

For Immediate Release:
May 13, 2019

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**CHICAGO HUMAN RHYTHM PROJECT'S 30th ANNIVERSARY
to feature
5th ANNUAL STOMPING GROUNDS GRAND FINALE
May 31 AT THE HARRIS THEATER**

The Grand Finale Performance will Feature Several World Premieres by Six Chicago-based Percussive Dance Companies, and will Honor Six Women of Rhythm with Pre- and Post-performance Receptions

CHICAGO – **Chicago Human Rhythm Project's** (CHRP) 5th Annual Stomping Grounds festival will culminate with a Grand Finale concert featuring CHRP's Stone Soup Rhythms, Natya Dance Theatre, Muntu Dance Theatre, Trinity Irish Dance Company and Trinity Irish Dance Ensemble, Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater and the Mexican Folk Dance Company performing world premieres and celebrated repertory works on Friday, May 31 at 7:30 p.m. at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance (205 E Randolph St). Rooted in the ancient and contemporary arts of percussive dance, the Grand Finale will also honor the Free For All Fund at The Chicago Community Trust and the women who have led and supported percussive dance in Chicago: Pamela Crutchfield (CHRP), Amaniyea Payne (Muntu), Hema Rajagopalan (Natya), Dame Libby Komaiko (in memoria, Ensemble Español), Kim Niewiedzial (Trinity) and Matie M. Ovalle (Mexican Folk Dance Company). The brainchild of CHRP Founder and Director, Lane Alexander, Stomping Grounds is a collaborative effort that simultaneously celebrates cultural pluralism and the "common ground" through American tap, Irish step dancing, African dance, Indian Bharatanatyam, Mexican folk and indigenous dances and Spanish flamenco by world class ensembles. This year's entire festival is dedicated to the memory of Dame Libby Komaiko, the Founder and Artistic Director of Ensemble Español.

"We all speak in rhythm . . . different dialects . . . but completely understandable to each other, Human Rhythm Project has always focused on growing the conversation and connections between individuals and communities by using the universal 'tongue' of rhythm," said Lane Alexander. "It's more important now than ever to focus energy on what we share in common and to celebrate diversity while recognizing the universality of our underlying similarities."

"Lane's vision has always been 'bringing the world together through rhythm'. Chicago consists of many rich ethnic cultures existing in isolated pockets," said Elaine Cohen Rubin, former CHRP board chair. "Stomping Grounds brings all those pockets together by sharing each of their cultures through rhythm, so all can enjoy, understand, appreciate, and become one."

"STOMPING GROUNDS literally shakes the earth it dances on. We are proud to support this program that showcases Chicago's wide spectrum of percussive dance at its highest expression, in neighborhoods throughout Chicago at no charge," says a member of the Chicago Free For All Fund. "Here's a program that does what few others do -- supports Chicago artists who have honed an art form to its highest level

and then brings it directly to the people where they live.” — FREE FOR ALL FUND at The Chicago Community Trust

Tickets to the Stomping Grounds Festival’s Grand Finale range from \$15 to \$65 and can be purchased at harristheaterchicago.org or by calling the Harris Theater Box Office at (312) 334-7777. Tickets to the pre- and post-performance Pearl Receptions range from \$125 to \$250 and can be purchased at Eventbrite.com or by calling Chicago Human Rhythm Project at (312) 542-2477. For more information on Chicago Human Rhythm Project and the Stomping Grounds Festival, please visit chicagotap.org.

Positioned at the forefront of the percussive dance movement, [Chicago Human Rhythm Project’s](http://chicagohumanrhythmproject.org) 30-year run has impacted audiences, students, artists and the dance field in Chicago and across the globe, shaping and redefining how the world approaches the art of percussive dance presentation, education and development. Now in its fifth year, CHRP’s collaborative Stomping Grounds Festival is the largest percussive dance festival in the United States and features many of Chicago’s world renowned and most celebrated foot drummers.

Running from March 18 to May 31, Stomping Grounds featured free and affordable performances throughout the city at venues including the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago Cultural Center, Beverly Arts Center, DuSable Museum of African American History, National Museum of Mexican Art, Irish American Heritage Center, Garfield Park Conservatory, Caruthers Center and Links Hall.

About the Free For All Fund

The CHICAGO FREE FOR ALL FUND supports free public arts and culture events in the City of Chicago.

About Pamela Crutchfield

Pamela Crutchfield is a passionate and active member of the Chicago dance community. She is co-founder of DanceWorks Chicago, a small company devoted to the professional development of young dancers and choreographers. Pam received the prestigious Ruth Page Award in 2009 and is also a recipient of the Friends of River North Dance Chicago Company award. She has been a volunteer in the Ann Barzel Dance Collection at the Newberry Library. Pam made the lead gift which catalyzed fundraising for Chicago Human Rhythm Project’s shared dance/arts space – the American Rhythm Center – and has provided major support for CHRP’s Artist in Residence, Dani Borak. Pam has underwritten the creation of new choreography for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street 2, River North Chicago Dance Company, Giordano Dance Chicago, Luna Negra Dance Theater, DanceWorks Chicago, Lucky Plush Productions, Visceral Dance Chicago and Lar Lubovitch Dance New York. She is on the advisory board of numerous dance companies and served on the Hubbard Street Dance Chicago board for four years. Additionally, she served as a director for Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance. In 2010, Pam was an honoree of the Arts & Business Council of Chicago’s 25th Anniversary Celebration. In 2011, she served as one of the Victory Garden Theater’s playwrights at their annual Chicago Stories gala. In 2012, Pam was awarded the Luna De Honor for her dedication to the artists of Luna Negra Dance Theater. Most recently, she received the 2017 Distinguished Service to the Dance Field Award in recognition of her outstanding philanthropic leadership from SeeChicagoDance. She received the Champion of Dance award from Dance/USA, and she established the Pam Crutchfield Dance Fund that has resulted in support for numerous commissions of new dance pieces at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. She has been a board member at the Old Town School of Folk Music and Free Street Theater. She is a graduate of DePaul University.

About Chicago Human Rhythm Project

Now in its 30th year, Chicago Human Rhythm Project (CHRP) has helped to foster the revival of American tap dance in Chicago, the USA and the world. Through its leadership for three decades, CHRP has helped to support new tap organizations throughout North and South America, Europe and Asia. CHRP presents Rhythm World, the oldest and largest annual festival of American tap and percussive dance, 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 audiences with generations of diverse artists. For information, visit chicagotap.org.

Chicago Human Rhythm Project's STOMPING GROUNDS 2019 is made possible by support from the Reva and David Logan Foundation, The Chicago Free for All Fund at the Chicago Community Trust, The Field Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events for the City of Chicago, US Bank, Bank Leumi and the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest. Seed funding for STOMPING GROUNDS was provided by Engaging Dance Audiences, a program of Dance/USA funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Presenting partners include the Beverly Arts Center, the Chicago Cultural Center, the DuSable Museum of African American History, Garfield Park Conservatory, the Irish American Heritage Center, the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Millennium Park, the National Museum of Mexican Art.

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