



**KUN-YANG LIN/DANCERS**

**Minutes from Regular Board of Directors Meeting: March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 3:00-5:00pm at Drexel University URBN Center: 3501 Market St. Philadelphia, PA 19104**

*Present Members:* Ellen Gayda, Renee Quarterman, Jessica Lynch, Janet Stern, Ken Metzner, Kun-Yang Lin, Alex Carbonell, David Harrison, Amanda Lepore (via phone)  
*Absent:* Ellen Schwartz, Liz Klaproth, Brea Heidelberg  
*Others Present:* Katie Moore

**Proceedings**

**Ken called the meeting to order at 3:00pm**

AGENDA:

- 1. Home Season Update** (Program Ads, Ticket Sales, VIP Dinner and Reception Package and Board5 Discount Code)
- 2. Upcoming Events** (Last Open Studio Series and Home Season)
- 3. Artistic Update** (Annenberg Center 2019 Spring Home Season)
- 4. Other Business**

1. Home Season Update and 2. Upcoming Events

2017 Program Ads:

\$6,650 in ad sales  
\$850 in donations  
\$7,500 total in ads and contributions  
22 Ads in booklet

2018 Program Ads:

\$10,850 in ad sales  
\$2,750 in donations  
\$13,600 total in ads and contributions  
28 Ads in booklet

- Ken congratulates Ellen Gayda on her incredible efforts in helping the company through program ads and donations

- Ellen Gayda responded that she is in the process of sending personal thank you notes to everybody who purchased an ad or donated. She also mentioned that she did need to do lots of follow-up to several organizations before they responded
- Ken noted that the majority of ads/donations came in the last ten days. Ken also mentioned that Renee Quarterman, who is not self-employed, successfully got 5 or 6 ads from her network, which is worth praising.
- Renee commented that she combined both email templates Katie and Ken sent previously about program ads and then name-dropped NEA and Pew and William Penn Foundation. She also tried to make her outreach personal. She thought of businesses she patronized that were based in Philly, so she had a list of 12 companies. She was really surprised by the positive responses. Her employer, her investment advisor, her house cleaner, her vet and her apartment complex all purchased an ad. The communication with her apartment complex, Dalian on the Park prompted the manager to start a conversation with her about possibly collaborating with KYL/D on an event at the building
- Ellen Gayda added that if any board member uses a lawyer, a CPA, etc. there are businesses people engage with that can be prospective ad purchasers
- Ken commented that this season is the first time KYL/D exceeded our goal for program ads. We had a \$10,000 goal, which we far exceeded
- Renee asked what the costs are to print the program?
- Ken responded that last year it cost \$2,100 for 1,200 copies of a 36-page program, however there will be more pages this year so it will be more expensive. It's not cheap. But, if it ends up \$3,500 to print, then with ads and donations combined we are still profiting \$10,000.
- Alex asked if KYL/D checked out M3 for printing? He has used them in the past and thinks they are priced well and do good work
- Ken responded he has not lately research M3, but he can check their information at a later date.

Ken moved on to discuss ticket sales

- Ken reviewed that ticket sales are very slow, about in-line with last year. We have sold 148 tickets total and 80 of those are from Temple University. We really only sold 68 tickets and of those 24 of them are for the dinner. We have a lot of work to do in terms of ticket sales. Now is really the time for everyone to reach out to their network. KYL/D has 2 and 1/2 more weeks to sell approximately 1,200 tickets. Remember to share code: Board5 for \$5 off
- Ken continued to explain the company's observations are that people are buying tickets later and later. People wait until the last week which is incredibly stressful for the company. One thing KYL/D is doing differently this year is spending more on advertising due to an expanded budget with the Pew grant. The company is doing print ads in both the Philadelphia Weekly and Metro newspapers' Spring Arts editions; ads on WHYY radio during show week; exploring a print ad in the Phila Inquirer; online ads in Philly Fun Guide, ThinkingDance and Philadelphia

Dance.org; dedicated e-blasts to the subscribers of Philly Weekly and Funsavers (during week of the show with discounts offered). We also will do a special “today only” 50% discount on Kun-Yang’s birthday, March 18. Paid Facebook postings continuing and intensifying. Interfaith Center is helping us to promote the shows via their own e-blast. These efforts are in addition to our own e-blasts and personalized emails

- Ellen Gayda asked if the story circle participants are attending the shows?
- Ken responded that KYL/D is giving those people free tickets. Two tickets per participant. One participant, Hojin Park works at the Won Institute. The Won Buddhist Institute sent out a newsletter and put our event on their FB page. Interfaith Center also sent out newsletters and gave us 780 physical mailing addresses for the show postcards so we are leveraging all relationships through the project as much as we can.
- Ken reiterated that in the past the company had only the budget to mail postcards to a few hundred people within our network. This year we sent over 5,600 which should be landing this week. KYL/D did mailing list swaps with New Paradise Laboratories, BalletX, NextMove, and the Painted Bride
- Ellen Gayda asked how the price of the dinner at Estia works. Is KYL/D committed to paying a certain amount?
- Ken responded yes, we are committed to paying \$2,200 (plus alcohol consumption) for 50 people so we need at least another 25 people.
- Alex responded that he is buying around 20 show tickets on Monday or Tuesday. At least 4 of those should be dinner tickets
- Ken added that if each board member brings 4 or 5 people we would hit our goal for dinner attendance. He pointed out that Ellen Schwartz and Ellen Gayda have already hit that goal
- Renee asked about more details on the VIP Dinner
- Ken explained it is a \$110 ticket for the Sat. night 8pm show. The dinner is at Estia- a Mediterranean restaurant. The company has a private area with a bar. On the lower level. 2 ½ blocks from the theater. The ticket also includes the show ticket and a dessert reception in the lobby with the artists.
- Renee responded that she bought regular tickets for Saturday night show, she will pay the difference to upgrade to the VIP Dinner Package.
- Ken added that Kun-Yang and himself will send personalized emails 2 weeks before the show to people he sees have not yet bought a ticket. Since we have to pay for 50 or so people- it doesn’t make sense to pay for ghosts so we want to invite some comps. If YOU know people who are pretty sure are not going to buy a ticket but would be valuable to have there, please let him and Katie know. As we get closer and haven’t sold the minimum for the dinner, Ken explained we can build some goodwill by inviting a few guests for free. First priority is always to sell the most tickets though.
- Renee asked if people who buy ads at certain rates get tickets to the show, can they then upgrade to the VIP Package by paying the \$70 difference per ticket?

- Ken responded yes, that is an option they will communicate to the program advertisers
- Janet asked if KYL/D's ticket sales were similar compared to other companies?
- Ken responded that there is not a lot of publicly available intelligence on that. He knows from several people at Koresh that they are always struggling until the last minute to sell tickets. Ken also knows from talking with the Artistic Director at the Annenberg that the BalletX audience there was good, but incredibly last minute
- Alex responded that all Bourbon and Branch show attendees are last minute- the majority buy tickets at the door even though its 40% off if you buy beforehand
- Janet asked if the company had reached out to senior communities?
- Ken responded that Jessica Lynch has spent time working on that audience segment
- Jess explained that she originally had the focus to try to sell tickets to the shows to senior communities. That was tough. She went to Whitemarsh, Cathedral Village, the Hill- folks with resources and realized there needs to be more relationship building. Her hope is to have KYL/D come to them, get into their programming. The strategy is now more long-term and she will keep everyone informed of updates
- Ken added that KYL/D was recently at the Philadelphia Senior Center. It was for the Asian health Collaborative meeting. Marla Soffer invited KYL/D, she has shown interest in being on the board. She is very connected to different communities and works a lot with immigrants, which got us an invite to the Asian Collaborative monthly meeting to discuss the CHI Dance program and the upcoming performances. We made some good contacts.
- Ken continued that the CHI Dance program is continuing to do well, the school teachers are asking KYL/D for mindfulness-based movement training so they can do similar activities that we are doing with students, but throughout the school day. KYL/D applied for funding from the City to pilot a teacher training program at Southwark. We want to expand on that idea to other schools and have a student leadership component where students partner with teachers to do mindfulness movement breaks. It is slowly building and we are starting to connect the dots.
- Janet asked about how we are utilizing the dance center space for programming
- Ken responded that KYL/D is looking at shifting the model of rehearsal time to free up the studio space during hours in which people want to take classes. Ken and the staff have been talking to Alex Carbonell about piloting a dance school model in the fall. It requires moving rehearsal time and changing rental availability.
- Kun-Yang added that he is still teaching at Temple and cannot control his schedule, but his plan is to have Maggie help with rehearsing repertoire. So starting in the summer we will test out day time rehearsal (an additional day of rehearsal) so the company is not immediately shifting the whole model.
- Kun-Yang continued to explain that most dance companies create a school or do programming in public schools to help create a full-time model for the dance artists— like Roxey Ballet in NJ. But the challenge of having so many programs at your home base is that it limits the touring opportunities. Kun-Yang explained that Nai-Ni Chen essentially has two different companies under one umbrella. One

company that only does school programming and one company that only performs repertoire on tour.

- Kun-Yang added that the company is thinking about creating a piece related to seniors, a new work that requires a lot of research. Ideally, we are thinking about a way to go to senior center to doing lecture/demonstration. Long-term process but part of it is how to sell tickets
- Ken responded that overall the company understands the reality of the way people experience and want to experience art is changing and the company needs to be open and adaptive to it. There are several ways we can target new audiences that we are trying
- Kun-Yang added that overall, he is proud of us- when KYL/D was first at the Painted Bride, we would always sell out. We have steadily grown our audience. In the past, however, we got a lot of previews, but now everyone in the press is getting laid off. Now we have a publicist recommended by Pew who hasn't gotten the company any preview coverage, so it is a lesson that we always need to market ourselves as much as we can.
- Janet asked about how BalletX has been doing with their season
- Ken responded that he doesn't know their numbers, but he thinks they are doing well. They certainly pack the house. BalletX has a network for doing that. They have 4 seasons a year- Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. They don't have to pay the theater rental because they are the resident company of the Wilma. The William Penn Foundation supports the Wilma to support BalletX. They have a great financial relationship. They do not pay production costs, so they can spend more on marketing and advertising
- Ken continued to explain that KYL/D worked with a social media consultant firm, ChatterBlast, to help the company get better exposure and he mentioned that he was interested in the retargeted ads BalletX does, where their ad follows you on different online platforms. ChatterBlast says that retargeted ads have a bare minimum budget of \$5,000 per ad.
- Ken concluded that he has looked at BalletX's 990 and they are still not making any money off of their home season. Their budget comes down to raising money from funders and individual donors.
- Katie adds that she volunteers for BalletX performances and when the company switched from 1 week to 2 week runs, a lot of audiences during the second week were comps/free tickets. So, just because you got to a show and see a packed house does not mean all audiences are ticket purchasers. Many audiences are personally cultivated.
- Ken added that when comparing KYL/D to other dance companies we need to acknowledge that Ballet is Ballet. It is a whole other world from Modern/Contemporary dance in terms of audience engagement.
- Ellen Gayda asked how the open studio series was going
- Ken responded that they are doing very well! There have been around 40-50 attendees at each event and they have all been received well.

- Ellen Gayda responded that she is hesitant to push the open studio because she doesn't think her people will go to both the open studio and the show.
- Ken responded to definitely push the show first
- Ellen Gayda added that when she talks to her network about the company she looks at the calendar and determines the most important events- the fundraiser and the home season and tries to spread out her communication so she is not bugging people too often.
- Ken agreed that it can be tough to be constantly promoting activities, but he thinks the open studio is really geared towards building potential audiences through the community and those who might be hesitant to purchase a show ticket, and also targeting those arts lovers who really love to learn more about the creative process. Some of the open studio attendees might come to the show. We have offered them all discounts. Staff from the Pew Center are much more interested in the creative process. We have already had one staff member attend an open studio. What is important is that we are continuing to have frequent events that are raising awareness of the company.
- Ellen Gayda asked if KYL/D knows who buys tickets to all of our venues over the years? She is curious to see how many repeat people there are.
- Ken responded that we now have the capacity to do that through our donor software Katie manages. We have imported prior audiences, but it is a monster of a headache. After this season, we can look at that info and create a report.

### **3. Artistic Update (Annenberg Center 2019 Spring Home Season)**

- Ken mentions that him and Kun-Yang had several meetings with the Artistic Director at the Annenberg. He's new, young and much more interested than his predecessor in knowing what is going on in the Philadelphia community. He has invited KYL/D to be a part of their 2018-2019 season. We would be part of their subscription series and be on the big stage with all other national/international visiting companies they present. April 12-13 is what is proposed. What he decided to do is for every company in the subscription package is only two shows- Friday night and Saturday matinee. He wants to present us on same basis as all other companies.
- Ken continues to explain that that would be KYL/D's spring home season. Our main show. We don't have a contract yet but what the A.D is proposing is that the Annenberg Center would cover production costs- approx. \$24,000. They will also cover marketing. What they want is the first \$12,000 in ticket sales and then we would keep the rest.
- Janet asked about the Annenberg's tickets prices
- Ken responded that tickets will range from \$29-\$49 and if its sold out- the house would be \$31,000 so Annenberg would get 12,000 and we would get 19,000.
- Ellen Gayda asked if we would be allowed to do program ads
- Ken responded no, which is a disadvantage. But, he thinks it's important to look at the benefits we get from being presented by the Annenberg. It elevates our

visibility, especially among the loyal, older audience they have cultivated with their subscription series

- Ken continued to emphasize the cost structure is different. It typically costs KYL/D \$15,00-\$16,000 to rent the venue for our home season. This year it will cost more due to bigger production and another day of tech. KYL/D also does our own marketing and handles the box office. With the Annenberg, we would pay no rental fees and they also do substantial marketing and run the box office. There is little risk to KYL/D in the current proposal at the Annenberg Center.
- Kun-Yang added that if KYL/D manages to pack the house then we would make more net income than we do at the Prince since there are a lot more seats. In theory, it is possible.
- Ellen Gayda asked how many seats were in the Annenberg.
- Ken responded that there are 734 seats per show. They just use the lower level. They do not open up the balcony section.
- David asked generally how large KYL/D's marketing budget is
- Ken responded If you put into marketing what we spend on the printing the postcards and the mailings it is probably only around 10% of overall costs-typically only \$1,500 dollars. This season we are spending at least \$6,000 because Pew is largely paying for it. We have never done print or radio advertising.
- David added that he knows what the Annenberg Center's advertising budget is. He worked closely with the previous A.D. Michael Rose and they spend a ton on marketing so David feels confident that Annenberg will do a good job to help market KYL/D's shows.
- Kun-Yang added that if KYL/D is successful at the Annenberg it could lead to future seasons there
- Ken added that although the risk is low, there is pressure to get a good audience. If there are bad audience turnout it won't be bad financially, but it does reflect on our reputation to a certain extend
- David chimed in that even If KYL/D did do poorly at the Annenberg, if there are few people there, there are few people who would know and tell. David emphasized that the real value is the reputational value. KYL/D can tell presenters that we were presented by the Annenberg Center. It is a venue well-known to other major presenters.
- Janet asked what the A.D.'s rationale was for inviting KYL/D
- Ken responded that KYL/D did a good sales job. Chris Gruits, the Artistic Director had previously been at Interlochen Festival in Michigan when the company performed there. From that performance, he knows we are of a certain caliber.
- Janet asked if there were any academic benefits to be presented by Annenberg
- Ken responded that the A.D. wants to expand the venue's collaboration with the various University Departments at UPenn
- Ken concluded the conversation by asking is anyone had any last questions about Annenberg? When he has the contract in-hand he will give everyone an update. He

concluded that both him and Kun-Yang have taken a lot of time to think about it and he thinks the opportunity is worth it.

- Ellen Gayda agreed and reiterated that the company has nothing to lose
- Renee agreed that it gives KYL/D a lot of exposure

No one asked further questions and the conversation went back to home season ticket sales

- Renee explained that she decided not to talk to her network until the week of the show. With her friends, there is no point reaching out before because they are so busy. If she keeps following up with people they become less interested
- David responded that he's seen the last-minute decision-making process as a trend that has evolved over the past 30 years. A while ago, he put his fine arts ads in the movie section of the newspaper as an alternative activity for people looking in the paper for what to do that night. His sales shot up as a result, but doesn't happen anymore because people don't get and read the newspaper anymore.
- David continued to explain that he went to a marketing seminar at NYU which revealed that people actually do put things on their calendars, but they don't take action on purchasing a ticket until the less minute so they can have the flexibility. Most people understand they can get good seats last minute to performing arts shows, unless its Broadway.
- Ken responded that with the expanded advertising budget he thinks the company will learn a lot from the experience to see if it makes a difference. We might learn that KYL/D doesn't have an audience of 700 people coming to each show unless you want to give your tickets away and pack the house. However, Ken is always leary about training audiences to expect discounts the week of because you don't want to cannibalize the audience. KYL/D usually does not do a lot of FunSavers
- Alex added that he thinks Groupon is horrible, you really only get a quarter back of what you're providing
- Ken responded that marketing by the Prince is also little to none. The website is not good, they do not promote their programs. For example, when KYL/D was reaching out to organizations about mailing-list swapping, we asked the Prince to give our mailhouse 1,000 addresses who have seen live performances in the past 18 months and in return KYL/D would give 1,000 addresses. All lists are handled externally by the mail house so KYL/D doesn't even get the data. They refused the offer. They really do not have a marketing orientation. On the other hand, NextMove was happy to swap 1,000 addresses.

Ken concludes by asking if all are in favor to be at the Annenberg next season.

Jessica moves  
Renee seconds

**Meeting adjourned 5:07pm**