

MY STATEMENT

By Pearl Primus

My career has been a quest...a search for roots. The journey has taken me deep into the cultures of many people in many countries of the world.

Dance has been my vehicle. Dance has been my language, my strength. In the dance I have confided my most secret thoughts and shared the inner music of all mankind. I have danced across mountains and deserts, ancient rivers and oceans and slipped through the boundaries of time and space.

Dance has been my freedom and my world. It has enabled me to go around, scale, bore through, batter down or ignore visible and invisible social and economic walls.

Dance is my medicine. It is the scream which eases for a while the terrible frustrations common to all human beings who, because of race, creed, or color are "invisible." Dance is the fist with which I fight the sickening ignorance of prejudice. It is the veiled contempt I feel for those who patronize with false smiles, handouts, empty promises, insincere compliments. Instead of growing twisted like a gnarled tree inside myself, I am able to dance out my anger and my tears.

Dance has been my teacher, ever patiently revealing to me the dignity, beauty and strength in the cultural heritage of my people as a vital part of the great heritage of *all* mankind.

I dance not to entertain but to help people better understand each other. Because through dance I have experienced the wordless joy of freedom, I see it more fully for *all* people everywhere.

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