

## DanceCleveland wins 2014 Joyce Award in support of new choreography

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CLEVELAND, Ohio -- DanceCleveland was named Wednesday one of four recipients of a prestigious 2014 Joyce Award.

The award, a \$50,000 grant from the Chicago-based Joyce Foundation, supports cross-cultural art projects and will enable the group to commission and present a new work by New York choreographer Camille Brown.

"We didn't really think they'd be interested," said Pam Young, executive director of DanceCleveland. "They give out so few of these. But the project will be a real challenge for us, and I think they found that exciting."

The only dance organization to win a Joyce grant this year, DanceCleveland will work closely with Brown and her company, Camille A. Brown & Dancers, as they research, develop and perform a piece addressing the experience of African-American women in contemporary urban culture.

The work, tentatively titled "Black Girl," will be based on interviews with a diverse range of women in Northeast Ohio as well "The Bluest Eye," the first novel by Lorain-born author Toni Morrison. The other three Joyce Award winners are composer Jessie Montgomery and playwrights Lynn Nottage and Tracey Scott Wilson.

"She's a pretty remarkable person," Young said of Brown, noting performances of her choreography by such companies as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Philadanco and Urban Bush Women. "There's a lot of poignancy to her work."

Young said Brown will make several visits to Cleveland, starting this summer, and then spend the rest of this year and much of the next creating "Black Girl" in time for DanceCleveland's 60th anniversary in the fall of 2015.

The grant also enables DanceCleveland, which also won a Joyce Award in 2006, to provide Brown with rehearsal and training space and to support public performances of the work in a smaller PlayhouseSquare venue such as the Allen or Hanna Theatre.

But while the work itself is likely to be intimate in nature, Young said the significance of the project will be huge for DanceCleveland.

"These kinds of fellowships are becoming rarer and rarer," she said. "This a big deal for us."

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New York choreographer Camille A. Brown will partner with DanceCleveland to create a new work following the receipt of a 2014 Joyce Award. Ra-Re Valverde