

Keeping the Faith – The Prison Project

“...one of the nation’s most innovative (programs) for prison inmates.”

The New York Times

“This is one of the first major accomplishments in my life. This program takes a bunch of convicts and allows us to be productive, socially accepted, figures of pride.

-- Participant, *Keeping the Faith*

What is Keeping the Faith – the Prison Project?

Keeping the Faith—the Prison Project (non-religious) is an arts residency program designed to enable incarcerated women and girls to discover a sense of identity within themselves and to develop that identity within the context of community - through the vehicles of performance, video documentation and a published anthology of their writings. The Pat Graney Company has conducted this three-month program of movement, writing, and visual art at the Washington Corrections Center for Women and Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women for the past twenty years. Each year, the program culminates in performance where the participating women perform their own movement and writing, and display their own visual art for members of the general public as well as for over 300 of their incarcerated peers, and prison staff. *Keeping the Faith* creates a rare forum for cultural development among incarcerated women by facilitating the exploration and expression of both individual and collective identity.

Keeping the Faith National Model, which expands the Washington-based residency to reach incarcerated women nationally has been in operation since 2000. The National Model is a multi-year program where incarcerated women participate in a condensed, two-week version of the Keeping the Faith residency outlined above. In addition to working with the incarcerated population, the Keeping the Faith Artist Team assists local artists in creating their own version of KTF, thereby encouraging the continuity of programming in each locale. KTF has been a model for 3 other national programs; Inside/Outside in Cincinnati, and The Journey Home in Phoenix and ArtSpring in Florida. An international residency of KTF took place in Dublin, Ireland at Mount Joy Prison (the Dochas Centre) in 2004.

‘**Keeping the Faith**’ teaches participants that they are of value and that they can contribute to something of beauty. After discussions with the Volunteer Coordinator at Washington Corrections Center for Women, we were informed that the percentage of inmates who re-offend after having completed *Keeping the Faith* is roughly 9%, a serious reduction from the normal rate of about 46%. These numbers speak directly to the success of the program.

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Pat Graney C O M P A N Y

It has been proven, through diligent, time-consuming hard work over a period of the last twenty years, that sustainable arts programming is and can become part of the prison environment. It leads to reduced recidivism, creates opportunities for inmates to interface with members of the general public as more than the sum of their criminal parts, and has created a sense of flexibility within the corrections system that is producing long-term, sustainable results for both inmates and institutions.

What is the Pat Graney Company? The Pat Graney Company is a non-profit organization that makes its home in Seattle, Washington. Led by nationally-celebrated choreographer Pat Graney, the company tours both nationally and internationally, and has recently received praise in the Seattle Times, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and the Village Voice. Ms. Graney received Choreography Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts for 11 consecutive years, as well as from Artist Trust, the NEA International Program, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Ms. Graney is also the recipient of both a US Artists Award and an Alpert Award in Dance/Choreography in 2008. In 2011, Ms. Graney was chosen to receive an ‘Arts Innovator’ Award from Artist Trust and the Chihuly Foundation. In 2013, Ms. Graney was chosen as one of 20 Americans to receive the prestigious Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. Half of the resources of the Pat Graney Company are dedicated to the **Keeping the Faith Program**.

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