
Winter 2-24-2022

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Recommended Citation

Batsheva Kahn, Lin (2022) "Creativity Can't Be Canceled: DePaul Students Express Their Pandemic Experience Through Art," *Vincentian Heritage Journal*: Vol. 36 : Iss. 2 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/vhj/vol36/iss2/5>

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Creativity Can't Be Canceled: DePaul Students Express Their Pandemic Experience Through Art

Lin Batsheva Kahn

BIO

LIN BATSHEVA KAHN is a DePaul Theatre School Excellence in Teaching Honoree who teaches *Modern Dance; Chicago Dancing; Diversity in Dance: Paradigms Shifting*, addressing racism, sexism, ageism, and ableism; and *Creativity & Adversity*, an interdisciplinary class about transcending hardship through the arts in the Psychology department. An innovative choreographer, Kahn created MusicDance En-sem'ble, a performance group of dancers and guest musicians such as Grammy award-winning Third Coast Percussion. Ongoing collaboration with faculty from the DePaul School of Music includes Michael Kozakis's Percussion Ensemble, Michael Lewanski's 20+Ensemble, Harry Silverstein's Opera Theater productions *The Fairy Queen* and *Nozze di Figaro*, and *Dido and Aeneas* with Dr. Eric Esparza and Jason Moy. Choreography for the 2019 Theatre School at DePaul production of *A Dybbuk: Or Between Two Worlds* was described as "stunning." Kahn's 2021 virtual *Moving Toward Action with Music & Dance* was supported by DePaul University's Vincentian Endowment Fund, Jewish United Fund, and community patrons. She has received many grants from the DePaul Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity for this international teaching and performance event. Quality of Instruction Council grants have taken her to

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the University of Hertfordshire in London with dance psychologist Dr. Peter Lovatt, Axis Dance Company in California, and The Joffrey Ballet in Chicago.

With over 4,500 views, her ideas about creativity filmed at PBS WTTW as an ELI Talk includes the moving duet *January Thirtyfirst*. Times of Israel published “Creativity Can’t Be Canceled” and 4 other pieces she wrote in their Marketplace of Ideas in 2021. Lin’s work expressing themes of human significance has been seen worldwide, while her inclusive university teaching has impacted students across the United States and from countries such as Egypt, Peru, India, Hungary, Korea, China, Ecuador, Uzbekistan, Singapore, and the Netherlands. A Chicago native, she holds a BFA in modern dance from the University of Illinois-Champaign; a master’s in dance, theatre, and communication from Kent State University; and a master’s in contemporary dance from Case Western Reserve University. Her thesis for the latter was about the relationship of creativity and grief, and it initiated the unique DePaul course *Creativity & Adversity*.



Freshmen to seniors create dance, drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, poetry, film, and music pieces in my course Creativity & Adversity: Psychology, Religious Thought, and the Arts. They make Picasso-like cubist faces from ripped paper. Their final “transcending work of art” re-channels individual hardship through a chosen artistic medium. However, in spring 2020, students created from the same shared adversity: a global pandemic. The positive impact on non-art majors from different backgrounds and places in the world was timely, important, and meaningful. They discovered their untapped creative resources while learning creativity can’t be canceled.

Please click this link to experience the online exhibition and music:

**Creativity Can’t Be Canceled:
DePaul Students Express Their Pandemic Experience
Through Art**

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