

1950's

The Founding Years

◆ In 1951 CMDE's precursor, The Studio, was created by Shirley Ubell teaching classes in her home in Paramus NJ.



In 1950, Shirley Ubell (right) performs

◆ In 1956 The Studio finds a new home in a rented storefront at 815 Main Street in Hackensack.

1960's

◆ By 1962, The Studio had grown to include over 200 students.

◆ On May 2, 1962, Shirley and husband Earl Ubell co-found The Foundation for Modern Dance Education, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. In 1967 the name was changed to the Center for Modern Dance Education and CMDE was born.



In 1960, The first All Boys Dance Class is formed. Michael Ubell (far right).

◆ In 1963, the first of many branch schools was opened.

◆ In 1968, CMDE adopted the Merry-Go-Rounders, a professional adult company which toured the U.S. to perform for children.

◆ In 1969-1970, CMDE presented a series of performances and master classes: Martha Graham and Jose Limon were highlights.

1970's

◆ In 1970, CMDE purchased a former church building at 84 Euclid Avenue in Hackensack, its present location.

◆ Funds from the Rockefeller Foundation and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts assisted CMDE with the creation of The Repertory Dancers, the first adult modern dance company in New Jersey.



In 1970, José Limón instructs students during a master class series.

◆ CMDE's popular Saturday Workshops, in which children choreograph for children, were presented on television.

◆ In the late 1970s, CMDE received federal CETA funds to run a full-time dance-theater company, BODTY, for one year.

1980's



In 1980's, CMDE is on the forefront of providing quality Mommy & Me classes

◆ The first "Danceathon" took place in 1983, initiating an annual event.



Shirley Ubell teaching a children's class in the 1980s

◆ In the late 1980s, Shirley Ubell receives her Master of Science in Movement Therapy from Hunter College, and CMDE begins the "Learning Through The Arts" program for people with disabilities.

◆ CMDE celebrates its 25th Anniversary in 1987. A New York Times article recognizes the Center's impact on the modern dance world.

◆ CMDE made its last mortgage payment in 1989, and celebrated with a "Burn The Mortgage Cabaret."

1990's

◆ At the start of the decade, CMDE received a HUD grant to renovate its building to make its building wheelchair-accessible.

◆ The "Community Arts For Youth At-Risk" program - later renamed the "Moving Into Knowledge" program - is formally initiated in the mid-90s, with funds from the state.

◆ In 1996 Shirley Ubell is celebrated in an article in Dance Magazine as a master teacher.

◆ The Moving Experience Dance Company for teens and young adults with disabilities was created in the late 1990s. Funds from Bergen County helped make the program possible.

◆ Funders by this point have included the Greentree Foundation, JP Morgan, Lipton/Unilever, The Puffin

Foundation, 21st Century Children's Fund, FleetBoston, and United Way of Bergen County.



In 1990's, Children Musical Theatre Workshops begin

2000's

◆ CMDE receives its first grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for the Open Door Dance Project, beginning a series of collaborative events targeting underserved populations.

◆ The African performance company The Seventh Principle, and Raqs LaMajali World Fusion Dance Experience, both begin their ongoing partnerships with CMDE.

◆ In 2002 the piece "It's About Time," created by Claire Porter for dancers Irving Burton, Stuart Hodes,



CMDE (The Studio)

Alice Tierstein, and Shirley Ubell, all over 70 years old, is featured in Dance Magazine.

◆ In 2006 the Center received a prestigious Citation of Excellence from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and has continued to receive this award every year since.

◆ In its 45th year, CMDE hosted the acclaimed Philadelphia-based Hip-Hop Company, Rennie Harris Pure Movement, in a performance with performer Claire Porter, the Seventh Principle Performance Company, and the CMDE Repertory Company at the Park Performing Arts Center in Union City.

◆ In 2009, CMDE is one of only nine organizations in New Jersey, and the only dance organization in the state, to receive a highly competitive American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant directly from the National Endowment for the Arts, in the amount of \$20,000.



In 2006, Rennie Harris PureMovement performs at the 6th Annual Open Door Dance Concert. Continuing the tradition of bringing contemporary choreographers to new audiences

◆ In 2009, CMDE is featured in a Dance Studio Life magazine article, titled "Bringing Modern to the Masses".

◆ CMDE collaborating organizations in the 1990s and 2000s included the Park Performing Arts Center in Union City NJ, with dance company Fusion Tango; the Hackensack Riverkeeper and Ringwood Manor, on outside performance projects; the Lillian Booth Actors' Fund Home, with older adults; Gilda's Club Northern New Jersey, for people living with cancer; the Somerset Office for the Aging; the Bergen County Office for Children; and many local schools, libraries, recreation centers, senior centers, disability-service groups, and youth facilities including pre-adoptive facilities.

◆ Funding during the 21st Century has included the National Endow-

ment for the Arts, Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the New Jersey Cultural Trust, The Dana Foundation, the



River of Many Bends outdoor performance

Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation, the Hackensack Women's Club, and the Lillian Pitkin Schenck Fund.

2010's

◆ CMDE continues to collaborate with both arts and non-arts organizations, and to support many local artists through the use of its studio space, including dancers and actors from all over the world.

◆ A 2011-2012 "Projects Serving Artists" grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts supports a collaboration with Claire Porter to create "Modern on Modern", an original work grappling with the unanswerable question, "What Is Modern Dance?"

◆ Bergen County awards CMDE a special 50th Anniversary Proclamation in May 2012.

◆ CMDE's 50th Anniversary Year celebration culminates with a Gala Performance on June 16, 2012.



Adult students perform in 2012