

COLORADO CONSERVATORY OF DANCE
UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTORS
APRIL 20, 2020

As an important component of our desire to keep our stakeholders informed of CCD's operations, planning, and ongoing adjustments during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, this is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of where the organization stands as of this date. We want to inspire confidence in our families and the community that we are addressing these challenges to the best of our collective ability, and that the staff and faculty are tireless in their efforts to provide continuity and quality while we work within the various guidelines and regulations set forth by the state and public health authorities.

Much of the information in this update reiterates the presentations given by the Executive and Artistic Directors, as well as Conservatory Manager Michael Hinton, during CCD's community forum on Thursday, April 16. (If you were unable to attend that virtual meeting [a recording of it can be found here](#).) These forums will be held on a regular basis as the situation evolves and as we have updates; invitations to them will be made via emails through your Dance Studio Pro account.

Before we launch into the litany of updates we have to offer, we appreciatively offer the following disclaimer:

All of the plans discussed in this statement are subject to change. They represent our desire to offer some degree of hope that we will begin to see a gradual normalization of our society's day-to-day operations and reflect the most current research and data from scientific and public health experts (not politicians on either side of the aisle), and are offered so that CCD stakeholders can maintain confidence that the staff and faculty are engaged and focused upon best practices during the current crisis and beyond.

With this in mind, please read the following carefully and in the spirit in which it is intended.

FINANCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION: RICH COWDEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As a broad statement of position, CCD remains strong. Despite numerous challenges to our business model, we have availed ourselves of several relief funding sources and will continue to do so as they arise, while also eliminating all but essential expenses. Additionally, we continue to explore what opportunities may surface from our community-based online courses, where we feel there is potential for a virtual expansion of the organization's revenue streams.

While we are pleased to note that to date less than 20 students have disenrolled from CCD courses—high levels of attendance due entirely to the extraordinary commitment of families and faculty members to continue dancing in a nontraditional fashion—this still represents a nearly 10 percent loss of tuition revenue for the organization. Additionally, the cancellation, consolidation, or indefinite postponement of the entire spring performance season threatens to

cost CCD upwards of \$50,000 in lost ticket and concession/merchandise revenue. In short, the organization faces considerable budget deficits and revenue shortfalls despite our best efforts to mitigate them, as many of these factors are and will continue to be beyond our control.

That said, let me offer some specific examples of our approach to conscientious fiscal oversight during this crisis:

- We have secured funding through the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program, a \$359 billion aid package enacted as part of the CARES stimulus legislation. This funding will allow CCD to maintain its payroll of 24 employees as well as assist in rent and utility payments for the two months following its disbursement (likely in early May) and will convert from a loan to a grant once we demonstrate the continuity of our payroll and employee numbers during that time. CCD was one of the first nonprofits in Colorado to apply for and secure this assistance.
- I am actively seeking and applying for other financial relief; this includes federal programs such as the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), as well as state and local efforts from Colorado Creative Industries (CCI), the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), and the City and County of Broomfield. While not as large as the PPP awards, these other programs when considered in aggregate will contribute greatly to the organization's short-term sustainability.
- As you will read below, we are also attempting to develop plans to go ahead with as much of our spring season as possible, leveraging the creativity and innovation of the staff and faculty to envision a number of scenarios that will enable us to recoup those revenues to a degree, and more importantly offer our dancers the opportunity to perform the repertoire to which they've dedicated so much effort.
- As previously mentioned, an important facet of our ability to weather this storm is the reduction or elimination of non-essential expenses. To this end, we have also formulated plans to host many (if not all) performances in CCD's studio once we are permitted to reopen and when our families feel comfortable gathering in some form—whether that be in smaller classes with social distancing, videotaped performances with no live audiences, or other models that allow students to perform without compromising their health or safety in any way.
- We are also delighted to report that our Community Education Coordinator, Rachel Newbury, is working on plans with our partner schools to restart our community education initiatives—free after-school ballet and our signature Move to Learn partnerships—in the virtual space so that the hundreds of children we reach through these efforts can still take advantage of these programs.

- I am immensely proud of the dedication and spirit the CCD community—parents, dancers, staff, faculty, and board—has demonstrated during these times of unprecedented uncertainty. And I am also pleased to report that your work has not gone unnoticed. CCD was recently featured in the trade publication *Dance Business Weekly* for our efforts to sustain the organization during the COVID-19 crisis. If you're interested, you can [read that article here](#). We're also going to be appearing in an upcoming article in *Dance Teacher* magazine as a national leader in how organizations can pivot to face the challenges of a crisis such as this.

PERFORMANCE CONTINGENCY PLANNING (AGAIN, SUBJECT TO CHANGE): JULIA WILKINSON MANLEY, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, AND MICHAEL HINTON, CONSERVATORY MANAGER

GALA

- Gala will not be canceled and we are working through plans to hold these performances the same week as originally scheduled.
- Gala will likely be held in Studio 1 this year.
- We anticipate either doing a live online performance or producing a high-quality video of all of our dances. If we are allowed a small audience, we will decide on audience limits and possibilities in regards to the current situation.
- Our top priority is to keep everyone safe and healthy. For example, if guidelines dictate to have dancers wear masks for the performance they will.
- Gala attendance requirements are still in effect. If you are unable to attend a gala class, please communicate with us and we will work out a plan for you.
- Gala costumes are anticipated to be given out on the original date. We will notify you as more information comes out.

CINDERELLA

- Cinderella will not be canceled but instead will be moved to September 11th & 12th with a contingency date of October 22nd and 24th. At this time you are welcome to discuss the new dates with your family and kids.
- Separate meetings will be scheduled on an ongoing basis with the entire Cinderella Cast to discuss further details regarding Cinderella.

VENTURE

- As of now, Venture will be split between the DanceFound Participants and the Young Choreographer's Showcase.
- YCS will have their pieces performed as a part of Gala and will be under the same constraints as Gala. This means that we will either be doing a live online performance or a high-quality video.

- DanceFound will be combined with our Summer Moving Project performance on July 25th and will be performed in Studio 1.
- Rehearsals will continue through summer at the faculty member's discretion.
- We will find an appropriate surface for our tap dancers.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLANNING UPDATES

BLOSSOM BALL

- The staff is exploring the possibility of hosting Blossom Ball as a virtual fundraiser, and will make a determination at its meeting on April 22. Should this occur, the organization will face a number of challenges associated with trying to meet our \$40,000 fundraising goal.

SUMMER PROGRAMS AT CCD

- We optimistically anticipate hosting our Summer Intensive and Summer Camps this year at the same level of excellence that our families have come to expect.
- Dates are subject to change and families will be notified immediately as this information becomes necessary and available.
- CCD welcomes students from other studios whose own summer intensives may have been canceled. Please contact Michael Hinton at mhinton@ccdance.org for more information.
- We will continue to accept registrations and enrollments for summer.
- Summer Moving Project and Movement Lab's Summer performance is still scheduled but will take place in Studio 1 at CCD.

TIPS FOR ONLINE CLASS SUCCESS

- Change your mindset! This is not a normal ballet class and shouldn't be treated as such. We find this is a good time to really work on details such as alignment, correct muscle use, and artistry.
- It is also important to have enough space to dance. Move some furniture around and create a functional dance space. You might find that by opening a section of your house up, you may also open up the opportunity for other activities.
- Make sure that the teacher can see your whole body on the camera.
- Make sure that the lighting is not too bright behind you. That will create a silhouette and make it difficult for your instructor to see you.
- Wear clothing that is form-fitting so that we can see your bodies.
- Make sure that your dance surface is safe. Concrete is very dangerous to dance on, as well as many other hard surfaces. We recommend trying to dance on a surface that has a little give to it, such as a mat or a rug. If you would like information on purchasing marley, email Marnie Rundiks at mrundiks@ccdance.org.

- Adult Punch cards will not expire for the time being. You are welcome to keep track of your own punches or donate for your online classes. If you would like to purchase a new punch card, you can call the front desk at any time and we will be able to help.
- If you miss a class and would like the class recording, please email info@ccdance.org with the class you missed and we will send that over to you.

WAYS TO HELP CCD WEATHER THE STORM

- Get your friends and family to take our online classes—they're affordable, interactive, and a great way to stay active while supporting a local nonprofit.
- Parents: take class with your kids! Or you can take the donation-based online classes found on our website.
- Continue to donate. We are using every last penny to stay alive right now, so even a \$1 donation is a huge help.
- Reach out to your favorite restaurants and businesses for Blossom Ball donations. We love to support other businesses, and donating some of their product to Blossom Ball is a great way for everyone to get exposure.
- Talk to people about our Summer Intensive. Many intensives have already canceled, so a lot of people are looking for somewhere to go. By sending them our way it is increasing our exposure and gives other students the ability to continue their dance training.
- Share all of our posts on your social media.

If you've made it this far—both in your ongoing support of CCD and in simply reading this, um, novella—you're already doing an enormous amount of work to contribute to the sustainability and vitality of our beloved conservatory. Please direct any questions or concerns you have to any staff member and we will continue to address them to the best of our collective ability.

Stay safe, stay strong, and we'll see you soon.