

# DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE



*RELENTLESS EXCELLENCE*

MEDIA ADVISORY  
November 29, 2016

Contact:  
Ramona Logan  
214-871-2376 Ext. 411  
214-882-2451 cell  
[r.logan@dbdt.com](mailto:r.logan@dbdt.com)

## National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu Visits Dallas Black Dance Theatre

Dallas, TX - **Dr. Jane Chu**, chairman of the **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** visited Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) as part of a two-day tour of arts organizations in Dallas. Chu's first stop was Dallas Black Dance Theatre where she experienced a mini-performance by both **DBDT** and **DBDT: *Encore!***, learned about DBDT programs and participated in a roundtable discussion on cultural equity and the role of the arts.

Chairman Chu told the round table group, "The NEA has two criteria for awarding grants, excellence and merit. We decide the grant amount on the project, not the size of the organization." The NEA has given grants to DBDT for more than 30 years. "Not only is that cool, you can thank your colleagues, because people in the community make the first round of recommendations for NEA grants," explained Dr. Chu. NEA grants were awarded in every congressional district in 2016.

In FY 2016, Dallas Black Dance Theatre was the only modern dance company in Texas to receive an NEA grant. **Dr. Gary Gibbs**, executive director for the Texas Commission on the Arts said, "Dallas Black Dance Theatre is a credit to Dallas and Texas as they are known nationally and internationally."

Dr. Chu told the group that arts is for everyone, and 50% of NEA grants in arts education are related to diversity. Dr. Gibbs added, "Government funding for the arts is more diverse than private or corporate funding. We disperse funds in a more inclusive manner."

**Kevin Hurst**, director of charitable giving for Neiman Marcus Group asked about measuring outcomes.

Chu said she loved to measure because it is a way to dispel stereotypes about art being exclusive. Measurement can also provide hard evidence about the economic impact of art.

DBDT Executive Director **Zenetta Drew** inquired about the NEA's use of data in its decision making, noting the growing importance of data as evidenced by the National Center for Arts Research (NCAR) at SMU and DataArts (formerly CDP).

Chu said organizations should strive for data visualization to make data more understandable. "Data is important, it should not be put on a shelf. We are in a hard evidence world," Chairman Chu explained. "We need to communicate research and learn from it."

"I value reports from parents and teachers just as much," said Gibbs. "They are close to the students and know the impact of art on them."

**DBDT** performed *Furtherance* and **DBDT: *Encore!*** performed *Opaque* during the chairman's visit. "Seeing those two pieces was wonderful," Chu said. "It touched our hearts."

When asked about what might happen to arts funding with the new Trump administration, Chu replied, "We don't speculate on government funding."

Chu did say the National Endowment for the Arts empowers people to be innovative. "Art is one of the best ways to bring people together and celebrate our differences," she concluded.

### **Participants in the Round Table Discussion**

Jane Chu, chairman, National Endowment for the Arts  
Gary Gibbs, executive director, Texas Commission on the Arts  
Zenetta S. Drew, executive director, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Ann Williams, founder/artistic advisor, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Georgia Scaife, board president, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Gilbert Gerst, board chairman, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Sylvia Hougland, vice chair, Cultural Affairs Commission  
Lauren Embrey, philanthropic vision and chair, Embrey Family Foundation  
Kevin Hurst, director of charitable giving, Neiman Marcus Group  
Nancy Nasher, co-owner, NorthPark Center  
Mark Cooks, board vice president, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Sheena Payne, board vice president of marketing, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Kim Whitaker, board vice president of development, Dallas Black Dance Theatre  
Clem Maddox, board vice president of government affairs, Dallas Black Dance Theatre

### **About Dallas Black Dance Theatre**

Founded in 1976 by **Ann Williams**, **Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT)** is the oldest continuously operating professional dance company in Dallas. It has become the largest minority arts organization in Dallas and the 10th largest in the nation. The mission of Dallas Black Dance Theatre is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at its highest level of artistic excellence through performances and educational programs that bridge cultures and reach diverse communities. With an ever-expanding national and global audience, the company employs a diverse, multi-ethnic troupe of dancers performing for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

Located in a historic facility at the eastern end of the thriving downtown Dallas Arts District, Dallas Black Dance Theatre is a nationally and internationally recognized professional modern dance company. DBDT engages the cross-cultural community through contemporary modern dance presented from the African American experience. Dallas Black Dance Theatre is a resident company member of the AT&T Performing Arts Center - Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre located in Dallas's Art District.

During its 40-year history, Dallas Black Dance Theatre has performed on five continents, in 15 countries and 31 states, including two Olympic Cultural events. Over the years, more than 4 million arts patrons and 2.6 million students, grades K-12, have experienced the dance company's performances and educational outreach programs. DBDT serves more than 100,000 people annually, including more than 20,000 youth in grades K-12 in Dallas-Fort Worth area schools. DBDT offers community outreach services through workshops, lecture/demonstrations, master-classes, residences, mini-performances and student matinees that are designed level-specific for elementary, middle, high school and university students. Another 40,000 youth and adults are reached through local, national and international festivals, tours, special performances at universities, social service agencies, professional and corporate organizations, civic events and community venues.

**Dallas Black Dance Theatre** is comprised of five performing companies and its training Academy. Dallas Black Dance Theatre's professional company, **DBDT**, consists of 12 full-time professional dancers performing a mixed repertory of modern, jazz, African and spiritual works by national and international choreographers. **DBDT: *Encore!*** (formerly DBDT II) features eight artists of rising excellence from across the nation that support DBDT's growing local and regional educational outreach.

**Dallas Black Dance Academy**, the official school of Dallas Black Dance Theatre, celebrates 43 years of delivering dance instruction to a community of diverse backgrounds. Over 500 students participate weekly in 50 dance classes of ballet, jazz, tap, modern, and African at DBDT studios for ages four to adult. The academy has three performing ensembles: Allegro, DBDT's premier academy ensemble, Senior Performing Ensemble, and Junior Performing Ensemble.

For more details visit [www.DBDT.com](http://www.DBDT.com) and [www.dbdtd.com/academy](http://www.dbdtd.com/academy).



(l-r) Kevin Hurst, Zenetta Drew, Gary Gibbs, Jane Chu, Ann Williams, Nancy Nasher, Gerogia Scaife, Kim Whitaker, Gilbert Gerst, Sheena Payne and Mark Cooks.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre, 2700 Ann Williams Way, Dallas, TX 75201

[SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}](#)

[Forward this email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by [r.logan@dbdt.com](mailto:r.logan@dbdt.com)