

**Doris Duke Charitable Foundation/Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Theater Initiative**

Beginning in 1998, the recently formed Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) began its work in the arts by launching the **Leadership Presenting Institutions** program. Later, DDCF introduced its **Mid-sized Presenting Organizations** program, eventually investing millions of dollars to help presenters establish or grow endowments while providing multi-year program funding to support artists' commissions, residencies, community-based projects and other research and development efforts led by artists. (Grantees are listed in Attachment A.)

An evaluation conducted by AEA Consultants posited, "The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation hypothesized that by providing funding for artistic programs while also providing incentives to build endowment resources to support those programs over the long term, it could stimulate diverse performing arts institutions to strengthen their support for artists, sustain or grow audiences, and fortify their long-term financial health. The data collected by AEA suggests that the hypothesis was correct, and the Foundation's strategy has been a success."

Wishing to extend its work beyond the presenting community, in 2000, after an extensive research and development phase, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation joined forces with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (AWMF), which was a significant funder of the country's leading theaters, by establishing a new theater initiative that grew into three distinct but interrelated programs:

The **Leading National Theatres Program** (LNTP) was the first to be launched. It provided 22 of the country's leading nonprofit regional theatres with multi-year artistic program support from the AWMF and matching endowment support DDCF. Theatres chosen to participate in this program included:

1. Actors Theater of Louisville
2. American Conservatory Theatre
3. American Repertory Theatre
4. Arena Stage
5. Berkeley Repertory Theatre
6. Center Stage Center Theatre Group of Los Angeles
7. Connecticut Players (Long Wharf)
8. Goodman Theatre
9. Intiman Theatre
10. Lincoln Center Theater
11. McCarter Theatre Company
12. New York Theatre Workshop
13. Perseverance Theatre
14. Playwrights Horizons
15. The Public Theater
16. Roundabout Theatre Company
17. Shakespeare Theatre
18. South Coast Repertory
19. Spanish Theatre Repertory Company (Repertorio Español)
20. Steppenwolf Theatre Company
21. Sundance Institute (Theater Lab)
22. Trinity Repertory Company

As of 2006, the two foundations had invested \$38.6 million in the Leading National Theatres Program.

The LNTP was quickly followed by DDCF-funded **New Generations Program**, a competitive re-granting program administered by Theatre Communications Group. Grants were awarded to 142 theatres from 2000 to 2006 to mentor promising young theatre professionals or to build young, culturally specific, disabled and/or other under-served audiences.

The final piece of the initiative, launched in 2005, was **The Ensemble Theatres Program**, which allowed the DDCF and AWMF to provide artistic program grants to leading national ensemble-based theatres. This program was intended to provide the same amount of funding support each year for five-years to the seven ensembles. In subsequent years, the number of ensemble theaters selected was meant to be expanded with a new class of grantees added each of those five years. Additionally, DDCF granted \$1.5 million to establish a re-granting program administered by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters for creation and touring projects that built partnerships among ensemble theatres, arts presenters, and resident theatres.

Initial grantees of DDCF's Ensemble Theatres Program included:

1. Culture Clash, Los Angeles, CA - DDCF awarded \$40,000 and AWMF \$40,000
2. Dell'Arte International, Blue Lake, CA - DDCF awarded \$30,000 and AWMF \$30,000
3. Ping Chong & Company (Fiji Theatre Company), New York, NY – DDCF awarded \$40,000 and AWMF \$40,000
4. Pregones – Touring Puerto Rican Theater Collection, Inc., Bronx, NY - DDCF awarded \$50,000 and AWMF \$70,000
5. Saratoga International Theater Institute, Inc. (SITI Company), New York, NY - Awarded DDCF support of \$40,000 and AWMF support of \$40,000
6. Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Minneapolis, MN - DDCF awarded \$50,000 and AWMF \$70,000
7. Wooster Group, Inc., New York, NY - DDCF awarded \$50,000 and AWMF \$50,000

Due to its long-term interest in and support of the presenting community and more recent foray into the field of theater, DDCF Program Director for the Arts, Olga Garay, began convening the Foundation's presenting and theater grantees to explore ways that these two sectors could collaborate more effectively – especially in service to under-funded yet creatively vital ensemble theaters. A number of meetings took place in locales ranging from Boston to New York to San Francisco to Dublin, Ireland that sought to identify similarities and differences in how producing theaters and presenters function.

From these discussions, it became apparent that the two sectors worked very differently and were largely unknown to each other. For example, presenters have for years worked very closely with choreographer-led dance companies commissioning new work and providing critical residency, touring, and performance opportunities. Yet, it became evident that a similar relationship between ensemble theaters and presenters was largely missing.

In an effort to begin building knowledge of the creatively rich and diverse ensemble theaters sector, DDCF Program Director for the Arts, Olga Garay, enlisted Mark Russell to lead the Under the Radar (UTR) Festival and was a critical part of its conceptualization and initial funding. It was quickly decided that the UTR Festival should be held immediately before the annual Association of Performing Arts Presenters (now Association of Performing Arts Professionals) in New York City, since presenters from across the country and the world made APAP an annual gathering place and, as such, would have already budgeted to be there. Many leaders of the theaters that DDCF and AWMF had funded were also present, and DDCF provided funding support for their travel expenses.

The first UTR took place in St. Ann's Warehouse in 2004; in 2005 the Festival moved to its current home, NYC's Public Theater. DDCF provided the lions-share of the capitalization for the first and second UTR

Festivals. Since then, there have been more efforts to bring ensemble theaters into the bosoms of both the presenting community and the producing theater community.

DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Attachment A

Leadership Presenting Institutions

1. 651 Arts
2. American Dance Festival
3. Appalshop
4. Brooklyn Academy of Music
5. Carver Community Cultural Center
6. Dance Theater Workshop
7. Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival
8. Jazz at Lincoln Center
9. John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
10. Joyce Theater Foundation
11. Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts
12. New Jersey Performing Arts Center
13. Ohio State University, Wexner Center for the Arts
14. San Francisco Performances
15. Spoleto Festival USA
16. University of California, Los Angeles Live Arts
17. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
18. Walker Art Center
19. Washington Performing Arts Society

Mid-sized Presenting Organizations

1. Asia Society
2. Japan Society
3. Performance Space 122
4. Portland Institute for Contemporary Art
5. St. Joseph's Historic Foundation, Hayti Heritage Center
6. Visual Arts Research and Resource Center Relating to the Caribbean, Caribbean Cultural Center