

April 24, 2014

TO: College Academy of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

FROM: Stacy Alley

Last spring I received \$2000 from CARSCA to help fund a trip to Iquique, Chile to represent The University of Alabama in the International Choreographers' Showcase, hosted by Dance-Forms Productions, as part of the Festival Internacional de Teatro y Danza (FINTDAZ) from October 5-12, 2013. This grant assisted with production costs, accommodations, and airfare to Chile to present *A Conversation Between Jazz Trumpet and Tap Dance*, an interactive performance between jazz trumpeter, Rob Alley, and myself as tap dancer at the Plaza Prat de Iquique, Centro Cultural de Alto Hospicio, Centro De Las Artes Escenicas de Pozo Almonte, and Salon O'Higgins de Pica.

Only five choreographers are selected for the showcase, which featured performers and companies from Washington D.C., Kentucky, Texas State University, and The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. The festival itself featured artists from all over the world and proved to be an excellent opportunity for my work to be seen on a prestigious international stage as well as a chance to network and exchange ideas with like-minded directors, producers, and artists.

The purpose of this research is to expand the boundaries of uncharted territory between live jazz trumpet and tap dance by exploring improvisation as a driving force in a creative exchange and how this relationship between the two informs both artists' interpretation of the music. In the spirit of collaboration and the melding of two art forms, this joint research venture embarks upon an adventurous field of inquiry, as after careful investigation, it was clear that duo collaborations among jazz trumpeters and tap dancers are extremely rare. It is important to note that both the presentation in Chile and the rehearsal necessary to bring it to fruition are considered research in the field of theatre and dance and that improvisation is a skill that must be deeply explored during the rehearsal process in order to succeed in performance. Although the success of this process was ultimately measured by the response to the actual performance, both by the FINTDAZ community and Susana B. Williams, director of the *International Choreographer's Showcase*, I deem it successful as I am now better able to explore dance beyond the standard musical theatre genre that is typical of my work at UA and is therefore vital to my career as a teacher, choreographer and performer.

As a result of our research in Chile, Rob and I were invited to perform at the *Darkroom Series* for New Light Theater Project at the New Theatre in New York City in August 2013, as well as the Alabama Repertory Dance Theatre's 2013 Fall Concert and a University of Alabama Gymnastics Meet in 2014. Most recently, we were invited to be a part of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland in August 2014.

The piece was extremely well received by the producer, director, and audience members alike. Susana B. Williams, producer and director of Dance-Forms Productions, sent the following:

This is what the audience and the critics expressed of "Tap Trumpet A Conversation" performed by Stacy and Rob Alley at the 7th International Theater and Dance Festival ANTIFAZ/FINTDAZ 2013 touring four cities of the Tarapacá region of Chile. Reason why Dance-Forms Productions would like to continue presenting the work in other parts of the world where the two artists could benefit with new engagements, in particular at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Edinburgh, Scotland:

"Danceforms' 64 th International Choreographers' Showcase"

A dance presentation by Dance-Forms Productions received a 98% score for the excellent and innovative contemporary works presented, as well as the effective form in which the different movement languages were offered in the program. The program included:

"Tap Trumpet A Conversation"

World Premiere

Concept and choreography: Stacy Alley

Music: Rob Alley / Costumes: selected by Stacy and Rob Alley

Performers: Stacy and Rob Alley

The work by Stacy and Rob Alley was simply awe inspiring, a duet of tap and trumpet who were an absolute delight to watch, and are the reason why this show scores a high rating; they totally added a distinctive energy to the show. This is a show that you really should see, purely to experience that sensational act.

This is a sampling of work by several different choreographers. The duet "Tap Trumpet A Conversation" was by far one of the best works presented and was unique combining the high level energy of the tap dancer with a contemporary musical composition superbly interpreted by the trumpet player, which I had never experienced live. The highlights were a) a *fantastic* trumpet player, b) the incredible intensity of the dancer's feet, and c) the fabulous conversation taking place between the dancer's tap movements and the trumpet.