



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 11, 2011

To: Parks & Community Services Board

From: Shelley Brittingham, Assistant Director
Parks & Community Services

Subject: Experience Dance Program Presentation
(Information only; no board action requested.)

At your January 11th, 2011 meeting, Eva Stone of Stone Dance Productions will present information on the contemporary dance festival Chop Shop: Bodies of Work and the Experience Dance Program. The festival is scheduled at the Meydenbauer Theatre on February 12 and 13, 2011. As part of this unique dance production, a community outreach component, the Experience Dance Program, has been developed and managed by the Parks & Community Services Department for the past three years. This memo provides some background information on the festival and its' associated educational and community outreach programs.

In 2008, Stone Dance Productions presented a one-day contemporary dance program at the Meydenbauer Theatre. The production included the works of eight local and regional contemporary dance choreographers/companies - many of whom had never performed or had work presented on the Eastside. The performance was a sell-out.

In 2009, Chop Shop: Bodies of Work was expanded to a two-day festival. An educational outreach component was implemented with the intention of supporting the festival in the development of new audiences. The Experience Dance Program took place at three City of Bellevue community centers prior to the performances at Meydenbauer. The program consisted of free family programs and introductory level contemporary dance classes. Tickets to performances were distributed to program participants and other interested Bellevue residents at no charge. In 2010, the Experience Dance Program was offered in two community centers, and in 2011, we are again planning to support the festival through this educational outreach program. Funding for the festival and the community outreach component has been provided by King County 4Culture, a cultural services agency and the Bellevue Arts Commission since 2009.

The relationship between parks and the arts is mutually beneficial in that arts programs and activities held in parks facilities highlight them as community assets and enhances their value. For the arts, the presentation of activities and performances in easily accessible and familiar spaces can be a strong component in developing future audiences and artists. Informal presentations and workshops in park facilities can help artists reach new audiences and help audiences experience unfamiliar artists or art

forms. The City's Parks & Community Services Department contributes to the range of affordable, publicly accessible cultural education programs offered in Bellevue in a variety of arts disciplines and venues. The Experience Dance Program is an example of the type of program that can support professional performances such as Chop Shop: Bodies of Work in the community.