And the 2011 Rolex Award goes to...Nigel Lythgoe.

The presentation of the Rolex Award was like watching the stars align, signalling that everything is right in the universe. Two amazing icons, Judith Jamison and Nigel Lythgoe shared the stage for this special evening. One could see the admiration they had for each other as Ms. Jamison presented the 2011 Rolex Dance Award to Mr. Lythgoe.

The performance closing did not disappoint with all the highs of the 2011 'A Halloween Thriller' performance. The Street Beats Group ended the show with high energy, enthusiasm, rhythm and fun. What a way to send the attendees of Career Transition For Dancers 26th Anniversary off for a night of dancing, dinner and live action.

Photos by Richard Tremine, except where noted.
Meet the Universally regarded as an American national treasure, Chita Rivera is Broadway’s most accomplished and versatile dancer/actress/singer.

A recipient of the prestigious Kennedy Center honor, Chita has won two Tony Awards as Best Leading Actress in a Musical and has received six additional Tony Award nominations. In addition to a Rolex Dance Award, Chita is a member of CTFD’s National Advisory Board.

She most recently appeared on Broadway in Chita Rivera: the Dancer’s Life, the story of her own life in the theater, written by Terrence McNally and directed by Graciela Daniele. She received a Tony nomination for this performance. Her most recent Broadway appearance previous to this was in the Tony Award winning revival of Nine, starring Antonio Banderas.

Born Dolores Conchita Figueroa del Rivero in Washington, D.C., on January 23, 1933, Chita’s parents were from Puerto Rico.

Then in 1957, Broadway history was made when Chita’s electric performance as Anita in the Broadway premiere of West Side Story brought her stardom. Chita’s talent enabled genius, Jerome Robbins, to realize his groundbreaking choreographic vision for the production. She married Tony Mordente, a dancer from the West Side Story cast, on December 1st of that year. (The couple divorced in 1966). Chita’s performance as Anita was so central to the success of West Side Story that the London production was postponed until after she had given birth to her daughter, Lisa Mordente.

The starring role in Bye Bye Birdie followed West Side Story, and Chita returned to the West End in 1960 to reprise her performance in that role as well. Around the nation or on tour, Chita subsequently starred in Born Yesterday, The Rose Tattoo, Call Me Madam, Threepenny Opera, Sweet Charity, Kiss Me Kate, and Zorba. A national tour of Can-Can with the Radio City Music Hall Rockettes took her to Japan as well. Chita also played Nicky in the film version of Sweet Charity with Shirley MacLaine. In a wry tribute to Nicky, Chita’s character for her most recent screen appearance, a cameo in the film version of Chicago, is also named “Nicky.” Chita is currently preparing for the Signature Theatre production of the Kander, Ebb, McNally musical, The Visit.

Despite the many highlights of her stellar and historic career, Chita always maintains that her most treasured production is her daughter, singer/dancer/choreographer Lisa Mordente.
Judith Jamison joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1965 and quickly became an international star. Over the next 15 years, Mr. Ailey created some of his most enduring roles for her, most notably the tour-de-force solo Cry. During the 1970s and ‘80s, she appeared as a guest artist with ballet companies all over the world, starred in the hit Broadway musical Sophisticated Ladies, and formed her own company, The Jamison Project.

She returned to Alvin Alley American Dance Theater in 1989 when Mr. Ailey asked her to succeed him as Artistic Director. In the 21 years that followed, she brought the company to unprecedented heights – including two historic engagements in South Africa and a 50-city global tour to celebrate the company’s 50th anniversary.

Ms. Jamison is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, among them a prime time Emmy Award, an American Choreography Award, the Kennedy Center Honor, a National Medal of Arts, a “Bessie” Award, the Phoenix Award, and the Handel Medallion. She was also listed in “The TIME 100: The World’s Most Influential People” and honored by First Lady Michelle Obama at the first White House Dance Series event.


Ms. Jamison continues to dedicate herself to asserting the prominence of the arts in our culture, and she remains committed to promoting the significance of the Alley legacy – using dance as a medium for honoring the past, celebrating the present and fearlessly reaching into the future.
Nigel Lythgoe is the CEO of Big Red 2 Entertainment, a newly formed company with 19 Entertainment. Lythgoe most recently served as president of 19 Television, and prior to his tenure there, worked at London Weekend Television, where he was Controller of Entertainment and Comedy.

Born in 1949, Mr. Lythgoe developed an interest in dance at an early age. His first professional job was with the Corps de Ballet, and he later went on to choreograph the BBC’s Young Generation dance troupe for more than 500 shows. He became the only person to dance in, choreograph, direct, and produce the Royal Variety Performance for Her Majesty the Queen of England.

He has worked with stars such as Gene Kelly, Bing Crosby, Shirley Bassey and, most prestigiously, the Muppets, and while at London Weekend Television, he commissioned and produced hit shows such as “Gladiators” and “Blind Date.”

In 2000 Mr. Lythgoe earned himself the nickname “Nasty Nigel” as a judge on hit show “Popstars” before leaving for Bob Geldof’s television company Planet 24, where he executive produced and directed the U.K. version of “Survivor.” Additionally, he developed and produced the TV phenomenon “Pop Idol.”

Meet the Rolex Dance Awardee: Nigel Lythgoe

(l. to r.) Judith Jamison & Nigel Lythgoe [Photo by Annie Watt]
Lythgoe has been a driving force in the world of performing arts as the executive producer of the TV juggernaut “American Idol,” which has been nominated for more than 40 Emmy Awards, and “Idol Gives Back,” which raised more than $140 million for charity and in 2007 received the prestigious Governors Award, the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences’ highest honor. Lythgoe also served as producer and director of the acclaimed Celine Dion/Elvis Presley duet featured in the special. He is the co-creator and executive producer of the Emmy Award-winning series “So You Think You Can Dance.” Additionally, he executive produced NBC’s “Superstars of Dance” and Fox’s “Carrie Underwood: An All-Star Holiday Special.”

In 2010, he took “So You Think You Can Dance” to the U.K., where he is reprising his role as judge, and in 2011, he launched “CMT’s Next Superstar” along with his son, Simon. In addition, Lythgoe was recently named executive producer on the American version of the popular U.K. game show “Secret Fortune,” currently in development.

In the summer of 2009, the U.K.’s University of Bedfordshire awarded Lythgoe with an honorary Doctor of Arts for his outstanding contribution to the performing arts in television.

Lythgoe is actively involved with numerous charities, serving as the chairman of the British Academy of Film & Television Arts, Los Angeles, and as an honorary national vice president of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. He also sits on the honorary board of Center Dance Arts at the Music Center Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County.

And in 2009, Lythgoe joined forces with director Adam Shankman, “Dancing with the Stars” judge Carrie Ann Inaba and actress Katie Holmes to found the Dizzy Feet Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides scholarships to talented young dancers, works to elevate and standardize dance instruction in the U.S., and exposes youth in underprivileged communities to the joys of dance education.

Lythgoe lives in Los Angeles.
Born in Morocco in 1918, Victor Elmaleh came to this country with his parents in 1925. After he started school, they decided to leave him with his grandparents' family for an American education. In Brooklyn he attended P.S. 48, New Utrecht High and Brooklyn College. Later he transferred to the University of Virginia, where he studied architecture.

In November 1941, he met Sono Osato, who had for six years been with the original Ballet Russe, but was then with American Ballet Theatre. That proved to be the most important and significant event of his life. They were married in April 1943 and have been happily together ever since – almost 70 years. They have two sons; Niko and Antonio and three grandchildren; Sarah, Andrew and Alex.

“Sono has the best and purest character of anyone I’ve ever known so I feel I’m the luckiest guy in the world. Coincidentally, she was one of the most beautiful, elegant, lyrical and natural dancer-artists of her day. My real life commenced with our being together and everything that I’ve done since has happened with her loving partnership.”

Victor’s life is divided into: business, sports, painting and music.

After the war in 1946, he “Americanized” his father’s export business in Morocco by starting an import firm which consisted of his brother, Jacques, brother-in-law, Larry Craig and Arthur and Frank Stanton, and named it Craig-Stanton.

Sports have been a passion all of his life and he competed while in business. “Sports are one of the only areas in which individual talent can be really measured.”

Handball; Was the sport in his early years and he won the National Doubles Championship in 1951.

Squash. In squash, he won the National Doubles Championship in 1968, when he was 49 and his partner was 23, and later the Age 50 Nationals. At 81, he won the Elmaleh Pro-Am, and at 92 he still plays a game designed to his lack of mobility. To promote squash doubles, he set up a program with U.S. Squash and contributed to build The Elmaleh/Stanton Squash Center in Southampton and one in Toronto.

Tennis. In tennis, he competed in Senior Doubles; won numerous tournaments including the Eastern Seniors and two others with Bobby Riggs. “Sadly, I gave up tennis in my 80’s because my legs gave out.”

In 2001, Victor joined the Board of the Orchestra of St. Luke’s and created an endowment. Ultimately, he found their new home at the Baryshnikov building. He serves on the board of Concert Artists Guild and established an annual competition for musicians. He also created a fund for pianists at Rockefeller University and plans to arrange recordings for fifteen young pianists to help launch their careers.

As an alumnus of the University of Virginia (class of ’42), he has been very involved with their plans for development which has resulted in the Elmaleh Wing of the School of Architecture and the Elmaleh Art Gallery.

For his dear Sono, he established an endowed gift at Career Transition For Dancers entitled The Sono Osato Scholarship Program for Graduate Studies.

“I go to the office every day and have no intention of retiring. As always, my motto is ‘Keep Moving.’"
If it were at all proper for a grown woman to declare that she has a favorite animal, Nancy MacMillan (pictured above) would most definitely claim her love for the giraffe. Friends and family know this, and over the years small giraffe statuettes have slowly moved into the living room. There are perhaps some giraffe napkin rings in the kitchen. Nothing ridiculous, but giraffes subtly inhabit her home.

Her love is very much about their grace and sophistication, how they rise above us, munching on the highest branch, looking down from above. The giraffe’s incomparable beauty comes in its perfect posture, long neck, strength, and large, sparkling eyes. Not that dancers are giraffes, but Nancy’s love of dance seems a natural extension – there is a similar beauty and grace, an ability to soar, lean, muscular limbs, and an utterly elegant sportiness.

For more than 30 years, Nancy has been both an adoring audience member and volunteer in the world of dance. She has worked with the American Repertory Ballet since 1980, serving as Chair of the Board and Treasurer. With Master’s degrees in Finance and Economics, Nancy brings to organizations an awareness of some of the hard financial realities associated with sustaining non-profits.

She has been publisher of Princeton Alumni Magazine for the last 21 years, a volunteer at Princeton Medical Center, and on the board at the Institute for Advanced Study.

So her aesthetic love for ballet is only part of the story and perhaps the smaller part. For Nancy, dance is also about an intense work ethic and enviable level of discipline, about athleticism, passion, commitment to a craft. With her love for dance, business savvy, and appreciation for difficult adjustments to shifting opportunities, Nancy became involved with Career Transition For Dancers, where, since 2004, she has served on the Board of Directors and the Executive, Finance, and Fundraising/Development committees. Nancy knows that there are incredible opportunities out there, but change often requires a community to help facilitate inevitable transitions.

So the living room has a few giraffes, even some Nutcrackers and photos of Fred Astaire, but more, it has a woman who recognizes that the kind of grace, commitment and discipline found in dancers can translate smoothly into a new phase of life, especially with support from organizations like Career Transition For Dancers.
Michele Riggi’s love and passion for dance began as a child and continues today in her prestigious role that started in 2005 as President and Chairwoman for the National Museum of Dance in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Michele studied under New York City Ballet principal dancer, Melissa Hayden at Skidmore College and later garnered a spot with the Professional Dance Teachers of America. Here she toured nationally to teach dance teachers across the country the art of movement.

After years on the road, Michele returned to Saratoga Springs to open up her own dance studio which kept her on her toes for 10 years until she found her lifelong dance partner and devoted husband Ron. Michele continued to teach dance part-time, but the role of motherhood eventually took center stage while raising her four children. Philanthropists, Michele and her husband Ron jointly support many charities and causes related to the Arts.

These days, you can find Michele busy working on her latest transition, her first self-published book, “Posh Palazzo Pups” living with 24 Furry Friends. As of today the count has grown to 36! Most of the dogs have been rescued from shelters, homes where they were not wanted, pet stores and even the back of a van in a parking lot! All proceeds from sales of her book go to benefit Canine Cancer Oncology Research and the construction of a 24-hour pet hospital in Saratoga Springs, NY.

Michele is also the co-Chair of Winter Heat, a Latin dance Benefit for CTFD and Compièx Contemporary Ballet. Michele is also the co-Chair of Winter Heat, a Latin dance Benefit for CTFD and Compièx Contemporary Ballet.
The National Museum of Dance & Hall of Fame opened its doors on July 7, 1986 in Saratoga Springs, New York. It is the only museum in the country, and one of very few in the world dedicated entirely to the art of dance. There are three permanent exhibits in addition to the many other galleries that house regularly rotating exhibits on diverse dance topics.

Established in 1987, The C.V. Whitney Hall of Fame annually recognizes individuals who have made pioneering contributions to the art form. There are currently over forty inductees that represent all genres of dance, as well as its many affiliated professions.

The Washington Bathhouse Exhibit explains the unique history of the museum building, and The Children’s Wing offers a world of dance-oriented fun for young visitors. In 1992 the Swyer Studios were constructed adjacent to the museum, to house the School of the Arts, residencies, master classes and performances.

The museum’s archival collection is home to hundreds of dance artifacts including costumes, photographs, films, and personal effects. A recent addition to the museum, the Resource Room also contains hundreds of books, periodicals, posters and publications available for reference to dance scholars.

The Mission of the National Museum of Dance is to cultivate, promote, foster, and develop amongst its members and the community at large, the appreciation, understanding, taste, and love of dance and its history, and to provide the means for popular instruction and enjoyment thereof; to collect, classify, preserve, and protect records, articles, and subjects of historic interest; to select, annually, one or more individuals, corporations, dance companies, associations, or other institutions as honorees to be named in the National Museum of Dance Hall of Fame.

The Museum is an all-inclusive institution, related to a diversity of professional dance forms, and representing dance from a diversity of cultural, religious, gender, and class segments/backgrounds of society.
Let me put it simply, Career Transition for Dancers (CTFD) changed my life. After a 33-year career in musical theater I felt, deep down, I needed a change. Here’s the scary part – I didn’t know if I had any other skills to earn a living. So what to do? A friend told me about CTFD. This was back in 1995 and over the next year the dynamic duo of Suzie Jary and Elizabeth Campbell shepherded me through the daunting process of finding out what I wanted to do with my life when I grew up. After that year I found my niche in the Marketing Communications department of a large financial institution and stayed there for almost 12 years.

Recently I have written a book about my journey and the year of working with CTFD takes up a complete chapter. In fact one friend who read my book said that anyone even contemplating changing careers should read this chapter, because I approached it so pro-actively, treating “finding a new career” as a full time job. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to all of you for supporting CTFD throughout the years to help dancers like me move on with our lives. Thank you.
Meet the dancer-clients from the show:

Patricia Cody at the 26th Anniversary Jubilee

It has been almost two decades since I first walked in the door of Career Transition For Dancers. Career-wise, those two decades have seen me through three years at New York Law School, graduating first in my class, landing my first attorney job at Sullivan & Cromwell, paying back my law school loans, and years of law firm practice predominantly as an employment and labor litigator.

One year ago, a big transition in my legal career occurred when I became General Counsel for TheraCare of New York, Inc., an education and health services provider company to special needs children in the tri-state area.

If anyone had told me during my years as a dancer and performer that this would be the career path I would eventually take, I would have been the first one to insist that they were mistaken.

From the age of four, my life essentially revolved around dance – dance classes, recitals, dreams of performing in musical comedy theater, and of course, on Broadway.

The Triumph of Will Over Ego
by Michael Dean, Dancer-Client

I took my first dance class in college as a lark. At that time I had never seen a dance performance or even a Broadway show, but from the beginning I loved the physicality of it and the music (and the girls) and soon I was spending all my time in the studio, either taking or watching class. By the time I graduated, I was determined to give dance a try, I ended up dancing for 15 years.

I got a scholarship at the Joffrey School and made my professional debut on Broadway with the Paul Taylor Company and Rudolph Nureyev in 1974. Over the next several years I danced in the companies of May O'Donnell, Pauline Koner, Theater Dance Collection, Utah Repertory Dance Theater and the Asolo (FL) Opera, danced the original choreography of Agnes De Mille (Oklahoma), Hanya Holmes (My Fair Lady) and Peter Martins (Carousel) and worked with William Hammerstein and James Hammerstein among others. By the time I was 35, I knew I was ready to think about the second half of my life. I received money from what was then called the Dancers In Transition program and took courses at NYU in Construction Management, started working at a cabinet shop, and then enrolled in Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. Today, 25 years later, I am the Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer at Turner Construction Company.

During my time of transition I often struggled with feelings of failure, loss and confusion. But over time, I used the discipline, creativity, ability to focus and persevere against long odds that I learned as a dancer and applied it to learning a new skill set. I have now spent more time in the construction business than I spent dancing but I don't believe I could be where I am today without the training and experience I got from dance.

Today I still try to take class most Saturdays with my wife and sometimes my 3 daughters. I think of it as "the triumph of will over ego" – which might be a good way of thinking about career transition – the odds are great, the work is hard, it's sometimes embarrassing and confusing and you don't know if you will succeed. But change is inevitable and the rewards are worth it. And if you can make it as a dancer you can do anything you set your mind to. Remember – "Just keep smiling and keep moving."
Behind the scenes of the Show
by Ann Marie DeAngelo
Performance producer & Director

I have always wanted to do a Halloween themed evening and this year there were more pieces available that suit the theme. A few years back, not many pieces existed other than my original one-hour Bell Witch story-ballet. We now have Vampires (Dracula), Ghosts (The Bell Witch), Witches (Hexentanz), The Raven, and Wills (Giselle) - along with evocative songs in “Thriller”, “Under My Skin” and “Beautiful Monster” for a successful collage.

The selection process first wants to suit the theme, and then is based on availability and talent willing to volunteer their time. Diversity is key, and synthesis that results in less than 90 min. happens by strategic programming. This is a result also, of having been an artistic director for 15 years, a choreographer, and seeing numerous performances a year. But even though I come to the table with lots of creative and organizational experience, this single-night show takes months of planning - much of it in my head and on 100 drafts of paper. However my formula never changes - that of eclecticism, variety, and choosing the best in each genre. Excerpts from larger works, commissioned works, the innovative or evolutionary are all juxtaposed or pinned against each other. Amalgamation is the choreographic voice of the future - individual voices become stronger when working as part of the collective.

The challenge is always to maintain a high level of professionalism even when at times benefits are not taken seriously by some. Working a year to nail down pieces, staying within a limited budget, and accommodating artistic and production needs in advance makes for a smoother Tech process. Keeping speeches short, transitions moving, and not doing individual bows will also ensure a better show flow. It’s also great when personalities perform...as Bebe did this year, or in Marvin Hamlisch’s song I choreographed to last year.

My vision is to keep each show fresh, and I believe it is by presenting a variety and by marrying the old and new. A strong underlying message in my shows is “through our differences we discover our sameness”.

Lastly, the one tech day only works because of months of planning and focus. Organization is key to any success, as well as being creative within financial limitations. My production team is phenomenal and ultimately we don’t just believe in the cause, but we all really care!

[Photos: Richard Tremine]
On Stage
by Mark Stuart
Artistic Director - Mark Stuart Dance Theater

It was truly an honor to participate in this year’s Gala and lend our support to CTFD at the legendary and newly rebuilt City Center. There’s an energy on stage and in that house that very few theaters possess. It’s almost palpable.

I don’t think many people truly comprehend the army of people and teamwork it takes to put on such a spectacular show. From the Producer and Director, lighting and sound designers, stage managers, deck crew, and all of the performers and honorees, it is amazing to watch such an enormous amount of information and logistics pull together out of thin air to create such a fantastic evening. It is a testament not only to all of their talent and experience, but also to their dedication for their art and to CTFD.

For Mark Stuart Dance Theatre, choosing to do a new piece is a scary thing with the very few hours of rehearsal we have available, but the challenge of creating a World Premiere for this year’s Halloween Spooktacular really intrigued me. I wasn’t quite sure how we were going to tell a powerful story that the audience could relate to while staying within a Halloween theme.

We settled on the timeless story of boy meets girl, boy and girl are torn apart and then struggle to find their way back to each other. Once we made that decision it was easy to layer a vampire/zombie army in to serve as our antagonists.

We actually finished choreographing the piece the morning of the Gala during tech rehearsal, which was also the first time that we had the entire cast together in one room. Watching my incredible artists come together to create this piece of art just served as a microcosm of the entire event. Thank you CTFD!

Photos: Richard Tremine
More Treats than Tricks: CTFD’s Halloween Gala Fundraiser

by Natasha Johnson, Esq
Dancer & Volunteer

On a night traditionally filled with horror and gore, the red-carpet interviewer for Career Transitions for Dancers’ (CTFD) annual fundraising gala, I and others were treated to an evening of glitz and glamour. CTFD’s efforts to support dancers at any stage of their careers—pre or post dance—were highlighted by a multi-genre dance showcase at New York City Center for a one-of-a-kind performance; A Halloween Thriller presented by Rolex Watch USA.

The evening continued with a five-star dinner celebrating the efforts of notables like Nigel Lythgoe (who I got another photo op with), a dance floor abound, and the most creative costumes this side north of the annual Village Halloween Parade.

As one of CTFD’s newest fans and one of the hundreds of guests, I was noticeably awestruck and inspired. The combination of seeing some of the industry’s up and coming talent share the stage with some of dance’s hottest acts and industry legends, including Judith Jamison, would make even those with two left feet full turn and recognize the importance of dance and the value and stability that CTFD offers to the dance community nationwide. Bravo CTFD!

At the Dinner

by Ann Van Ness
CTFD Boardmember & Auction Chair

A Treat.

I love Dance and I love Dancers. They are a vital piece to the art and entertainment world. As a Board Member of Career Transition For Dancers, I am honored to volunteer my time and resources every year at our annual gala to these wonderfully disciplined artists. Yet, this year’s magic was more than phenomenal; it was a Thriller! On Oct. 31, 2155 friends, colleagues, loved ones and all people passionate about dance gathered at the New York City Center for a one-of-a-kind performance; A Halloween Thriller presented by Rolex Watch USA.

As we watched dancers from around the country volunteer their time and talent, I couldn’t help but be proud to support an organization that supports these dancers. I was left wanting more performances as the show came to an end, but I knew there was a second important element to the evening: the dinner and auction. I was overjoyed to see how much fun everyone was having. But I was focused, the dinner and auction was as important to the health of Career Transition For Dancers as the performance. Raising support that evening ensured we kept the doors open at CTFD, and continued to provide scholarships, grants, career counseling and support program nationally.

I was blown away the décor of the Grand Ballroom at the Hilton Hotel envisioned by Dinner Chair, Janice Becker. The beautifully Gothic theme complete with dripping candles and a rolling fog brought to life the spirit of Halloween of all of our guests. Looking at the room, I knew we were in for a fun-filled night.

As our auctioneer opened the bidding to 752 dinner guests for a Thanksgiving Brunch with Times Square views of the parade, I felt butterflies, it was very important that the auction did well. Every dollar raised provided more for our programs. What a special way to give back and a wonderful showing of support! By the end of the evening, we raised an additional $119,000.

But none of this would be possible without the hard-working 26th Anniversary co-Chairs, Michele Herbert, Anka K. Pelliz, Stewart Wicht, the Gala Chairs, Honorary Chairs, Gala Leadership Committee members, Artistic Chair, Ann Marie DeAngelo, Dinner Chair, Janice Becker, Journal Chair, Craig Dix, and the 2011 Honorees, Victor Elmaleh, Nigel Lythgoe, Nancy MacMillan, and Michele Riggi. Thank You. This was the best Halloween ever!

This was the best Halloween treat ever!
Inside Career Transition For Dancers: Fall to Winter

Pre-Gala Reception Hosted by Vice President, Anka K. Palitz - October 5, 2011
Photos by Jerry Ruotolo

(l. to r) Brian Hedikke, Michele Herbert, Michele Riggi, Anka Palitz, Janice Becker & Stuart Witch

Step Up 4 Vets - November 24, 2011

c.) Patricia Kenney, Gala Auction Winner, with Step Up 4 Vets Thanksgiving Day Parade Brunch, in NYC

Winter Season Celebration - Potluck - December 5, 2011

(l. to r) Karen Hildenbrand,

(l. to r) Ann Van Ness, Melanie Brown & Dana Lutt
National Outreach Project
Seattle: Community Day at Pacific Northwest Ballet - September 10, 2011

Stepping Into Hope & Change - Chicago - October 10, 2011
Photos by Dominika Fitzgerald
CTFD Programs & Resources

The Caroline & Theodore Newhouse Center for Dancers

Individual Counseling

One-on-one counseling enables the organization to address the unique concerns of each dancer-client. One-on-one counseling is often a performer’s first direct interaction with the organization as he/she begins to recognize the necessity of planning for a life beyond dance and address issues related to career changes. Face-to-face counseling is therefore invaluable in its role in assuring dancers that the organization will be alongside them through each step of the transition process.

Group Counseling

Focus and Support Groups
Focus and support groups allow dancer-clients to gather with their peers in a positive stress-free environment. Purposely small in size, focus and support groups are uniquely poised to destroy the isolationist stigma often associated with the career transition process. Dancer-clients discover that their peers in all areas of dance are encountering the same challenges and doubts which they are experiencing, which serve as a constructive counterpart to each participant’s one-on-one counseling.

The Business Group provides entrepreneurial dancers with practical business information and networking opportunities among fellow entrepreneurs and business practitioners.

The Diamond Group consists of mature dancers to discuss the shared concerns of late career development, finances, health, work-related skills, and other aspects of their professional lives.

CareerLine

CareerLine, the organization’s nationwide toll-free telephone counseling hotline, allows dancer-clients outside of the New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago areas to make use of free career counseling via telephone. Recognizing both the geographic distribution as well as the rigorous touring schedules of performing artists, the inclusivity of CareerLine allows dancers to make an initial contact or continue previous counseling with Career Transition For Dancers no matter where their career may take them.

Financial Assistance

The organization’s financial assistance fund is divided into two programs:

The Caroline H. Newhouse Scholarship Fund

The Caroline H. Newhouse Scholarship Fund provides $2,000 grants to dancers pursuing an undergraduate degree, certifications or launching a new business. Eligible dancers must complete an application form and provide documentation of a work history in performance. The Newhouse Fund was established in 2002 by the organization’s Director Emerita Caroline H. Newhouse.

The Sono Osato Scholarship Program For Graduate Studies

The Sono Osato Scholarship Program For Graduate Studies provides $5,000 merit-based scholarships toward graduate degrees in fields other than dance performance. The Osato scholarship program was created to help dancers meet the substantial financial commitments that come with the pursuit of a graduate-level degree. Areas of graduate study supported by the scholarship include professional degrees, the medical arts, the social work professions, physical and social sciences, education, business and the humanities. The program was established in 2005 by a generous gift from renowned dancer and actress, Sono Osato.

Noah Racey’s New York Song and Dance
Career Resources

Career resources make up the final category in Career Transition For Dancers’ cooperative services. These online resources help dancers to research new careers, remain up-to-date on the organization’s other programs, and reach out to alumni.

Video Career Conversations

Easily accessible in a variety of ways, Video Career Conversations are archival recordings of the organization’s live Career Conversations seminars. Video Career Conversations feature a panel of experts from a number of disciplines discussing a range of topics with transitioning dancers.

National Career Network

The National Career Network is a searchable online database connecting transitioning dancers with professionals interested in offering their own experience in a wide variety of non-dance fields.

Transition Links

Transition Links are a collection of external resources aggregated on careertransition.org which reflect and reinforce the organization’s services. Categories such as career counselling, assessment and job search; financial aid for college; dance publications; and performing arts unions link to guides, tools, and resources all of which have been selected and evaluated by Career Transition For Dancers’ career counselors.

Movement Institute for Career Development

To Inspire

Career Conversations

Career Conversations are free seminars that expose dancers to the vast array of opportunities, resources, and career paths available. These seminars are geared toward both those dancers who are seeking guidance on jumpstarting the transition process and those who have begun to achieve a more finely-tuned awareness of the next step.

Stepping Into Hope & Change

Stepping Into Hope & Change are full-day career development conferences with sessions led by panels of industry experts and career counselors addressing issues such as: economic climate and conditions, career planning and forecasting, and self-discovery for transition preparation. Additionally, it provides a Networking/Resource Fair and break-out testimonials from successfully transitioned dancers. All of these elements are client/industry responsive and interactive.
Reaching Out

Local Outreach Project

Local Outreach Projects introduce dancers to Career Transition For Dancers’ programs through their colleagues and peers, encouraging them to institute long-term career plans while still dancing. Each project varies in structure, based on dancers’ interests, needs, and performance schedule. Our Local Outreach Project is an effective way to demonstrate how the issues of transition apply to all dancers while attendees are surrounded by their peers and organization alumni in a positive environment.

National Outreach Project

The National Outreach Project brings the organization’s individual and group counseling services to cities with a significant dance presence. These two-day seminars introduce dancers around the country to the organization’s signature counseling methodology so they can begin developing second careers while still performing. Throughout Part One, counselors use Career Transition For Dancers’ signature career exploration methodology to help dancers identify personal interests and skills, discover career possibilities for the future, and address the emotional aspects of change. Part Two is dedicated to thirty-minute, one-on-one career counseling appointments and follow-up information to those who wish to continue using the organization’s services.

Moves-Stories of Transition

Highlights the accomplishments of our nationwide dancer-clients, provides our audience with how-to videos and sources of inspiration.

Dancers on the Move

The monthly dancer-client specific e-newsletter informs dancers of upcoming programs, services and community events received by Career Transition For Dancers and partnering companies in their region.

MovingOn

The organization’s semi-annual newsletter is read by over 60,000 current and former dancer-clients, funders, and other members of the dance community in print and online.

Website (careertransition.org)

Career Transition For Dancers’ website is the organization’s central networking and outreach resource hub. The website provides dancers with the tools and information to begin planning for their transition while still dancing and empowers them with on-going on-demand information over the course of their transition process—all on their own time and at a pace that is comfortable for each individual.

Resource Centers

The organization’s New York and Los Angeles offices maintain Resource Centers for use by all dancers. The Resource Centers contain career development literature, university guides and course lists, listings of financial aid opportunities, archived copies of the organization’s newsletter, testimonials from current and former dancer-clients, job postings, computers and printers for résumé and portfolio creation, and access to the organization’s online career resources. [Photos: Richard Tremine]
SAVE THE DATE:

NYC Volunteers Needed
Tuesday, January 3 - Friday, January 6

The Career Transition For Dancers’ Development Department is looking for several volunteers to help with a mailing at our office located at 165 W 46 Street, Suite 701, NYC. Lunch will be provided. If you are interested and available, please email Dana Lutt, Communications Coordinator at dlutt@careertransition.org, or call 212 764 0172. Please kindly respond to Dana no later than 12:00pm on Thursday, Dec 22 if you are interested in signing up for a shift(s).

Tuesday, Jan 3 12:00pm-3:00pm
Wednesday, Jan 4 11:00am-2:00pm and 2:00pm-5:00pm
Thursday, Jan 5 10:00am-1:00pm
Friday, Jan 6 11:00am-2:00pm and 2:00pm-5:00pm

We so appreciate the help of our volunteers!

We are coming to a city near you!

Did you know that we serve dancers nationwide? Our signature National Outreach Projects are headed to 6 cities in 2012! Join our counselors for free interactive workshops, networking and information about Career Transition For Dancers,

Louisville, KY
Raleigh, NC / Durham, NC
Richmond, VA
Salt Lake City, UT
Boston, MA
Washington, DC

Dates to be announced on our website.

Business Group Meeting
Monday, January 9 --6:30-8:00PM

Our Business Group provides dancers in New York with practical business information and also allows them to network with other entrepreneurs and business people. All dancer entrepreneurs at any stage in their business development - including their performing career businesses - are invited to attend. Please RSVP to groups@careertransition.org or to Dana at 212 764 0172 as space is limited. New members always welcome.

Career Transition For Dancers, New York
The Actors’ Equity Building
165 W 46 Street (at 7th Ave)
Suite 701, 7th Floor
New York, NY

Diamond Group Meeting
Thursday, January 12 --11:00am-1:00PM

Our Diamond Group enables dancers over 50 years old in New York City to meet and discuss common issues relating to career development, work-related skills, finances, health, and other aspects of their professional lives. In addition, group members exchange valuable information and resources. On occasion, guest speakers are invited to share their expertise on topics of interest to the group. Co-leaders are Lauren Gordon, Career Transition For Dancers East Coast Career Counselor, and Anita Lands, Career Transition Coach.

Please RSVP to groups@careertransition.org as space is limited. Remote participation is available via our teleconference line, call Dana at 212 764 0172 for more details. New members always welcome. Free of charge.

Career Transition For Dancers, New York
The Actors’ Equity Building
165 W 46 Street (at 7th Ave)
Suite 701, 7th Floor
New York, NY

Computer Classes in Los Angeles offered free of charge through Career Transition For Dancers
Register Now for January 2012 Classes

Career Transition For Dancers’ Los Angeles office is partnering with the Los Angeles School District and The Actors Fund to provide computer classes for dancers of all ages and computer skill levels. All fees and registration costs are waived for those who are eligible for a Grant with Career Transition For Dancers, West Coast. Please contact Joanne at 323 549 6660 for further information.

Presented by Rolex and Capezio, Winter Heat:
Monday, March 5, 2012 at the Edison Ballroom, NYC

Palm Beach Fashion Awards Luncheon: Thursday, March 15, 2012, at Club Colette in Palm Beach, Fl

Presented by Rolex, Career Transition For Dancers’ 27th Anniversary Jubilee Gala: Monday, November 5, 2012, New York City

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

The Caroline H. Newhouse Scholarship Fund

The next application deadline is Wednesday, January 11, 2012. Fully completed applications must arrive in our New York City office by 5:00pm on the application deadline. Applications postmarked on the deadline date or received after the deadline date will not be accepted.
Career Transition For Dancers
The Caroline & Theodore Newhouse Center for Dancers

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Career Transition For Dancers admits eligible current, former, and future professional dancers of any race, color, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to its clients. The organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, age, national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies, scholarship awards and other organizational programs.

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