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**Keynote Luncheon**

**Introduction:** Sage Cowles  
*arts activist, patron, and former Bill T. Jones dancer*

**Speaker:** Bill T. Jones  
*choreographer, author, and artistic director*

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*[Singing] Don't you want to have your freedom? Don't you want to have your freedom? Don't you want to have your freedom? Soldiers of the cross.*

*Do you think I'll make a soldier? Do you think I'll make a soldier? Do you think I will make a soldier? Soldier of the...*

*[Speaking] I do that because I am so scared, ladies and gentlemen, to be here today. [laughter]. And as I learned from some great people, some great teachers, who say that when you feel it, my boy, you must step out on the word. And I wish I could own the word like the lady who taught me that song does, but I own the feeling and I tried to put it on the stage. So, give me strength.*

I am an artist. As an artist, I realize that I am the beneficiary of a privilege and an opportunity many other artists would relish and deserve. I thank you for inviting me. Let us be clear from the beginning... I make reference to the personal neither for self-promotion nor aggrandizement, but as an offering of deeply understood information that I feel reflects similar experiences and perceptions of the artists I shall attempt to speak for today. I offer all of this with humility and deep anticipation.

I am an artist defining myself as a choreographer. Being invited to address this particular congress has sent me into a rapid spiral of soul searching and an analysis of my motives.

Why do I do what I do?

I will volunteer free of qualification that what I enjoy most is the process of research, discovery, and problem solving that occurs before a work has its premiere. Candidly stated, viewing the finished work may or may not be satisfying. True grace is spontaneous engagement free of concern for the outcome. This is true in life and art. I want grace.

Simply stated, I love nothing more than making my art. The company, that is the means by which the work is made, is an enterprise that represents a focus and livelihood for myself and all the persons, artistic, administrative, and technical, who give the company life.

Allow me to digress for a moment.

It must have been about twenty or twenty five years ago when, through serendipity of circumstance my older brother, a construction worker and truck driver, happened to be looking over my shoulders as I watched some documentary on The San Francisco Ballet. "Is that what you do?" he asked. And, not really feeling prepared to launch into an explanation of the historical/philosophical/aesthetic nuances of contemporary dance, I said "Yes, sort of."

"Can you make any money doing it?"

My expression must have betrayed the quick tallying of just how many things I was doing at the time to make a living: washing adult diapers at a geriatric facility, teaching yoga, art modeling. His response to my hesitation was to say, "If you knew what I know now, you wouldn't be messing around like that."

My brother's admonition has resonance some twenty-five years later. There is the first distinction one must make in choosing such a career. The relevant question is "Can my art make money?" For whatever complex reasons generated at the junction where mass taste, historical precedent, cultural traditions, prestige, and marketing meet we find an organization like mine cannot exist by earned income alone.

There was a time in the past when on reviewing a previous year's financial profile it was revealed that a shockingly high percentage of the company's income was earned. To all the persons who understand these things, it was obvious that this was not a healthy sign. The popular wisdom is that sources of income should, in addition to earned, be distributed more equitably between the categories of government, corporate/foundation and individual.

So artists need philanthropy. Let us remember that "philanthropy" comes from the Greek *Phylanthropia* – love for mankind, or is it charity? Is art making altruistic and, as by extension a form of philanthropy?

I must confess that I had never really thought much about philanthropy, other than as a means to an end, until recently. I have held the predictably unexamined prejudices and resentments of many towards those who are perceived to have so much that they can give some part of it away. I smiled smugly to myself when I first heard Balzac's truism: "At the source of every fortune, there is a crime." I share the self-righteousness

expressed by the minister and leader of the social gospel movement, Washington Gladden, in his 1895 article *Tainted Money*. It was a full frontal attack on the benefactions of “robber barons,” “Roman plunderers,” “pirates of industry,” “spoilers of state.”

As Artistic Director of a small, not for profit organization, my truest relationship to philanthropy has been in the conflicted emotions I am forced to acknowledge when sitting with my development director as she informs me of what grant applications have been accepted and/or rejected. To be accepted brings first a too predictable sense of validation followed on its heels by self-disgust.

Validation? Bah!

Who needs the validation of money when it's the approval of peers, audiences and self that ultimately counts? Why should rejection matter?

Oh! but it does and we all know it, but do we all feel it?

Few of us artists ever move far from a desperate struggle with self-worth in the face of philanthropy.

It's sobering to realize just how irrelevant the notion of art as we know it was to the early founders of American philanthropy.

Robert Bremner says,

Ever since the Seventeenth Century, when Cotton Mather announced that Boston's helpfulness and readiness to every good work were well and favorably known in heaven, Americans have regarded themselves as an unusually philanthropic people. Americans seem never to tire of saying, or of hearing, that they are generous to a fault – the most compassionate, open-handed people the world has ever known. The philanthropic streak in the national character is taken so much for granted that it is sometimes deemed more a genial failing than an asset or virtue.

The real founders of American philanthropy, however, were men and women who crossed the Atlantic to establish communities that would be 'better' than, instead of like or different from, the ones they had known at home.

*End quotation.*

It has been important for me to realize that initially charity and philanthropy were practically inseparable.

So the late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries saw such good works as the founding of charitable societies, hospitals, orphanages followed by libraries and institutions of higher learning. The artist as recipient of such pious good works would be a long time coming in the American philanthropic tradition. Even museums and orchestras, those diadems of a civilized society, were more a concern of the late Nineteenth Century than of any earlier era.

My design for this address had been to use the clear voices of bygone eras as a sort of prod to stir nostalgia for a simple time, and perhaps as a goad to conscience. Well, as you will probably agree, with so much talk of returning to basic values, with various national myths being morphed into concepts such as “compassionate conservatism,” nostalgia becomes a bad habit. Likewise judging from a document I recently read entitled *Highlights of the Foundation's Center Study – 1999 – Arts Funding 2000: Funder Perspectives on Current and Future Trends*, I recognize there is plenty of conscience and thoughtfulness in this room today.

But, who are you? Yes, I know you are descendants in distant ways of John Winthrop, Cotton Mather, Elihu Yale, Benjamin Franklin and, in some more immediate ways, descendants of Andrew Carnegie, JD Rockefeller Sr. and Julius Rosenwald. In even more recognizable ways you are the descendants of a 38-year-old Baptist Clergyman, Frederick T. Gates, who agreed to assist Rockefeller Sr. in his benefactions by interviewing applicants, making inquiries, and suggesting actions.

I came upon several striking descriptions of contemporary givers. This description comes from Francie Ostrower's *Why the Wealthy Give: The Culture of Elite Philanthropy*.

The social elite may be thought of as an elite within the larger elite. It has been characterized as a core or dominant group within the elite whose behavior, values and culture is admired by, and serve as reference point for, other members of the elite.

On the other hand, it has been argued that today, the social elite represents a class in decline, increasingly replaced by a more atomized collection of corporate managers. Be prepared! I fixate on this definition for several reasons:

- It represents an undeniable fact of our cultural history that is still in evidence today.
- The personal/individualistic perspective suggests a moral, ethical, emotional component in a discourse that seeks to find a “correct” path towards a “greater good.”
- I am an artist and the language and the power of art is always directed towards the eyes, hearts, mind and hearts of individuals. Isn’t this your aim as well?

Ostrower’s book is based on a series of interviews with ninety-nine wealthy donors who live and/or work in the New York area. These donors defend an ideological position according to which it is legitimate and desirable to maintain true philanthropy, a set of institutions whose mission is “public,” but that remain under private rather than governmental control.

The vast majority of donors agree that “for wealthier members of our society, philanthropy is not only a matter of choice, but is an obligation.” Some donors talked of “giving back.” Some tied their giving to personal lifestyles, explaining that they did not choose or even felt uncomfortable with “higher levels of spending or luxuries.” Others pointed to guilt as a motivating factor.

Some comments suggested that the role of philanthropy was in legitimating wealth. Philanthropy has also been postulated as a method of legitimating the upper class to the rest of society.

Waldemar A. Nielsen extends this description. “Donors on the whole are revered figures in the American context. Yes, oddly enough they tend to become the forgotten factor in American philanthropy. Their fundamental role and special characteristics are often displaced by the changing outlook of successive generations of trustees, and even more by the preoccupations of staff professionals responsive to changing academic, intellectual social trends.”

Now your features become clearer, but questions persist. Ms. Ostrower goes on to report that while characterizing philanthropy as an obligation, donors readily acknowledged that it is also enjoyable. One donor, for instance, noted that “There’s a return in my own head that I’ve been a person who is generous, and have helped some person or some cause.”

My response to this is, Can a foundation feel “enjoyment?”

Even more troubling in its implications: Does a corporation truly seek enjoyment or is it capable of feeling it? as enjoyment is an individual’s prerogative.

Is this the break between old-fashioned elite philanthropy and Foundations/Corporate giving?

In describing scientific philanthropy, Bremner says,

At long last, or so they thought, the charitable impulse was being disciplined, the head was triumphing over the heart, the ‘machinery of benevolence’ was coming to be understood and usefully operated, and ‘philanthropology,’ the study of the scientific principles of philanthropy would soon be recognized as any other branch of learning.

Likewise, Ms. Ostrower’s reports “Indeed, philanthropy comes as a channel through which individuals can express various personal experiences, attachment, and relationships with other people.”

If we substitute foundation or corporation we begin to focus your portrait even more finely, but does it work?

“Indeed, philanthropy comes as a channel through which corporations can express experiences, attachment and relationships with people.”

Have we reached this exercise’s limit? Ms. Ostrower’s book’s most provocative conclusion is that elite philanthropy grows out of the donor’s sense of identity (class, ethnicity, religion, and gender). Philanthropy becomes a mark of class status that contributes to defining and maintaining the cultural and organizational boundaries of elite life. Here, I suspect the interest in drawing any parallels between your methods and motivations and those of the elite’s probably fall apart. What cultural and organizational boundaries or class status are you defining or maintaining?

Isamu Noguchi, the great sculptor, declared “Culture is where life and art meet.” I like that. Cultural historian, Jacques Barzun, declares culture to be “the well furnished mind.”

Both definitions place you at a critical location.

I have often said that I believe that artists should be the freest persons in any society. You, on the other hand, have taken upon yourself the task of cultural arbiters.

When I first began preparing these remarks I had formal talks with a development director, a director at a state's art agency, a major donor, some board trustees, and a presenter. They all made suggestions concerning grantmaking policies and process most of which were already to be found in the Foundation Center's study. Still I have responses to several areas of the study.

- **Sustainability:** I appreciate the concern you feel and wholly encourage us all to find a more stable and welcoming place for the arts in our society. Let us not forget that artists are a tenacious and resourceful lot. Is it art schools, conservatories and universities? There seems no shortage of young hopefuls devoted to the punishing pursuit of careers in the arts. And yes! There are Darwinian forces at work that have their way in what is described in the report as a sensitive eco-system. We should be careful however that these most delicate species are not lost.

This comment does not address a particular aspect of our changing art climate. It seems that most giving goes to organizations, not to the many individual artists that I've described. The presenter I spoke with did feel that grants should be made easier to apply for. The applications demand a specially trained worker to deal with language and form. She feels more and more comes between individual artists and philanthropy. She feels the organizational norm restricts artistic freedom.

- **Grantmakers are narrowing their focus:** In response to this, the development director felt that more flexibility was needed in the structure of the programs organizations are given to apply to. She feels that guidelines are too strict, and, perhaps, too narrow. Of the multi-year grants she would like to see multi-year support given to operating costs and not only to projects.
- **The landscape of audience and the demand for the art is changing:** One night over dinner, I had a heated exchange with a powerful agent, a manager of symphonic orchestras. This agent felt composers, conductors and critics had been trying to force modernism such as serial music and the likes of John Cage down the throat of audiences and the audi-

ences weren't having it. "When do we decide it doesn't work?" he asked. So I asked, "Do we abandon Schoenberg and the likes of John Cage?" The funders report tells us that the art field does not well understand its audience. I am confused by this. Which audience? Does it mean the audience I see each time I go to my Cineplex and pay \$8.50 for one and a half hours of distraction? Does it mean the artists are asking the wrong questions? Is it the artists' role to create a demand for their product?

At a dinner, I was strategically placed next to the Director of Corporate giving of a major multinational corporation. Her nostrils were quivering and she wore an expression of barely concealed disdain. She could "smell" a hungry artist. At one point she announced that they were in the business of making money and that what she supported had to deliver "a return." And I ask, is this a cultural arbiter?

Why does all art have to appeal to all people? I might say. And this is where I don't envy your role. You feel art is good for the people and so you want to expose as many folks as possible to what you think will give them a well-furnished mind. And yet we know most of what is most important and profound takes time and steady commitment in order to be understood or enjoyed.

Unfortunately while you are working in good faith for this miraculous enrichment to occur, some power is tapping its proverbial foot impatiently demanding written proof of your effectiveness, evidence of your accountability.

- **Future trends:** "Dollar amounts of arts funding for most grantmakers will increase, but the arts' share of funding will mainly remain steady."

I ask, how much money are we talking about? Waldemar Nielsen writing in the late 1990's says, "After two hundred years of development some 35,000 active American foundations with combined assets of some 175 billion dollars – totals far beyond anything that exists in other nations of the world. But if only 2% of the estimated private wealth is committed to philanthropy, as now seems quite possible, the number, assets, and grantmaking of American foundations will double by the first decade of the new century."

Isn't it true that even if your proportion of the wealth stays the same, there will be a great deal of money available? So why not dream bigger – take more risks?

Yes! to long and longer terms of support for artists and arts organizations. What of a ten- to twenty-year commitment of support?

Yes! to more theaters. What if for every five Cineplexes there was one state of the art theater? And what if those theaters had a guaranteed operating budget? Remember Andrew Carnegie and his gift of libraries?

I can hear some of you thinking that anything is possible, but first we must demonstrate that the arts make a difference and that the people really want them, in other words this is accountability.

Why? The question of accountability is a particularly thorny one for me. I often say to whoever will listen, "Art making is a subversive act." My assumption is that for whatever reasons – some due to hideously calculated manipulations of the powerful upon the hearts and minds of others – some due to more subtle forms of repression, something like a primal fear of the dark – it takes an act of will to construct a vision that is free of the mean spirit and mediocrity that seems to drive our world.

So for me, the making of art implies that all received truths are subject to examination and dismissal. I don't feel that it is appropriate to always insist on accountability. Can I speak for you?

And a topic even more difficult to express: I am unsure if the Democratic model is valid for the arts. Yes, I agree with the spirit of your thinking in that all people should have access to excellence. But are all people capable of understanding the research branch of any endeavor? And at its most effective, research is what the most advanced art is. Some arts must remain a preserved domain.

I must now move more decidedly to the personal. My own organization was shown a great honor by being awarded a multi year Lila Wallace audience development grant. I quietly railed against the demands of the grant that I apply demographic criteria and marketing research techniques as a means of increasing our audience diversity and size. It has been useful and,

perhaps, more than that. I have thrown open my process ever wider to this potential audience on the assumption that they will feel some sense of proprietorship and embrace what is for many an esoteric art form. It seems to be working. If this is what you mean by an artist better understanding his/her audience or an audience participating as an educator, I must acquiesce, but with some qualifications. I sometimes wonder about the cost. The language of disgust, outrage, and transgression is the very stuff that once made up the metaphorical walls of the metaphorical temple, the inner sanctum wherein the mysteries lay. Do all comers deserve access or desire it?

In the dance of philanthropy and art all parties are changed. The artist takes on the role of prophet, research scientist, entertainer and social earthwork: one who prepares the landscape for re-habitation and cultural growth. Add to this list public servant and some of us grow skittish and, maybe, balk.

In our dance, who are you?

The great poet Garcia Lorca declared in 1929: "Since ancient time art has used wireless telegraphy and bounced its signals off the stars."

Are you these stars?

**Moderator:** If you have questions and think that you cannot be heard, please come up here. Otherwise, if you have wonderful resonant voices, speak out!

Spell-bound! This is usually not a group that is usually rendered speechless. Yes?

**Q:** I would like to figure out a way to capture all that you said. I think it is hard to be sitting on the other side of the table and justify to those who look to us why we fund the arts. I would just like to encourage you to continue to speak as you do.

**Jones:** Well thank you for your generosity. It was a tough... I was trying to think, how do you talk honestly to a group of people that you do respect and you need so desperately. [laughter] You know my friend... I woke... I fell out of bed yesterday in Phoenix, walking back and forth, back and forth, and I said to him, I realize how angry I am. And it's anger that comes from a lot of stuff. And I think a lot of artists are that way.

And it gets focused on: Who do you lead? So I think that when you hear an artist, have mercy. [laughter] You know? They are an arrogant bunch, but, you know, have mercy. Can we expect artists to have mercy? I would like you to be able to expect me to, but I cannot speak for everybody. There are some crazy people there. [laughter] But they are earthworms, right?

**Moderator:** Great. Yes...

**Q:** Bill, what would you do if, for some reason, you had to trade places with one of us? [laughter]

**Jones:** First of all, why would you ever ask me to do that? [laughter] What would I do? What would I do? First of all, I do not know. How much money do you give me? [laughter] And who are the people around me that can help educate me? Because I think I would like to do some of the things that I am talking about. I think I would like to try long-term, something really long-term. I don't know. Tell me, am I wrong? What initiatives do you know that are ever longer than five years? Are there some? There are? The lady says there are a few. Could you give us an example?

**Q:** There is a Children, Youth, and Families Initiative in Chicago. It was ten years.

**Jones:** Oh.

**Q:** It was an ambitious project; it did not work very well. It took more than ten years.

**Jones:** Hmmmm.

**Moderator:** Yes?

**Q:** Grants for the Arts, San Francisco, awards its operating expenses year after year after year after year.

**Jones:** They do not have to reapply?

**Q:** They do but it is sort of a formality. Our staff and advisory committee have to know what is happening with groups to renew their funding each year.

**Jones:** How long has it been going on, then?

**Q:** Since 1961.

**Jones:** Whoa! Wow! How is it going? [laugh]

**Q:** That depends on who you ask. [laughter] Now that the earthworms, the artist earthworms, have done their jobs in different parts of San Francisco and the boutiques have moved in.

**Jones:** Yeah, and some of the artists are getting old. [laughter] I was speaking to Harvey Lichtenstein about the BAM cultural district, and they were showing me all of these wonderful plans and I said, Now, where is the senior facility? [laughter] Oh, oh yes, artists get old! I think artists do not know that. Yes?

**Moderator:** Yes?

**Q:** I saw your amazing solo in LA, and you really just completely opened up the heart of the audience.

**Jones:** I was a little open myself at the end of it. [laughs]

**Q:** I want to ask you, when did you decide... Here it felt like you were not coming from that place.

**Jones:** No.

**Q:** From that focus. Why did you decide to use critique rather than coming from the heart?

**Jones:** Well, because I think that that is the language that you would most respect me using. And I think there is some heart behind the critique, you know? But I think too much of your congress to come in and throw it around in the way I would in my solo work. I am talking to you, we are talking about things; we are not talking about my performance. We are talking about ideas, aren't we? I am not demonstrating how to make an audience want to cry or whatever, I am trying to talk about what I have been reading in your literature that you are talking about.

**Q:** You are a really extraordinarily gifted performer, a mover of people. Could you talk just a little bit more about that? Your decision about how to work with people, with tough ideas. How you reached that as a performer.

**Jones:** Well, as Martha Graham says, If I could talk about that, dear, I wouldn't dance about it. [laughter]

No, no, no, the lady's point is well taken. I think I am one of the most talkingest dancers around, alright. As a

matter of fact, when I was recently at Jacob's Pillow and *twenty* presenters were in the audience one night and I didn't find out until afterwards, Oh, by the way, there was a conference here of twenty presenters here tonight and they all did a critique of your show the next day. I was livid! I had not had a chance to talk to them. Right? And somebody said, You know, I feel like I know so much more about his politics and ideas than I do about his art. Now, I am celebrating my twentieth anniversary as a dance company and they had... there were people there who were presenters who had never seen me. Now I think it is because they *read* what I say and get scared shitless. And they *hear* the scandalous things and they don't go because they have made up their mind beforehand.

So, I don't think I have... I have done. I have given. I know how to do them both. And what I said today, I stand behind. And the way I said it, I stand behind.

Because, and another thing, as I said to a group of young kids the other day in Austin, They think you are stupid! People think dancers are stupid. So, I said to someone who said, Well, I like ballet, you know? I said, What do you mean, "you like ballet"? Do you like the Kirov? Do you like the American Ballet Theatre? Do you like the Paris Opera? Do you like the Chigetti method as opposed to the McGonigle method? [laughter] Well, I don't know all of those terms. I said, Well, your obligation is, in the future, to defend your feelings about dance. And what's more, if you go on a show like Terry Gross Fresh Air, and she is going to give it to you... Could you describe, please, what a *jeté* is? On the air. [laughter] Alright? Yeah, describe it please. Tell me with words.

No, I talk. I talk for a reason. That is also a subversive act, depending on who you talk to. [laughter] Yes. Thank you, though, for that. Thank you.

**Moderator:** Here and then over here.

**Q:** I just wanted to respond to your comment about senior facilities for artists to assure you that one is in the plan for Dubrovnik Croatia in about ten years. [laughter]

**Jones:** I am glad! [laughter] In Croatia? [laughter]

**Q:** ...which will be open to international...

**Jones:** Oh, for international artists.

**Q:** ...including artists from the United States.

**Jones:** Right. Ahh. Well, that is great. I wish it was a little bit closer to home. [laughter] Like St. Paul or some place like that. You know how when you get old – I don't know, maybe artists are so uprooted, but I know right now, my mother is 86, and where she lives is really important. She wants a connection to family. She wants a connection to things she knows. Food. So I don't know, maybe artists don't have those needs but we might think of trying to find a few of those places...

That is a project I would work on. Yeah, I am trying to envision. I got... My friend and I, we say that we got, this is like, we're supposed to be dead now and we ain't! Right? So now I am thinking about, whoa! So if I do live another 30 or 40 years, what is my life going to be? And that is a lovely privilege to have to think about, how to age. Yes?

**Moderator:** Two last questions, Well, three and that is really it. Yes?

**Q:** Early on you talked about getting grants and...

**Jones:** Yes.

**Q:** (question unintelligible)

**Jones:** No, I just asked you because I don't think I have a right to speak about what you feel. And I say that we all know that this is... There is a desperate thing that is going on here when artists get that acceptance or rejection. And I am saying we all know, even if an artist says it doesn't matter, it matters, and it matters deeply. We all know it, I said. But, do we all feel it?

Now, it was a provocative question, but I don't really know. I must admit I try to practice what I preach. This is not a many-headed hydra. These are individuals in this room. So maybe you might better tell me what is the response. I mean, yeah, what is it? What do you feel? I mean, do you feel?

**Q:** Well, I will say yes. Absolutely.

**Jones:** Is that part of the job description? Maybe you shouldn't be involved; at least be like a medical doctor.



**Moderator:** I think that one of the things that we feel is that we all have limitations. And most of us do not fund projects that are wonderful because we have limited funds. And so even though we support projects that we feel really strongly about, for every docket that we do there are several projects that we care about just as much but because of the limited assets, we are not able to support...

**Jones:** I got that from the report. That is why... That is why this question about this immense wealth that is coming over the horizon, and is already there. And I understand, one thing I didn't mention is I understand that you have to educate the new computer people, the Generation X, Y, or Z'ers. They've got to know there is such a thing as giving, right? That was something I couldn't touch on, but I hope that there is work being done in that. Yes?

**Moderator:** And that is happening. Last two questions, yes?

**Jones:** There is a man over there; I would love to hear him speak. [laugh] Yes?

**Q:** I just wanted to say: thank you for coming to us as an expert. Really, you are an incredible expert.

**Jones:** Do you think... Why do you say that? How can...

**Q:** Because you have been doing it for years. There are these moments when people have to recognize that speaking, not coming and performing, but coming and speaking as an expert is essential for us to understand the exchange.

**Jones:** Well, I appreciate what you are saying but I must admit that there is a sense of – now part of this is a term in African-American culture which is called, You are always trying to get over. You know? You understand how to smile, how to wink, how to do whatever you have to do to “get over.” And until I was given this wonderful opportunity, I had not really thought about how it really works. I just know that these things exist. You know more than I do. I was really taken with the Funders' Report and how thoughtful it is. So no, I am a recipient who has had to deal with this side of dealing with this force that I don't know about. But I hardly consider myself an expert. I don't think many artists

would. People don't take time to think about money that way, I don't think, in art.

**Q:** (question unintelligible)

**Jones:** Right. Well, I'll tell you one of the best things – I don't mean just to stroke, but my board president, who is a person – and I like her. [laughter] You know, and there have been people that I have had dinner with that I really would have liked to have taken a knife and put it through their chests at one point, right? [laughter] And you feel dirty, you must feel like the young woman with this husband who she is just waiting for him to die or what have you. [laughter] But it is really great when you can have a relationship with somebody who is there to support you and you become partners. I do not even know, it is like a new relationship: Is it going to work? Will there be a divorce? Will I make a misstep? Will she turn out to whatever? But, right now, it is good. It is good.

**Cowles:** One last question and then we will...

**Jones:** Yes. Hello, partner! This is my partner from Lila Wallace.

**Q:** Thank you for your kind words. We are friends. And I was thinking about what you said: Do all people desire access? Do all people deserve access? I was wondering if you could say something about audience members who surprised you with their responses, who challenged...

**Jones:** Right. Well, I must say it happens... You know, it happens all of the time. It happens all of the time. Of course, the struggle is still here. There were people who were way brave, way heroic. Simply on this man's words, they came forward – and another term from African-American – they threw down. And they gave. Boom! There, take it! Take my innermost thoughts. Because they believed that it could make a difference. What you hear in that last statement – I hope it can be mitigated – it is just saying: Don't assume everybody can do this, folks. Don't assume everybody... I do it. I have done it big time, right? But don't assume that everybody should. And keep that place that people can be curmudgeons and generous, but yet be geniuses. Right? I mean, that is all that that statement meant.

Recently doing this audience development thing where people would come in and watch it week after week, there was a woman who stood up, a black woman, she was an imposing black woman, and she said she had worked in Harlem for 35 years and had never heard of me. And she wanted to come in and see what all of the noise was about. [laughter] And then she said, I was dancing to the music of Schubert; was that appropriate for young black people? You're here in Harlem. I got it, she said, I have lived in Europe, I have traveled to Croatia! – no, she didn't say that! [laughter] But she said, I have traveled all over the world. I got it, but is this appropriate for the people that you are trying to be a role-model for?

The next day, a young woman, a young Spanish woman who had been there, said that she was offended by that woman's comments. She said that, We, we got hip-hop, we got all that. We need people to think highly enough of us that they would bring something that we don't have.

So, if I had pulled back and not let them in – this was not a paying event, this was showing them a work in progress – that dialogue would never have happened and I would never have had the courage to think sometimes: Put your toughest stuff out in front of an audience that you think is going to reject it. So, how can I say two things? I am just saying that I say it just so that you remember, that we must always remember, there should be a preserved domain as one aspect of what we mean by art.

**Moderator:** Thank you. Let's thank Bill T. Jones.  
[applause]



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