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Chair

Mr. Gordon Brown

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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• (1530)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC)): Good afternoon, everyone.

We're going to call to order meeting number 44 of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Today we are embarking on our study of dance in Canada. For the first hour, from the Department of Canadian Heritage, we have Marc Lemay, director general of the arts policy branch, as well as Robert Hunter, director of strategic arts support at the arts policy branch. Also, from the Dance Collection, we have Amy Bowring, director of collections and research. And by video conference from Canada's National Ballet School in Calgary, we have John Dalrymple.

Each of our three groups will have up to eight minutes each, and then we'll move to some questions.

We'll start with our officials from the Department of Canadian Heritage, for up to eight minutes.

You have the floor.

Mr. Marc Lemay (Director General, Arts Policy Branch, Department of Canadian Heritage): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Department of Canadian Heritage appreciates this opportunity to appear before the committee in the context of its study of dance in Canada.

Our objective today is to present committee members with an overview of the professional not-for-profit dance sector in Canada, and how it is supported at the federal level. We will be pleased, of course, to answer questions you may have for us, to the best of our knowledge.

Let's move directly to page 3 of the document that gives an overview of the professional arts sector. The arts in Canada encompasses a broad range of cultural activities that include the performing arts, the visual arts, media arts, and literature. Dance is one of the many disciplines in the professional arts sector. The work of Canadian dance artists and ensembles is created, produced, presented, and toured nationally and internationally by numerous organizations that directly provide arts experiences to Canadians in a large number of communities, while at the same time contributing to the economy.

If we turn to page 4, you will see that the Canadian arts sector is indeed an important contributor to Canada's economy: a contribution of \$12.1 billion to the GDP, of which \$1.9 billion relates to live

performing arts. In 2011 there were 136,600 artists in Canada, 8,100 Canadians employed as dancers, and these people represented 6% of all artists in Canada. In 2012 there were 1,115 not-for-profit performing arts organizations registered in Canada, and 139 not-for-profit dance companies received public sector support in 2013-14.

[Translation]

Let's move on to page 5, which deals with the funding of professional arts organizations in Canada.

A diversified and balanced mix of public and private sector revenues is a distinctive characteristic of the Canadian arts sector. Professional Canadian arts organizations count on diversified revenue streams and enjoy support from the ticket-buying public, touring, the private sector and the three orders of government.

[English]

About three-quarters of the income of Canadian performing arts organizations is self-generated or comes from private sources. Government funding represents, on average, 26% of the revenues of these organizations. Of that public portion, the federal contribution typically represents about 8%. In the case of dance companies, more specifically, about two-thirds of their income is self-generated or comes from private sources, while approximately 14% comes from federal funding sources. The Statistics Canada performing arts survey reports attendance of more than 1.3 million at dance events at not-for-profit professional dance companies in 2012. According to this survey, attendance at dance performances has remained relatively stable since 2006.

The federal framework of support for the arts. Direct federal support for the arts is provided by complementary programs delivered by the National Arts Centre, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Department of Canadian Heritage. The National Arts Centre mainly focuses on the production and presenting of performing arts in the nation's capital. The Canada Council for the Arts mainly supports professional artists and arts organizations. It's principal focus is on funding artistic creation and production across all artistic disciplines.

Canadian Heritage is responsible for policy and legislation. It also delivers programs that contribute to strengthening business practices in the sector, improving cultural infrastructure, ensuring Canadians' access to professional arts experiences in their communities, and training Canada's future artists. Arts organizations also receive ad-hoc support for special projects from other federal institutions, most notably from Infrastructure Canada for their performances spaces.

•(1535)

[Translation]

I will now talk about the National Arts Centre.

The NAC co-produces and presents works that have toured nationally and internationally, especially in the realm of dance, as well as festivals, such as the Ontario Scene events, which are taking place right now, in May.

The Canada Council for the Arts invests primarily in the making of art by individual artists and arts organizations, and supports creation, production and touring activities. The Canada Council for the Arts plays a key role in supporting dance artists and the creation and production of dance throughout the country.

The Department of Canadian Heritage has four programs that support the non-profit professional arts sector. I would like to start with the Canada arts training fund. Through this program, Canada's most promising artists receive excellent training for national and international careers in the arts. Forty percent of this program supports dance training institutions.

A second program, the Canada arts presentation fund, invests in some 600 arts festivals and performing arts series in more than 250 communities each year, in almost every part of the country. Through the Canada arts presentation fund, 238 festivals and performing arts series with a dance component were supported in 2013-14.

[English]

Third, the Canada cultural spaces fund occupies a unique niche in federal infrastructure funding by providing support to smaller projects of non-profit organizations that improve the conditions for the creation and presentation of professional artistic work. Some 42 dance projects received support from this program since 2006.

Finally, in 2013-14, the endowment incentives component of the Canada cultural investment fund provided matching funds to 22 dance organizations for a total of \$8.8 million, and the strategic initiative component provided assistance to four projects with dance partners totalling \$1.5 million.

In conclusion, support for the creation of, and access to, Canadian artistic experiences, including dance, has been an objective of successive governments. The federal investment in the Canadian dance sector has improved access to professional dance performances for Canadians in all parts of the country. It has also made the dance sector more resilient and entrepreneurial. The funding priorities of federal arts programs promote pan-Canadian values of diversity, linguistic duality, and national-caliber excellence.

The challenge for policy-makers is to remain responsive in a world of rapidly changing conditions, so that artists and arts organizations can continue to contribute to the vitality of their communities.

I wish to thank you for your time today. My colleagues and I are available to answer any questions you may have.

The Chair: We'll now move to Amy Bowring from Dance Collection Danse, for up to eight minutes.

Ms. Amy Bowring (Director, Collections and Research, Dance Collection Danse): Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about something that has been a major part of my life since 1978. Dance has played a role in Canadian lives for a very long time. The dance profession in Canada goes back further than most Canadians realize. It also intersects with the broader social, political, economic, and military history of Canada. The stories of dancing Canadians are truly Canadian stories.

I'm the director of collections and research at Dance Collection Danse, a non-profit arts organization that is a combination of archives, exhibition gallery, publisher, and research centre. Our mission is to safeguard and disseminate Canada's theatrical dance heritage. We are the only organization in Canada with this mandate. We serve all kinds of people, from scholars and students, to journalists and filmmakers, to curators and amateur genealogists, to the artists themselves. We create live exhibitions in our gallery in Toronto. We loan artifacts to other museums, such as Pier 21 in Halifax, and we co-produce exhibitions with partners such as the Confederation Centre Art Gallery in Charlottetown.

We disseminate Canada's dance history to the wider public through our annual magazine, as well as the 39 books we have published, including the only bilingual encyclopedia of dance in Canada. We offer programming to the public through lectures, panels, screenings, and our grassroots archiving workshops.

We also have extensive content on our website that tells the stories of dancing Canadians, and we strive to make connections between our dance ancestors and the vibrant community of today. Among the varied researchers who come to us are those Canadians who have discovered that their mother or father danced professionally. They come to us asking about their parents, and we help them reclaim a part of their ancestry that was little known to them. One such man, a retired geographer from Kingston, did so much research that he ended up self-publishing a book about his mother's dance career in the vaudeville era.

Not as many walk through our door as they do at Library and Archives Canada, or at the Royal Ontario Museum, but for those Canadians we help, we are often the only ones who can help. The importance of Dance Collection Danse lies in our ability to extract the extraordinarily rich record of dance in Canada that is beyond the consciousness of most Canadians. We are anxious to continue to discover and tell that story.

The stories contained within our collection are linked to the broader story of Canada. Over the decades that the suffragettes and then the Famous Five women were fighting for the rights of women, dancers and dance teachers were practising and legitimizing the kind of female empowerment that Agnes Macphail and Nellie McClung were striving for. Women in dance were earning their own money on the vaudeville stages of Canada and buying their independence and their right to choose their own lifestyles. The teachers of the period were business owners and entrepreneurial women who paid rent for studios and performance halls. They paid musicians, bought sheet music and costumes, and contributed to the economy.

Toronto dance teacher, Amy Sternberg, even created what is probably the first teacher training program in dance in Canada, thus developing the next generation of teachers, and empowering young women in the 1920s.

Dancers also contributed to the war effort during both world wars. Their role in boosting morale by organizing troop shows and visiting local bases was vital for the men waiting to go overseas. Groups like the Bomba-Dears in Winnipeg and the Rhythmettes in London would gather after their school or work days with a brown bag dinner in their hands and board a bus to travel out to the bases in their region and perform. They returned home in the wee hours of the night only to get up early the next morning and do it all again. They sometimes found themselves shovelling out the bus during snow storms so they could get to the troops. Some of their counterparts made it into the big military reviews that toured Canada and then followed the allies into Europe after D-Day.

Dancers organized benefit concerts to raise money for recruitment or Red Cross efforts. There was not a dry eye in the house during the Peace Ballet that was part of Amy Sternberg's fantastic extravaganza at Massey Hall in 1915. The audience looked to the hundreds of soldiers in attendance who had been training at the CNE grounds and would soon be heading overseas.

Dancers also became soldiers and medics. The male ranks of Boris Volkoff's Canadian ballet were quickly depleted at the start of World War II as dancers joined the Canadian medical corps or the air force. For many, those years without training ended their budding careers, but several returned to dance after the war using their DVA credits to pay for training.

• (1540)

Canada's immigration story is also revealed through dance. It is likely that social and sacred dances have been practised here since the arrival of Canada's earliest aboriginal peoples. Ballroom dances were transported by French and British settlers, and every immigrant population has brought its vernacular or folk dances.

Even when we trace Canada's theatrical dance heritage and the work of professionally trained dancers, it also parallels our immigration history. During and after the Russian Revolution, imperial-trained Russian ballet dancers started opening studios and arranging concerts in various Canadian cities. After World War II, displaced persons began arriving from eastern Europe, bringing ballet as well as the German expressionist modern dance of Mary Wigman.

Our three oldest ballet companies were all developed by immigrant women, and when the doors of immigration opened wider to Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean in the latter 20th century, a diverse range of artists brought their dances to Canada and provided Canadian audiences with exciting forms that they had only previously been able to access through touring companies. Menaka Thakkar and Rina Singha brought bharatanatyam and kathak from India. Patrick Parsons brought the dances of the Caribbean. William Lau added Peking opera to our artistic landscape, and there are still mysteries to be solved. We have found evidence of a school of Spanish and flamenco dance in Toronto as early as 1925. We know there is more to discover and that the history is richer and deeper than we currently realize.

When the federal government enacted the Canada Council into existence in 1957, everything changed. That one cultural policy shift created possibilities for the development of a professional art scene in Canada. It gave artists a fighting chance to develop Canadian culture despite living beside the behemoth of the United States. Artists could share Canadian stories with Canadians and the world in a rich and vital way.

For dance, it meant better training, proper venues, and the chance to earn a living as a dancer in our own country. Dance Collection Dance ensures that the investment made in dance by government, foundations, and private donors has an enduring legacy for future generations.

I envision a Canada where dance and its heritage matter. I would like to see a cultural policy that recognizes all of the arts as a valued asset within Canadian society and where dance and its heritage are seen as a necessary thread in the fabric of our great nation, a nation built on vision, a vision built in the ballrooms of Charlottetown and Quebec in 1864.

Thank you.

• (1545)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will now go to Calgary, Alberta to hear from John Dalrymple, for up to eight minutes.

You have the floor, sir.

Mr. John Dalrymple (Director, Strategic Initiatives, Canada's National Ballet School of Canada): Thank you very much. I really appreciate being here. I'm here representing Canada's National Ballet School. Our major funder is the Department of Canadian Heritage, so we're very happy to be at this table today.

The ballet school has been around for 55 years. We're basically committed to the idea of demonstrating the relevance of dance to every individual in Canada. Dance improves quality of life, it improves health, it has emotional and cognitive benefits, whether you're watching it or doing it. Our principal role in that process, and it has been this way since the founding of the organization, has been to train Olympic-calibre young people to become the great performers and stars of tomorrow, and that remains a steadfast principle of the school.

Something that has been significant for us as we've been moving forward thinking about the future of our art form and the future of our organization is how do we demonstrate that relevance more broadly? Typically, you have a small population of individuals who have been exposed to dance at a young age, and those are the people we're relying on to become the audiences of tomorrow, so we wonder about the rest of the young people in Canada, and what about the rest of the aging populations in Canada for whom dance can also be a significant benefit?

We started a program called Sharing Dance, and that's really what I want to talk about in my presentation today. Sharing Dance is an umbrella program that has three streams. Stream number one is designed for young people. What it really does is to support school teachers in the public school system across the country, delivering the curriculum that is already in the physical education curriculum, and it's related to dance. When I was a kid—and it's still the same in many schools today—you did lane square dancing for three gym classes, and that was about it for your exposure to dance. The reason is because there are very few dance specialists in your average public school. It is part of a larger physical education curriculum, so we feel we have a role to play in helping teachers bring more dance into the classroom.

Our second stream deals with aging populations. There are brain issues that come with aging that are dramatically impacted by regular activities related to specialized dancing, specifically a Dancing With Parkinson's program that we've been running at the school.

The third stream is something called Sharing Dance Day, which is an opportunity to give a very accessible fun dance routine to the whole community that both of these streams can participate in, and anyone else who is involved. Once a year we have a multi-generational celebration of dance in Canada, and as we build towards 2017 our goal is to have a million Canadians involved in this program over the course of the 150th birthday year.

Sharing Dance addresses major social issues. I think that's an important thing for any art style or any arts sector to look to do. It's not enough to say fund the arts for arts' sake. We really need to look at what some of the broader issues are in society. Childhood obesity and a lack of physical activity are major priorities for most Canadians. There's a lack of resources for arts, dance, and even physical education activities in most public schools. They're all on the decline. The emotional health of our young people is something people are concerned about. Then the issues that come with aging, as we have a baby-boom aging population, is another priority for Canadians. We believe that efforts to get dance in the community can impact all of these things positively.

For the remainder of my presentation, I thought I would tie what I have to say to the points that were given to me in the outline for this appearance.

To start with, you were looking for feedback on how dance can define and express various aspects of Canadian culture. We know from the programs we deliver in the school systems, that some students can't express themselves in English as they would like. The good thing about dance is the way that it's inclusive, so it lets them experience a more level playing field with their classmates. That

applies as well to students who have significant physical challenges or mobility issues.

Kids have an interest in dance, often from their cultural background, and giving kids more opportunities to dance in the classroom allows them to tap into that. Dance really celebrates our differences, but also highlights our sameness at the same time, because while the styles of dance may be different from different cultures, we all tell the story the same way.

Another question we wanted to address was how young Canadians, in nurturing and developing their physical and musical skills, can benefit from dance. You were looking for information on the health benefits of dance specifically. Well, dance is an excellent form of physical activity. There probably isn't another art form that has the same level or quality of physical activity connected to it. In fact, there have been studies done at the Arizona State University, as well as the National Cancer Institute in the United States, showing that the metabolic equivalent intensity levels of dance as delivered in a classroom context often exceed the vast majority of any other typical source of classroom activities, including playing hockey, basketball, baseball. So we're looking at an activity that has all the emotional and cognitive benefits that come with an art form but, in fact, have superior physical benefits to those we've been traditionally relying on in the school system. Those mental and emotional benefits are incredibly significant.

● (1550)

We acknowledge that kids today are dealing with a great number of complex stresses, and having the ability to foster social skills and emotional well-being through a creative activity is something that's really important. Also, having that specialty so we can give that back to the community is significant for us as a large arts organization.

The last piece I'd like to say about that is that about 15% of Canadian kids get access to dance through recreational activities their parents pay for. But that means 85% of kids are getting access to formal dance activities only through the school system. So we think this is a huge opportunity to really make an impact.

In terms of the impact on local economies, really, in a nutshell, we're looking at building the audiences of tomorrow. There's no way you can expect somebody to really care about dance performed at the most avant-garde, creative, or high ballet Olympic level if they've never been exposed to it as a child. It's fundamental and there's tons of research to demonstrate that.

So we feel that investments to get dance activities to kids are huge for the future of our art form. We are also looking at programs through which we can identify specific kids with real leadership ability and provide immersion experiences for them.

In terms of how the government supports dance in Canada, as I mentioned, 10% to 15% of Canadian youth are in formal programs. As the largest dance training organization, we recruit from that small slice of actually engaged dancers every year to join our professional ballet program. So, there are really untold numbers of kinesthetically gifted youth, with the potential to have amazing dance careers, who are yet to be discovered because they haven't been exposed to the art form yet. The great thing about it is that while this might help us find more Olympic-calibre amazing dance artists in Canada, this creates an opportunity for all Canadian youth to enjoy these benefits.

In terms of encouraging our dancers to stay in Canada, I think if you go back to the argument of building a really strong audience for tomorrow, then there will be more artists who stay in Canada. Many dancers go to Europe because their work is valued there more often than it is valued here. I think funding in these programs to demonstrate the relevance of dance more broadly will make that value emerge here in Canada.

Finally, we're looking for information on how we can assist dancers who are recareering. Also, as the organization that runs the largest teacher training program for professional ballet teachers as well as recreational teachers in Canada, we know that the opportunity to expose more youth to dance will actually build and support a larger recreational dance community, providing more teaching opportunities and more jobs for dancers as they recareer.

I'm happy to answer any questions, and thank you again for the time.

● (1555)

The Chair: We'll now move to the questions, and I'll ask members of the committee to keep in mind that Mr. Dalrymple is here with us as well.

We're going move to Mr. Weston, for up to seven minutes.

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Thank you, all, for being here. I'd like to welcome all of you, especially my fellow alumna from York University, Amy Bowring. It's nice to see you here.

I just wanted to say, Mr. Dalrymple, that when you said that it allowed children to tap into their individuality, I wanted you to know that we were listening and we got the pun.

Mr. John Dalrymple: That was actually unintended, but I'm going to use that moving forward. Thank you.

Mr. John Weston: I want to touch on four things, if I can in this very short time.

First, you made a very strong connection between physical fitness and dance, Mr. Dalrymple. I'd like you to know that parliamentarians passed a national health and fitness bill just before Christmas. We're all concerned about the rising levels of obesity, as you pointed out, and you put the solution squarely at getting children in the classrooms to dance. I'm just wondering if you want to elaborate on that a little bit, and also maybe inform us about whether there is a stigma about dance. Are there some youth in the schools who think it's not a cool thing to do? Is that something you have to deal with in doing the admirable work you're doing?

Mr. John Dalrymple: Yes, that is true. I think two issues have limited the presence of dance in the classroom. One is on the teachers' side of intimidation around dance. If you hadn't done it when you're young, the idea that you would stand in front of your classroom and try to lead a dance routine or an exercise is highly intimidating.

So to try to address that we're not just providing one-off video resources or written curriculum activities, but we're also creating an online learning management system that provides real-time support from Canada's National Ballet School, in some cases to help those teachers overcome being intimidated. We can create content they can deliver and send right to the classroom. So they can assist as we livestream from Toronto; they can deliver some of the exercises they really need to do to get the kids active and also to tick the curriculum boxes.

The other point you were asking about is whether dance is cool. Certainly, with a lot of boys you find initially that they don't want to dance, especially in gym class; they think it's lame. Part of that has to do with having no exposure to quality dance teaching. I can say without any reservation whatsoever that when we deliver our program in the schools, those boys' minds are changed every time. We've got a scholarship program, a very generous donor set up. So as we work in inner city schools in Toronto, and if we find kids with kinesthetic gifts, they have the opportunity to come to our after-school and weekend program for free, thanks to this donor.

We have three boys, one's from Ethiopia and one's from Afghanistan and one is from South America, and they were all shaking their heads at the beginning—they didn't want to dance, because it was lame—but they showed a real aptitude and they're kinesthetic learners, so they became leaders in the classroom. Now they're going to be joining the ballet program at the school.

I think those are realities we have to tackle; what we've seen in our program has the quality to overcome those issues.

Mr. John Weston: The issue you made about dance being even more effective than some of the traditional sports in terms of physical participation was very convincing, and I would encourage you to work with Sports Canada and other organizations like that—in other words, to cross-pollinate.

Right now 180 cities have declared National Fitness Day and maybe dance organizations should be approaching mayors and councillors and say to them that on that day we should get dance going in the various cities. I think that's a very exciting aspect of what we heard about today. Let me move on, though.

I'd like to touch on something a couple of you discussed. In fact, I think it was you, M. Lemay.

[Translation]

You mentioned the role of the NAC, here in Ottawa. I myself am very impressed with the programming, especially now. There is a veritable smorgasbord of arts, including dance.

[English]

How is that funnelled to the rest of the country? I know we have a capital; therefore, we have an NAC, but are you able to make sure some of those offerings are somehow broadcast to leverage this great program that we have here in Ottawa?

I'm a British Columbia MP, so it's very meaningful.

Mr. Marc Lemay: I can provide a bit of information to get all the information you might be looking for. I think people from the NAC would be better positioned than me to talk about it. Of course, the NAC often presents performances that tour nationally or internationally, so these won't be presented only here in the national capital region, but also in Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver, and Montreal.

What you see here at the NAC is not exclusive to the NAC. It costs a significant amount of money to create a new dance performance; therefore, you have to present it to a bigger audience than in only one city, and these productions tour.

The NAC also does co-productions with dance companies across the country and it ensures that what is presented here is the best work of Canadian dancers and choreographers from all over the country. That work can be presented on a national basis in different regions of Canada.

• (1600)

Mr. John Weston: That's really good to know, and it's rewarding to hear that it's leveraged across the country.

Let me switch to the financing of dance. You talked about there being many not-for-profit companies. Are they intentionally not-for-profit or do they just go that way?

You mentioned that three-quarters of the financing is from the private sector or self-generated and one-quarter is from government. I don't know who is to pronounce on what's good or bad or what's right or wrong, but maybe Amy or Marc, you could give us some insight. What do you think of those proportions: three-quarters self-generated, one-quarter from the government, and I guess 8% of the 26% from government is federal?

Mr. Marc Lemay: That's for the performing arts organizations altogether, not just dance. For dance organizations it's one-third, two-thirds.

But for the performing arts, yes, it's three-quarters private or self-generated.

Mr. John Weston: So one-third, two-thirds means it's one-third self-generated?

Mr. Marc Lemay: No, one-third is from government, two-thirds is self-generated and private sector contribution.

Mr. John Weston: Thanks for clarifying that.

The Chair: On that note, we're going to move to Mr. Nantel, for *sept minutes*.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank our witnesses for being here because we don't talk about dance often enough.

Ms. Bowring, you clearly established the fact that dance contributes significantly to the creation of a heritage and that it is one of the issues. We are talking about quality of life, of course, but also the sense of identity and pride as Canadians.

I would like to ask the representatives from the Department of Canadian Heritage, Mr. Lemay, in particular, if they can provide us now or later with the percentages of the amounts allocated to the non-profit professional arts sector.

Could you give us a general idea of the percentage that dance receives compared to other disciplines?

Mr. Marc Lemay: I could provide details later. Regarding the Canada Council for the Arts, we are talking about an investment of \$18 million. That represents 12% of the amounts paid annually by the Canada Council for the Arts.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: These amounts go to dance.

Mr. Marc Lemay: That's right.

At the Department of Canadian Heritage, the percentages vary from program to program. As I mentioned, in terms of training, 40% of program resources go to dance. So it varies from program to program. We could provide a detailed table.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: I think it would be very useful for everyone here to have those kinds of details. During our study on music, we were often surprised by the very low incomes of musicians. If I'm not mistaken, the same is true for instrumentalists of symphony orchestras in various cities, where the salaries are not very high, when you factor in the practice time that they need to devote to maintain the quality of playing.

Can you tell us how much a professional dancer earns? There are a lot of variations, of course. I imagine that Winnipeg's star dancer earns a little more. I would certainly ask Mr. Dalrymple the same question, but Mr. Lemay, do you have any statistics on the income of professional dancers?

• (1605)

Mr. Marc Lemay: Yes, we have that data. The average income from dance for a professional dancer is a little more than \$17,000 a year. With \$17,000 a year, we understand that dancers often have other forms of income, other kinds of work. Professional dancers have an average income of \$35,000 a year, so a little more than half actually comes from dance. Other income may come from related activities.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: That is pretty indicative of the working conditions. When you are passionate about dance, the fact that the total income is barely double the specific income from dance shows that they cannot have a career with a large salary. They need to work part time because, in total, the amount is \$35,000.

Are there any incentives for improving this situation? What can we do to help the dance sector with respect to salaries? I imagine your resources are not unlimited, and you spoke about increased support from the private sector. Are we seeking better compensation for dance artists in this context? Or are we talking about support for the industry, presentation, production, or something else?

Mr. Marc Lemay: It is not an issue that has a simple solution. There are investments from different levels of government and the private sector. That is why the average incomes are not very high for dance and other arts disciplines.

However, we have to be careful. The dance ecosystem is fairly complex. The way we invest funds could have negative, unintended and major consequences.

For example, I don't think that investing more money to train more young dancers, who would have difficulty finding relatively well-paid jobs and work as professional dancers, would strengthen the dance sector.

There is something else that was mentioned by our colleague from the National Ballet School, and that is building audiences. I think it's important for Canadians to appreciate and value dance. A good part of the solution could be found there.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you very much, Mr. Lemay.

I would like to ask Mr. Dalrymple the same question.

Does the government play a role?

[English]

Mr. John Dalrymple: I would second that response. The government obviously plays a huge role in this. In terms of increasing compensation for artists, it's quite true that even if you were the principle dancer at the National Ballet of Canada, meaning that you were at the summit, the best dancer in the whole country, you might make \$150,000 a year. If you imagine being the titan of the mining industry, you would certainly get paid a lot more. I think the government has a role to play, but it needs to be strategic. As we've discussed, I think investing in programs that provide more access to dance for young people in diverse ways will create more value for the work as those people grow up.

We have great infrastructure in terms of our performing arts building. Certainly in Toronto there was a huge investment in that. Our facility for training dancers is the best in the world. For Canada to say that it has an arts training centre that is better than any other in the world is significant.

We need to ensure that we are looking to the broader society and asking, "Are you part of the growth of this art form with us?" I think that the government won't have enough money to just award more grants to help artists make more money. But if companies are more successful, if corporate sponsorships are more valuable because the art form is more valued in society, I think we will see a cascading effect that will bring artists to where they should be, to where hockey players are, because they train just as hard and they work just as hard.

• (1610)

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Nantel.

Mr. Dion, you have seven minutes.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Thank you, Mr. Dalrymple.

[Translation]

Ms. Bowring, Mr. Lemay and Mr. Hunter, I would like to thank you for providing us with a very good overview of the situation.

However, if I used my seven minutes to ask you to describe the film, what kind of presentation you would have made, all three of you, five or 10 years ago? What has changed? Where would we be in five or 10 years from now if we continued to apply today's policies? It would be very helpful for the committee to hear what you have to say about the situation historically and as it is now.

Mr. Lemay could start.

Mr. Marc Lemay: Thank you.

Let's go back 10 or 15 years.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: We are talking about dance.

Mr. Marc Lemay: We would see, for example, that access to professional dance performances in Canada has greatly increased. People have more access to more diversified dance programming in more communities and municipalities across the country. That is the case not just in the large urban centres but also all across Canada.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Do you have data on that?

Mr. Marc Lemay: Yes, we do.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Can you share it with the committee members?

Mr. Marc Lemay: Yes, we can do that.

In fact, I probably have some figures right here on the investments from the Canada Arts Presentation Fund. About 12 years ago, in 2002-2003—

Hon. Stéphane Dion: It's okay; I believe you. Go on.

Mr. Marc Lemay: Arts organizations, specifically in dance, also receive support, both federally and from other orders of government, in order for them to do more to diversify their sources of funding and increase their revenue from private sources. Our arts and dance sector is more entrepreneurial and better able to obtain support from the private sector. Partnerships have developed over the years and we can demonstrate that.

Major investments have been made over the last 10 or 15 years to start dance companies, which has allowed organizations working in dance to achieve greater financial stability. In the arts in general—and this is certainly also true for dance—arts organizations are better organized and have more robust governance than was the case 10 or 15 years ago.

Where challenges still exist is clearly in terms of audiences. We are well aware that the world has changed. Digital technology has completely changed the world of culture. Cultural offerings are much more extensive than they were 20 and 30 years ago. It is a challenge for a discipline like dance to continue making a place for itself, attracting people to its venues, renewing its audiences and expanding them.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Is that because of the digital revolution?

Mr. Marc Lemay: In part. There is also more competition. People have much more choice in the way they spend their money on culture than they did 30 years ago. The supply is greater. It takes effort. I agree that it must start with the very young. Often, it starts in the family and continues at school. The more kids have a contact with art very early in their lives, the more likely they will be to become interested arts consumers.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Madam Bowring, what is your perspective on that?

Ms. Amy Bowring: My perspective is more anecdotal, being in the trenches with the artists. But I would say that investment hasn't kept up with the fact that eggs, milk, and butter cost more than they did 5 or 10 years ago. Subsidy is key. We had quality professional dancers prior to 1957, but we did not have professional dancers who were paid. We went from paid to unpaid to paid again. We went to vaudeville where people were paid. Then from the end of vaudeville, basically 1930 until 1957, people worked other jobs and danced on weekends and evenings and so on. Then with the Canada Council people started to have jobs again.

The reality is that subsidy is very important to having an artistic country, and education is also key. I know that is not a federal jurisdiction. It's up to the provinces, but I would say there is still not enough art exposure in the classroom, for dance, in particular. I have two little boys who are not that interested in sports. They don't like competition very much. One draws and the other one dances. That's just how they came out. Yet they don't get a lot of exposure to that in their classrooms in our little town of Whitby.

•(1615)

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Thank you.

Mr. Dalrymple, what is your perspective?

Mr. John Dalrymple: I would follow up on the digital piece. I think that's usually significant. I see it as an opportunity for this sector. We know that people who visit a website to watch cultural content online are twice as likely to buy a ticket for it later. So in terms of that audience development piece, the digital thing is essential. For young people it's even more pronounced. We're immigrants in the digital world, but they are the natives. We need to make sure that we're investing and providing quality content and programming in that digital sphere, because that's where we will find the young people, and the scalability that comes with that is significant. It's one thing to get bums in seats of a certain sized house, but it's another thing to actually think about delivering programs to thousands or millions of people. You can do that with digital technology.

The public health element is something that wasn't well recognized or talked about five years ago either. We at the National Ballet School are getting a significant amount of interest from potential funders and partners who would never have thought of partnering with us, like Canadian Sport for Life and the Public Health Agency, all because of the really strong arguments we can make for dance as something that's good for emotional, mental, and physical health.

The last piece is accessibility. We need to look at dance as a physical art form, but there are ways we can create quality dance activities for anybody, regardless of their state of health or physical mobility. These issues are more significant now than they were five years ago.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Thank you.

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

We'll now move to Mr. Hillyer for seven minutes.

Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC): I just have a couple of questions. Not all of these questions are going to be in the same stream of thought, so they might seem a little bit random.

Ms. Bowring, I was interested in your presentation. Was it you who said that dance was beyond the consciousness of most Canadians, or was that Mr. Dalrymple?

Ms. Amy Bowring: No, I said that we have a history that goes deeper than the consciousness of most Canadians.

Mr. Jim Hillyer: Yes, I think not only does your history, but so does your organization. We don't know it exists; I think it's a good thing that it exists.

I have two questions. One, do you have any thoughts on how we can bring dance or the history of dance to the consciousness of the rest of us? And two, why do you think we need a separate organization or institution for the history of dance rather than just including it in history, or the history of culture, or the history of art?

Ms. Amy Bowring: Okay, sorry, your first question was what?

Mr. Jim Hillyer: The first question is, how can we bring the consciousness of the history of dance to the rest of us?

Ms. Amy Bowring: I could use a bigger staff, a bigger facility, and a bigger marketing team. We've been around for almost 30 years and we're still a very well-kept secret because we are a small organization even though we are the main organization looking after the country's dance heritage. We were founded by two ex-National Ballet dancers.

Then your second question was what?

Mr. Jim Hillyer: The second question is, why do you think we need a separate organization?

Ms. Amy Bowring: Dance Collection Danse started as a reconstruction project between 1983 and 1986, and during the research that led to the reconstruction project in 1986—I'm talking about the reconstruction of dances from the pre-Canada Council era—the researchers kept coming back to Toronto from all across the country with shopping bags full of films, scrapbooks, photos, and clippings—everything.

When the research project and the reconstruction was finished, our founders went to provincial archives, national archives, and even the city archives, and all of them said, "It's not in our mandate to collect this, we cannot take it" and so they said, "Okay, we'll do it" and they created Dance Collection Danse to do exactly that.

• (1620)

Mr. Jim Hillyer: That's surprising to hear, but—

Ms. Amy Bowring: Well, archives are, you know, overloaded as it is, right? Everybody is years behind in cataloguing, sorting, and so on, so it gets to a point where the heads of archives have to just say, "We can't handle it, we can't take it".

Mr. Jim Hillyer: So if it weren't for your organization, these things might just be staying in grocery bags in someone's closet.

Ms. Amy Bowring: Or dumpsters, or incinerators.

Mr. Jim Hillyer: Okay.

Mr. Dalrymple, are there national schools, even if it's not an official government organization, for genres other than ballet?

Mr. John Dalrymple: Sure. In the dance sector there are really the National Ballet School, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School, the L'École Supérieure de Ballet in Montreal, and the the School of Alberta Ballet. And yeah, they all do focus on ballet because of the rigours of training that are required to dance that particular art form. Kids have to start very young and they have to dance quite a bit to be able to do it at the professional level.

There are many, many professional dance schools. A lot of dance companies will also run a school as an adjunct to what they do as a presenting organization, and there are—I don't know how many—hundreds and hundreds of those. So there are professional-calibre teachers teaching dance for people who would be professional. Certainly post-secondary institution's fine art departments have professional dance training as well, in a variety of styles.

Mr. Jim Hillyer: How much do the big ballet schools focus on genres other than ballet?

Mr. John Dalrymple: It would depend on the school. Certainly at Canada's National Ballet School, we know it's important that the students are exposed to a variety of dance styles. About 20 years ago we had Peggy Baker, who's a really significant modern dancer and a real legend in Canada, become our artist in residence, so the senior school students get classes with Peggy from grades 10, 11, and 12 to learn contemporary dance movements. We also have Indian and South Asian dance and we've got folk dancing, so they do get exposed to a variety of dance styles. I would imagine that would be consistent with the other large schools, just so that the students are prepared for the diverse range of choreography that's in companies today.

Mr. Jim Hillyer: I haven't done any studies on it, but I imagine, if my household is indicative of anything, shows like *Dancing with*

the Stars and *So You Think You Can Dance* have increased the popularity of dance—at least watching dance. My kids and I are just blown away at the calibre of people who aren't even professionals yet on *So You Think You Can Dance*, and by how powerful and impactful good dance is.

I imagine that this type of exposure increases the popularity of dance. Is there more that we can do to market dance? That would probably increase people's ability to make a living dancing. You talked about making money and then not making money and then making money again. It depends a bit on the market. If the market is really into dance, they're going to pay for dance. With my seeing these shows, if a good dance troop came to town I'd be more willing, just because it's in my consciousness now, to take my kids and pay for tickets to see them.

Is there a way that we can do this marketing to help raise the popularity, and therefore the income, of professional dancers?

Go ahead.

Ms. Amy Bowring: Show like *So You Think You Can Dance* certainly have done a lot to raise the popularity of dance. In fact, we haven't experienced that same popularity since the golden age of variety television on CBC in the 1950s.

There are a number of filmmakers, such as Moze Mossanen and Rhombus Media, doing a lot of dance productions, but they're now having a terrible time getting productions made and aired because of cutbacks at the CBC.

The Chair: All right. Thank you very much.

We're now going to move to Mr. Stewart for five minutes, and that's going to be it.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Thanks to all the witnesses for coming today. It's a great first day to this study.

We've had three studies we're doing. We've just finished one on the music industry. We're just going through one on film, and now one on dance. It's interesting to hear the perspectives of different players in all those industries.

I noticed with the music—I used to be a musician—that the musicians had a sense at one point that they could be millionaire rock stars, but now they have to adjust because of piracy. Now singer-songwriters think that they can't make a living off of this anymore, or that they have to move to another country in order to do it, such as the United States.

In the movie industry there is a kind of acceptance that you go the U.S. to do big blockbusters, or you stay here and do independent films, or some kind of combination.

I'm trying to get a sense of the dance industry and how you see your careers as dancers, how dancers see their careers, and how government can try to enhance that in order to preserve our culture, so we don't lose.... I'm trying to get a flavour of somebody who's entering this industry as a director or dancer, and how they would see themselves going through until they're seniors and retired.

I'll start with Ms. Bowring, and then over to Mr. Dalrymple.

●(1625)

Ms. Amy Bowring: That's a big one. Nobody goes into it for the money, that's for sure. You go into it for the love, and you know that it's going to be hard to make your way. Some people are going to be big and international like Crystal Pite or Jean-Pierre Perreault, and others are going to struggle through their entire careers.

When you ask how government can help, it comes down to subsidy. I keep going back to that, I know, but it's true. We saw it was such a landmark event for the Canada Council to be funded. It made such a huge shift in how art was made and presented in Canada. It just proved that a government that values art and can subsidize it is where the help is.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart: Okay, we may come back to that in a second.

Mr. Dalrymple, do you have anything to add on that point?

Mr. John Dalrymple: At the ballet school, we're looking at maybe 20 kids a year who are graduating. For the last five years we've had a 100% job placement rate, which is good for a professional training school. A big part of it, though, is to make sure that the academic education they get is also of a high calibre. For us, it's somewhat easier. Our academic school is run by the ballet school, so there's an ability to integrate the arts into what the kids are exposed to on a daily basis, and that helps them to excel academically as well as artistically.

I think the opportunity to have more of an arts presence at the public school level would be significant in helping kids in that regard, because a dance career is not going to take you until you're a senior citizen; you're going to have to do something else. Some can be choreographers or artistic directors, and there's a number of our graduates who have been able to do that quite successfully. Others become neuroscientists or marine biologists or lawyers, and they need to be able to go back to school to train.

What we've found is that dance has given them a particular amount of focus, time management skills, and discipline, which has seen them excel as graduates in other programs.

We're having a symposium for our alumni next year. We'll have all of our alumni, even those who can't be present beamed in digitally, to talk about that. We would be able to provide a report on forty to fifty years of graduates of the ballet school and how their careers have turned out. If that's of interest, we'd be happy to share that.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart: Sure, thank you.

It's perhaps more like the Olympic athlete model that you were describing in your presentation. That's useful for me to know.

The second thing I'm interested in is on comparisons. You're not just focusing on Canada, of course; you've talked to international artists.

I'm wondering if people coming from other countries have a different experience. I'm sure the Canada Council was started in reaction to what was happening internationally. I'm wondering if there are other things internationally that we should be trying to mimic in order to stay competitive with other countries that are perhaps supporting their dance more rigorously.

Mr. Lemay can maybe jump in on that one as well.

Mr. Dalrymple, you look like you're ready to jump in there, so maybe you can start.

Mr. John Dalrymple: I would just say that the model in Europe, for instance, where dance is valued and a dancer could have tenure after five years with a company, is that a dancer gets paid for the rest of his or her life. The value of the art form is so high there. That is amazing, but you also see the state of those economies there, and the ability to maintain that over the long term is perhaps in jeopardy.

In the United States, there is less government support, but their organizations are struggling with many of the same things that we are. I think the issue that rings very true in the United States, when we talk to our colleagues, is that priority of demonstrating the relevance as broadly as we can as a way of building audiences for the future.

I find in Europe that they're not worried about that yet, but I don't believe they have a terrific secondary plan if complete government subsidy is not sustainable over the long term.

In other parts of the world, such as Japan and China, there are significant investments happening in dance, but their economies are quite different in terms of the scale.

●(1630)

The Chair: All right, thank you very much.

Thank you to our witnesses. If you have any further contributions to our study, please get them to us in writing.

On that note, we will briefly suspend.

●(1630)

(Pause)

●(1630)

The Chair: We're going to call meeting number 44 of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage back to order.

In our second hour today, from the Canadian Dance Assembly, we have Kate Cornell, the executive director. From the *Regroupement québécois de la danse*, we have Harold Rhéaume, president, and Lorraine Hébert, executive director. From the Dancer Transition Resource Centre, we have Amanda Hancox here with us. She's the executive director of the national office. Parise Mongrain, who is also here, is the director of the Quebec office. By video conference from Toronto, we have Coralee McLaren, a former dancer.

Each of the three groups will have up to eight minutes each.

We will start with Kate Cornell from the Canadian Dance Assembly.

You have the floor.

•(1635)

[Translation]

Ms. Kate Cornell (Executive Director, Canadian Dance Assembly): Thank you, Mr. Brown.

[English]

The Canadian Dance Assembly is the national arts service organization for the professional dance sector. The CDA helps foster a community that is creative, vibrant, and sustainable. The CDA represents more than 100 dance organizations, many of which you will hear from during these meetings, and close to 500 individual dancers. Our partners include all of the provincial service organizations, the Performing Arts Alliance of the National Arts Service Organizations, or NASOs, and the Canadian Arts Coalition.

I want to begin by thanking the committee for its interest and this unique opportunity to talk about Canadian dance.

The Canada Council for the Arts is a respected and trusted public funder of the dance sector. I want to acknowledge the government's sustained investment in the Canada Council during these difficult financial times. The Canada Council employs specialists who truly understand the needs of the field, as evidenced by the extensive dance mapping study that you will hear about on May 13. The dance mapping study examines the scope and influence of professional and non-professional dance in Canada. The Canadian Dance Assembly is forever grateful for this research and it is going to keep me busy for many years. In Canada dance artists are championed by service organizations like the CDA and *Regroupement*, who advocate for their well-being. Notably the Canada Council supports service organizations in community building.

Recently, Simon Brault, the CEO of the Canada Council, announced a new funding model. One of the new programs will be focused on international market access. This yet to be defined touring program is welcomed by the dance sector as absolutely essential to its development. There are no borders in dance. Dance is a universal language and therefore dancers can get a job in any country. The creative exchange of dance artists and choreographic works is at the heart of a healthy dance ecology. International touring and reciprocity is an important cornerstone of our field. The dance sector is encouraged by this announcement of the international program at the Canada Council, but would also like to see Canadian embassies and the Department of Foreign Affairs consider supporting touring.

My brief includes several recommendations. One of them is that CDA recommends that dance organizations, in an effort to have reciprocity with their international partners, have access to more international touring funding at the Canada Council for the Arts and at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

To illustrate the absence of borders in dance, I want to tell you about Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite, whom you heard mentioned in the last session. Crystal Pite is truly world renowned. She is currently the associate artist at the Sadler's Wells ballet in London. She's also an associate dance artist of the National Arts Centre here in Ottawa. Last year she was the only Canadian choreographer featured in the Nederlands Dans Theater's live

streaming dance series shown in movie theatres and in Canada's Cineplex theatres.

Crystal Pite is an excellent example of a Canadian working in the dance sector. She trained in a studio in Victoria, and first danced with Ballet BC, and then she left Canada to dance in Germany with the extraordinary choreographer, William Forsythe. She later returned to Canada to be resident choreographer with Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal. Then she founded her company Kidd Pivot, and her international career took off. Her Canadian company toured to an astonishing 52 cities in 2014. Those cities were in Canada, the U.S., the U.K., and Europe. Her dance has no borders, but Crystal Pite is 100% Canadian.

As a result of her successful work in many countries, Pite has seen hundreds of talented international dancers, not unlike the coach of an NHL team. Of course, she has longstanding relationships with accomplished Canadian dancers who she regularly employs, but when she auditions a dancer who can perform her demanding choreography she doesn't ask to see their passport. Pite hires the dancer and lets her manager, Bernard Sauvé, sort out the paperwork. Since July 2014 the demands of that paperwork have hindered the dance industry.

In January, *The Dance Current* magazine published a feature article on the temporary foreign worker program and its affects on the dance community.

•(1640)

The following is the administrative trail of Pite's new co-creation:

Pite has been commissioned to create a work for the Pan Am Games taking place in Toronto in the summer of 2015. The creation process and rehearsal schedule for this new work extends over eighteen months—

—which is quite common—

involves three foreign national collaborators—dancers whom Pite admires and wishes to work with—and will take place in three different provinces over three different work periods. This means that Kidd Pivot needs to absorb the \$9,000 cost of making nine separate applications (representing three dancers who will be paid for work in three different provinces each requiring a separate application), as well as the administrative hassle in doing so.

“This is a very, very complex issue,” sighs manager Bernard Sauvé, “very time-consuming, very expensive and not conducive to art-making.”

Unfortunately, Kidd Pivot is just one of many dance companies spending thousands a year on the temporary foreign worker program.

This ESDC program does not recognize the reality that dance is by design international, just like professional hockey. There are many similarities between hockey and dance. Athletes train for about a decade to become professionals. These workers are susceptible to sudden, career-ending injuries, but hockey players have highly skilled, high-paying jobs, whereas dancers have highly skilled, low-paying jobs, as we've already heard. Professional hockey players are traded and move quickly between teams, using the international mobility program.

Here are two examples just to illustrate the difference between hockey and dance.

American Ryan Miller of the Vancouver Canucks makes about \$6 million a season. American dancer Gilbert Small of Ballet B.C. makes about \$30,000 a season. If it so happened that Ryan Miller were to come to Canada today, the Vancouver Canucks would pay \$230 in fees to the international mobility program, whereas Ballet B.C. would pay \$1,000 for Gilbert Small, through the temporary foreign worker program.

International players contribute to making hockey competitive, world class, and enticing to Canadian audiences. The same is true of international dancers in Canadian dance companies.

Considering the numerous similarities between professional dance and professional hockey, dance companies have requested access to the international mobility program. Therefore, the Canadian Dance Assembly recommends that dance organizations be eligible for the international mobility program instead of the temporary foreign worker program.

In conclusion, dance is an essential component of Canadian culture. Right now Canadians are dancing in studios, community centres, church basements, schools, parks, living rooms, and theatres across the nation. Dance as a non-verbal means of communication keenly expresses the complex pluralism of Canadian culture to audiences of all backgrounds. Dance crosses barriers and helps to define who we are as Canadians.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll now move to Harold Rhéaume and Lorraine Hébert, for up to eight minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lorraine Hébert (Executive Director, Regroupement québécois de la danse): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My colleague, Harold Rhéaume, and I represent the Regroupement québécois de la danse. Harold is its president.

I am going to speak to you about the realities of the sector we represent. Essentially, it is made up of dance companies that focus on research and original creation. We will describe our advances and our challenges as well as the observations and recommendations that we have included in our brief. The brief draws its inspiration from the master plan for professional dance in Quebec, which we published in June 2011. This is the result of several years of work by more than 200 dance professionals. The activities in our sector are atypical. My colleagues talked to you about it just now. I will go over a few points only.

There was a boom in dance research and original dance in the 1980s. That was a time of deep recession. Recessions have continued and reoccur to this day, meaning that the sector has had to find ways to organize itself and to pool resources and services in order to reduce costs. The sector has therefore developed a number of organizational models that are based on that sharing of resources and services. We are very proud of them.

In dance, there are organizational models like Diagramme—gestion culturelle, La Rotonde—centre chorégraphique contemporain de Québec, the Circuit-Est centre chorégraphique, La danse sur les routes du Québec and la Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault. In a way, they form the backbone of our ecosystem.

The operations of about 35 research and creation companies are supported by at least two levels of government. In most cases, those companies are very small organizations that rely on one or two employees. In 2008, we did an internal study in conjunction with the HEC. The study showed that the salary of an employee working in a dance company is \$35,000. Working conditions are very stressful given the multi-tasking required and the number of overtime hours worked.

Yet because the companies remain very efficient, the dance economy has been growing since 2004. The growth is slow, but it is sure. According to figures from the Conseil des arts de Montréal, the revenues from the activities of those 35 dance companies came to a little more than \$33 million in 2012-2013. But the manoeuvring room was extremely tight because the expenditures came to a little more than \$31 million.

Funding comes from the governments in part and outreach, specifically international outreach, in part, actually the larger part. In our opinion, the local market for dance is underdeveloped.

The many underpaid hours of work and certainly the many unpaid hours of work, in the case of dancers and choreographers, also contributes to the budgetary balance in the ecosystem. According to statistics from a recent study on the status of dancers and choreographers—the same source of figures that we mentioned earlier—total income earned from dancing itself, not from teaching or other related tasks, is an average of \$13,900. When you subtract expenses for training, career management, travel, preventative or therapeutic health care, auditions and even personal investments in creative works, the net income goes to \$9,300.

● (1645)

We should tell you that 70% of the choreographers and dancers who took part in the study are self-employed workers. Forty-two per cent have chronic pain as the result of dance injuries and the same percentage has no complementary coverage from social protection or income security programs.

According to another study, recently conducted by the *ministère de la Culture et des Communications* on social protection for artists and others who are self-employed in the arts, governments must implement programs to provide artists with access to a social safety net. Such programs are already in place in countries such as France, Belgium and Germany.

In conclusion, improving working conditions for artists and workers is a vital issue for all our organizations, but our sector cannot solve it alone. Yet dance has made some major advances in the last 30 years, especially on international stages. But those advances are fragile. The dance ecosystem is efficient, but it is fragile and vulnerable to change.

For example, the changes announced to the Canada Council for the Arts' funding system is a cause for concern. We may find ourselves in a situation of diminishing funds allocated to dance in general or in a situation where the distribution of those funds ignores the nature of our ecosystem. That ecosystem is essential for productivity and artistic excellence in dance. All of its elements are interdependent. If one link is weakened, the entire chain is weakened.

Earlier, my colleague spoke about the impact of the changes to the international mobility program and the foreign workers program. Unfortunately, we are experiencing that impact and seeing its effects. It jeopardizes co-production projects and touring, as well as company development projects. It is costing a great deal. It gives us a lot of administrative hassle that is frankly counterproductive.

Why is dance not entitled to an exemption, like the one granted to the Cirque du Soleil, given that international mobility lies at the heart of its history and its economics? I would say that there is still a future for dance because dance is built on structures, on organizations and on extremely committed artists who want only to dance, at least for a while. The commitment to dance is a deep and very personal investment, not in order to make a lot of money but in order to make a lot of oneself.

Future challenges mean future investments. We need more investment in international outreach, more investment in the entire production chain—

• (1650)

[English]

The Chair: I have to cut you off right there. You're well over the eight minutes. You'll get a chance to expand on that in the questions.

We'll now move to Amanda Hancox, Parise Mongrain, and Coralee McLaren.

You have up to eight minutes between the three of you.

Thank you.

Ms. Amanda Hancox (Executive Director, National Office, Dancer Transition Resource Centre): Thank you.

I'd like to thank the committee for this opportunity to speak about the situation for professional dancers regarding career transition.

Founded in 1985, the Dancer Transition Resource Centre is a national charitable organization dedicated to helping dancers make necessary transitions into, within, and from a professional performance career. Our services are available to professional dancers across Canada and in both languages.

For this presentation we'll be focusing specifically on issues regarding only those dancers with performance careers. I don't wish to minimize the concerns of the wider dance community in any way, or other cultural workers, because we're aware that the overall discipline is struggling with endemic and interrelated issues that concerns all dancers and ultimately affects their careers. But as we can see, our other colleagues are very good at this and the committee will hear their issues.

Dancer transition is an internationally well-documented issue. I would like to start with a quote from *Making changes: facilitating*

the transition of dancers to post-performance careers, the report of a major international research project conducted by the Research Center for Arts and Culture of Columbia University in 2004. It reads:

We know of no other occupation that requires such extensive training, that is held in such esteem as a contribution to culture, and pays so little.

As you've been hearing.

...in the long run, the vitality of dance activity itself requires attention to the welfare of those engaged in it.

Thus, inadequacy of career transition support not only creates significant challenges for individual dancers, but also imposes a social cost in the form of wasted human capital.

As you've heard, becoming a dancer requires an abundance of rigour, passion, discipline, and commitment. Dance careers are extremely demanding and highly competitive. It is appropriate that a dancer's career profile is frequently compared to that of a high performance athlete's. The training of a dancer begins at a very early age, often as young as eight, and it takes about 10 years before they enter the field.

When they do enter a dance career, the majority of dancers will find they are self-employed and are working from contract to contract or juggling several contracts at a time. They will often be creating their own projects because they really want to dance. The emerging dancers tend to develop a strong resilience to financial hardship.

According to a national survey of professional dancers in Canada conducted by Hill Strategies Research in 2005—and these numbers jump all over the place—the annual earning from dance was \$18,000, but the median was just over \$11,000. Despite this data, and instead of leaving the career, most adopt a strategy to diversify their activities. Therefore, 72% of professional dancers supplement their income with additional part-time work either within or outside the dance milieu.

According to many studies and to the DTRC's own observations, a performance career of a dancer lasts about 15 years. There are several reasons for the career to come to an end. Physical limitations due to age or injury, financial insecurity and lack of employment are common, but also discouragement. Performance stress, chronic pain, and lack of artistic opportunities are reasons for a dancer to make the difficult decision to stop dancing.

This is almost an inevitable step, and it requires specialized support. While we appreciate that some improvements in conditions of the dance profession have contributed to the extension of the career, no action will completely lead to the eradication of the issue. Ultimately, the majority of professional performing careers have ended by the age of 40. At an age when most professionals are reaching the peak of their career and have a stable socio-economic status, it's not unusual for a dancer's career to end. Sometimes it ends abruptly, leaving psychological and financial hardship in its wake.

It's a major challenge for many dancers to overcome the difficulty of career change. To address this, very many countries have initialized special programs. Over the years our organization has built and evolved programs to respond in the most economical and appropriate way possible to the challenge facing not only dancers, but indirectly the whole community. The heart of our mission remains to support dancers through the transition process, because we know when they're properly supported they can become aware of their transferable skills and have the ability to set goals that properly reflect their unique potential.

•(1655)

By offering retraining support to dancers at the end of their career, the DTRC ensures that they can continue to use their creative artistry in conjunction with their new skills, and contribute to society in a meaningful way, because they're gifted citizens and they want to remain productive. Forty is pretty young to hang up your shoes.

Again, to quote from *Making Changes*, the international study, "The issue of dancer career transition creates challenges on multiple levels—not just for individual dancers, who warrant assistance with the educational, emotional, and financial challenges they face at the end of their career, but also for the field and the culture at large."

For the field of dance, the issue of dancer transition connects to issues of dancer recruitment and dancer retention. In an increasingly competitive workforce, aspiring dancers and their families may be reluctant to make or encourage a commitment into a field where long-term financial, educational, and psychological needs go unaddressed.

Just as a side note, the artistic director of Canada's National Ballet School, Mavis Staines, was talking to Minister Glover in the fall, and I quote:

I believe the DTRC's unique contributions at the pan-Canadian professional dance community are invaluable. In fact, it is thanks to the services offered by the DTRC that I can ethically encourage Canadian parents to support their children's dreams to pursue professional careers as dance artists.

For the general population, the issue of career transition creates a lost economic opportunity to transfer valuable human capital to the global workplace where ex-dancers can embark on valuable and satisfying new careers, and employers can reap the benefits of having highly skilled, trainable, and creative workers who are so in demand. A growing body of literature indicates that through their training and professional performing careers, dancers develop a unique and valuable set of skills and abilities. Where appropriate retraining is made available, dancers can and do make substantial contributions to diverse sectors in the economic marketplace and in society.

If Canada sees dance as an art form that it wishes to protect and whose existence is justified by the positive externalities it generates, and if Canada wishes to develop excellent dancers and retain talent, its only option is to view the reality of the dancers' profession in its entirety and to support these dancers throughout the natural cycle of their careers.

Thank you.

•(1700)

The Chair: All right, thank you very much.

We're now going to move to the questions. We are going to start with Mr. Young.

Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC): Thank you.

I thank everyone for coming here today, for your time.

I'd like to start at the end of a dancer's career, which is something that we don't normally consider, because what happens at the end is very important to what happens at the beginning, that is, is, whether or not young dancers will choose dance as a career.

I think most people know about professional athletes. We have heard how much they earn in their careers, and we know that once they're in their late thirties their knees or ligaments or tendons start to give out a little bit and they don't have the same strength in their bodies, so they get ready to retire. But we don't normally think about that for dancers. It's exactly the same for dancers because dancers are in fact athletes.

We heard about dancers' earning power and the fact they have part-time work and sporadic work. Professional athletes who make maybe about \$6 to \$7 million in the NHL on average, for example, have a lot of money to save for retirement and have an association help them negotiate their benefits and their retirement earnings, etc. Of course, dancers don't, so when they come to the end of their career, they're basically on their own. They may be 35 years old, looking through the newspaper and the want ads, they may or may not have marketable skills, and they're getting ready for a second career.

Ms. Hancox, your organization helps them plan ahead to succeed in a career. That is great, but I think it's more important to note that that allows them, if they can, to choose to have a career in dance. That relates to what happens in retirement, so that they will know there's light at the end of the tunnel.

What should the government do to help your organization help dancers choose a career in dance and thereby grow and help dance flourish in Canada?

Ms. Amanda Hancox: The Department of Canadian Heritage has been very supportive of our organization since the beginning of the Canada Arts training fund, which used to be under a different name but was the same thing, since about 1996, and has supported us very well.

It's a program that supports development in the arts. From the very beginning, we have been an anomaly, but it was understood that training for a second career for a dancer really is part of training to be a dancer. You have to have that support, because as we've heard, and Mavis Staines said, their parents wouldn't let them go into dance if they knew that at the end there was just nothing.

Over the last year, we have had some red flags flown at us by the Canada arts training fund because we are not an arts training institution. They are saying that they don't know what we're doing in their program because we don't fit their criteria so well. It was a surprise to us because, from the very beginning, we had been in the program and no one had mentioned anything.

For the dancers who are transitioning, where does that support come? It's unique because we are a unique organization, so we may not totally fit in arts training, but we don't really fit in health, and we don't really fit in education.

We are really looking to have the government encourage the Canada arts training fund to acknowledge the fact that dance is unusual, unique, and different, and that training to be a dancer involves preparing for transition.

We start talking to these dancers when they're still in school about having to keep their options open and having to do some education while they're dancing, so that they can start to prepare for this and don't hit 30 or 35 or, God forbid, have a career-ending injury at 26 and suddenly find they have nothing. That would be my recommendation.

• (1705)

Mr. Terence Young: Madame Mongrain.

[Translation]

Ms. Parise Mongrain (Director of the Quebec office, Dancer Transition Resource Centre): You need to know that the process of career transition for a dancer lasts about three years. So, with our organization funded on an annual basis, our ability to provide dancers with quality support is compromised. If we knew that our funding was secure for a certain number of years, it would help us greatly.

[English]

Mr. Terence Young: Kate Cornell, I'm sure you've thought about this many times, but if the Dancers Transition Resource Centre didn't exist and a lot fewer young people chose dance as a career, what would happen to dance as an art in Canada?

Ms. Kate Cornell: It's difficult to imagine that future, but we would definitely see less people having the confidence to go into dance. We would see parents, as Amanda Hancox has already referenced, being reticent to put their student into a full-time program, be it a residential program at one of the ballet schools or even some of the post-secondary training programs in contemporary dance or in classical Indian dance forms.

Not to have that small bit of security....I can't help but mention that most dancers, even most arts workers, don't have pensions and rarely even have health care insurance. The security provided by the Dancers Transition Resource Centre is absolutely essential to our field. As Ms. Hancox has said, it's very important.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. Nantel, you have seven minutes.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to everyone for being here. I hope we will have time to talk to Ms. McLaren. Time really is flying.

My questions are for you, Ms. Hébert. Just now Ms. Bowring said that CBC/Radio-Canada was a major player that has become more fragile recently. Ms. Cornell said that the embassies are playing a smaller and smaller role in culture. I agree that we have to support international tours for our dance creators.

In Quebec and in Canada, what more could be done to stimulate demand? What could be done to get the public more interested in dance?

Earlier, you mentioned the 1980s. I remember Édouard Lock's company La La La Human steps and all the others. What created that vitality? What could we do to get a similar vitality back, first locally?

• (1710)

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: The vitality is still there. Dance audiences in Quebec represent 4% of all performing arts audiences. But even though it is only a small proportion, that audience is growing.

What is it that helps to make dance and the audience for dance grow? Among other things, it takes promoters who can develop skills, who have the equipment, who work with the cultural media, who have the means to promote dance and who are committed to the community. That last point is very important. Promoters have to be committed to their communities.

Locally, I feel that investment in the development of dance promotion must be continued. Promoters must be given more resources and they must be encouraged to work in networks. Finally, we absolutely have to invest in an online presence.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Ms. Hébert, when you say promoters, do you mean the people who buy the shows in order to present them in theatres in various cities around the country?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: Yes. They have a major role to play. They are the focal point, they are the people who promote dance in communities. They have to have the tools.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: In order to build the audience for dance, do you think that there could be greater visibility if there were more direct interaction with young people?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: We do that already, but it takes a lot of work. For it to be done well, we need partnerships. Partnerships must be established and developed with other organizations and with schools. Although that is work in the trenches, basic work, work for the long haul, it pays off.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Exactly; you mention schools. A little earlier, Mr. Dalrymple, in Alberta, told us about a collaboration with schools. What kind of collaboration do you believe is needed to create interest, both in dancing itself and in going to see dance performances?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: We have to take a very close look at what dance is developing with a very young audience, in schools and community centres. It is quite fascinating to see the impact of the young audience dance performances on kids and their parents. I think that it is certainly an investment in the future.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: When we were getting ready for this study, we saw the term "research and development" a lot. I have no doubt that a choreographer does a lot of research and development before putting on a show, but what exactly is the idea?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: A work is something original that implies research, experimentation and rehearsal. Generally, a work has quite a short lifespan, unless it gets included in a major series of international tours. Choreographers are therefore constantly required to reinvent themselves and create new works in order to maintain their place in the market. Originality is what makes one's mark in dance. To be original, you must constantly be producing something new.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Now, I heard loud and clear about Ms. Hancox, Ms. Mongrain and Ms. McLaren's crusade to improve the lot of dancers who are getting to the age when an athlete and a dancer is expected to retire.

Do you not feel that the media should do something to make access to dance easier? There was mention of some television programs that created some interest. Is there no approach that would make it easier for people to understand, interpret and have access to dance?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: At a minimum, it needs to be more visible in our media. Seeing how little visibility dance has in our media is pathetic, whether on television or in the traditional media. You have to know that, in our country, dance developed thanks to television. In the 1950s and 1960s, dance could be seen on television.

• (1715)

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Now you are suggesting steering towards the new media, but in what form?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: We are suggesting both. Television networks are still more mainstream than social media. We need a combination of mainstream media and social media creating the buzz. We have to create some buzz.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: But when you say that you have to steer towards the new media, what do you mean? More views?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: More and more dance videos are being developed. More and more events are being shown.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: For example, the Excentris cinema shows art films. You can go and see the film in the cinema or you can pay to see it in your home. Would that kind of initiative be possible, like showing things locally?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: I am not sure because the fact remains that dance requires contact with the public. That is very important. But showing beautiful images might be used for something else.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: My thanks to everyone and to you, Ms. Hébert.

[English]

The Chair: I remind members that we also have Ms. McLaren with us by video conference from Toronto, if anybody wants to direct some questions to her.

[Translation]

Mr. Dion, the floor is yours for seven minutes.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Madam McLaren, welcome, and thank you so much for being with us.

[Translation]

My thanks to Ms. Mongrain, Ms. Hancox, Ms. Cornell and Ms. Hébert, as well as Mr. Rhéaume.

[English]

I'm not sure we'll have questions for all of you in seven minutes.

[Translation]

I was intrigued by some of your recommendations. So I would ask you to briefly elaborate on some of them. If we spend seven minutes on the first one, we will not be able to discuss the other ones.

Ms. Hébert, you made a recommendation on the Canada media fund.

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: Yes.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Let me read it:

Create a new program or section in the Grants to Media Arts Program to meet the needs of the dance sector with regard to the creation, production and presentation of digital content, and to provide the required resources and specialized skills in managing, designing and developing digital projects.

What will that program do? What will it do compared to existing programs?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: How will we fund those projects? What type of equipment do we have? How are we paying for the specialized skills we need? Without exception, that is the situation of the dance sector. We don't have an access program like the one the industry has access to. We don't have research and development funding or tax credits. Our sector is made up of non-profit organizations. We have to receive some sort of assistance to get our projects off the ground. We don't have access to that right now.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Would you like the government to make a major investment in that program?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: It should make an investment.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Where does it rank on the list of priorities?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: One day the Canada Council for the Arts has the most money allocated to help us, the next day Heritage Canada does. Set it up any way you like, but we need funding.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: I was wondering why a new program is needed. Why is the current program not appropriate?

Ms. Lorraine Hébert: The program was designed for industry. It is not suitable for our arts sectors.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Okay. Thank you.

[English]

Madam Cornell, in recommendation number 4 you state the following:

That the federal government recognize those dance organizations working to improve Canadians' health and well-being by providing access to federal funding at agencies such as Health Canada and Industry Canada.

What do you have in mind here?

Ms. Kate Cornell: There are many dance organizations that are working in schools across Canada, helping those teachers who are afraid to teach dance, to have the benefit of a professional artist in the schools to give them exposure to professional dance. Those dance organizations are helping to keep Canadians healthy.

Because education obviously is a provincial concern, currently these programs come under operating funding from the Canada Council, and possibly from the Department of Canadian Heritage. There is no special funding directed toward these programs.

I can't help but notice that at Industry Canada they have in their Canada 150 program a pillar that is culture, and yet several—I believe that most of their programs are not-for-profits—aren't actually eligible to apply for those programs. It may be examining that.

I'm certainly not an expert in health. But I also wonder, in terms of the incredible benefits Mr. Dalrymple was speaking about with the Sharing Dance program, getting a million Canadians dancing, if there could possibly be some funding there to recognize the health value of dance and the work that's going on at these important dance organizations.

• (1720)

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Thank you very much.

I have more questions for you, and if I have time, I will come back to you, but in the meantime I will ask Madam Hancox and Madame Mongrain to respond.

[*Translation*]

Ms. McLaren could comment on that.

[*English*]

Can you explain to us one of your recommendations? You insist on the Monaco declaration. What do you mean by that? What is the status of Canada regarding the Monaco declaration? Why did you insist on making it a recommendation?

Ms. Amanda Hancox: It was an international recommendation for all countries to adopt.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: And Canada has not yet?

Ms. Amanda Hancox: Well, it's out there and as an organization that looks after professional dancers, we are doing that work, but it's a way of saying the governments of countries should definitely put a focus on this issue.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: What would be different if Canada did that?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Parise Mongrain: We are also aware that, to some extent, our community is quite closed. I don't think we are very well known. The committee can attest to that. The specific nature of dance as a profession is not known. The DTRC became the trustee of the Monaco Declaration. It would be good for Canada to embrace that declaration.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: What would that change?

Ms. Parise Mongrain: There would be awareness. Once training schools are funded, if we want Canadian dancers to excel, we need

to realize that they must be supported throughout their careers and that it is normal to do so.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: What did the government say when you made that proposal?

Ms. Parise Mongrain: We have not made it, as far as I know.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: So we heard it first.

Ms. Parise Mongrain: Exactly. We are putting the ball in your court.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: Okay.

Your second recommendation reads as follows:

[*English*]

It is recommended that [the] Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage ensures the political will of the Canadian government to support the Dancer Transition Resource Centre.

Why do we need that? Do you not feel you are supported by the government?

Ms. Amanda Hancox: As I mentioned earlier, it's just that we are not sure where we are going to fit. The Canada arts training program says it doesn't see how we fit into the program anymore. So it's just a way of saying we would hope the government would say this work is important, and that it needs to fit somewhere.

We have been remarkably supported thus far. It's only in the last year that we have moved from multiple-year funding to one-year funding. They have had no issue at all with the work we do or our mandate. I think they're just saying it doesn't really fit in their program and it's just leaving us nervous about what would happen.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: You want us to ask the government to make you less nervous, more confident?

Ms. Amanda Hancox: I mean not only us but the entire dance industry.

The Chair: We're going to move to Mr. Yurdiga for seven minutes, and then that will be it.

Mr. David Yurdiga (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC): I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here today on this very important study.

My first question is to Ms. Cornell. I'm very interested in hearing more about the temporary foreign worker program in the dance sector. Could you please explain how international dancers contribute to the Canadian dance sector and how, in turn, the inclusion of these international dancers benefits Canadians?

Ms. Kate Cornell: Absolutely.

I want to begin by speaking about international dancers working in Canadian dance companies with our incredible schools. The Canadian Heritage program supports training at 14 extraordinary schools, including the National Ballet School of Canada, which you heard from today. They are so good that they attract international students. Those international students train alongside Canadians, and Canadian artistic directors come in and watch the classes. Those students come and they audition, and when a choreographer finds a dancer that they want to work with, as I said in my presentation, they don't ask about their passports.

Having these international dancers is of great benefit to demonstrate the world-class level of Canadian dance and to bring in different styles, different ways of working, and the work of other choreographers as well. It really represents the lack of borders in dance and how there's a lot of movement with Canadian dancers working for a few years in Germany and then coming back and vice versa.

For audiences it is incredibly exciting to see that diversification of the Canadian population represented on the stage. Their ability to dance and their ability to dance the work of that choreographer are incredibly exciting to see on the stage.

I think having that exchange of dancers and not limiting our choreographers but allowing them to work with the dancers they want to work with benefits Canadians.

•(1725)

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

Just to elaborate on that, how many international performers are performing in Canada at this point? Obviously, it's a very important part of your organization.

Ms. Kate Cornell: Absolutely. As I mentioned in the beginning, I have about 100 member organizations. I don't have exact statistics, but I can definitely get you those numbers. For example, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens I believe has close to 30 temporary foreign workers.

[Translation]

Ms. Parise Mongrain: Some of them are already Canadian citizens or permanent residents, but the fact remains that Les Grands Ballets Canadiens has four Canadians.

A voice: How many are there in total?

Ms. Parise Mongrain: There are 36 dancers.

[English]

Ms. Kate Cornell: I can certainly speak to my members and get the exact number for you.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

What programs and services does your organization provide for individuals?

Ms. Kate Cornell: We're a really interesting NASO. When I sit in a room with my colleagues from the Canadian Arts Coalition, we're one of the only National Arts Service Organizations that services both individuals and organizations. We have partnered with ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society in providing affordable, accessible health care to individual dancers, which is absolutely essential—not just for their kids to go to the dentist, but also if they have injuries. Allowing them to have access to health care is really

important. Believe it or not, they are very interested in the advocacy work we do at the federal level, and they want to support that individually. We also partner with many other organizations, like the Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists, which is not a union but represents their rights. They have a document on protecting the rights of Canadian dancers. We certainly stand beside them in supporting safe working environments, so that when you come into a studio it's not freezing cold, that you dance on a sprung floor, which is incredibly important to prevent injuries, and those types of requirements. We try to work as best as possible to keep those individuals up to date and protected.

A voice: And on the move.

Ms. Kate Cornell: And on the move, for sure.

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you very much for that.

Ms. McLaren, I was just curious, how did the DTRC help you transition from dancer to another career?

Ms. Coralee McLaren (Alumna, Former dancer, Dancer Transition Resource Centre): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for directing that question.

Without the DTRC, quite certainly I would not have reached the place I have in my life without the kind of support it provided back in 2002 when I completed or retired from being a member of the Toronto Dance Theatre. I think what I've learned over this trajectory of the last 10 years or so, now having completed my Ph.D. in nursing, is to really capitalize on the skills, the discipline, the motivation, the creative thinking that I developed as a dancer. It was done through the DTRC, not only through their financial support, but also through their life support in understanding that these skills can carry you through to another career, and how similar a dance career is to a nursing career. I'm now conducting research with disabled children and using dance as a method to understand movement in a new way and using different kinds of dance-based theory as well to be able to understand how we can improve the lives of young children with disabilities.

On a number of levels I could not have done it without the support of the DTRC and the trust they gave me in trusting myself and leading now toward work that I'm extremely excited about and I hope contributes to Canadian society.

•(1730)

Mr. David Yurdiga: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much to our witnesses. Thank you for your contributions to our study. If you have any further contributions, please send them to us in writing over the next week or two.

On that note, the meeting is adjourned.

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