

Presenting / Touring Peer Session Report

NASAA Assembly 2008, September 11-13

Thursday, September 11, 3-5pm

Present: Sue Docker, Jeanette Guinn, Don Adams, Nikki Estes, Christine Bial, Diane Williams, Dora Shick, Cathy Welborn, Philip Horn, Jess Anthony, and Vicki Vitiello

Jess and Vicki welcomed the small but extraordinary group of leaders to the meeting. Providing a bit of context and a sense of continuity, Vicki reminded the group about the work in recent years to galvanize the national presenting and touring peer group network. Then each person introduced themselves with a short presentation about the specific presenting/touring work that is on their to-do list currently. Themes and common interests were soon revealed: policies and practices regarding touring artist rosters, setting up panels for fellowship review, developing and producing touring projects.

Philip Horn, director of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, spoke to the group about Pennsylvania's American Masterpieces project with the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Working closely with the company and with local presenters, the PCA designed a statewide tour that impacted close to 15 cities and had a total budget of more than a quarter of a million dollars. One of the outcomes was that smaller presenters that had never considered taking the risk of modern dance were heavily involved in the project. A key factor in this was Jim Woland's efforts to empower the presenters with information and first-hand experience with the company and the rep beforehand. They all traveled to New York City together, saw work, and met with the company leadership and a dance critic.

Don Adams, performing arts director for Mid-America, closed the conversation with some critical observations about how we position ourselves and our work to generate the most impact in communities. Strategies like community residencies and working collaboratively with artists are vitally important as we go forward in a pro-active way.

Saturday, September 13, 8:30-10:30am

Present: Sue Docker, Jeanette Guinn, Katie Fox, Michael Donovan, Don Adams, Christine Bial, Diane Williams, Margaret Mertz and the students and staff from UNC School of the Arts, Anna Boulton, Cathy Welborn, Jess Anthony, and Vicki Vitiello

We were warmly welcomed to the Loose Cannon studios on Saturday morning by Terry Cannon and Thomas Mann, two visual artists who have been deeply involved in Chattanooga's downtown revitalization efforts. We toured a cluster of downtown industrial buildings that have been renovated and repurposed for artist studio space, gallery space, alternative performing arts space, and several creative for community gatherings and events.