



Annual Report 2024



Note From
The Artistic
Director



It has been another year of twists and turns, responding to the moment, re-assessing and adjusting. As Artistic Director of SPDC, the year has been particularly profound. Last June (2023) I made the personal decision to temporarily move back to Vermont to help my aging parents. The original plan had been to move to NYC or perhaps Brooklyn. New York was opening up, I thought ‘why not?’ I decided I could work hybrid, commuting as needed.

Soon after my arrival, with most of my belongings still in storage, Vermont was hit with catastrophic flooding brought on, no doubt, by human induced climate change. The Capital city of Montpelier was devastated, as were multiple towns, villages and cities. Roads were fractured, many impassable for months. Homes and businesses washed away down rivers, crops ruined. The DMV was closed for over two months.

Fortunately, I found an active dance community to connect with, places to take class, festivals to go see dance, experience and keep forging ahead. I have treated this past year as a dance residency with time to create, research and develop. This year’s Annual Impact Report is a reflection on learning, growing, creating and data, proving the resilience and magic in the ever evolving world of the performing art called Dance.

Photo: Julia Barstow



What we did
and how we
did it

**PENTACLE ADMINISTRATIVE
SUPPORT PROGRAM**

In 2023 I began working with Pentacle from New York City. The year long Administrative Support Program provided me with mentoring in grant writing, social media engagement, advice on designing marketing materials, video editing, performances outside of New England and an opportunity to present at APAP – a goal I have had for SPDC for years. In mid-June we presented at The Performance Garage in Philadelphia, PA. There we met dance artists from California, New York, New Jersey to name a few.

The Sound of Migration Trailer for APAP
<https://youtu.be/TZXxrrPkHG8?si=Bm-v32dRkAiR1D42v>

Photo: Owen Burnham



**Touring and
Creating**

SEPTEMBER 2023 TO JANUARY 2024

After the waters receded from the Vermont Floods, I made my way to NYC for Company auditions in September. Once the cast was complete we began preparations to present excerpts from *The Sound of Migration* at the APAP conference in NYC in January. This included refining choreography, presenting at festivals and showcases to ready the dancers, compiling lists of venues, arts organizations and universities for potential touring, creating video trailers and marketing brochures. Our first stop was the 5x5 Festival at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford, CT. A familiar venue, at which SPDC spent many formative years. This was followed by a showcase performance at Dixon Place in the Bowery section of NYC. By January the Company was ready. We presented at the Ailey Citigroup Theater on the main campus of Alvin Ailey School. We were warned the APAP showcase would be “a beast.” Strict technical rehearsal and performance times left no room for error. One does not show up late, nor unprepared. Music files and light cues had to be uploaded weeks in advance, marketing materials meticulously edited. In, out. Done. The dancers and I handled it well. The union stage crew were gracious with their time and understanding.

Touring and Creating

FEBRUARY 2024 TO JUNE 2024

With funding for *The Sound of Migration* at a standstill, I turned my attention towards ***The Cure(d) - Neurodiverse Artists Create***. The project had been in research and development for over a year and I was eager to get started. We received a sponsorship from CTHumanities which gave me hope and a green light. I began hybrid rehearsals, working remotely and in NYC when weather and timing allowed.

The Vermont winter was harsh, cold, wet, muddy and unpredictable. Mud season even worse. By late March hybrid rehearsals had become remote and then stopped. I refused to continue choreographing without being there in person. Performance dates had to be switched and an almost entirely new set of dancers was cast.



Photo: Julia Barstow





THE CURE(D)

On June 14 and 15, 2024 we presented **The Cure(d)** as a work-in-progress at the Barre Opera House. In just over six weeks the new cast learned the choreography. The reception was overwhelmingly positive. The performance was covered by Vermont's leading news channel – [WCAX Channel 3](https://www.wcax.com).

Audience Testimonials: “An incredible experience... Visually fascinating... I felt so many different plateaus of emotions...I couldn't keep my eyes off of the stage...The dancers were spectacular...Thank you!”



The Barre Opera House venue was chosen for a reason. I had been in close contact with the Director since 2019 about bringing SPDC to Central Vermont where I had grown up. He worked closely with me to make the venue affordable. We tacked our performance on to the end of the “dance season.” I shared technical and labor costs with four other groups, cutting our costs significantly. The low cost and concentrated time with cast, set and lights afforded us the time to CREATE. The final venue bill of \$1,600 would have cost us \$11,000 at non-union houses in Connecticut and well over \$30,000 at Hartford's premiere union house - the Bushnell. Concert dance, with any type of technical aspect - projections, lights, sound, set, digital interaction - needs affordable space and time. This is the least understood component to creating magic.

Dance company combines circus arts into one diversive performance in Barre



WCAX Channel 3 for The Cure(d)
<https://www.wcax.com/2024/06/17/dance-company-combines-circus-arts-into-one-diversive-performance-barre/>





ARTS
INTEGRATION

Integrating dance into classroom curriculum has been a key program within SPDC's mission. As it was nearly impossible for me to teach, I continued to contract the work out to SPDC's longtime company members. Our Water Wonder program remains our most popular. We reached 240 students and their teachers plus an additional 600 families, friends and classmates who witnessed the final performances.



- Parkville Community School, Water Wonder grade K
- Montessori Magnet at Batchelder, Water Wonder grades pK, K
- E.B. Kenelly, Water Wonder Grade 7





**TECHNICAL UPDATES
MADE POSSIBLE
BY VOLUNTEERS
THROUGH
CATCHAFIRE**

We are again grateful for our complimentary membership to Catchafire through the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. This year volunteers gave hundreds of hours of their time valued at over \$100,000 for the following projects:

- Website design and development
- Spanish translation services for marketing materials
- Donor Letter
- Video Editing
- Website text copywriting
- Flexible Tech Support
- Annual Impact Report

In addition, over 250 hours of volunteer administrative services and marketing support were provided by numerous humans believing in what we do.

Audiences served: 1669

Breakdown of Expenses by Percentage:

Programming: 77%

Operating: 13%

Administrative and Fees: 10%

Photo: Andy Hart

DONORS AND
SUPPORTERS

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

Sonia Plumb Dance Company

5x5 Dance Festival

Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023



DONORS

\$5000+

Anonymous

\$2000 to \$4999

CT Humanities
CT Office of the Arts
George Plumb

\$1000 to \$1999

Sharon DeJean Murray
Sonia Plumb

Up to \$999

Jacqueline Lewis
Claire Sickenger

Please consider donating.

**Support - Sonia Plumb
Dance Company**

Sonia Plumb Dance Company (SPDC) was founded on the mission: to enrich and educate the community through innovative modern. SPDC fulfills this mission by providing performances, classes, workshops, community outreach, arts integration residencies, webinars, library talks and more to diverse audiences.
<https://soniaplumbdance.org/support/>

BOARD MEMBERS

Claude E. P. Mayo, President
Claire Sickinger, Secretary
Sonia Plumb, Treasurer
Sandra Piesik, Advisory
Crystal Waters-McCullough

**MANY THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS
FOR THEIR LISTENING, SUPPORT AND ADVICE**

Sylvia Plumb/Marketing & Communications
Dan Casey/Barre Opera House
Craig Gehr/LX Lighting
Susan Murphy/University of St. Joseph

**SONIA PLUMB DANCE COMPANY STAFF FOR
THE 2023/2024 SEASON**

Eric Acevedo/Dancer
Craig Gehr/Technical Director
Maddy Hall/Dancer
Madison O'Halloran/Dancer
Sarah McCarthy/Company Manager, Dancer
Erin Raymond/Dancer, Artist Instructor
Daniel Rocha/Dancer
Gabrielle Rodriguez/Marketing Associate
Asher Taylor-Dawson/Dancer, Artist Instructor
Tristan Wals/Dancer
Robbie Weatherington/Dancer, Rehearsal Director

SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS

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