

A Message from Judy Dworin, Executive Director: “Art-making as a catalyst for change”

Dear Friends,

I find myself in the difficult position of trying to find words to encapsulate what the three days of performances of *TIME IN* at Charter Oak Cultural Center felt like. Energized, moving, exuberant, pulling, expressive, amazing, poignant—none of them capture it all but each of them is accurate in its own right. Whether it was for the middle school students from Hartford Public Schools, the ex-inmates of York Correctional Institution, and other facilities or the general population that attended, an incredible dialogue took place and some were moved to say, “What can I do?” Yes, art can speak for change and facilitate change as it reaches the heart and mind of each person in a way that reminds us of our collective humanity.



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Thank you for your support in making this work possible. The *TIME IN* project has been a pivotal one giving a space for the voices of the York women to be heard, and by creating that space, allowing a vision that has guided us for so many years to reach a new clarity of purpose and realization. This work will continue even more fully and energetically, as Leslie Bird, Musical Director of Women of the Cross, has said many times: “*TIME IN* has its own life and we are here to follow where it goes next.” And follow we will, as we get calls and inquiries asking us when we will perform it again, as we apply for grants to fund a next phase at York, as well as to do residencies at schools such as Synergy in East Hartford, a wonderful alternative high school for youth at risk, as we apply to festivals in New York City and elsewhere, and begin to explore performances at other prison sites. Two

definite dates for performances are in the near future: Feb 1st and 2nd at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, and March 30th at Mrs. Porter’s in Farmington!

Our commitment to reaching underserved and sometimes-invisible populations and bringing their voices to the public through collaborative performance has reached a new pinnacle and now moves forward. Our next performance debut will be when 300 children from Parkville Community School and the Montessori Magnet School join Trinity College students, JDPE teaching artists, and world musicians Sirius Coyote in a journey to India and the South American rain forests to *Save the Trees!* The large-scale performance, this year for the first time, will be held at Trinity’s new community ice hockey rink. Join us on Wednesday, May 2nd, at 10:30 A.M. for the magical coalescing of this residency program, now in its eleventh year at Parkville!

In February, JDPE begins work on a re-envisioning of *Burning*—created ten years ago and based on Hartford’s witch craze of the late 17th century. This project is a collaboration with the Connecticut Antiquarian and Landmarks Society. Watch for its premiere this Fall—more details to come! Hartford’s witch craze has been in the news recently as Debra and Addie Avery of Washington, CT seek to exonerate their great, great, great plus grandmother Mary Sanford, who was hanged as a witch in 1662. Debra and Addie attended the student performance of *TIME IN* and they are becoming a part of the expanded *Burning* project with Addie as a performer.

On December 2nd I had the pleasure of reconnecting with Chilean poet Marjorie Agosin in an evening at La Paloma, sponsored by the Institute for Community Research, on their exhibit “Weavings on War.” Marjorie read some of her poems, and I spoke of my experience in Chile with arpillerista Violeta Morales in preparation for the creation of *¿dónde estás?*. There was a warmth and electricity among the people who gathered at La Paloma, and Juan Brito and Marta Torres, who collaborated on *¿dónde estás?* with me, were vital presences there. Marjorie and I are talking about a new collaboration on the *Women of Juarez*, and the December 2nd evening seemed to be a beginning of that process.

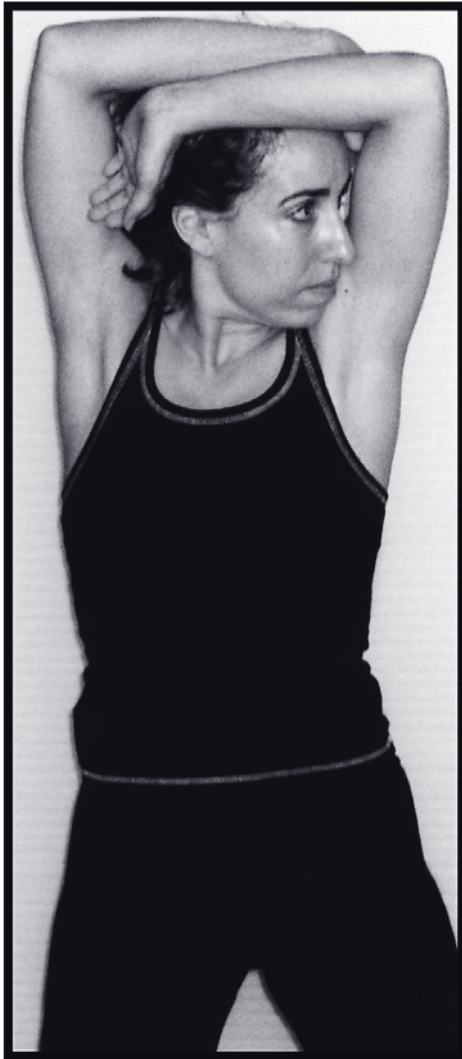
Keep checking our website for updates on where *TIME IN* is taking us—and our other projects—and join us if you can as we continue on this journey of art-making that makes a difference.

Peace and Love,

The Experience of *TIME IN*...

You may have read an article about it in the *New York Times*, heard Judy, Kathy and the Women of the Cross live on NPR Radio, seen it on the cover of *PREVIEW*...regardless of how you may have heard about *TIME IN*, we can all agree it was welcomed to the stage with a buzz of excitement.

It was only fitting to have Wally Lamb present on opening night to introduce the piece and participate in the talkbacks. It was amazing to see how this piece brought such a diverse audience together. You could feel the emotional energy in the crowd throughout the entire performance and later through the night as the majority of the audience stayed for the talkbacks. The talkbacks can only be described as a piece all their own, raising unsettling questions and answers that were real and thought-provoking, with such surprises as having in the audience children of incarcerated women, one who helped create *TIME IN* at York. Such responses gave a real-life voice to the stories that had just been performed. The intense and



work hard with our sisters, to find joy, laughter, respect and most of all freedom.... Thank you for this, for past weeks, the present of today, and for the hope of tomorrow...."

"This has been a tremendous experience for me, and has given me an opportunity to face some demons that had been buried for many years. I was able to express myself without feeling guilty about family secrets being told. I feel like an anvil has been removed from my chest. And if

honest responses of the audience, the cast, and former inmates at York; LaResse Harvey, Robin Cullen and Barbara Parsons closed each night's performance. Funders of the piece, officials from the prison, formerly incarcerated inmates, students, mothers, senior citizens, dancers...everyone in the standing- room-only audiences came together as a true community each night.

We had the pleasure of giving two school performances to youth from Hartford-area middle and high schools. We provided these students with Study Guides and it was great to see them taking in a different form of art and engaging in the piece by asking questions and providing feedback. In many ways *TIME IN* is a proactive piece in terms of its message about making choices and will hopefully be seen by many youth in our area through additional performances, and through our integration of the piece in our school residencies.

We are receiving numerous calls about *TIME IN*, and are happily discussing what our next steps and where our next performances will be. For updated information please visit us on the web at www.judydworin.org, and if you would like to join or add a friend to our mailing list, please call the office at 860-527-9800 or email jdworinens@earthlink.net.

Comments from the women at York:

"I guess, I could just go on and on about the treasure you brought to us. So I'll end with: you gave the women and myself a precious memory. When life knocks us down, and it will before it ever picks us up, we can go back to this time, remember what it felt like to be proud, to

these stories can be told outside, then maybe, just maybe there is hope in the form of help. This program is a good start for many of us who want to heal and don't know where to start."



TIME IN Reviews...

A Reconciliation Of Opposites

By Lisa Paul Streitfield, Special to the Hartford Courant

November 4, 2006

Hartford's Charter Oak Cultural Center performance space is contained within the oldest synagogue in Connecticut—a location as apt for the theme of time as it is incongruous for an alliance created inside a maximum-security prison.

All art is attempting to be collaborative these days. An emotion-packed opening night performance Thursday followed by a group discussion that extended the narrative of *TIME IN* revealed why: Group effort has the potential to birth a new form while serving as a literal lifeline to a collective voice.

Song, text and dance generated by female inmates at York Correctional Institution in Niantic was given life outside the prison walls by their collaborators wearing drab prison garb: seven members of the Judy Dworin Performance Project Inc. and Women of the Cross, a trio of a cappella gospel singers.

Artistic Director Dworin created an innovative structure in which the tension between incarceration and the liberation of spirit served as a precarious passage by which a new cross-disciplinary form is born.

The skillful weaving of personal stories within songs and ruminations about time was a process of emotional discovery shared with the audience. *TIME IN* conjoined urban rap to gospel and text to movement while returning dance to its origins as a repository of archetypal forces struggling for reconciliation within the body.

Deborah Thompson's evocative sign language served as a symbol for the silencing of women's voices while forging a link between speech and movement.

The title of the work sums this up as a marriage of content and form: inmates reflecting on what it means to do *TIME IN* while surrendering personal body movements, voices and text regarding their history of abuse to the timelessness of an art that is universal.

This breaking down of walls was by necessity: Inmates are forbidden to perform out of prison. Yet, the authenticity with which dancers and Women of the Cross embodied the incarcerated resulted in an alternately fierce and joyous narrative voice that could be heard as a collective cry arising from deep within the walls of our celebrity-obsessed, media-saturated entertainment culture.

Novelist Wally Lamb led the writing workshop at York that evolved into this collaboration. It is both fitting and poignant that a man served as midwife to the transmutation of women's personal stories of abuse into art.

In its formal narrative structure moving from darkness to light, oppression to liberation, female to male, *TIME IN* captures a contemporary mythology of healing and resurrection through the reconciliation of gender opposites.

This is a rare triumphant collaboration that has a life of its own, with implications far from the stage.

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The performance and the whole experience took my breath away. The brew of warmth, love, pain, emotion, survival, loss, creative energy, growth, talent, potential, and on and on moved me and paralyzed me at the same time. What to do about this—this being what it all means, reflects, points to?

— Nina Felshin, Curator of the Zilkha Gallery at Wesleyan University

Moving Matters! Residency Programs

THE WORD IS OUT! We are getting many phone calls requesting the *Moving Matters!* Residencies, from elementary schools to magnet schools. This fall began with a wonderfully busy schedule. Starting in September, we went to Snow Elementary School in Middletown for a six-week residency based on the book *The Great Kapok Tree*, by Lynne Cherry. An amazing parent, Jennifer Hadley, oversaw this project throughout its whole process.



This residency also allowed us to introduce the teaching artists who apprenticed last year at Parkville as full teaching artists this year. As the demand for residencies increases so does ours for teachers. Our teaching team now includes Lisa Matias, Deborah Goffe, Alexa Melonopolous, Rachna Agrawal, Michael Burke, Tammy Carlson, Tracy Lombardo, Megan Pagalia-Scheff, Kerry Kincy, and myself.

At Snow, our message of community, listening, and working together came through loud and clear as one student in Lisa Matias's class wrote "You gave everyone a job that didn't just make them *look* important, it made them *feel* important!" or another, "It felt awesome being on the stage with everyone." See Jennifer Hadley's wonderful description below for further details about the Snow School Residency.

Presently I am in the midst of a multitude of meetings with the Parkville Community School and the Montessori Magnet School for our upcoming *Moving Matters!* Parkville/Montessori Magnet Schools Residency. This year's residency will be based on the books *The Great Kapok Tree* and *The People who Hugged Trees*, and has grown to include 13 classes! The residency will begin in December with assemblies at both schools by Sirius Coyote, who once again will be creating the music and performing it live. An addition to this year's project are students from Parkville's sister school, Canton Intermediate. They came to the performance last year, and will come to Parkville to participate in a few of the movement sessions. Our final presentation will be held in Trinity's new hockey rink on Broad Street on May 2, 2007 at 10:30 AM. There will be plenty of space for both performers and audience. All of Canton Intermediate will be there as well! Save the date!



"....a program gem
...a rare and
compelling model"

—Mitchell Korn
Artsvision

— Kathy Borteck Gersten, Coordinator, *Moving Matters!* Residency Program

The Snow School Residency

by Jennifer Hadley, parent coordinator for the project:

The JDPE residency at Snow School exceeded our dreams. Funded by the Aetna Foundation, the CT Commission on Culture & Tourism, and the school's PTO, JDPE performed an excerpt from *TIME OUT!* for the whole school, worked with all five fourth- and fifth-grade classes for five sessions, and then led these students in a performance for the whole school based on *The Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry. The children loved their JDPE dance-teaching artists, commenting over and over again "she was great," and "she was the best." (How often do you hear *that* kind of praise from school children?) The students not only learned how to tell a story through movement, and to make different shapes with their bodies, but also that "being creative/using your imagination will help you throughout your life," and "that working together is important, especially in dance, because teamwork will always work." They also learned about rain forest animals and the importance of taking care of the environment, and were inspired to keep going: "I want to learn more about the animals that live in the rain forest."

Classroom teachers were impressed by the dance-teaching artists' approach to teaching and their ability to engage the students. A fourth-grade teacher wrote, "I especially liked how the program allowed the students to suggest and carry out parts of the program that they wanted." This resulted in increased self-esteem. One student wrote, "(I learned) that I can come up with really good ideas."

The final dance performance was exhilarating and showed that even those who had been skeptical about dancing learned that "dancing is fun."



TIME IN to be performed again!

JDPE and Women of the Cross will perform *TIME IN* at Central Connecticut State University on February 1 and 2, 2007 at 7:30 P.M. in the Torp Theatre, located in Davidson Hall. Talkbacks with former York inmates and the cast will follow each performance. For ticket prices and seating availability, contact the Centix office at CCSU at 860-832-1989.

An art exhibit featuring works from CPA's Prison Arts Program will be featured in Davison Hall, room 123 and a meet-and-greet reception will take place at Founders Hall at 6:30 P.M. before each performance.

If you missed *TIME IN* at Charter Oak Cultural Center, don't miss this opportunity. And please spread the word!



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TIME IN will also be performed at Miss Porter's School in Farmington, CT on March 30, 2007. This performance is not open to the public.



We Need Your Help!

YES! I believe that the arts can be a powerful agent of change.

YES! I would like to support the Judy Dworin Performance Project's innovative, inspiring, educational and collaborative art-making on stage and in the community.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ Email address _____

(You will receive occasional special announcements and timely news about JDPP via email.)

Enclosed please find my tax-deductible donation (please make checks payable to JDPP, Inc.)

_____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$150 _____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ Other

_____ Please contact me to discuss opportunities to become involved with JDPP.

_____ Please send information about booking a performance of *TIME IN* at my school.

Return this form to the Judy Dworin Performance Project, 233 Pearl Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Thank you for your interest and support!

JDPP depends 100% on private donations to fund its operations
and will put your donation to immediate good use.

Upcoming Events for JDPP

February 1 and 2, 2007 at 7:30 P.M.

Two performances of *TIME IN* will be held at Central Connecticut State University for students involved with the Institute for the Study of Crime and Justice. This performance will also be available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis.

For further information please call 860-527-9800, or visit our web site at www.judydworin.org.

March 30, 2007

A *TIME IN* performance will be held for the students and faculty of Miss Porter's School. This performance is not open to the public.

The work of JDPP is made possible with the generous support of:

J. Walton Bissell Foundation
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The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Bodenwein Public Benevolent Foundation
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