

Research Grant – CoTA Faculty Research Grant Fall 2015

Faculty Member: Bliss Kohlmyer

Unit: School of Theatre & Dance

Proposal Title: Romance Sentimentale – Piano, Dance, Film

A. Abstract:

My proposed creative research project is to travel to England with Professor Svetozar Ivanov to present *Romance Sentimentale* an interdisciplinary, collaborative, and multi-media work. We have been invited by the Northern Royal College of Music in Manchester and the University of London to perform and teach master classes. This work explores how the fields of music, film and dance enhance one another and tell a story that can only be told through this interdisciplinary lens. Funds will be used for a portion of round-trip airline ticket from Tampa to Manchester and a round trip train ticket from Manchester to London.

B. Proposal:

Why collaboration? We must find new ways of understanding to deal with the rapidity of our newly complex world. Therefore, relying on a single viewpoint is no longer enough. Through investigating and exploring the language of another art form, individuals can not only begin to better understand each other's worldviews, but also have a deeper understanding of their own. A collaboration between a dancer and pianist is considered cutting edge in the field of concert music, not to mention the use of black and white silent film. While it is not rare to for live music to accompany a dance performance, it is rare for dance to accompany a piano concert. This work cross-pollinates audiences and introduces dance performance to the concert music scene, all while expanding the fields of both music and dance.

For my proposed interdisciplinary and collaborative project, I will travel with USF Professor/internationally recognized pianist, Svetozar Ivanov to England. There, we will present our work *Romance Sentimentale*, a work inspired by Sergei Eisenstein's 1930 film *Romance Sentimentale* and Dimitri Kirsanoffs 1929 film *Brumes D'Autumne*. The concert features music by Berio, Scriabin, Schoenberg, and Crumb. Playing with the ideas of memory, loss, and liminality, my performance explores the nuance of Svetozar's music, the melancholy beauty of the silent film, and the physicalization of the intra-personal conflict developing in the main character's psyche.

Svetozar and I have been invited to present this work at the Northern Royal College of Music and University of London Spring 2016. An invitation from such highly regarded institutions will enhance not only my reputation as an artist but also the reputation of the University of South Florida. Presenting this work internationally will further USF's visibility and help to increase COTA's recognition as a "distinguished center for study, creation and research preparing next generations to forge ahead and create new knowledge."

The 2013-2018 draft of USF's Strategic Plan places emphasis on "partnerships to build significant locally- and globally-integrated university-community collaborations through sound scholarly and artistic activities and technological innovation." My creative research with Svetozar Ivanov and this particular work *Romance Sentimentale* are building on my passions for collaboration and multi-disciplinary work at the international level, with international institutions and their communities. These relationships benefit USF for they have the potential to lead to future engagements for USF Dance Faculty abroad. And, USF students will benefit from these engagements as we bring home new pedagogical and creative ideas. In addition, at the local level, this work is establishing a strong connection between the School of Music and the School of Theatre and Dance at USF. In my opinion, for both faculty and students, collaborations between these two departments should be happening more frequently.

Lastly, USF honors collaboration, invention, and the conflation of research and teaching. This project is a multi-disciplinary, multi-media, and collaborative work. My students have been involved in much of the work's movement research thus far for the concept of liminality is one that I'm continuously exploring in the dance studio.