

23 April 2020

Re: Strategic response to the COVID-19 pandemic

To Our Valued Stakeholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and membership of Free Flow Dance Theatre Company (FFDTC), we would like to thank you for your continued support of our Artistic Director, Jackie Latendresse's creative vision. We want to assure you that we are taking a responsive, flexible, and dynamic approach as we create new art and share it with our community in this time of crisis. We are seizing this opportunity to move forward and evolve as an organization.

In response to the arrival of COVID-19 cases in Saskatchewan in March and for the health and safety of our staff, artists, and patrons, FFDTC closed our non-essential in-person services and moved to remote interactions. We will continue to organize remote activities and programming until the Government of Saskatchewan indicates it is safe to re-engage in public gatherings.

Looking to the future, we have postponed our live fundraisers and events with hopes to reschedule. We are aware that the restrictions resulting from the pandemic may extend for months or longer, so we have transferred several upcoming events to online platforms including International Dance Day, our Works in Progress (W.I.P.) dance series, and the community workshop program. We also are mindful that even after social-distancing restrictions are lifted, there are likely to be long-term implications for social behaviour in our community. People may be reticent to gather in crowds and enclosed spaces, or to participate in hands-on dance activities and workshops.

In light of this, we are developing new approaches to interact with audiences, and are enhancing potential for online and remote programming. Dance is an art form that is collective and involves physical connection. Evoking this connection through online media is a challenge, but one that artists are called toward in a time when collective and connected action is so critical to our social health. We are expanding the ways we work with and engage with our artists and audiences and adjusting our budget to reflect these changes. We are investing in online tools, software, and technical staff to empower dance as an inspired agent of social cohesion through this pandemic and its longer-term impacts on the arts.

To end this letter on a positive note, we have exciting news to share. A first taste of the innovative developments to come from FFDTC in the coming months – Jackie and Marcel Petit, a local documentary filmmaker, are working on creating a documentary film to celebrate Free Flow Dance Theatre Company's Silver Anniversary!

Over the coming months, we will also revise and expand our strategic plan to address the changes in funding, performance, and outreach opportunities brought on by the pandemic. We will post updates on our response to the pandemic on our website at the following URL:
<https://freeflowdance.com/category/top-news/covid-19/>

Yours in good faith and health,

Joyce McBeth, Chair
Board of Directors
Free Flow Dance Theatre Company

Jackie Latendresse
Artistic Director
Free Flow Dance Theatre Company