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**ARTS LEADER CANDACE L. FELDMAN JOINS ALICE SHEPPARD'S
DISABILITY DANCE WORKS AS MANAGING DIRECTOR**

DECEMBER 6, 2018 (New York, NY) – Alice Sheppard and Disability Dance Works, LLC announce today that Candace L. Feldman has joined the organization as Managing Director. A respected arts administrator and leader with more than a decade of experience producing and presenting across the United States, Feldman joins a growing team of professionals from the arts, technology, and social justice sectors working together to advance and expand the disability arts movement.

Disability Dance Works (DDW) is a production company and hub for projects launched by dance artist, choreographer, and disability arts innovator Alice Sheppard. DDW focuses on projects, products, and activism at the intersection of disability, technology, and design. Recent work includes the national tour of *DESCENT*, an immersive dance production created by Kinetic Light, a collective that includes Sheppard and fellow disabled artists Laurel Lawson and Michael Maag. Plus *AUDIMANCE*, a mobile app that pushes beyond the traditional practice of audio description for dance by rendering bodies and choreography itself in sound. As Managing Director of DDW, Feldman will take the organization to the next level by strengthening Kinetic Light's internal processes, functions, and structures, while supporting the advancement and overall vision of DDW. She joined the organization in November 2018.

Artistic Director Sheppard commented: “We are thrilled to have Candace join this rapidly growing team. Intersectional disability arts is a new art form, and Candace's experience and insight will help us break new ground and create sustainable growth. There is so much more to come—stay tuned!”

Feldman is an experienced administrator, producer, and presenter. She has held leadership positions as Director of Programming at UA Presents in Tucson, AZ, seven years as Producing Director of 651 ARTS in Brooklyn, NY, and a Founding Leader for the Next Generation National Arts Network, as well as roles at CBS Corporation in CA and The Juilliard School in NY. In her most recent position at the University of Arizona, Feldman programmed diverse music, dance, and theater artists, helped to double revenue, and attracted audiences diverse in age, race, and background.

Feldman earned her bachelor's degree in Theatre Studies from Kansas State University and an MBA from the University of Arizona. She is deeply immersed in the performing arts field, and has served on numerous boards, committees, and funding panels including Theater Communications Group, South Arts Performing Arts Exchange, New England Foundation for the Arts, Arizona Arts Commission, and many others. In 2017 she traveled to Ukraine as an artistic advisor for the U.S. Department of State's Center Stage program. Center Stage is a groundbreaking cultural diplomacy initiative that connects foreign artists with American communities through the performing arts and brings international performing artists to tour throughout the U.S. through the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, in partnership with New England Foundation for the Arts.

After two and a half years with UA Presents, Feldman resigned citing racial discrimination, inequitable pay, and retaliation. Upon leaving the University of Arizona, she has become a figure of advocacy toward dismantling institutional racism in higher education and the performing arts.

“After leaving the University of Arizona, I was at a place in my life where I did not know if I would continue with a career in the performing arts. I was feeling frustrated and disturbed that even in our own field of artists, activists, and truth-tellers, that me and my people are still not fully seen, treated, or compensated as equal, valuable contributors,” commented Feldman. “But then I met

Alice. When we talked, she shared the road she has been so selflessly pursuing, as a Black Woman, Artist, Leader, and a prominent Voice/Representative for disability arts and artists. We share a belief in building a movement that is revolutionary for all, not just radical for some. My hope was restored and my purpose reignited. Everything happens for a reason. No doubt. I'm still here."

Functioning as a production company rather than a traditional dance company, Disability Dance Works aims to create and distribute innovative and interdisciplinary products, artistic work, and activism within and outside the arts world. Each project has its own carefully-chosen team of collaborators, imagined audience and users, and funding mode. Team members come from a variety of professional backgrounds, bringing valuable expertise and insight.

Sheppard recruited Lisa Niedermeyer, a professional with deep experience and relationships in the dance, arts administration, and technology fields, to serve as DDW's first full-time employee in 2017. Prior to joining DDW, Niedermeyer was directing technology initiatives at Fractured Atlas and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, as well as scouting for Exponential Creativity Ventures, a venture capital firm focused on innovative creative tech. P.S. 314, a social change consulting firm founded by President Pi-Isis Ankhra, has been a partner of Alice Sheppard's and Disability Dance Works since 2017. Together, their partnership explores the definition of radical inclusion through the lens of disability culture art and aesthetic. Their work specifically focuses on integrating strategic partnerships with community agents of change from the grass tops to the grassroots across the country in multiple sectors. Mar'ya Wethers, Touring Producer for DDW, brings 20 years of experience working as a producer and curator with a commitment to supporting and advocating for artists of color. Laurel Lawson, collaborator and dancer with Kinetic Light, is also an engineer and software developer and leads key projects including *AUDIMANCE* as well as the development of custom-designed wheelchairs for *DESCENT*. These talents and viewpoints combine to create a strategically-developed team with the power to move disability activism forward and make a serious impact in and outside of the arts field.

ABOUT ALICE SHEPPARD

Founder of Disability Dance Works and Kinetic Light, Alice Sheppard, saw Homer Avila, a disabled dancer, perform in 2004. Avila dared her to take a dance class; she did, and she loved moving so much that she resigned her academic professorship at Pennsylvania State University in order to begin a career in dance. She studied ballet and modern dance with Kitty Lunn and made her debut with Infinity Dance Theater. After an apprenticeship, Sheppard joined AXIS

Dance Company, an Oakland-based company where she toured nationally and taught in the company's education and outreach programs. Since becoming an independent artist, Sheppard has danced in projects with Ballet Cymru, GDance, and Marc Brew Company in the United Kingdom and Full Radius Dance, Marjani Forté, MBDance, Infinity Dance Theater, and Steve Paxton in the United States. She has received national recognition from a range of funders, including New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, the MAP Fund, the Mertz Gilmore Foundation, the Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation, Dance/NYC's Disability. Dance. Artistry. Fund, and the Diversability Foundation.

As an emerging, award-winning choreographer, Sheppard creates movement that challenges conventional understandings of disabled and dancing bodies. Engaging with disability arts, culture, and history, she attends to the complex intersections of disability, gender, and race by exploring the societal and cultural significance of difference. In addition to performance and choreography, Sheppard is a sought-after speaker and has lectured on topics related to disability arts, race, and dance. She was featured on the July 2018 cover of *Dance Magazine*. Disability arts writer and educator Kevin Gotkin wrote the cover story; "Sheppard's work models a truth that is rarely understood among dance audiences: Disability does not signify incompleteness. In fact, it offers novel pathways to several movement styles, each of them whole and generative of unique choreographic forms." For more information visit alicesheppard.com.

ABOUT KINETIC LIGHT

Working in the disciplines of art, design, architecture, and social justice, Kinetic Light creates, performs, and teaches at the intersections of disability, dance, and race. Through rigorous investment in the histories, cultures, and artistic work of people with disabilities and people of color, Kinetic Light transforms understandings of the dancing body thereby enabling new, powerful understandings of the moving world. The collective seeks to showcase freedom of movement as a pathway for others to understand how mobility—literal, physical, and conceptual—is fundamental to participation in civic life. Kinetic Light presented the New York premiere of *DESCENT*, the collective's first evening-length work, at New York Live Arts in March 2018 and performed *Under Momentum* at both The Whitney Museum and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in August 2018. *DESCENT* was voted 2018's Most Moving Performance by the readers of *Dance Magazine*. A national 2019-2020 tour of *DESCENT* will include performances in Atlanta, GA, Wilmington, NC, and beyond.

In the three years Kinetic Light has operated as a collective and fiscally sponsored project, it has earned philanthropic support from the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, The MAP Fund, Dance/NYC's Disability. Dance. Artistry. Fund, and residencies at EMPAC, Gibney Dance and the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography at Florida State University, among others. For more information visit kineticlight.org.

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