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**CHRP CELEBRATES *RHYTHM WORLD*'s 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY,  
LAUNCHES THE INAUGURAL AMERICAN TAP CONSERVATORY  
JUNE 15 - JULY 26**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Rhythm World, the cradle of the global tap festival network, will celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an unparalleled exposition of American tap dance in concerts, classes and community June 15 – July 26 at multiple venues around Chicago. As a part of this milestone anniversary, CHRP will launch the American Tap Conservatory, a five week immersion program for emerging professionals led by the next generation of choreographers.

Rhythm World, the oldest, largest and most comprehensive festival of American tap in the world, will feature more than 400 hours of education programs and 10 unique performance events featuring more than 150 performing artists in a perennial gathering of global tap virtuosos, students and community members. CHRP and Rhythm World continue to be principal drivers in the movement to establish American tap as an equal to French ballet and German contemporary dance by making sustained, economic investments in and advocating for people and communities of rhythm.

The preeminent education and performance festival dedicated to American tap, Rhythm World 30 will take place in multiple venues in the Loop and South Loop including CHRP's dance space/incubator, the American Rhythm Center, the historic Jazz Showcase, Navy Pier's Polk Bros Performance Lawns Lake Stage, the Fine Arts Building's Curtiss Hall and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago's Edlis Neeson Theater.

Directed by CHRP Founder and Director, Lane Alexander, this perennial summer festival features world renowned performers, choreographers and teachers who have led and transformed the field of American tap for five decades including the Ella Fitzgerald of tap – Dianne "Lady Di" Walker; the Glenn Gould of tap, Sam Weber; Founder and Artistic Director of *Rhapsody in Tap*, Linda Sohl Ellison; Outer Critics Circle and Emmy Award winner, Broadway star, Ted Louis Levy; Chicago masters, Alexander, Martin "Tre" Dumas and Jumaane Taylor; international visionaries Dani Borak, Charles Renato and Salvo Russo; and cutting edge innovators like Tristan Bruns, Star Dixon, Jason Janas and Demi Remick among others.



Rhythm World's education programs attract hundreds of students from around the globe and will include the American Tap Conservatory (June 15 – July 19); four days of courses, the 19th Annual Youth Tap Ensemble Conference, a comprehensive Teacher Certification program, the YOUTH Tap program (July 20 – 23); and, workshops and master classes (July 24 – 26).

### New This Year

The American Tap Conservatory will train a cohort of 25 pre- and emerging professionals who will immerse themselves in technique, repertory development, hand percussion, improvisation, business administration, writing and history - culminating in the performance of six world premieres July 19. These movement/rhythmic compositions will be created by the next generation of visionary choreographers including Daniel Borak, Star Dixon, Jason Janas, Charles Renato, Demi Remick and Cartier Williams.

As a part of the American Tap Conservatory, CHRP will present "Authors and Authorities", a series of free, public lectures by tap history experts with live demonstrations by ATC students. Authors to date include:

- Constance Valis Hill, author of *Brotherhood in Rhythm: The Jazz Tap Dancing of the Nicholas Brothers*; *Tap Dancing America: A Cultural History*; and the 3500-record *Tap Dance in America: A Twentieth-Century Performance Chronology of Tap Dance on Stage, Film, and Media*, donated to the Library of Congress
- Brian Seibert, author of *What the Eye Hears: A History of Tap Dancing* and New York Times dance critic
- Rusty Frank, author of *TAP! The Greatest Tap Dance Stars and Their Stories 1900-1955*, documentary producer and master teacher/performer
- Additional speakers to be announced.

### Other Highlights

- The US Premiere of Italian master body percussionist, Salvo Russo
- World Premiere of Martin "Tre" Dumas' *Selah Vie*
- Chicago premiere of Davon Suttle's *Melanized*
- Excerpts of TapMan Productions *What It's Like to be Human* and M.A.D.D. Rhythms *A Journey of the Dance Through Music*, directed by Star Dixon
- World Premieres of five new works created for the American Tap Conservatory by Charles Renato, Demi Remick, Star Dixon, Jason Janas and Cartier Williams
- Re-staging of award winning works by Lane Alexander (*Prisms*) and Michelle Dorrance (*Push Past Break*)



Concerts and public events will feature three generations of tap masters performing improvisation, traditional, classical, long-form repertory and post-modern works.

**Sunday, July 19, 7:00pm, Venue to be announced**

American Tap Conservatory repertory showcase featuring 5 – 7 world premieres learned throughout the 5-week program.

**Monday, July 20, 7:30pm, Jazz Showcase, 806 S. Plymouth Court.**

Virtuoso performers from the concert, Broadway and commercial stages come together to kick off the 29th annual Rhythm World Festival at the historic Jazz Showcase. This annual opening night event will feature some of the world's most celebrated hoofers and improvisers including Ted Louis Levy, Tre Dumas, Star Dixon, Jason Janas, Sean Kaminski, Demi Remick, Cartier Williams, special guests from Tokyo's renowned, *ArtN' Tap* and young prodigies alongside the renowned Eric Hochberg Trio.

**Tuesday, July 21, 7:30pm, Curtiss Hall**

Tuesday night will feature one of hoofers' most time honored traditions, the "Cutting Contest." The Cutting Contest is an improvisation tournament that begins with 16 contestants who pair off, trade phrases and are judged on the basis of timing, rhythmic composition, style, phrasing, structure and difficulty. The last contestant "standing" wins a \$1000 scholarship to Rhythm World 31 in 2021.

**Wednesday, July 22, 7:30pm, Navy Pier Polk Bros Lawn, Lake Stage**

Southern California's *Reverb Tap Company* will be joined by pre-professional Youth Tap Ensembles from across the US, Canada, South America and Asia alongside a mix of curated student works followed by the spectacular Navy Pier Fireworks display. This event is free and open to the public.

**Thursday, July 23, 7:30pm, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Edlis Neeson Theater**

**JUBALEE! Gala**

Chicago Human Rhythm Project will honor community leaders and philanthropists, Paul Levy and Mia Park for their extraordinary service to the Chicago cultural community with its annual JUBA! Award. A pre-concert reception will be followed by a performance featuring Italian body-percussionist, Salvo Russo; the Swiss and American duo Daniel Borak and Cartier Williams; CHRP's very own performance collective, Stone Soup Rhythms; an extraordinary collaboration between Dianne Walker, Sam Weber and Yukiko Misumi; the world premiere of Tre Dumas' *Selah Vie* and the presentation of the JUBA! Award.

**Friday, July 24, 7:30pm, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Edlis Neeson Theater**

**JUBA! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance I**

Friday night's concert will feature the works of the celebrated North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble, tap and music pioneers, Linda Sohl Ellison and Monti Ellison; tap virtuoso Jason Janas; Broadway star and Chicago native, Ted Louis Levy; and an excerpt of Star Dixon's new show for M.A.D.D. Rhythms, *A Journey of the Dance Through Music*.



**Saturday, July 25, 7:30pm, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago**

JUBA! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance II

The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary festival will close with a trio of long-form works representing the three decades of ground shaking creation and performance. The evening will feature the latest iteration Tristan Bruns' ever evolving *What It's Like to be Human*; CHRP's performance collective, Stone Soup Rhythms performing award Chicago Dancemakers Award and Princess Grace Choreography Award winning dances by Lane Alexander and Michelle Dorrance and another work to be determined; and the Chicago Premiere of Davon Suttles newest work, *Melanized*.

**Tap Scholar Awards**

Each year, CHRP awards at least \$10,000.00 in scholarships to deserving, talented teens so they may participate in Rhythm World's immersion programs. "These scholarships support CHRP's mission to build community by bringing together students from different backgrounds and places to meet their local and international peers and study with great and emerging masters," said Lane Alexander, CHRP's Co-founder and Director

Established in 1995 to honor the life of CHRP Co-Founder Kelly Michaels, the Rhythm World Tap Scholar Award program has provided more than \$350,000 in financial aid to more than 300 talented, deserving young dancers from Chicago and throughout the United States as well as international exchange students.

**To register for classes or to purchase tickets to performances, visit: [www.chicagotap.org](http://www.chicagotap.org)**

**Or call 312-542-CHRP (2477) or write to [registration@chicagotap.org](mailto:registration@chicagotap.org).**

**Funding**

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## Chicago Human Rhythm Project

The Chicago Human Rhythm Project (CHRP) has helped to foster the revival of American tap dance the globe. Through its leadership for three decades, CHRP has helped to support new tap organizations throughout North and South America, Europe and Asia. CHRP presents the oldest and largest annual festival of American tap and percussive dance in the world—Rhythm World—and has expanded through community outreach, ongoing education programs in public elementary and high schools, commissions of new work, innovative conferences for the field and a commitment to social reconciliation and local investment. CHRP led the development of Chicago’s shared dance/arts space, the American Rhythm Center, which offers daily dance classes for children, teens, adults and seniors and functions as a social enterprise and business development incubator for independent artists and small companies.

For nearly 30 years, CHRP has educated and performed globally for millions of people; received an Emmy Award nomination, as well as national airings, for *JUBA! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance*, which was co-produced with ITVS and WTTW/Channel 11; earned an NEA American Masterpieces grant administered by the Illinois Arts Council Agency; curated the first full-length tap concert in any of the Kennedy Center’s three largest theaters for a sold-out audience of 1,100 in the Eisenhower Theater; provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in tap dance scholarships to more than 400 deserving, talented teens; and, most recently, led a collaborative effort to establish a shared dance/arts space in the center of the Chicago Cultural Mile: the American Rhythm Center (ARC). CHRP’s vision is to establish the first global center for American tap and percussive arts, which will create a complete ecosystem of education, performance, creation and community in a state-of-the-art facility uniting generations of diverse artists and the general public. For information, visit [chicagotap.org](http://chicagotap.org).



Founded in 1988, **Chicago Human Rhythm Project** empowers artists and communities to express culture and identity through rhythm and percussive arts. Through the production of inspiring performances, education programs, and innovative business models for artistic collaboration, CHRP catalyzes diverse communities to foster social reconciliation and economic sustainability through rhythm.



The **AMERICAN RHYTHM CENTER** is a collaborative space for sustainable development that provides diverse classes for the general public and business development services to independent artists and small to mid-sized companies.



**STOMPING GROUNDS** is a 10-week, City wide performance and education festival featuring Chicago-based, percussive dance/arts companies in community cultural centers, elementary and high schools and many of Chicago's finest performing arts venues like the Harris Theater, the Auditorium Theatre and the Pritzker Pavilion.



**RHYTHM WORLD** is the oldest and largest festival of American tap dance in the world. Presented annually in July and August, Rhythm World brings together students from around the globe to study with the greatest living masters of the art form and to enjoy nightly performances by students and masters alike. Recognized internationally as the "mother ship" of American tap, Rhythm World has helped to develop a global culture of more than 70 festivals in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia and South America.



Our innovative youth education programs, **WE ALL GOT RHYTHM**, have provided high caliber arts experiences for more than 24 years benefiting hundreds of thousands of Chicago elementary and high school students. Since 2004, CHRP has deepened its commitment to youth education through partnerships with many public schools and community organizations and programs with ignition, engagement and immersion programs delivering lecture demonstrations and master classes, multi-week residencies and intensive scholarship programs that change lives and strengthen our community.



**STONE SOUP RHYTHMS** is our project-based, percussive arts collective that creates new work, supports the highest level of rhythmic expression and represents Chicago Human Rhythm Project throughout the region, nation and world.