Questions for PANEL 1

Panel 1. Navigating notions of Care with Dance.

Moderator: Assoc. Prof Lisa Wilson

Moderator's Introduction

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to this panel discussion titled "Navigating Notions of Care with Dance."

In a world marked by precarity, inequality, and deep social fragmentation, the idea of *care* has re-emerged as a critical framework not only in health and education, but also in the arts. Today, we ask: What does it mean to care: ethically, politically, and creatively, in and through dance?

This panel brings together a diverse group of voices who each engage with care from distinct vantage points: as educators, artists, policy-makers, and cultural entrepreneurs. Together, they will help us think through how care is enacted, negotiated, and sometimes even resisted in dance spaces.

- **Bernice Gordon**, from the Western Cape Education Department, brings a policy and institutional lens. She'll help us consider how care is structured or constrained within formal education systems, and what this means for arts education.
- Otlile Lebelo, a fourth-year student at the University of Cape Town, offers the perspective of an emerging artist navigating training, identity, and community. He voice reminds us of the lived experience of care or its absence in formative spaces.
- **Sifiso Kweyama**, Artistic Director of Jazzart Dance Theatre, speaks from the heart of professional practice. With Jazzart's legacy of social justice and transformation, he brings insight into how care is cultivated or challenged, in company life and leadership.
- And Verushka Pather, an independent, feminist entrepreneur of Khanya Design
 working across (not only) Indian Dance and African inspired design. Verushka invites
 us to think about care as an aesthetic, political, and entrepreneurial act, one that
 crosses disciplines and reimagines community.

We'll begin with a series of tailored questions for each speaker, moving from foundational understandings of care to more complex reflections on peace education and community transformation.

We invite you, the audience, to listen deeply, reflect critically, and join us in imagining how dance might not only move bodies, but also move us toward more caring, peaceful, and just futures.

Let's begin.

Speakers:

Bernice Gordon (WCED), Verushka Pather (Khanya designs), Sifiso Kweyama (Jazzart), Otlile Lebelo (UCT 4th yr. student).

■ Bernice Gordon (Western Cape Education Department – Policy & Institutional Perspective)

- 1. How is the notion of "care" operationalised within education policy particularly in relation to arts and dance education?
- 2. What institutional or systemic boundaries shape how care is enacted in schools and arts programmes?
- 3. How might peace education be integrated into curricula through embodied practices like dance and what challenges or opportunities does this present?

♦ Otlile Lebelo (UCT 4th-Year Student – Emerging Practitioner Perspective)

- 1. As a student and emerging artist, how do you experience care or the lack of it in your training and creative environments?
- 2. What boundaries have you had to negotiate in order to sustain your own well-being and creative integrity?
- 3. How do you imagine dance contributing to peace-building or community care in your generation's future practice?

in Sifiso Kweyama (Director, Jazzart Dance Theatre – Artistic Leadership Perspective)

- 1. How do you cultivate a culture of care within a professional dance company especially one with a strong social justice legacy like Jazzart?
- 2. What tensions arise between artistic excellence, discipline, and care and how do you navigate them?
- 3. In your view, how can dance companies contribute to peace education beyond the studio in communities, schools, or public discourse?

Yerushka Pather (Independent Feminist Entrepreneur – Intersectional & Design Perspective)

- 1. How does your feminist and entrepreneurial approach shape your understanding of care in dance and design?
- 2. What boundaries do you consciously set or challenge in your work to protect both creative freedom and collective well-being?
- 3. How can independent and cross-disciplinary practices foster new models of peace education rooted in care, aesthetics, and activism?

Solution Statement with Q&A Prompt

Thank you to our panellists for these powerful and thought-provoking contributions. We've heard how care: as a practice, a principle, and a politics, moves through education, choreography, leadership, and design.

As we reflect on these insights, we're reminded that care is not just about kindness — it's about accountability, boundaries, and the courage to imagine more just and peaceful ways of being together.

We'd now like to open the floor to you, our audience.

What resonated with you? What questions or provocations would you like to offer our panelists?

Please raise your hand or come forward to the mic, we welcome your voices in this conversation.