

Artist Mini-Grant Outcome – Spring 2020
“A Hybrid Dance Experience”
Zohar Ziff, Miller Arts Scholar in Dance

OVERVIEW

The funds I received from the Miller Arts Mini-Grant were ultimately utilized this summer to participate in online dance classes and small, in-person classes at a dance conservatory near my home. Although I initially proposed to attend the FLUX Summer Intensive – a four-day contemporary dance workshop – in person, it was cancelled due to the pandemic. Therefore, I used the funds from this grant to participate in dance in other ways: online and in small in-person settings. Through these experiences I learned how to engage in virtual dance with others and practiced repertory from my favorite choreographers online. When in-person, I adapted to taking dance classes while remaining distant from other movers in the space. These modes of practicing dance were new to me and helped me adjust to a new normal within my discipline.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

COVID-19 truly changed the environment in which artists participate in dance and movement. Unfortunately, the pandemic forced the workshop I was intending to go to – FLUX Summer Intensive – to be cancelled. Performances I was intending to attend by National Ballet of Spain and Nederlands Dans Theatre were also cancelled. However, with the closing of theater doors and rehearsal spaces, came a willingness of artists to share classes and workshops in the virtual sphere. I decided to dedicate a portion of the artistic grant to taking online classes throughout my confinement from my home in Madrid, Spain. Once there was significant deescalation of measures in Madrid, I was able to take small, in-person classes at a local conservatory, *Danza 180 Grados*.

Online classes were a big adjustment. One change was I had to dance in a cleared section in my room rather than spacious marley floors. Despite the physical constraints of the space, virtual classes gave me the opportunity to learn from artists without having to travel. For example, I took a hip-hop class from dancers Alexander Chung and CJ Salvador who are based in California and Gaga classes from dancers in New York and Israel. In addition, this was a great opportunity for me to keep up my dance training while in confinement. With live classes, such as a ballet class from STEPS on Broadway and repertory sessions from choreographer Shahar Binyamini, I was able to receive personal corrections to improve my practice at home. Another positive aspect of virtual classes was the ability to help support artists financially during this time, since online engagement was – and continues to be – a way for many of them to stay afloat as performances and in-person classes are infeasible. In addition, these online classes gave me more ideas about how to choreograph and move in limited spaces. I have begun practicing those skills in my Dance for the Camera and Jazz I classes, and plan to expand upon them in film and choreographic work I develop this semester.

I also had the opportunity to take in-person dance classes later in the summer. Once the risks and measures in Madrid had deescalated significantly, I was able to enroll in a three-week summer dance program at a local conservatory, *Danza 180 Grados*. In small, intimate settings I was able to attend a contemporary class followed by a ballet class five days a week. I received individual corrections and was able to move expansively in space. I also learned from other students in the program as they moved and improvised. This was a great way for me to increase my skills in ballet and contemporary floorwork especially, as I had access to mirrored studios, instructors who gave feedback, and space equipped for jumping and extending my extremities. I bought a foam roller during this time to assist with muscle soreness during the intensive and performed exercises at home with the roller to enhance my stabilization.

Dancers will continue to face challenges this year when rehearsing, performing, and practicing virtually and distantly. However, by experiencing the various ways that artists have formatted online and socially distant workshops and classes, I feel more confident in adapting my creative process to fit the necessary restrictions of the times.

I am extremely grateful for the Miller Arts Scholars Program for supporting my art during this time!

EXPENSES

Item Title	Cost (in USD)	Date	Item Description	Link to more information
Gaga Technique online class	\$22	March 25, May 9, May 13	3 online Gaga Classes; 45 minutes for dancers and 30 minutes for non-dancers.	Information about Online Gaga Classes
“Wet Ostrich” Repertory Session	\$18	May 10, May 17	2 contemporary repertory sessions with choreographer Shahar Binyamini based on his work “Wet Ostrich”.	Information about Shahar Binyamini
STEPS on Broadway Ballet Class	\$12	May 19	Intermediate ballet class over Zoom.	Daily Schedule for STEPS on Broadway
Alexander Chung & CJ Salvador Online Class	\$11.16	May 21	Online hip-hop choreography class.	Eventbrite Description for Online Class
Washington Ballet class	\$17	June 5	Online advanced beginner ballet class.	Washington Ballet's Virtual Classes for Adults

Gibney Dance class	\$10	June 8	Online intermediate ballet class.	Gibney Dance's Online Classes
Foam roller	\$19.99	June 21	A foam roller from an athletic-wear store helps me recover from soreness and in muscles and is a tool to practice my stabilization.	Link to item on Decathlon website
Two open classes at dance conservatory <i>Danza 180 Grados</i>	\$33.53	June 20	2 in-person intermediate contemporary workshops with: Iker Karrera and Mario González.	Danza 180 Grados
3 weeks of in-person classes with <i>Danza 180 Grados</i>	\$372.85	June 22-July 10	Classes were held 5 days a week; a normal day included a contemporary class followed by a ballet class.	Danza 180 Grados
TOTAL:	\$516.33			

Personal funds covered costs exceeding the grant amount of \$500.