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**Anjoli Chadha and Walter Rutledge Selected for Staten Island Children’s Museum
New Performing Artist-In-Residence Program**

November 6, 2019—The Staten Island Children’s Museum is pleased to announce that Anjoli Chadha and Walter Rutledge have been selected for its new Performing Artist-in-Residence Program (PAIR).

These artists were chosen following a comprehensive review of the nearly 20 applications received for this new endeavor. A performance schedule is available from the Children’s Museum’s website at sichildrensmuseum.org.

Funded by [The Staten Island Foundation](#), the PAIR gives artists the opportunity to establish a 6-month residency at the Children’s Museum where they will develop and perform interactive pieces for intergenerational audiences that integrate the Museum’s exhibits and spaces.

The PAIR application process was open to any performing artist in the five boroughs, with preference given to Staten Island residents. The Children’s Museum aspires to be an even more inclusive space for all families. To that end, artists from communities of color and other under-represented groups were encouraged to submit proposals from the worlds of theater, dance, music or puppetry to help re-interpret the exhibits for the Museum’s audiences.

“I look forward to building relationships and inspiring the community,” said Chadha, a dancer and performer born in Brooklyn and raised in India. “I created a healing work project called Sentient Dance in 2016. I call it ‘The Dance of Sentient Beings.’ We are conscious, self-aware, and intuitive by nature. Each of us has a dance because each body can sense and feel. I aspire to guide us to our wise expression. Through creating a relationship with our body, we find healing, love and freedom! I get excited to guide non-dancers especially, to tap into feelings to experience the dance that wants to happen rather than force themselves to make a ‘pretty move.’ I like finding the pretty in the awkward moves or the unfamiliar dance.”

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“The arts have provided me the opportunity to visit many countries and many nations. The first nation I visited is my favorite nation and the one place I return every chance I get. That place is the *ImagiNation*,” said Rutledge, a choreographer, director, arts critic, teacher, performer and Bronx native.

“The Staten Island Children’s Museum has always made learning fun and interactive,” he added. “We want to expand on this credo and offer educational, interactive and intergenerational arts experiences for both young audiences and their adult chaperones,” he added. “The consortium of visual artists, dancers, musicians, and storytellers we will enlist - many are Staten Island-based - are part of our creative community. And all are welcome to visit.”

Betsy Dubovsky, Executive Director of The Staten Island Foundation, stated, “We are pleased to support the new performing artist residency at the Staten Island Children’s Museum as an extension of their work to increase diversity, equity and inclusion within their organization and within their programming for children. It is great to see and we wish them well.”

“By working with Walter and Anjoli through the PAIR, we hope to expand cultural awareness of different types of performances, increase interactions with diverse artists while engaging with them and their craft, and deepen our visitors’ understanding of the Museum’s exhibits through performing arts,” said Dina Rosenthal, Executive Director of the Staten Island Children’s Museum.

About Anjoli Chadha

Anjoli Chadha began as a dancer and performer in New Delhi in 2008 with a Psychedelic Cabaret Band. Her journey of Self-discovery and Self-empowerment through the body started through realizing her sexuality as a dancer in India. She moved to New York in 2009 to continue as a dancer and performer. Some of her movement practices have been Kalaripayattu, Capoeira, Ballet, Yoga and more recently, Samba. She has been working with children for the past 10 years in daycares, schools and special needs centers as a caregiver, dance teacher and dance therapist.

In 2013, Anjoli graduated from Pratt institute with a master’s degree in Dance and Movement Therapy. The two years of training to be a Dance and Movement Therapist were an important, life-altering time for her. It was a time of facing herself honestly, healing traumas and understanding personal stories and beliefs that weren’t serving her growth. With the help of loving teachers, therapists and guides, she has learned the power of trusting the process of creativity and healing and believes they are deeply intertwined with one another. She experienced time and time again how the body has wisdom and that she had a vast well of intuitive healing powers when connected with her body, her Self.

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For the past nine years, Anjoli has been re-learning how she relates to people and developing empathetic ways of seeing and understanding others. Through working with groups of individuals in psychiatric units as well as facilitating dance healing circles for people in the Staten Island community, she has come to understand people's basic similarities: to be seen, belong and feel loved. Each person needs some healing and each is here to grow and experience the best version of themselves.

Anjoli's vision is to connect a person to the truest parts of themselves, to help them develop trust in their primal nature instead of fearing it, and to help individuals relate to one another in healthy, loving and supportive ways. Through Sentient Dance, she envisions people in spaces where they are uniting to their innate wisdom, wildly expressing through their bodies and making soulful human connections that heal and free them.

About Walter Rutledge

Walter Rutledge has worked in the arts for over 30 years. He trained at the Harkness House for Ballet Arts and became a member of the Harkness Ballet of New York. During his tenure with Harkness, he received the opportunity and encouragement to develop his choreographic and directorial skills.

Walter became the Associate Artistic Director/Choreographer in Residence of the Nanette Bearden Contemporary Dance Theatre. The 7-year association produced over 40 ballets, including collaborations with renowned artist Romare Bearden, choreographer Alvin Ailey, recording artists Roberta Flack, Dizzy Gillespie and Tap dancer Bunny Briggs. His original productions have received international recognition (as a writer, choreographer, director, set designer) and include: *Souls The Calah* starring icon Eartha Kitt, *On The Block (After Bearden)* with Dudley Williams, Hope Clark and Loretta Abbott, and *Soulful Noel* with Tony Award winner Jennifer Holliday and Grammy Award winning gospel luminaries Ricky Dillard, Tramaine Hawkins, Dr. Bobby Jones and Donald Lawrence.

In 2014, Walter became the co-founder and Editor-in-Chief of *Out & About NYC* magazine, an entertainment-based publication. Presently he is the director of Dance Of The Village Elders, a dance and fitness program for senior citizens, and an adjunct professor at the College of Staten Island. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from Temple University.

Photos Available: Please contact Jennifer Dudley at jdudley@sichildrensmuseum.org.

About the Staten Island Children's Museum

The Staten Island Children's Museum is located on the grounds of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, 1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301. For information and Museum hours, call 718-273-2060, email info@sichildrensmuseum.org or visit sichildrensmuseum.org.

The Staten Island Children's Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and its operation is made possible, in part, with public funds provided through the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs with support from the Staten Island delegation to the NYC Council. Significant operating support is also provided by the NYS Council on the Arts, Corporations, Foundations, the Trustees and Members.

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