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TAP

a publication of **THE INTERNATIONAL TAP ASSOCIATION**



Passin' it On

with Ernest "Brownie" Brown and Reggio McLaughlin

winter • 2005 • volume 16 • number 3



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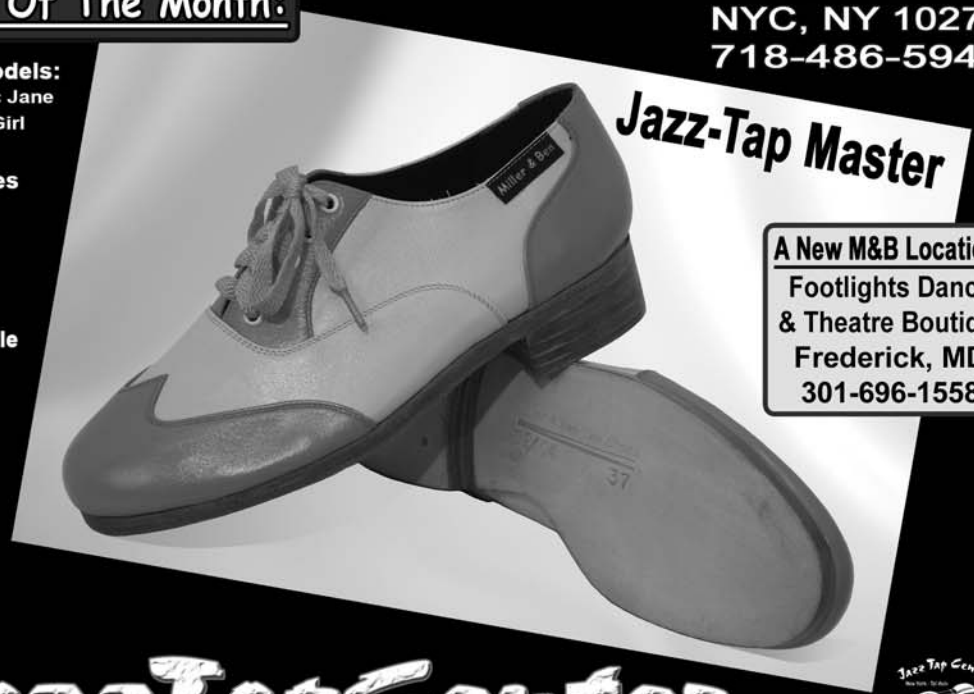
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Joseph Wiggan. See page 52 for details.

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* Health Tips will return next issue

www.tapdance.org

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All questions about membership and advertising sales and all submissions of letters to the editor, articles, news, and calendar items can be sent to ita@tapdance.org or by mail to *On Tap*, c/o ITA, PO Box 356, Boulder, CO 80306, USA. You may also contact us by phone (303.443.7989), fax (303.443.7992) or by visiting our Web site at www.tapdance.org.

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COVER: Ernest “Brownie” Brown and Reggio McLaughlin. Photo by John Sundöf

behind the scenes

THE INTERNATIONAL TAP ASSOCIATION

Transitions: Trading Eights

Thanks to the wonderful people who have helped us and to the new people coming our way. Heather Balogh, assistant editor for *On Tap*, is leaving to be with her significant other who has a new position at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. They will travel the world checking carbon data. We thank her and wish her well (and wish we could go with her)!

Welcome to Jenai Cutcher, our new assistant editor, thanks to recommendations from Lynn Dally, co-founder of Jazz Tap Ensemble, and Elizabeth Zimmer, senior editor (dance) for the *Village Voice*. Jenai graduated *summa cum laude* from Ohio State University with a major in English and a minor in Dance/Theater. Currently based in New York, she is a tap dancer and freelance writer and editor, and has authored two nonfiction children's books: *Gotta Dance: The Rhythms of Tap and Jazz*, and *Feel the Beat: Dancing in Music Videos*.

Allison Penner, our terrific membership director for nearly a year, has gone on to follow her dreams of finding full-time employment with a large institution, while completing a Master of Nonprofit Management degree from Regis College in Denver. She did a fabulous job building on the important work that Jean Anhalt began. Allison developed much-needed administrative structures, and began strengthening and expanding our new rep system through conference calls, a rep newsletter, the rep spotlight column in *On Tap*, and membership recruitment incentives, among other initiatives. Thanks to her hard work and that of the reps, the ITA's membership grew by more than 150 new members during her tenure. The sadness of her leaving is eased by our delight that she will be joining the ITA's board, so that we will be able to continue working with her in the future. Many thanks for her efforts at growing the ITA!

We are thrilled to announce that we have hired two new part-time staff members—both tap dancers. Erica J. Boyce, our new membership director, has a strong background in analytic thinking, project and personnel management, business development, grant writing, and budget monitoring. During the past eight years, she has been involved with program evaluation activities within the social sciences field, most recently as a senior research associate for OMNI Research and Training. With a passion for dancing since an early age, she has studied tap for the past 14 years, currently under Gene GeBauer.



Erica Boyce

Truman Bradley, the ITA's first development associate, is an avid dancer with experience in fundraising, public relations, and marketing. As a development professional, he has worked for clients including the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, John Hopkins University, Williams College, and SUNY Oswego. A competition swing dancer and instructor, he is the director of operations for 23 Skidoo!, which under his guidance has quickly become one of the nation's most recognized swing dance performance teams. He has studied tap for the past six months.



Truman Bradley and Danielle Hatley.

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Presents!

For Now: Thanks to all of you who have so generously contributed to our fiscal year-end fund drive. We will list all our contributor's names in the next issue of *On Tap*, after the drive is completed. As you can imagine, we are eager to raise money to bring our new staff people on full-time to maintain and expand our programs to serve you better, our members, and the growth of tap worldwide. We are deeply grateful for your help.

For the Holidays: Lost for ideas on what to give your friends and relatives? As we enter the holiday season, check out the articles, ads, and calendar section of this issue of *On Tap* for books, videos, CDs, classes, or performances you could give to your beloveds. Or, for a life-transforming experience, think of giving gift certificates for a special coaching session with a nationally known artist, or for classes at your local tap studio or one of the many Tap Day celebrations or festivals now held worldwide (see *On Tap*, vol. 15, nos. 5 and 6 for ideas, or email us here at the ITA for contact information). Or give them a membership to the ITA (see our holiday ad on page 13).

Wherever these next months find you, keep the rhythms of tap flowing and celebrate with great gratitude our loving lives in tap.

Happy holidays!

—Marda Kirn, Director

On Tap welcomes your comments, questions, and diverse points of view. Letters/email to the editor must be no more than 600 words and are subject to editing. Queries (and responses) are also welcome. Please include your name, full address, daytime telephone number, and email address so we can contact you if we have questions. No anonymous submissions will be published. Queries will include published email addresses to facilitate dialog.

Letters/email may be submitted to the editor at meow@sprintmail.com; queries may be submitted by email to ontapsubmissions@gmail.com or by snail mail to ITA Letters, PO Box 356, Boulder, CO 80306, USA.

letters & queries



A Thank You from Phil Black and Barbara Kossen

Phil and I want to thank you and everyone involved in the making of the gorgeous article in the last issue of *On Tap* (vol. 16, no. 2). We are so thrilled. All the teachers here at Broadway Dance Center and so many friends just can't get over it. It was done so beautifully. Please let people know that if they would like Phil and I to teach a class or to coach them, they can call me at the Broadway Dance Center at 212.582.9304, ext. 81.

Also, so you know, all the hoofers—Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown, Honi Coles, etc.—used to go to Phil's old studio to work out. Thank Jimmy for his good wishes. We love him too. Looking forward to meeting you all in the near future.

Best wishes,

—Phil Black and Barbara Kossen, New York City, USA

Jane Goldberg: April in Paris

Ed. Note: This email from Jane Goldberg to Steven Harper was originally written in response to a question that he posed to Sarah Petronio in our Closing the Gap series (On Tap, vol. 16, no. 1). During the interview, he asks Petronio what Goldberg was doing in Paris, and Petronio responds, "I don't know." Goldberg contacted Harper to give him the reason, and we reprint it here, with additional clarification from Goldberg, because we think the history may be of interest to On Tap readers.

Steven, in answer to your question to Sarah Petronio in your very well-written interview with her, I was in Paris because I wanted to be in Paris in April, which is when I got there. April 1 to be exact. 1984. And I stayed a whole month in a hotel across from the Louvre. (Never got to the Louvre!) I had never been to Paris before.

I had just done my first European tour with Changing Times Tap (my company at the time), which consisted of Buster Brown, Leon Collins, Harold Cromer, Marion Coles (Honi's dancing wife), Sarah Safford, Beverly Wasser (now Rolfmeir, the former ITA rep in Philadelphia), myself, Jim Roberts on piano, and Montego Jo on drums. In addition, I hired a few Viennese musicians to round out the band. Gunther Brunner, a terrific presenter from Vienna had seen my show *The Depression's Back and So Is Tap* in New York City at the time, and he booked my company. We were presented in Vienna in a "new dance" festival, which was very, very exciting, because, as you know, tap is often relegated to nostalgia or something not really "new."

A tap dancer/advertising exec. had come from Germany to see the show, and she got me a few gigs in Germany, in Dusseldorf, and Köln [Cologne]. I also met Carnell Lyons on that trip and taught for his students in Berlin (at that time, West Berlin). I then went to Paris, where the great soprano sax player Steve Lacy lived, and he and I played together. I had heard him play solo at Environ, a loft in Soho when the "loft jazz" movement was really big, and he made me realize the power of the soloist, with what he could do with his horn. He was on the soprano sax before Coltrane! (Steve Lacy died last year of cancer.) I wrote up our experience later in *The Village Voice* under



The Depression's Back and So Is Tap. (l to r) Beverly Rolfmeir holding t-shirt, Cookie Cook, Jane Goldberg, Sarah Safford (on floor) getting ready for Vienna, 1984

the headline "Tap for Your Torte." I had a great editor at the time, Burt Supree, who took risks and ran a lot of tap features. Burt loved tap and covered it himself.

Working with Lacy was a true highlight of my tap life. I was turning somersaults puzzling over "free jazz" charts—you name it—and he said some really interesting things about tap dancing, such as his problem with tap dancers not being able to "turn off the tap" when they were dancing, and still moving. He was truly an experimentalist, an ex-pat, a monk disciple, and expert. Have you ever heard his music? He inspired me so much as a tap dancer.

Anyway, I went to see Sarah as well, because Sarah was "the name" in tap in Paris. She took me to the "baths" too, in the old Jewish section, which was a lot of fun, and Passover dinner was great. Not too many [people in the American tap family] had met her yet. Also, she loved the tape I had of *By Word of Foot*. She called it a real gift. She was familiar with Slyde but not the 17 others I had on tape, I don't think.

I also looked up a few agents, one of whom was very avant garde and handled Robert Wilson and Philip Glass in Europe. This agent, Benedicte Pesle, was a real grande dame. She loved the tape of the old masters and almost took me on, but couldn't chance it. So I was making the rounds, gaining back all the weight I lost eating that good European dark chocolate.

Yours in the Brazilian sun,
Jane (Goldberg)



ITA members as of March, 2005. Map created by Dave Gura, dandguru@yahoo.com

Tap Festival and Events Coordinators Beware!

On Tap received a very disturbing letter from one of our Asian members who wishes to remain anonymous, but who wanted to share her story. Apparently, a person foreign to her country contacted our member and asked her to provide her with a visa so that she could participate in a tap intensive being offered. Dutifully, and believing in the goodness of tappers everywhere, our member helped to acquire the visa for this woman—who then never attended the festival or contacted our member. Instead, this person used the visa (illegally) to gain entrance (legally) into our member's country. We report this event with great sadness, but we feel obligated to communicate some of the dangers that exist even in our tap world. Please heed this warning.

—Cat Ohala, On Tap, Boulder, CO, USA

A Bill Robinson CD!

Recently on the Internet, I found a CD with Bill Robinson tap dancing, and I was surprised to find out that it came out just last year from HEP Records in Ireland. The CD is called *Doin' the New Low Down*, and it features Don Redman's orchestra playing current hits in 1932. One track has "Bojangles" singing and tapping to the title song, "Doin' the New Low Down." He sings the lyrics (by Dorothy Fields) and then he taps for several choruses, including a couple with stop time. He only appears on this one track.

The recording was made four years after *Blackbirds of 1928* was a hit on Broadway, but Robinson obviously remembers well the lyrics and the routine. Back in those days, tap dancing to the new jazzy music was the big new thing on Broadway, and before long it would spread via Hollywood and national magazines to the rest of the country.

I found the CD at www.cduniverse.com. On the Web site, you have to search for Don Redman—not Bill Robinson (who hardly

gets a credit!). If you are in Europe, try logging on to www.hep-jazz.com. If you are a tap history buff, I think you will enjoy this.

—Jack Cobb, Arlington, Virginia, USA

Tap CD Treasures

I have some info on two fabulous tap dancing CDs. They are difficult to locate, but are well worth the effort if you can get your hands on them.

Tap Dancing—Harlem—Broadway—Hollywood was made in France (I believe) because the jacket has everything in both French and English. However, I purchased it from someone in the UK. It has 24 cuts of singing and tap dancing with Bill Robinson; Buddy Rich; The Nicholas Brothers; Cora LaRedd; The Four Step Brothers; Tip, Tap, and Toe; John Bubbles; Slim Gaillard; Ralph Brown; Eleanor Brown; Fred Astaire; Gene Kelly; and Donald O'Connor.

To get a hold of this CD, go to Sagajazz.com, the English version, and search for "Sagajazz Label." When you place your order, the Web site will take you to UKTowerrecords.com.

On this site, I found another CD called *Sounds of Tap Dance—The Various Artists*, featuring Jimmy Slyde, Chuck Green, Baby Laurence, and Bunny Briggs.

Both of these may not be available, but UK Tower Records will try to locate them for you and fill your order. Good luck!

—Kathleen Cirioli, ITA Rep, New Jersey, USA

Searching for a Copy of Tap Finder

I just heard about the International Tap Association at the Tap Jam in Boulder, Colorado. I am thrilled. I am also desperately seeking a very small book called the *Tap Finder* that was published by Gayle Tutterow of Largo, Florida, USA. I would love to buy this if anyone knows anything about how to get it. Thank you so much!

—Cheryl Gibbons, CLGdance@hotmail.com, Denver, Co, USA

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corrections



(l to r) Katherine Hopkins-Nicholas, Fayard Nicholas, and Anne Miller backstage during intermission, 1984. Photo courtesy of Katherine Hopkins-Nicholas.

Print Error

Our profuse apologies go out to Ricky Watson, author of “Tempest or Tranquility,” which appeared in *On Tap* (vol. 16, no. 2, p. 45). The last sentence of his article was cut off during the printing process. We reprint the last paragraph of his piece here, in its entirety:

“That week gave me a lot of inspiration and brought me to this point of reflection. What I ultimately experienced during that time was the feeling of being *aware*—being aware of my surroundings as a tap dancer during the dance (especially dancing in a group) and being aware of what is going on internally—calm or storm?”

Watson currently resides in Berlin, Germany, where he and his tap partner of the duo Zapateo! spread the good word of tap. For more information about his whereabouts, visit www.rickywatson.net.

Katherine Hopkins-Nicholas

Our deep apologies go to Katherine Hopkins-Nicholas. In the last issue of *On Tap* (vol. 16, no. 2), her name was incorrectly stated as Katherine Nicholas. Katherine Hopkins-Nicholas and Fayard Nicholas are available for teaching and performances. For more information, contact the ITA at 303.443.7989 or ita@tapdance.org.



Ricky Watson at the Chameleon. Photo by H. Beiss

spotlight on ita reps

compiled by allison penner and cat ohala

ITA reps are volunteers who support, enhance, and educate their tap communities, and recruit new ITA members. With more than 45 reps on six continents, they play a vital role in the worldwide presence of the ITA. Please see the inside back page of every issue of On Tap for a complete list of reps and their contact information.



BECKY HOAG
COLUMBUS, OHIO, USA

Becky Hoag is the founder/director of Shuffles Productions. She teaches tap classes, is frequently hired as a master teacher/choreographer, and is a judge/teacher for Dance Master's Ohio chapter. Hoag founded and produces an annual tap festival called Columbus Taps! Guest teachers for the festival have included Jimmy Tate, Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, Lynn Schwab, Lane Alexander, Tré Dumas, Nicole Hockenberry, Dianne Walker, and Ayodele Casel. In addition, Hoag directs a performing tap company called The Columbus Tap Project, comprised of very talented teens and young adults. Hoag loves tap—to the point of obsession (as many of us do)—and loves to promote it.

She is thrilled and honored to have been selected to be an ITA rep in Ohio. Her goals are to increase the membership base in Ohio for the ITA, to help studios become more aware of what is going on in the tap world, to keep producing tap events to educate people about tap, and to help keep tap in the limelight. Hoag can be reached at shufflesproductions@wowway.com or www.columbus taps.com.



CHRISTOPHE LIGERON
RENNES, FRANCE

Christophe Ligeron encountered tap dancing when he married tap dance teacher and artist Isabelle Girault. Unbelievable as it sounds, he does not tap dance! However, his commitment to the art form is commendable. Seven years ago he created the nonprofit organization Tap Breizh, organizing various workshops with many international artists and a school (now with four teachers and 130 regular students), and producing the first tap festival in France. He also manages two tap companies (one amateur and one pro—combining two famous jazz musicians, a contemporary dancer, and a tap dancer), three studios, and is currently working on a professional training program for future tap teachers.

Ligeron would like to make the ITA better known in France, not just On Tap, but its other services as well, and to join other ITA reps in discussions and collaborations to help promote tap for all—amateurs and professionals—and to gain support for this art. France has 17 ITA members so far, has no real cohesion among tap dancers, and does not have enough teachers. Ligeron's main goals as an ITA rep are to improve these three areas.



KAREN RUBIO
FOREST PARK, ILLINOIS, USA

In December 2004, tap enthusiast Karen Rubio became an ITA representative for the Chicago area in Illinois. Rubio has always been involved with tap via the studios her kids attended and the companies they've performed in; she's even thinking of taking up tap dancing again.

Rubio loves being productive in tap. She feels like she's giving back to those who helped and encouraged her children through tap. Rubio believes that tap is about respect, support, history, family, and passing it on—and she intends to keep that tradition through her writings. Her tap involvement includes many aspects of helping to make tap happen, from transporting artists and her kids, helping with class registration, giving out tap information, collecting tap memorabilia, and assisting and supporting the tap world however she can.

Rubio's goals are to educate the public to the tap masters' instrumental feet, which she believes express a unique musicality and personality for every dance artist performing with heart and soul. She believes that the art form of tap needs to expand to a place deserving of the masters' passion, love, and hard work throughout every community. Helping the ITA and increasing its membership is making this a reality for her.

So Dança
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fieldnotes

POSTEVENT DESCRIPTIONS

edited by jenai cutter



The Kaohsiung Children's Tap Company performed at the Taiwan Tap Competition. Photo by Yukiko "Smilie" Misumi

ASIA

JAPAN

Dancers Prepare for Jimmy Slyde

by yukiko "smilie" misumi, ita rep

In Japan, many tap dancers are getting together and improving their skills in preparation for the upcoming Dr. Jimmy Slyde tap show in May 2006. The Jam Tap Dance Company (Mr. Kuniyasu Kato, founder and artistic director), which will invite Slyde to Japan again next year, also has three different studio performances throughout the year called *New Tap Generation*.

EUROPE

ESTONIA

Tappers at Home and Abroad

by vera ivanshina, ita rep

DuffTap Studio, under the leadership of Alexander Ivashkevich, has had an intense summer. First of all, part of the group went to Germany to participate in the festival Step, Jazz, Musical des 21 Jahrhunderts (June 21–25), where they won first prize for the now-famous dance number "BZI" (young dancers: Anton Merkulov, Jevgenia Gabets,

Uljana Maljutina). Second, Anton Merkulov was invited to take part in The Arts Summer School in China from July 24–August 6, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of European–Chinese relations and held at The Affiliated High School of Peking University.

This was a really remarkable experience for 15-year-old Merkulov: "The following next four to five days were practice days, where we learned a modern piece, skirt dance, a fan dance, and Chinese tai chi. All that, combined with a mix of solo performances and choir singing. The Great Wall was very great and soon after that we were taken to the Friendship Store—the store famous for its cloisonné technique (copper pots, dishes, valuables, statues, they even had marble stamps on which you could have ordered your name written in Chinese)." And of course, there was tap dance. Merkulov was the only student among the 50 to do tap, and naturally, won the affection of the audience.

Also, I was lucky to be an intern for the New York City Tap Festival, which was an amazing experience in itself. There was a wonderful crew of 12 interns. We saw all the

hard work the organizers of the festival have to do to make this wonderful event happen and run smoothly. I am very grateful to Tony Waag, Margaret Morrison, Hjördis Linn, and Kirsten Burke Smith, who helped me and many others be a part of the festival and share in that thing we love most: tap dance.

UNITED KINGDOM

Tap in the Laban Archives— and a Master Class to Boot!

by billie mahoney

Penny Smith of London, UK, arranged a master class with Billie Mahoney at the studio of Jean Chamberlain in Hillingdon, Middlesex. About 30 adult tap dancers from various groups of the surrounding area attended on Sunday morning, August 7. Mahoney had been attending the biennial conference of the International Council of Kinetography Laban at the new Laban Center near Greenwich. Various teaching and choreographic tap dance materials by Mahoney, which have been documented in Labanotation, will become part of the Laban archives there.



Anton Merkulov, DuffTap Studio, in Arts Summer School, Peking, China



Paula Skimin teaching. Photo courtesy of Kimberley Timlock

NORTH AMERICA

CANADA: ONTARIO Dancers and Drummers Unite in Teaching

by kimberley timlock, ita rep

It's so refreshing to attend a workshop where you actually learn something you will use on a regular basis in your tap work. Paula Skimin, artistic director of Turn On the Tap, held a six-hour workshop this month with drummer Chris Cawthray. What a joy to work with these two talented artists. The class focused on articulating the differences between the way dancers and musicians communicate. We covered much in the six hours, from knowing how to find the pulse and recognize cycles, to making sure everyone understood the difference between polyrhythms and counterpoint and more. I am looking forward to Skimin holding more of these in the future. For more information, contact Paula through www.turnonthetap.com.

UNITED STATES

HAWAII

Lucky We Live in Hawaii!

by linda wilson, ita rep

Los Angeles ITA rep Jim Taylor spent several days of his Maui vacation tap dancing and teaching master classes, sponsored by ITA members Becky Pelissero and Jill Okura. Classes were held at the elegant Maui Arts & Cultural Center, home to both the Maui Tap Experience and Heart Dance. Participants (including your West Hawaii rep, Linda Wilson) were treated to the Nicholas Brothers' "Lucky Number" routine, which Taylor has been working on with Fayard Nicholas. Students also enjoyed a class in the Eddie Brown Choruses.

Taylor made the scenic drive upcountry to teach in a lovely new private tap studio. The studio, nestled in the trees on the slopes of the Haleakala volcano, was cause for this quote from Jim: "Lucky Jim!" And lucky us—for having Jim in Hawaii. Mahalo!

For updates on tap happenings on Maui in 2006, EM: llwilson@hawaii.rr.com; WB: www.maui tapexperience.org

NEW YORK TV Telethons and Travel for Tap Kids

by new york stage originals

New York Stage Originals is proud to announce that the cast of *Tap Kids* was invited to appear on the 40th annual Jerry Lewis MDA telethon. The cast flew to Los Angeles for rehearsals September 1 and appeared live Monday morning, September 5.

The 21-hour, star-studded event simultaneously entertains, informs, and raises funds for the service and research programs of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The telethon is carried on 190 television stations throughout the United States, as well as on cable in Canada. It's also seen worldwide on the Internet.

Tap Kids also showcased at the Western Arts Alliance September 10 in The Kimo Theater in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and returned to Mexico in October for the Festival Internacional de Tamaulipas Mexico.

NORTH CAROLINA News from the Tar Heel State

by gene medler

The North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble (NCYTE) has had a great summer with classes and performances at Tap City in New York and the Chicago Human Rhythm Project (CHRP). In New York, NCYTE performed four times at the Joyce Theater. I don't know what was more exciting—the performance itself or being backstage with so many great dancers, legends, and legends-to-be. Thank you, Tap City director Tony Waag.

Nothing can match the warmth and nurturing atmosphere of the CHRP. Although it was disappointing that Jason

Samuels Smith was not there because of a major motion picture deal starring Outkast, Ayodele Casel rose to the occasion and was fantastic, teaching a beautiful piece of choreography. Jeannie Hill also outdid herself with a wonderful jazzy tribute to Coles and Atkins. Thank you, ladies. Thank you, Lane Alexander.

Tap for a Good Cause

by robin vail, ita rep

Footnotes hosted their third annual concert on July 9 with special guest artist Gene Medler. Medler graced the stage with "Billie's Bounce" and he danced a duet with Robert Perera to "On the Sunny Side of the Street." It was such a treat to see Medler dance, an occasion much too rare for his many fans.

Footnotes Tap Ensemble raised \$1,000 for the American Cancer Society through a benefit performance held at the Carolina Inn in Chapel Hill on July 24. The afternoon, entitled *Tap through the Ages*, brought together tap artists from ages 7 to 85 for one great cause. Guests included the NCYTE, Second Time Arounders, and the Taptations.

OKLAHOMA Onstage with a Tap Legend: Paying Tribute to Arthur Duncan

by ashley rivers

It is certainly not every day that an aspiring tap performer has the opportunity to stand onstage with one of the men who kept tap dancing alive in America. On March 12, 2005, not only was I onstage with Arthur Duncan, but I was even able to participate in his act! (Duncan became a regular on *The Lawrence Welk Show* in 1965 and was the first African-American to be hired as a regular cast member of a weekly variety TV show.) During his visit to Oklahoma City



Jim Taylor, Becky Pelissero, and Linda Wilson. Photo courtesy of MTE, Kula, Maui



Footnotes Tap Ensemble. Photo by Bill Russ

University's (OCU's) Ann Lacy School of American Dance and Arts Management, he performed during the American Spirit Dance Company's spring showcase, taking time to meet with the awestruck dancers and even sign a couple of tap shoes.

When he arrived at the airport in Oklahoma City, we dancers greeted him at the gate with a time step. After his performance, dean John Bedford and dance chairman Jo Rowan of OCU's Ann Lacy School of American Dance and Arts Management presented Duncan with the school's Living Treasure in American Dance Award. Many famous tap masters have visited the school to receive this award, including Ernest "Brownie" Brown, Bunny Briggs, Cholly Atkins, Peg Leg Bates, Dianne Walker, and Honi Coles.

"Too many artists such as Vincent Van Gogh were not given proper recognition while they were alive. Artists who have made great contributions should have an opportunity to know how much their work means to others. What we are trying to do here is to honor these wonderful men and women during their lifetime—so they know how important they are to us," says Jo Rowan.

"There is a Chinese proverb that says: 'If you want to understand a man, you must know his memories.' Well, if you want to understand tap, you have to know tap's memories," said Jo. "If you can touch tap's history, then you have touched the heart of this great dance style tap." We need to

embrace the stories of those who came before us—only when we understand our heritage can we truly become artists.

People like Duncan can teach us the meaning of greatness. They teach us that we have to work for what we want, but it is

possible for us to achieve it. We entertainers hope to do wonderful things during our lifetime; we believe in big dreams and we know that with hard work and the right attitude, we can achieve the impossible. Everyone who has ever enjoyed tapping a foot to the music—whether performer, tap student, or member of the audience—owes so much to Duncan.

I am so thankful that I was given the opportunity to meet such a great man. We in the entertainment business are family, and we owe our "mothers and fathers of dance" even more gratitude than we can express. We have the responsibility to show them how much they are valued and admired for their unstoppable determination and noble contributions to tap.

SOUTH AMERICA BRAZIL

Tap Included in the Festival of Dance of Joinville in Santa Catarina

by bia mattar, ita rep

Both tap dance and the ITA gained exposure in southern Brazil at the 23rd Festival of Dance of Joinville, which, according to the *2005 Guinness Book of Records*, is the biggest dance festival in the world. Many tap dance groups participated in the six-day



Arthur Duncan (ctr), receiving his award from dean John Bedford (r) and dance department chair Jo Rowan (l). Photo by Brianna Brandon, courtesy of OCU

competition, including choreographers and teachers. It was a significant event for all students and lovers of dance.

The dance community had the opportunity to learn more about tap, and the tap companies present were able to learn more about the ITA from representative Bia Mattar. "The idea was to give them details about how to become a member of the ITA and the benefits of it," she explained. Mattar believes that the ITA can be a useful tool for developing communication and the interchange of ideas between dancers spread throughout such a large country. A newspaper interview with Mattar, who is a choreographer and teacher at Patibiribia, Perc Pé de Sapateado, further introduced the community to tap dance in Brazil. Mattar discussed her new volunteer job organizing tap activities and submitting reports to the ITA. She also spoke on television about the reps in Brazil and the history of the ITA around the world.



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tap day reports

edited by jenai cutter

ASIA

JAPAN

Tokyo Celebrates Tap Day

by yukiko "smilie" misumi

More than 100 tap dancers gathered and celebrated National Tap Day 2005 in Tokyo, April 22–24, at Art Sphere Theater, with four performances in three days. Performers included Yasuyuki Imanishi, Junko Otaka, Megumi Kageyama, Kaoru Tomita, Sachi Hashimoto, Makoto Fujikawa, Yukiko "Smilie" Misumi, Yasuhiro Yoshino, and more.

EUROPE

LATVIA

Tap is Back in the Baltic

by zuzanna runkovska

Latvia is a small country near the Baltic Sea. We have our own language, history, and culture. And finally we have tap dance. Last year, on November 11, the first tap dance company in Latvia was founded—Bat Tap Company. Before that, we had one or two separate dancers in the whole state. Now there is a small school and a quickly growing company.

We also decided to celebrate Tap Dance Day with a tap concert. There hasn't been such an event in Latvia for years. The last time we had a tap dance concert was in the early '90s, when the American Tap Dance Orchestra was in Riga, but now no one remembers that. In Latvia, there is poor information about tap dance, dancers, or any events. In fact, it's great if people know about Fred Astaire or Gene Kelly! So we decided to start with something small to build our audiences. We invited Feet Beat Tap Ensemble from Finland to perform. We performed as well and mixed it all with some videos from well-known Astaire and Kelly musicals. For our first time, it wasn't bad; the hall was full with audience members. Everyone was pleased with the event and they were surprised that tap dance is still going on in Latvia. I think it wasn't bad for the beginning, and we're planning to make some bigger concerts next year. This is how we are putting Latvia's name on the map of tap.



Five of the performers in the Tap Day Concert organized by the Bat Tap Company in Riga in Latvia. (l to r) Saana Laine, Sofi Kyrklund, Essi Tikanoja, Annika Malm, Hannaleena Markkanen. (not pictured) Jussi Lindroos, Zuzanna Runkovska, and Rasa Emale

NORTH AMERICA

NEW MEXICO

Joyful Dancers Step out in Style with Substantial Tap Jam

by jennifer noyer

The seventh annual rhythm tap jam, presented by the National Dance Institute of New Mexico (NDI-NM) and the University of New Mexico (UNM) Dance Department, lured Bill Evans and Mark Yonally back for a percussive romp Friday evening May 20 at UNM's Keller Hall.

Local dancers joined in a delectable feast of tap styles, from roots in Buster Brown's "Laura," Broadway jazz tap, to new fusions of contemporary modern dance with tap. A second concert on Saturday was held at the Santa Fe Dance Barns.

To open the evening Evans reproduced his laid-back and cool rhythmic sequences in "Los Ritmos Calientes," introducing the tap format of quick solo statements and group responses. Wendy Leverenz Barker, Evans, Elizabeth Gallea, Jackie Oliver, Laura Sicignano, and Yonally each took control with their own variations on Latin jazz rhythms, adding Spanish decorative touches with hand and arm shapes.

Oliver choreographed two fast, widely traveling pieces with dancers from the NDI-NM. "Moanin'," composed by Charles Mingus, incorporated leaps and jumps with percussive foot patterns to extremely com-

plex modern jazz rhythms. "Moses Supposes," from the soundtrack of *Singin' in the Rain*, was full of Broadway musical, multilevel acrobatics, danced by Eli Barnes, Glenn Giron, Jesse Martinez, and Matthew Ortiz.

Jennifer M. Gibbs expanded tap vocabulary in "Cause I Said So" with a contemporary, more expressive style, adding strong torso movement in contractions, falls, and even crawls. Dancers Lacy Brown, Lydia Martinez, Emily Trumper, and Sarah Waff from Tara's Dance Academy performed a sad yet defiant statement to "Playboy Mommy" by Tori Amos. In "Paper Bag," Gibbs used dancers from the Dance Arts Center Studio in jazzy modern body shapes with expressive arm gestures, and a more modern use of floor movement.

Yonally wowed the audience with his rapid-fire footwork in a highly inventive "Improvoigraphy." He went from loose-knee foot brushes, faster-than-the-eye foot vibrations, to Monty Python hop-skips across the floor.

Suite 'N' Sour (with Sassy) was a new, intriguing three-part dance by Evans to music from Basie, Ross, and Grey. Working with Barker and Oliver, he moved the first section into fast, tapped turns, traveling in circles. A finger-snapping walk-around in the second section developed dance patterns to vocal rhythms by Barker. The third section brought Oliver and Barker from right and left into dance conversations with him at center stage.

Evans selected music by jazz pianist Bill Evans, from an earlier collaboration called "Double Bill," for his new jazz waltz of the same name. His feet echoed the complex patterns of the piano's melodic line, while his heels picked up the bass accompaniment.

Ten-year-old Logan Mitchell, from the Dance Arts Center, performed "Make 'Em Laugh," choreographed by Barker in Vaudeville style, demonstrating confident comic showmanship.

"Laura," originally by Buster Brown, has been handed down and passed from dancer to dancer, arriving with Oliver, Barker, and Evans for a new generation with its repeated stamped accents, sweeping frontal foot gestures, and smooth unison rhythms by nine dancers.

“Cominagetcha,” choreographed by Robbie Peterson for dancers from Dance Arts Center and Tara’s Dance Academy, was a neat and satisfying space design in strong, assertive style using two groupings of nine dancers.

“A Cappella,” originated by Evans, Sarah Hutchinson, Skip Randall, and Yonally, returned with its amazing synchrony of timing and game play as Barker, Evans, Gallea, Oliver, Sicignano, and Yonally moved in perfect unison.

Drummer Eric Riley and choreographer Sicignano returned to African roots of jazz and tap in a duet, as feet took up the African rhythms on the drum.

Most of the cast reappeared at the end in a joyful unison statement of classic tap patterns from Bill Robinson’s “Encore.”

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**UNITED STATES
OREGON
Portland’s National Tap
Day Celebration**

by sue ceswick

Dancing nuns, a Beatles “tapology,” a family dance troupe all grown up, Michael “Shoehorn” Conley the tapping sax player, and our grande dame of tap, 83-year-old Lorraine Sheahan, were some of the featured acts at Portland, Oregon’s eighth annual National Tap Dance Day celebration.

The event took place on May 29 (the Sunday before Memorial Day—so we can all remember the date!) at the downtown Tiffany Center ballroom and featured a class on the traditional BS Chorus, a tap jam, and a stellar roster of performances. Organizers, local tap dancers, and teachers Dede Priest and Cindy Brenn reported that more than 350 tappers and fans attended this year’s celebration.

Portland tap dancer Aaron Wheeler Kay showed his magic touch in leading tap jams by inviting dancers of all levels to show off their steps in a supportive setting. Matt Allegre on drums and Ricky Salrdeau on bass kept the pulse for the improvisers.

Priest and Brenn’s next planned segment was to give tap teacher Judy Tibbles an award for her tireless support of the art form. But to their surprise, Judy trumped them by bestowing her own certificate upon the Tap Day organizers! Tibbles’ award to Priest and Brenn included the poem, “Lines for Gene Kelly to Dance To,” by Carl Sandburg.

Two area high schools with dance performance troupes strutted their stuff, with Beaverton’s Dance West tapping to “Jelly’s Last Jam,” choreographed by Terry Brock, and the Jefferson Dancers doing “Three Four,” created for them by Jason Samuels Smith. Local studios and parks and recreation groups were well represented, including Multnomah Arts Center, Tualatin Hills, Billings School of Dance, Hollywood Dance Studio, Classic Tap Studio, Multnomah Athletic Club, Yellow Rose Dance Ensemble, Northwest Academy, Skylark Tappers, Terry Brock Studio, and DanceEvolve. A fixture on the Portland scene since they were tiny tappers, the Hot Shot Tap Dancers (Carl, Bethany, Lloyd, and Kyle Massey) were reunited at this event and shocked everyone. They still dance great, and now they are all so tall!

The world’s only tap dancer who plays horn at the same time, Shoehorn, entertained the crowd. Then Sheahan brought down the house with “Hey Mr. Jessie,” while Jefferson Dancer alums Erin Lee, Wheeler Kay, and Damon Keller demonstrated their growing virtuosity.

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(l to r) Kyle Massey of the HotShots Tap Dancers and Dana Scoles from Classic Tap Dance Studio; (background l to r) unidentified girl and HotShot dancers Bethany and Lloyd Massey Photo by Diane Inskeep



summer events

FESTIVALS AND INTENSIVES

edited by jenai cutcher



EUROPE

THE NETHERLANDS

Bufalino's Summertap Intensives in Zwolle

by michelle van rooyen, ita rep

Driving back from Schiphol, the airport of Amsterdam, where I just brought one of our tap heroes, Brenda Bufalino, I think of these wonderful 12 days that this grand lady of tap spent at our place for two Summertap Intensives.

Tapdance Studio de TAPperij in Zwolle has become a meeting point for tap dancers who want to “stretch” themselves, and has hosted a great variety of teachers during the past years. This was a first, however, for welcoming people from all over Europe and the Middle East, coming to attend one (and some, even two) of the “Bufalino Summertap Intensives.”

The first was a three-day workshop for intermediate dancers; the second, a six-day intensive for advanced tappers. Three hours of tap a day were followed by “Talks with the Master,” during which Bufalino discussed tap-related items and videotapes.

The students were thrilled to be able to spend so much time not only with this great teacher, but also in the same group. It was wonderful, as well, to hear so much history and background from someone who really was there in the great era of tap, before its revival. It was a remarkable experience and, once again, a big stretch for most of us!

UNITED KINGDOM

Associated Tap Dancers Produce TapUK

by jo summerfield

The 11th annual TapUK festival, run by Associated Tap Dancers (formerly Amateur Tap Dancers), was held in May in Mablethorpe (Lincs) at Haven's Golden Sands holiday park in England. Adult tap dancers from all over the country arrived throughout Friday (some even in the early hours of Saturday morning!) ready for and excited about their weekend of tapping.

There were 25 different workshops held during the course of the weekend, and participants could attend up to seven each.



(l to r) George Patterson, III, Dr. Jeni LeGon, and Tré Dumas. Photo by Marjorie Lopes

These included not only tap workshops at all levels from beginners to advanced, but song and dance, jazz, ballet, and choreography as well. The instructors for the workshops were Maurice Kachuk, Diane Hampstead, Jason Di Mascio, and special guest Heather Cornell from Manhattan Tap. All offered a different and unique style of tap and teaching methods, so it really was a great opportunity for those attending to experience these varying techniques.

A party was held at a local theater, the Dunes, Saturday evening with music, dancing, and socializing. Some of the instructors performed in a show organized by Jill Freeman. Despite a few technical difficulties, it was a great success.

We woke on Sunday morning to blue skies and sunshine—a lovely way to start our second day of workshops. The climax of the weekend was the Sunday afternoon showcase, in which ten groups from various dance schools around the country performed their routines. Everyone's support and encouragement created such a lovely atmosphere.

By Sunday evening our legs were aching, our feet were sore, and our brains were full, but it was a small price to pay for such a great weekend. Associated Tap Dancers run

events throughout the year at venues all over the UK. For more information, PH: 01895.420409, EM: amtap@hotmail.com, WB: www.tapuk.freemove.co.uk.

NORTH AMERICA

CANADA

CALGARY

Blame Canada: M.A.D.D. Rhythms Canada's "Calgary Tap Summit"

by lisa latouche

June 30–July 3, 2005 marked a monumental weekend for M.A.D.D. Rhythms Canada as they launched their very first tap festival in their hometown of Calgary, Alberta. The weekend brought together an array of tap legends and mentors, including Dr. Jeni LeGon, Van “The Man” Porter, George Patterson III, Bril Barrett, Martin “Tré” Dumas III, Lisa LaTouche, Jumaane Taylor, Tasha Lawson, Jennifer Bishop, Danny Nielsen, and Kris Kelly. Through three days of packed classes, they all shared their personal vocabulary of rhythms, steps, and tap insights, filling the students with joy and inspiration. Classes included more than 80 students from across western Canada, age 6 to 60+, and ranging in levels from absolute beginner to preprofessional. Festivities also

included memorable seminars with both Porter and LeGon. On Friday, July 1, Porter hosted “An Hour with the Man,” sharing his one-of-a-kind film clip collection, which had participants in shock. Some of the highlights included footage of The Nicholas Brothers, The Berry Brothers, The Condos Brothers, the Miller Brothers and Lois, Clayton “Peg Leg” Bates, Teddy Hale, Bill Robinson, John Bubbles, and more. On Saturday, July 2, LeGon hosted her very own evening, showcasing her documentary from the National Film Board of Canada entitled *Jeni LeGon: Living in a Great Big Way*. The evening concluded with LeGon singing aloud alongside her video, leaving audience members in tears of joy. All participants were thrilled to have a one-on-one experience with such a living legend.

The weekend concluded on Sunday, July 3, with the festival concert “Great Feets of Rhythm,” hosted by Lisa LaTouche and Bril Barrett, which played to a full house at the Vertigo Playhouse Theatre. The show included live jazz accompaniment by Calgary’s own Kristian Alexandrov Trio. The M.A.D.D. Rhythms Canada crew were featured, along with a special presentation from the tap festival students showcasing choreography by Bril Barrett, all of which they learned during his three-day repertory course. The evening was a great way to conclude the weekend, leaving the audience standing on their feet. A special note of thanks goes out to assistant director Kris Kelly and to all the volunteers who helped bring the heart of tap dance an extra step closer to the Calgary community.

ONTARIO Syncopation City

by kimberley timlock, ita rep

Each year I host a summer tap intensive in Hamilton, Ontario. For five days tap dancers from all over Canada tap for five hours with some of this country’s top tap dance artists. David Cox showed everyone that you don’t have to lose your finesse when tapping hip, high-energy compositions. Paula Skimin used the blues to make sure each dancer knew the difference between eighth and sixteenth notes. William Orlowski took us through a wonderful barre, and then a fabulous Paul Draper combination. Cathy Duncan shared some new and interesting sounds and movement. I worked on choreography, or what your feet are saying, and composition, music theory for the tap dancer. It was most interesting to see how each of the faculty guided each class through an improv session.



(l-r seated) Harold “Stumpy” Cromer, Ernest “Brownie” Brown, Dianne “Lady Di” Walker, Robert L. Reed, Jr., (standing) Reggio “The Hooper” McLaughlin, Jason Samuels Smith, Dick Van Dyke, Chloe Arnold, and Elka Samuels Smith at the LA Tap Festival Photo by Larry Howard

We finished the week with a great discussion on footwear and some great choreography by the participants. New friends were made, we all learned an immense amount, and look forward to next year. We would like to remind those of you who live across the border that we have some great tap dance artists up here, and encourage you to come tap with us next year!

UNITED STATES CALIFORNIA Feet a’ Flyin’: The Third Annual LA Tap Fest

by jim taylor, ita rep

This year’s LA Tap Fest was dedicated to the memory of Gregory Hines and Dr. Leonard Reed. The Debbie Allen Dance Academy hosted the six-day event, which included classes in African, hip hop, jazz, and tap dance. The teachers were Jason Samuels Smith (festival director), Chloe Arnold (festival co-director), Maud Arnold, Ernest “Brownie” Brown, Ayodele Casel, Channing Cook Holmes, Harold Cromer, Arthur Duncan, Titus Fotso, M.A.D.D. Rhythms Chicago, Reggio McLaughlin, Fayard Nicholas, George Patterson, Van Porter, Robert Reed, Elka Samuels, Sue Samuels, Jojo Smith, Dianne “Lady Di” Walker, Sam Weber, Joseph Wiggan, and producer Debbie Allen.

The turnout for this year’s festival was most impressive, and the students’ proficiency was way above average. Both Brown and Samuels Smith taught repertory classes that were included in the closing night’s per-

formance. Brown and McLaughlin taught the famous Copasetics Chair Dance and Samuels Smith’s piece included 72 students performing in two groups. The execution and precision of the festival dancers clearly demonstrated the high quality of the week’s classes. The performance was held at the Pattiz Concert Hall in Los Angeles, and three special awards were presented. Dick Van Dyke received the Paul Kennedy Advocate of the Arts Award, Brown received the Dr. Leonard Reed Longevity Award, and the Gregory Hines Humanitarian Award recipient was teacher/choreographer Arlene Kennedy.

The opening number, choreographed and danced by Titus Fotso and his African dancers and drummers, was electrifying. Porter used audience interaction to warm up his dynamic performance of “Mack the Knife.” Channing Cook Holmes of the Jazz Tap Ensemble presented a tongue-in-cheek vignette using a newspaper, then introduced the Caravan Project, dancing Becky Bloom’s choreography. Robert Reed presented slick and polished “licks and tricks.” The Kennedy Tap Company danced a knockout production number by the late Paul Kennedy, the delightful Ayodele Casel performed “A Night in Tunisia,” and Chicago’s M.A.D.D. Rhythms gave a powerhouse performance of “Glorious,” choreographed by Martin “Tré” Dumas. The Syncopated Ladies demonstrated style and skill, providing an excellent segue to the first act’s finale—the always charming and precise Lady Di.

After intermission, McLaughlin sang and danced with sophistication and ease, alone and with Brown. Weber's rhythms floated across the floor, and winners of the FameUs Kids show, *Sickamore*, donned the choreography of Isaac Morgan. Innovative duets of taps and vocals followed from Chloe Arnold and singer Gina Loring, and then Samuels Smith with poet/rapper Ahmad Rashad Jr. Next, drummer Smith engaged his son in trades. Samuels Smith included astonishing rhythms, speed, and original moves that are beyond description. What a fantastic talent! Duncan followed, singing and dancing with his own special magic, and later brought Samuels Smith out for a dynamite duet from the movie *Tap Heat*. Samuels Smith's accomplished tap company, Anybody Can Get It, followed and took us to the finale of the show ... our very own Hollywood tap legend Dr. Fayard Nicholas and his gorgeous wife, Katherine Hopkins-Nicholas. Between showing film clips, their performances of "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby" and "Chattanooga Choo Choo" were the perfect ending to an absolutely perfect performance. Thanks for a truly splendid evening.

NEW YORK
New York City
Tap City 2005: It Takes a Village
 by hjördis linn

Tap City 2005 was "A Joyful Summer Thunderstorm of Busy, Happy Feet" (*The New York Times*). This year, our fifth, we are proud of how smooth our move to a bigger theater was! Special thanks to our production/design staff—Tony Mayes (production stage manager), Jim Oakley (lighting designer), and Wally Flores (sound designer)—for making everyone look and sound great, and recognition to executive producer Tony Waag for his artistic vision and bringing us all together. Having our performances at the Joyce Theater, New York's premiere dance venue, helped us raise the bar professionally and brought Tap City to a larger number of people. Our audience totaled 3,065 over eight performances!

Our enthusiastic student body numbered 424: 236 adults (Margaret Morrison continues to design great class offerings), a record 142 youths (kudos to Michele Ribble for her expanding outreach), and 50 teens in our new preprofessional program (bravo to Thelma Goldberg for coordinating this exciting and challenging program). Special thanks to Kirsten Burke Smith, our registrar, for her excellent customer service. This student body represented 28 states in the US: Arizona, California, Colorado,

Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia. We had the pleasure of having 62 international students representing 18 countries: Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Canada, China, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Singapore, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and Venezuela. Many thanks to our students who keep the tap energy flowing and inspire the teachers at Tap City. This give-and-take between teachers and students always moves me, because it is so genuine and key to the growth of tap.

We are forever grateful to this year's 179 performers and 41 teachers who brought their love and respect for the dance, as well as their incredible energy and talent they generously shared in the classroom and on the stage. Of the 179 performers, 19 were musicians—more than any other year, thanks to a grant from the American Music Center. This year we offered 125 classes and extended partial scholarships to 67 students in the youth and preprofessional programs. These scholarships are made possible by the generosity of The Heckscher Foundation for Children, to whom we are grateful for their support so we can continue to offer young people an affordable dance experience.

Without our interns, we simply could not pull this festival off, and this year's group was phenomenal and very supportive of each other. They even busked on the street to promote the festival.

A highlight for me this year was a phone call I received from Dr. Jimmy Slyde, thanking us for our work and saying how pleased he was to experience how polite and respectful many of the youngsters were at Tap City. We both agreed how refreshing that was and what a good sign it is for the future. As our anonymous angel says, "Onward and upward!"

Manhattan Tap's NYC Rhythm Tap Intensive Workshop with Heather Cornell

by eric lewis

As a performer, teacher, and choreographer, Heather Cornell is definitely one of the big names in tap. She works around the world, yet every summer she returns to her home base, New York City, for a two-week intensive that is just that: intense.

This one-of-a-kind program offers students the opportunity to work with Cornell, connecting with other legendary tap dancers through her style of teaching and dancing. The program offers 56 hours of diverse classes, consisting of a beginner class, music classes, the advanced/intermediate workshop, and material of the masters, all spiced with ongoing informal and personal tap history, and taught in accordance with Cornell's philosophy that anyone can be the next great tapper. This year the spotlight in the mentor's class was on Buster Brown, as students learned his dances: "Laura," "Fascinatin' Rhythm," and "Just You, Just Me." Each of these is not only a classic, but also a formidable dance to have in every tapper's repertoire.

The intensive draws dancers from all over the world; Germany, Spain, Finland,



Manhattan Tap Intensive musicians during the advanced/professional workshop (l to r) Andy Milne, piano; Famoro Dioubate, music director, balafoon; Dave Ambrosio, bass; and Andy Algire, balafoon (behind drums)

Estonia, Canada, France, China, Japan, and the US were all represented. The amount of one-on-one work with a single teacher and the chance to work with a vast array of world-class musicians distinguish this from your ordinary summer festival. As expected, the musicians played the music that students were dancing to, but, as may not be expected, they actually taught the students how to play their instruments, how to work with musicians, music theory, and even the culture behind their music. Experimentation was key as Cornell, the participants, and the musicians all embarked on a collaboration combining tap with jazz piano, balafon, and more. Being in the middle of the city that never sleeps and experiencing pure collaboration with some of the best around was thrilling to all. The feeling in the class was so inviting that musicians jumped into improvisation circles to dance and students sat in with the band in classes.

The intensive is known around the New York City community as a haven not only for dancers, but musicians as well. We had extensive work with master balafon player and African griot Famoro Dioubate, as well as with inspired jazz pianist Andy Milne. Over the two weeks, dancers such as Chikako Iwahori, Max Pollak, and Lynn Schwab dropped by to check out classes, to sit in with the musicians, or just to dance. Lorraine Condos, widow of legendary tap-per Steve Condos, stopped by to watch.

The greatest gift that a dancer receives from participating in this intensive is feeling as if one has a better connection with the past and with the community that defines tap dance. A healthy understanding of where we come from is the focal point of the intensive and many of Cornell's general principles of

teaching. It's a great workshop for any dancer and an experience that anyone serious about tap dance should not miss.

As Kaleena Miller of Buckets and Tap Shoes in Minneapolis, Minnesota said, *"This workshop really had everything that I needed: intensive dancing, historical information, and a lot of info from and discussion with professional musicians, which can be a rarity. I felt that after this workshop, I really I had a lot to bring back and offer to my hometown tap community."*

TEXAS San Antonio Tap Texas Style: Third Coast Rhythm Project Festival

by barbara phillips

Third Coast Rhythm Project celebrated their eighth annual Festival of Tap July 21-24, 2005, in San Antonio, Texas. The four-day event included courses, master classes, tap jams, a participant tap-off, and a panel discussion with a distinguished lineup. Jay Fagan, Derick Grant, Acia Gray, Nicole Hockenberry, Jason Janas, Tasha Lawson, Barbara Phillips, and Jackie Troup Miller shared their tools of the trade with tap dancers from around the country. The guest artists celebrated their mutual love and respect for the art form onstage Saturday night at the Jo Long Theater for the Performing Arts. They were accompanied by the Anthony Bazzani Jazz Trio and received a glowing review from the *San Antonio Express News*. The 2006 festival is slated for July 20-23.



Third Coast Rhythm Project, (standing l to r) Derick Grant, Barbara Phillips, Jay Fagan, Tasha Lawson, (Baby Allen Thomas Hockenberry), Nicole Hockenberry, (seated) Acia Gray, Jason Janas, Jackie Troup Miller.

UTAH Brigham Young University's Tap Dance Workshop

by colleen west

BYU's tap dance workshop was fantastic again this year, with seven qualified teachers including Anita Feldman as the guest artist. There were 48 students from all over the US, ranging from the ages of 12 to 50. Besides tap technique classes, which were offered in beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, Irish hard shoe and Appalachian clogging classes were also popular. In addition, there was an evening performance in which the students were able to showcase what they had learned during the workshop. Feldman and Debby Robertson also performed a duet, "Military," choreographed by Brenda Bufalino. It was so much fun, we can't wait to do it again next year!



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PASSIN' IT ON

interviewed by kalisha buckhanon
transcribed by sandy adler

Ernest “Brownie” Brown
with Reggio “The Hooper” McLaughlin
and Jumaane Taylor



Ernest “Brownie” Brown. Photo by Larry Howard

Ed. Note: We are pleased to share the following conversations led by Kalisha Buckhanon with Ernest “Brownie” Brown and Reggio “The Hooper” McLaughlin. The following text was taken from two interviews, with excerpts merged to enhance the flow and presentation of the topics discussed. Jumaane Taylor joined the second interview as well, making it a three-generation spread.

To call Ernest “Brownie” Brown a forefather of tap is an understatement. Dancing professionally since the age of ten, 89-year-old Brown has watched the art form develop from shows in storefront nightclubs to vaudeville to Broadway to its current state as a growing international phenomenon. He has firsthand knowledge of, experience in, and insight into a history that most people can only read about. After being ushered into tap dance by an older brother whom he observed casually hoofing, Brown went on to headline at famed New York City venues such as the Roxy, Radio City Music Hall, and the Cotton Club, and later appeared in the movie *The Cotton Club*. Abroad, he has topped the marquee at London’s Palladium and Paris’ Latin Casino. For almost 20 years, he and Charles “Cookie” Cook toured vaudeville as the must-see duo Cook and Brown. He was a member of the exclusive and legendary Copasetics, a fraternity of black entertainers that was formed in 1949 in memory of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson. Its members included such late greats as Billy Eckstine, “Peg Leg” Bates, Honi Coles, and later Gregory Hines. Far beyond his lofty credentials, Brown possesses a sparkling personality, giving spirit, and love for tap dancing that has been an invaluable gift to countless students and colleagues. He recently reflected on his career with his current partner and protégé, Reggio “The Hooper” McLaughlin, while 19 year-old tap artist Jumaane Taylor listened in.

—Kalisha Buckhanon



Ernest "Brownie" Brown and Reggio McLaughlin. Photo by John Sundlöf

“I’m a dancer from my heart. ... I like the way it makes me feel”

—Reggio McLaughlin

KALISHA BUCKHANON: Brownie, do you ever go down Memory Lane and think about the people you’ve known and worked with and met? What do you think about your career?

BROWNIE BROWN: Oh, I had a wonderful career. I enjoyed my career.

REGGIO MCLAUGHLIN: He’s actually still dancing.

BB: Dancing with everybody and all over the world, at home and abroad.

KB: So how’d you meet this mick, Reggio? (laughs)

RM: Well, I can tell you how.

BB: Tell them how nuts you was.

RM: Actually, I went to school with Brownie’s granddaughter. We were going to the same [elementary] school [in Chicago] when we were younger. She was a friend of ... my sister’s. ... She knew that I was trying and learning how to tap dance. So when she used to come over, she would always say, “My grandfather is a tap dancer. Next time he comes to visit,” because Brownie was living in New York at the time, and we were in Chicago, “next time he comes to visit, I’ll let you know.” You know what I mean? “You can meet him.” I was maybe in my 20s or teens—somewhere around there, when I started taking tap more serious. ... So ... she came by one day and said, “Yeah, my grandfather lives with us now. He’s back. I’ll bring you over to meet him.” And when she brought me over, I said, “Oh, man, I’ve seen your face around on the FBI’s Ten Most Wanted list.” So I took him in as my mentor and teacher.

BB: (laughs) ...

KB: So at the time, did you know that he was the influential figure in tap?

RM: Yeah, I knew who he was. I knew he was a member of the Copasetics, because I watched videotapes of him before I even met him, like on the *Dick Cavett Show*. And that was a shock to me, when I met him and then realized the status that I was meeting ... You’re always hearing people say, “Oh, my uncle taps. My cousin taps.” And you see them and they only know two steps, you know what I mean? And you look and say, “Oh, man, I thought he could tap!” You never heard of them; nobody else ever heard of them. ... But when I met Brownie, I said, “Wow, this is major.” I would come by, “Oh, show me this, show me that.” And we’d sit down and watch videotapes of him and he taught me some dance routines.

KB: But at the time you met him he was retired.

RM: Yeah. He came back [to Chicago] to retirement, man, ... somewhere in the middle ’90s, because we’ve been together about that long, about 13 years.

KB: Brownie, right when Reggio first started asking you to do shows and perform and teach him dance, what were you thinking about that? What did you think about coming out of retirement to work with him?

BB: I enjoyed it. ...

KB: Were you looking for a change?

BB: No.

RM: It just happened. It just really happened. And we never talked about performing as a duo or anything. There was a theater company on the South Side called the Chicago Theater Company. A guy was doing a monologue in a play. It was called [*The Little Tommy Park Colored Celebrated Minstrel Show*]. And [the actor] asked me if I would give him a few moves to do because the character that he was playing in the monologue was talking about some dance percussive movement, and he wanted me to give him some movement, a rhythm with his feet to go along with his monologue. [So] I asked him, “Who’s choreographing this show?” He said, “They [don’t] have anybody. They’re just going to watch dance videos and pick up what they can.” And he mentioned that they wanted to do a cakewalk. I said, “You know what? I know somebody that knows the cakewalk” ... I told him about Brownie. So [the actor] talked to the producer, and then said, “Yeah, you—all come on in and help us put ... the dances together.” And we did [and got nominated for an award]. So they were so flattered with Brownie and his age [79 at the time] and everything, and what we were doing together that ... the [*Chicago-Sun Times*] did an interview. And then Lane Alexander read the interview. ... He called and asked Brownie about performing with the Chicago Human Rhythm Project. Brownie was like, “Call my partner.” And then they called me and I’m like, “Brownie, what partner?” (laughter) But anyway, we ended up doing his show and it just kept going and going and going. We never anticipated on being a duo. It just happened like that. I looked up and it was like 12 or 13 years had passed and we never even realized it. It’s amazing that we’ve been together this long. So, yeah, I brought him out of the gutter and put him on top again. (laughter)

He’s got all these awards since he’s been with me like ... the Flo-Bert Award from the New York Tap Extravaganza. The Living Treasure Award he just got at Oklahoma City University. He got one from Robert Reed from the St. Louis Tap Festival. And then over a year ago he got the Hoofers Award from Tap City in New York too. So he’s been racking them up.

KB: Brownie, you talked about taking vaudeville all over the world. A lot of people in my generation and the ones coming up after me, when they hear terms like “the cakewalk,” “vaudeville,” it unfairly conjures up negative connotations. They’re very critical of the performers back then for doing things that they consider to have been degrading to black people. ...

RM: [Like it’s] low class.

BB: We weren’t doing them to degrade anybody. ... We were dancing. We would see these type of pictures at that time; we never thought we were degrading ourselves. ... At the time that we started dancing, everybody was doing black face. Blacks and whites—it



(l to r) Reggio McLaughlin and Ernest "Brownie" Brown. Photo by Susan Paley Lawrence

was normal at that time.

RM: But that's the way it was [back then]. Blacks were in the theater because they were used to entertaining guests on plantations. At that time, the white performers, white vaudeville performers, were in a better position relative to taking black material and performing it. So they would come to blacks to get material. Pay them with a little moonshine, a little money, and get some dialogue, some dance moves. They'd say, "show me this, show me that," ... and they [would imitate] blacks by painting their faces black and stuff like that.

KB: What was your perception back then of being a professional dancer? What did that mean to be one?

BB: It was very wonderful for me. At that time ... we traveled coast to coast ... making money.

KB: Entertaining was one of the few ways you could make money being black.

RM: You could escape a lot of things by being a performer.

KB: Did you think when you started back then, doing the shows that you were doing, did you ever imagine that you would be doing it for 80 more years? (laughs)

BB: I didn't know I'd live that long.

RM: Brownie didn't know. People would ask me, "How's Brownie doing?" I'd say, "He's doing great. He's always ready at the word go." They'd ask, "Man, how old is he?" And I'd say, "He'll be 89." They'd say, "Oh, my God, I need to hang out with you guys!"

KB: How long have you been dancing, Reggio?

RM: About 20 years ... 20 or so years, you know, consistently. As I was developing to be a tap dancer getting some dance pieces, a little here and a little there, I reached a point where it became very serious. And I realized this is exactly what I wanted to do. You know what I mean? And then when you get to that point—

BB: You become professional.

RM: Yeah, professional. Working every day, practicing every day, trying to teach on a regular basis. Then you start seeing that you're making a living; you're totally living from dancing.

KB: So that's what it means for you to be a professional: to work—working, practicing, studying.

RM: Everything, yes. It just becomes your occupation. Period. But even then, you have to be a dancer from the heart. Because at the time I was learning tap dance, it was outdated. I realized there were no job opportunities. ... Even now, when we come together at a tap festival, it seems like there are a lot of us, but when we all go our own way, it's still not as many people we think it is.

KB: That's why I was asking Brownie what it meant when he first started out to be a professional. Because the opportunities that you're talking about, regular teaching and performing, even those were unavailable to them [other dancers of that era] back then. ... You kind of think about how the words "professional tap dancer" have evolved over the years.

RM: But see, when I started, it was different, because you talk about tradition of tap. Traditional was something where, back in that time, like when they was using the term "hooper," it was something you just did with your feet. Rhythm. You know what I mean? It had nothing to do with the upper body and the arms and all of that.

KB: Choreography.

RM: Yeah, choreography. [Back then], it was just something spontaneous—what you created and your rhythm. Like Brownie tells you how he started learning how to dance. It was just being on stage, getting put in situations. "Do something!" And then he'd have to dance, you know, and he'd accidentally fall and make a pratfall out of it.



Tip, Tap, 'n Toe perform at the Cotton Club. Photo courtesy of Melba Huber

KB: So in the beginning, Brownie, was it more about the percussive and the musical elements of tap? Was choreography all that important when you first started?

BB: When we first started, we did whatever we knew, put it together, and sent it on the road.

RM: But during that period, in vaudeville, it consisted of more than dancing. They sang, they danced, they did jokes, acrobatics. ... It was more of a variety. Now the tap dancers get out there and the majority of them just dance. Some improvise; some just do their own thing. A few sing and do a little bit of dancing, like a song-and-dance man. Not too many really do jokes. When I work with Brownie, we have a combination of vaudeville and contemporary, because when we're out there, we're doing showmanship—because whatever happens on stage, happens. A lot of stuff, we only practice so much and that's it. We might go over the dance one time, the day of the show, with a musician, but the way we are on stage, is the way we are off stage, because the whole world is a stage.

KB: Do you think that is important to that type of performance—the vaudeville—combining the singing and dance?

RM: Totally. What they do, and they do it a lot in New York too, they have workshops where they say, “This is a traditional workshop.” Meaning this is tap from back in the early days. This is how we keep traditional dances alive. When I was in New York I worked with Brenda Bufalino and we did a whole tribute to Honi Coles, and we also did Bill “Bojangles” Robinson’s material. Now Brownie’s passing down his legacy to me of what he was doing with the Copasetics and with his partner Cookie Cook. I carry that on, plus I add new stuff, and everybody keeps adding on. It’s like, you can never let that die because there wouldn’t be none of this today if it wasn’t for some of that in the past.

KB: Exactly. Brownie, when did tap become your primary focus? You were singing, you were doing comedy, you were acting. When did tap take over?

BB: I started tapping first before I started acting, before I started doing comedy and acrobatics and all of that. How I got into acro-

batics and things like that and comedy, I was tap dancing and fell a couple of times while I was working and doing a step. I fell on that step and I come up out of it some way and from then on when I was rehearsing I would be doing all these different kinds of things. Then I started doing comedy and started doing gags and stuff like that and just kept on carrying it on and on.

KB: What do you think about the outcome today? Right now when you go to festivals and you go to events, it’s really a mixture.

BB: It’s just like everything else; it’s good and bad and everything.

RM: It’s the variety of it all, you know. They mix it up. Some ... bring in the older traditional dancers; [some] bring in the younger [or]—all the generations of dancers. ... There are a number of tap dancers who are really in the mainstream and who are looked up to not only as teachers, but as visionaries. [They

might ask,] “So, where do we take tap from here? Where do we go with tap now?” ... Because now when [festival producers] promote their festivals, they have to promote all the new ideas as well, the more innovative stuff, what’s happening, to keep the people interested and keep people coming. Inspiration.

BB: Inspiring people.

KB: What do you think is drawing people to tap today? What do you think is inspiring them to join classes and what elements of the art form do you think are intriguing people today, as far as keeping it alive?

RM: When the musicals come back around—*42nd Street*, *Stomp!*, *Riverdance*, *Noise/Funk*. [Also] you’ve got Savion [Glover] always out there doing something. You’ve got the festivals ... popping up in other cities now, and a lot of the dance schools in these places are starting to connect The same thing with the ITA’s magazine [*On Tap*] that’s around now but wasn’t around some years ago. Now it’s out there and it’s being distributed everywhere. So it’s a combination of stuff. Then you get dancers being in shows in other cities and stuff. And not only that, sometimes they have tap on other shows with ballet, jazz, modern dances, too. And then you’ve got a person like Brownie. ... You’ve got a lot of new dancers ... they enjoy listening to the stories these guys like Brownie tell. “What about this? What about that? How was it like working in the Cotton Club? What about Duke Ellington? What was it like?” They’re so inspired by that.

KB: Do you see that as part of your role now? Not only to continue dancing but to educate the younger generation about what it was like back then, how it was back then, and how it’s changed? Even with you, in the 20 years you’ve been doing it, I’m sure you’ve seen some enormous changes.

RM: Yes!

KB: I’m sure you have stories of your own.

RM: Dancing in the subway at the time I was learning was rough because no one was doing tap. You’d go to an agent and say, “I’m a tap dancer. I want to see if you can book me.” They’d turn you

around right back out the door. The agent would say, “Tap dancer? Ha ha ha! There ain’t been no tap dancing since 1935 (Brownie laughs), ’25, when tap was alive! Go on, hit that door!” They turned you right around. But then when *Jelly’s Last Jam* came out with Gregory Hines, the movie *Tap, Cotton Club*—all this stuff helped tap to start circulating and come back around. Then *they* started calling *me* up: “Yeah, man, we’ve got a little job for you. Somebody wants a tap dancer now.” Then a lot of clubs started coming up with a Cotton Club theme after the movie, and corporate events. So they were all inspired by these kinds of things. ...

KB: So it just had this big revival.

RM: Yeah, revival. People go see these shows, then they [imagine themselves] up there dancing tap, and they’re like, “Oh, man, I want to take tap! Mom, I want to take tap!” So that’s that. And [studios] probably now, they hear of the demand for tap classes, and look for teachers. ...

KB: Brownie, in those down periods, when people were considering tap a lost art form, what kept you going? Why did you continue?

BB: Well, because what kept us going was we were always working.

KB: So even though people were saying it was a lost art form, you knew otherwise.

BB: Yeah. We was always working someplace. They had places for us to work. During that time, too, they had vaudeville. They used black acts, white acts, all type of acts. Mostly they used black dancing. In every bill they had, they used black dancers. [This was from the 1930s to the ’70s.]

KB: Has there ever been a period since you started that you can remember when you didn’t work at all? Reggio is shaking his head. (laughs)

RM: There was a dry spell when nobody was working.

BB: Oh, yeah. That was a dry spell.

KB: Like when? Do you remember when?

RM: Brownie, wouldn’t you say that would be about the ’70s and ’80s?

BB: Yeah.

RM: Right around in that ’70s/’80s period. And the reason I know, I remember seeing a documentary of Honi Coles. And he was just talking about that he could have been like the popularity of Fred Astaire if he was given the chance to. And a lot of these artists, they were being ripped off for their material and stuff. These dancers would come in and take their classes, and then you look up and there’s your act on stage without you. And the documentary on Honi Coles, [*Great Feats of Feet*], he was another part of the dancers with the Copasetics, which Brownie was a part of. But anyway, you see documentaries of them talking about it. But at some point, what helped Brownie a lot was by him being an established artist for so many years. There were people out there who knew they were 100% tap dancers and they would give them work and find them work to do so they could continue on with what they had been doing all of their lives. Because you get to a point where you’re too far gone to turn back now.

KB: You don’t know what else to do. (laughs)

RM: I mean, I wouldn’t know what to do. I don’t have no pile of degrees or nothing like that, man.

KB: Brownie, what would you do if you weren’t a tap dancer?

RM: Hee, hee, hee! He’d be out there hustling pop bottles and alu-

minum cans with a shopping cart!

KB: What would you do, Brownie?

BB: I’d do something. (laughter) ... I’d work in a restaurant, anything.

RM: He’s a survivor. He’d do what he got to do.

BB: Yeah. You do what you got to do to make a living. ...

KB: It seems like there are many more opportunities now for dancers to make money, to put money away.

RM: I don’t know about putting it away, but just to survive, make a living, yeah.

KB: Make a living.

And also kind of, I don’t want to say “unionize,” that’s probably too strong of a word, but to have more collaborations, which would sustain some type of long-term survival living.

RM: When you start doing Broadway musicals and these type of performances you have to be with a union. With a union that provides you with some type of security, because you’re paying dues for them to protect you. It’s like insurance.

KB: Yeah, the whole security issue is probably foreign to your generation, Brownie.

RM: Right. ...



KB: Let’s talk about the Copasetics. When did you first meet Bill Robinson? Do you remember?

BB: I think I was on the bill with him at the time.

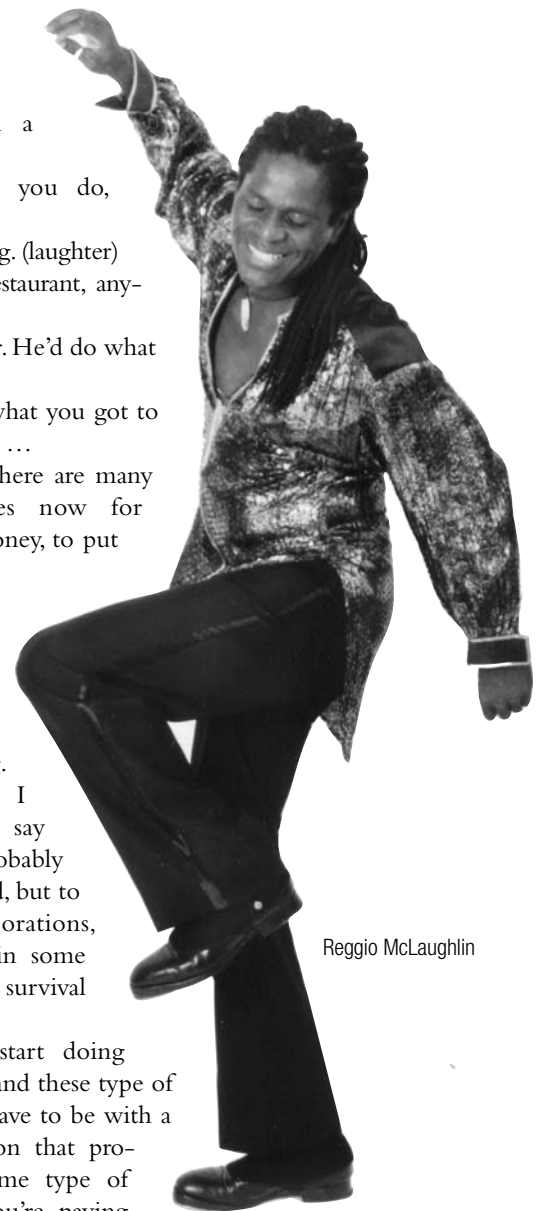
KB: At what time?

BB: How the heck did I meet him? I know one thing, I broke my leg somewhere and I was in Harlem Hospital in New York. Bill “Bojangles” Robinson heard about it and so he came to the hospital and saw me in the hospital.

KB: You had never met him before that?

BB: I’m trying to remember whether I had met him. Yeah, I had met him before, but it was just one of those fast things. So he had heard about me, so he came to the hospital, Harlem Hospital, and saw me.

KB: Let’s talk again about how you became a member of the Copasetics. Talk about the Chair Dance—the history of it.



Reggio McLaughlin

“Don’t do it
the way I do it.
Do it the way
you do it.”

—Brownie Brown

RM: Which came back from the Hoofers Club. And Brownie was saying, one part of it was, the owner couldn’t catch you sleeping, because if he did, he’d throw you out. Some of the dancers who hadn’t worked in a while and didn’t have a place to go or to stay, would go hang out at the Hoofers Club. So during a period when, like Brownie said, they would sit down because they were tired or during a break, they would try to take a little cat nap and tap their feet. And this went right on into developing a routine. And we call it the Copasetics Chair Dance.

KB: Which is something that you—all are teaching; keeping it alive.

RM: Yeah, we brought the dance back to the forefront again. I worked with Brownie on it. And when I worked with Brownie, he never wore taps or anything like that, but I just kind of listened to his rhythm, the movement of his feet, and I would watch the [video]tape. I started putting all the moves together. Tony Waag in New York from Tap City, the artistic director, the founder, he asked me and Brownie if we would come up there and teach the Chair Dance. We went up there and made a big production number out of it and we closed out the show with it. So we’ve been bringing this dance back to the forefront. It’s a part of the history of tap.

KB: Speaking of the tradition, you’ve both talked a lot about the importance of passing the history of the great artists—not just the dancing but the anecdotes, the stories—to the younger generation, that it should all be part of the education of a tap dancer. You all talked about how you felt like that may not be one of the values of tap today.

RM: They’re taking shortcuts, skipping the value of what really gives the dance the meaning, what really gives the dance the chemistry.

KB: Which you think is—

RM: Which is being connected to the heart and the soul and the spirit of dance from the legacy that was laid down from Bill Robinson, from the Copasetics, Honi Coles, all of these guys who lived this stuff and sacrificed so much to carry this legacy on to another generation. This is what they were 24/7. Guys that passed up good jobs. Like me. I don’t have a [regular] job. I’m a tap dancer. Whether I make money or no money, dancing in the subway for people to throw out nickels and dimes, man, [or on a stage] I turn down good jobs because I’m happy doing this. I’m a dancer from my heart. I don’t care if people look at me when I dance. I like how it makes me feel. You know what I’m saying? Yeah, a lot of dancers are trying to take shortcuts. They just want to get out there: Boom-bop-bap-boom-bang! “Look at me!” Show off and stuff like that. They got rhythm, but they don’t even know where it came from.

KB: Brownie, what do you think about the new dances and how they’re learning to dance now?

BB: The only way they can learn how to dance, you have to learn from the old-timers like myself.

KB: You think that’s the only way to really learn?

BB: Well—

RM: To get the most out of it—

BB: To get the most out of it.

RM: What he’s saying is. ...

There’s steps. Like when you learn from A to Z, but some go right to Z; they’re just jumping over it. They say, “I don’t want to learn that.” They go to the classes and they pick out all the funky stuff, but they don’t want to learn to do the soft shoe. They’re passing it up. But when they go to teach somewhere, they’re very limited on what they can teach. Like I was saying, I could go somewhere and teach [from] a beginner to [an

advanced] class, very structured. Some of these dancers, they lose out on a lot of work because they only can teach one level, because that’s how they learned. They don’t have a structured beginner class. They miss out on a lot. They’re incomplete. That’s what’s happening to them, some of them. I think all the dancers have the ability to learn these things and maybe at some point they will realize the value of everything that tap has to offer versus just picking out this and that.

KB: Who are some people in the younger generation that you—all felt like were preserving all of the values of tap? Women and men.

RM: Women and men. We talked about Michelle [Dorrance] who was with the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble. Dormeshia [Sumbry-Edwards] and Omar [Edwards] and many more up there in New York and all over. We’ve got Jason [Samuels Smith], Derick [Grant], a lot of the guys who came out of *Noise/Funk*. It’s good because they have had a very good mentorship. They’re not hot headed. They listen. Not only that, these guys, some of their parents were dancers and stuff also, so their parents have already embedded into them the discipline of vaudeville, that whole surrounding of positive energy about what dance should be. It’s like a total package of dance. So that’s kind of good. I always talk about the mentorship that you really need. Right now I’ve seen a lot of dancers stop dancing, but I think if they had good mentorship, they would have continued to dance. I mean, I’m talking about being backstage when me and Brownie was one of the last ones coming on, and there’s like ten other top dancers before us and they was, like, kicking! They’re jamming and doing everything. I’m just shaking. “Oh, Brownie, look at them! What am I’m gonna do? These guys are great, man!” He’d just be sitting there waiting or reading the newspaper. “Aw, shut up, man! Just go out there and do your own thing and do what we do and you’ll see. It’ll be OK.” With that kind of advice, I’d go out there. “Don’t even think about them,” he’d say. We’d start doing our thing and we’d do our thing and we’d look up and everybody’s giving us standing ovations and stuff.

KB: Speaking about mentors, can we talk again about what you two have learned from each other: Reggio, what have you learned from Brownie since you’ve been working with him?

RM: Oh, man. I’ve learned a lot of history. One thing that we talked about, you had books that were out, some books would say this or that. Brownie would hear something from a book and say, “Aw, man, that ain’t the way it goes. The reason why I know [is], I was there when that happened.” You’ve got people telling stories from their own point of view, changing up stuff, filling in the gaps

with what they think happened. But being with him, somebody who was there and lived that era, it's like you're getting something in its purest form. I like that because it means more, makes it very solid. I like what I learn from Brownie, because he never uses terminology. I had to learn, pick up by watching him, trying to listen to the rhythm. He's never worn taps since I've been with him, so it made me use all my senses to develop myself as a dancer, as a teacher. And now when you go to these classes, a lot of these dancers, they don't even think for themselves. You've got to just put it all on a silver platter, count it out for them. They say, "How many times do we do this? OK. How many times do we do that?" I just dance with the music and when the music changes, I can feel the change with my feet. I'm like, "Man, I never counted it. I just know how to change when it comes up." And they don't. And they need to learn to dance from the heart.

KB: It seems like you already the gift inside of you.

RM: I started out learning that way, and when I worked with Brownie, it continued to develop that way. And to try to bring that into the class right now is almost just like a lost way of teaching. You can't even teach that no more unless you're with somebody who's from that school too. There are some guys out there that learned the same way like I did, but with some of the students now, you have to put it all out there. Spell it all out. And that makes the dancers be more robotic. When Brownie shows me something, he always says, "Don't do it the way I do it. Do it the way *you* do it."

KB: You said he taught you a lot about showmanship too ... really connecting with the audience.

RM: Yeah, because he was in vaudeville. Not only did they dance and sing, they told jokes, they had a combination of stuff. When I was dancing in the subway, it was a very intimate setting, because I'm right on the platform with people and they'd say, "Hey, how are you doing, hoofer?" And I'd say, "Hey, how you doing?" ... So you develop this intimate connection with people. When I came on stage, I brought the same connections with people I had from dancing in the subway. I wasn't like a look-at-me dancer. I'd get on stage and just start talking to the audience, "Howdy! Hey, how are you doing?" They're my friends.

KB: And [Brownie] what have you learned from Reggio, would you say? You said he taught you how to teach.

BB: Yeah, he did.

KB: Before Reggio you didn't know how to teach?

BB: I didn't teach. ... I never taught before.

RM: He might do one little workshop, but it was kind of structured in a way where the people came. Because the workshop was like a documentary type of form. ... He never really taught, until his mid 70s, when we started working together and getting workshops. People wanted to meet Brownie, to ask him questions about the past and what was it like to work with Duke Ellington. What



Charles "Cookie" Cook in concert ca. 1980 with Louie Belson on drums. Photo © Circuit Productions, Inc.

it was like to be in the Cotton Club. Things like that. Brownie danced for Al Capone once here in Chicago in a speakeasy when he was a little kid. He did stuff like that. ... But at the same time, after telling stories, we had to teach too. So, I'd pick up from him what he'd got, then I had to make it teachable. I had to break down the steps. When we did the Chair Dance, I always improvised it. We never broke it down. I always just went, "Dun-dun-da-dun-dun," tapping my heart out. Then when they told us to teach it, I was like, "Oh, man, how am I —?"

BB: (laughs)

RM: Now we had to sit up there and I had to go over and over, "Brownie, what did you do here?" Break it down. And as we were going through this breaking down process, that's when we were picking up stuff from each other. I'd say, "Well, that's a flat, man, and this is that." Then when we'd go into the classroom and taught it. It was amazing. ... Then Channel 11 saw the Chair Dance that we did and they wanted us to do it for Center Stage for the PBS station, because I was awarded a grant to study with Brownie from the Illinois Arts Council. And so they thought it was amazing that Brownie was passing down his legacy to me and he even felt like I



Brownie (r) shows Jason Samuels Smith (l) a new step. Photo by Melba Huber

had the ability to pick up this legacy and to continue it. I also talked about that with the kids today. If they continue with the determination, that's what will break down barriers for them and knock obstacles out of their way. It all depends on how determined you are to do this and how much you're willing to sacrifice.

KB: In your lifetime, where would you like to see tap be?

BB: I wouldn't like to see it be what it is today, because ... the only real good tap dancing out there now is the tap dancers that are teaching.

RM: It's like the connection of the true sense of tap dancing, where it developed from, is being lost. It doesn't tell the story like it should.

KB: But he was saying there are people out there who are teaching it.

RM: Yeah, they're teaching, but we don't get the opportunities like they did years ago at MGM with movies, stuff like that. Gregory [Hines], he was doing good with *Cotton Club* and these tap movies ...

KB: So you would like to see more opportunities?

RM: Yeah, bigger opportunities. Right now, what's good is that these tap festivals are springing up all over in different places now. They got a tap festival in LA with Debbie Allen, Jason [Samuels Smith], and Chloe [Arnold]. I think they're going to draw more attention to people out there to see tap at its best. It's so many great tap dancers that work very hard that go undiscovered, that are not recognized that are amazing, you know what I'm saying? So I think with these tap festivals, if they continue to grow and make noise, pretty soon you're going to find somebody to say, "Hey, you need to do this." Like *Riverdance*. Make something big of it, you know? You would just want to see it grow. Like, the sky's the limit, as far as we can go. Let's just take it there. Yeah. That's what I would like to see more and more.

KB: Brownie, you told me that you had started dancing after seeing your older brother.

BB: Yeah. I had a brother who was [a dancer] in show business before me.

KB: Did you go to his shows? Did you go to his rehearsals? When

did you first see tap dancing?

BB: When I first started dancing I was just fooling around the house, and then I started doing amateur shows.

KB: Just by watching your brother?

BB: And the theaters at the time [in Chicago], they used to have, one day a week, amateur hour. So that's where I went and started dancing. I went there and won a couple of prizes ...

KB: So wow, at seven or eight—(laughs) did you win money? Or were you just doing it?

BB: Oh, yeah, yeah. I forgot what the prize was. There's usually first, second, and third prizes, something like that.

KB: Just think about when you were first learning how to dance. Jumaane, you can add something, and Reggio too. I guess you guys, especially you, Jumaane, are more from the era of teaching, where people are taught tap. I'm interested to know what was it like for your era, Brownie.

BB: Well, I was never taught dancing. During that time, very few people were taught dancing. They just picked it up wherever.

KB: Tap is a percussive dance, there's music involved, that element, the physical element, and then there's the choreography of it. When you were learning how to dance, did you watch what dancers were doing and repeat their foot movements? Or did you listen? How did you pick it up?

BB: Oh, no, no, I just picked up dancing from my brother and then did my own stuff, whatever I felt like doing, whatever come into my mind to do, I just did it. I wasn't worried about anybody else, watching anybody else ...

KB: Were you interested in making music with your feet, or were you interested in dancing, body movement? What was more important?

BB: I mostly liked to have an interesting dance, because my brother came up and danced, so I wanted to be like him and dance too.

KB: Jumaane, what about you? What was the most important element for you, if you remember?

JUMAANE TAYLOR: I was in dancing school, so that's where I learned ... It was mostly the music of it, the percussion.

KB: Reggio, what attracted you?

RM: I like footwork, rhythm. When my teacher would teach me, Jimmy Payne Sr., he would show me a combination and I would take his combination and I would go and practice it over and over, but I would do it my way. I would always try to make it much more funkier, faster, you know what I mean? And sort of like in a direction that I wanted best to describe me.

KB: So you developed your own style.

RM: Yeah, my personality and style. So I was definitely about footwork, rhythm, because that was tap to me. At that time, I really wasn't interested in no body movement, but the rhythm. That's what "hoofin'" is about—the rhythm of the feet. Brownie, when he started, I would say he did more rhythm footwork and used his body later when he became a member of Copasetics, and he started doing routines that required footwork and then bringing it into his body. Jumaane, when you was in dance school, did you take more than just tap? Did you do jazz or ballet or take jazz movements alone? Like some schools you go to, you do a combination class, where they teach you that, so that's what I'm getting at. Were you just all feet, or did you take jazz?

JT: I took gymnastics. And I did the Katherine Dunham technique.

RM: So you could be doing acrobatic tap, like flipping over the head and up the wall and all that.

KB: He was on the Nicholas Brothers, that next level.

JT: That's all a part, because Maceo [Anderson], who I got combinations from ... was one of The Four Step Brothers. They were actually like acrobatic tap dancers, but they had sharp routines. But then they're going through that flipping and splitting and jumping over each other. There's some very incredible stuff.

KB: Right. ... I wanted to talk about those really, really early shows, Brownie. I remember you telling me about—I just love to say the name—"Watermelon Idea." (laughs)

BB: Oh, my God!

KB: That was your first show, right? I love that. Where was that performed, your very first show?

RM: With Mammy and her Pics.

BB: Yeah. That was when I was just a kid. There was three of us and a woman called Sarah Donovan. She had an act called Mammy and her Pics. We were the "pics" [pickaninnies] at that time, myself and Cookie [Cook] and a boy named Horace Payne. ...

KB: What was that first show like? What type of theater was it, do you remember?

BB: Oh, it was a big-town theater at that time. There was a big white show with just us as colored entertainers. We were called Mammy and her Pics.

KB: Were shows segregated in Chicago, even up North?

BB: It wasn't segregated as far as we were concerned. It was just the idea for what they had as far as doing a big white show with black entertainers. And we were the black entertainers. They called us Mammy and her Pics.

KB: Do you remember how the audience responded to your show?

BB: Oh, yeah, they responded very well, because at the time, we'd been playing in all-white theaters. It was a white show with us featured in it. Mammy and her Pics.

JT: Did you and Cookie get started after that first show?

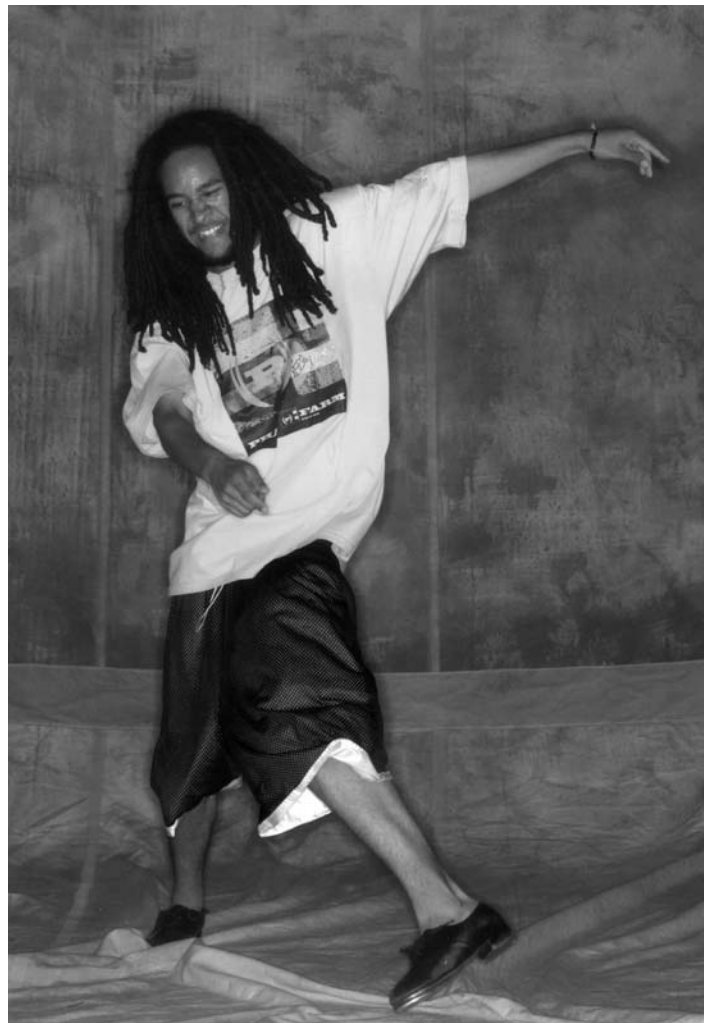
KB: Yeah, let's talk about your previous partner—Cookie Cook. How'd you start working with him?

BB: Cookie Cook? Oh, honey! ... I have to go back to the day when I first started in show business. I was working professional right away. ...

RM: Yeah, his brother first told him about a dancing job. Something happened to one of the dancers and they needed a replacement and he got Brownie to do it. Cookie was already with them, and that's how he met Cookie. I guess after that they started working as a duo.

BB: Oh, yeah, we got started. Actually, the way we got started, we came back to Chicago and [Mammy and her Pics] broke up. ... I used to go to the [Regal] Theater at that time and catch shows. They had a comedian there called [I think] Margus Garby Rogers. He was the house comedian. I went there with another fellow at the time. He introduced me to him. So he was telling me about how he's got a show that he's going to take to Kansas City, and if I could get me a partner, he would take me with him. So that's the time that I went and got Cookie.

KB: How old were you, do you remember?



Jumaane Taylor

BB: Oh, my God, I must've been about 13 or 14, something like that. ... So we got together and started rehearsing. Then the guy got the show together and took it to Kansas City, and instead of us calling ourselves Cook and Brown, he called us Garbage and His Cans.

KB: Where did he get that name from?

BB: His name was Garby ... and he called [the act] Garbage and His Cans. So we were the two cans, me and Cookie.

KB: Who are some of the people that you remember in those days? You mentioned The Four Step Brothers. Were you aware of other people dancing, either through television or the newspapers? Were you aware of acts like Maceo and the Step Brothers?

BB: Oh, I knew all of them. We were in Big Time even before they were, before they even got together as the act the Step Brothers. They all came along during the time we were there.

RM: Yeah, but that's also during the Golden Age of Tap, so at that time, it was like tap dancing was all the way up in the forefront. So you had a lot of dance acts that was out there that crossed paths, because you played a circuit, a vaudeville circuit of theaters, and one group is leaving as another one's coming. So you became affiliated, meeting Sammy Davis Jr., the Nicholas Brothers, even Lena Horne and people like that who worked in the Cotton Club.

KB: Buster Brown.

RM: Yeah. Brownie worked with Count Basie, Duke Ellington, everybody of that era—especially after he and Cookie moved from Chicago to New York and was part of that Harlem renaissance era too. So all the dancers definitely at some point or another had some meeting point. Brownie'd been around a lot of dancers when the Hoofers' Club was there in New York.

KB: Back then when you started, Brownie, there was no such thing as the Internet or [*On Tap*]. How did you find out about jobs?

BB: Oh, they always had agents. You had to have an agent to get a job.

KB: Were your agents—not to dwell on the subject of race, but we are trying to figure out what was going on—were the agents black primarily?

BB: Jewish.

KB: Jewish agents booking black entertainment.

RM: A lot of times, a lot of the shows that blacks were doing were pretty much backed by Jewish people, I guess because of what Jews went through in their period of Holocaust, they understand what's happening with blacks out there. But not only that, it was all about talent and making money too.

KB: So you saw them as artistic allies?

RM: Yeah, they were very artistic and knew how to market black artists and how to get them in places.

KB: So in addition to it kind of being a network of people, word of mouth, looking out for each other, you also had these agents to look out for you in New York. As far as New York, who are some of the [other] people [you worked with]?

BB: Harry James. You don't know about Jack Teagarden. He was a big name. Played all the high-class joints that they played.

RM: Cab Calloway. See, that was also during the Big Band era too. Everything was big bands. Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Cab Calloway ... ([Brownie] likes to watch videotapes; he had a lot of videotapes. A lot of them also got destroyed in a flood down here.) Lionel Hampton too. It was funny, because when they was showing Lionel Hampton, he was playing drums.

KB: At the time all this was going on, the Big Band era, when you were performing regularly with these people, [Brownie] were you aware that history was being made? What did you—all think about what was going on? Were you just doing your thing?

BB: Just doing our thing. Working, making money. It was show business. They hired you for a certain amount of money, and you went along with them. And mostly during that time it was all big bands.

KB: Were there restrictions in New York in some of the bigger theaters?

BB: Oh, no, no, no. ... There were no restrictions. If you were good enough, they hired you.

KB: Regardless of race.

BB: But you had to have a good agent to get you into places where nobody else could get you into.

RM: Unless you're talking about the Cotton Club and how the black entertainers had to come in through the back entrance. You couldn't come through the front door. Those type of restrictions. Because you did have a certain type of segregation. ...

BB: The reason why they came through the back door at that time is because that's where the dressing rooms were and everything. You

came in that way to get dressed. But at that time, there was no colored audience coming in.

KB: So there wasn't much of a colored audience for tap?

RM: No, no, it was a white audience. ... The only [dancer] that had the big chance of getting away with a lot of things at the time was Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. He was a super movie star. They called him the Mayor of Harlem. They talk about his history—he had six or seven police badges—all that stuff. Which Honi Coles talks about with the Copasetics when they were on *The Dick Cavett Show*. [Bojangles] had a lot of freedom to do a lot of things—

KB: Because of who he was.

RM: Because of who he was, sure. One thing, working with Brownie, one thing that I experience with him is that he never talks any bitterness about segregation or white/black, so it's almost—I don't even know if he understood that. We've never talked about that. We've been to colleges and different places, and people ask questions, and when they want to talk about segregation and black/white issues, it's an issue that we almost pretty much avoid. We never really talk too much about it, because me and him never even talked about that. If we do, it's very limited, because some of these things happening back then, we already know a lot about. We try to keep moving the way we are now.

KB: And I think it is the past.

BB: Yeah.

RM: Yeah.

KB: But I think it is important to continue to share that just from the perspective of people like Jumaane, the younger people who don't know what it's like to have to try to make it.

RM: Experience it firsthand.

KB: Right. (laughs)

RM: Tote that barge, lift that bail!

KB: Jumaane, could you imagine showing up with your group and having to go to the back? That's not even in your realm of consciousness, at least it better not be.

JT: No.

KB: I think it's important to not necessarily dwell [on the subject], but just remind people what the older generation has gone through so that the [younger generation doesn't] take their privileges for granted. ...

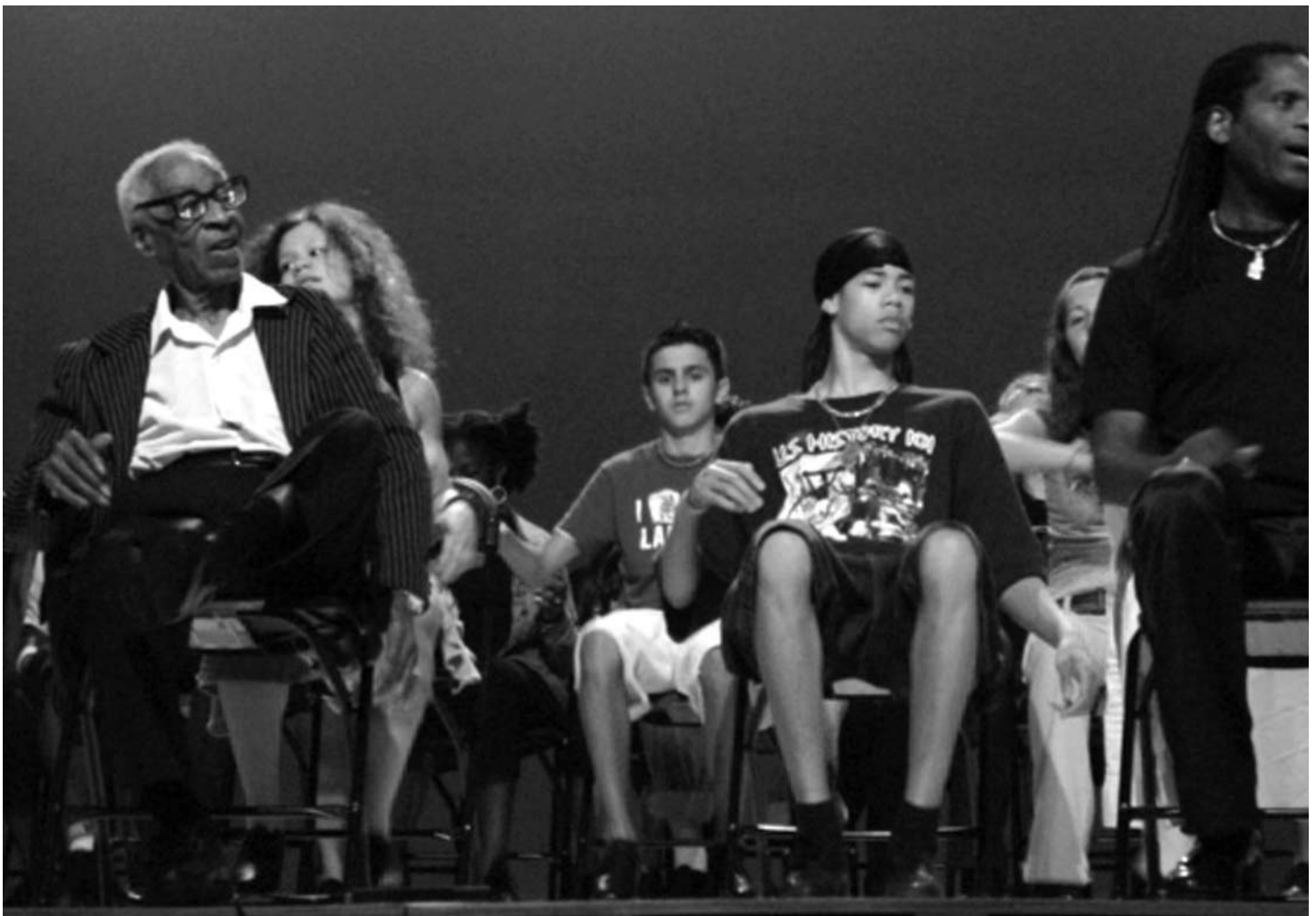
BB: You've got to understand, where you was working at, there was a stage entrance. It's not necessarily that you had to go to the back, but that's the way you got into the club and a theater, so you could start to work.

KB: It sounds like just dancing was so much more important at the time. You all loved to dance and wanted to dance so much that the racial barrier was not important.

BB: It wasn't. As far as I'm concerned, I knew segregation existed, but it didn't bother me any because it never came up to me at that particular time. At that particular time, I was working in places which was segregated, but it was white. You was a colored and you had a white audience.

RM: So he wasn't put in a position all the time where he had to go through a major disaster. [He went through] the proper procedures. You just go through the back—that's where the stage is—you do your thing, you pack up, you're out of there.

KB: They are definitely, [Brownie's] generation, pioneers. I have so



Ernest "Brownie" Brown (l) and Reggio McLaughlin (r) teach the Chair Dance at the 2005 LA Tap Festival. Photo by Larry Howard

much respect for them.

RM: Oh, sure! Without a doubt.

KB: But the Cotton Club, that's really legendary. I used to live in Harlem, so I've walked past it, but I don't know anything about [its] heyday. What was it like in there back then? What was the atmosphere in the Cotton Club?

BB: The atmosphere was all right. They had a whole colored show and a big band. They had good entertainment, of course, girls, comedians, tap dancers, acrobats, a line of chorus girls. At that particular time, too, Lena Horne was one of the chorus girls and then she started to become a singer. They called her a soubrette. She'd sing out front to the girls and the girls would dance. They'd stage it just like that. It was like a production, which it was. Cotton Club shows were a production.

KB: How many hours a day would you say you spent on rehearsing and coming up with routines?

BB: Oh, once you got your act together, you didn't have to rehearse no more. All you had to do was find a place to do it at. If somebody booked you, it was great. ... You didn't have to perfect too much routines, just perfect what you knew.

RM: The concept of "routine" is a different concept of what a younger generation of dancers call a routine, with its improvising and bop-bop-bop. ... Back then, when I was around the old-timers and Maceo, improvising was unheard of. That wasn't no routine; it was a technique and it started getting famous with Savion, being

accepted for what you're doing and doing your thing. Back then, you usually did a chorus, which was a 32-bar routine to a dance ... a routine that had a beginning, middle, and ending. Like when you see Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, they're performing with props and everything. They were really taking dance somewhere. Back then, in that era, it wasn't improvising. ... You did some stop timing to music.

KB: Jumaane, I know the younger generation is exposed to improvising very early. When were you first exposed to it?

JT: Like at ten.

RM: Jumaane's been coming around to the workshops since he was a kid, standing right up and connecting with where you're supposed to be at, you know what I mean? If you're going to be a dancer from the heart, you stay connected from a kid. So I think he has shown everybody who knows him that he's the real thing as a dancer. Especially if you say, "I want to be a dancer," but don't nobody never see you around. You're not in the workshops, you're not doing anything—you're not staying connected. So he's been there from a kid all the way to now. Under those circumstances, he just has to keep growing. That speaks for itself.

KB: [During] that dry period, when tap pretty much went underground, you [Copasetics] just kept it alive among yourselves?

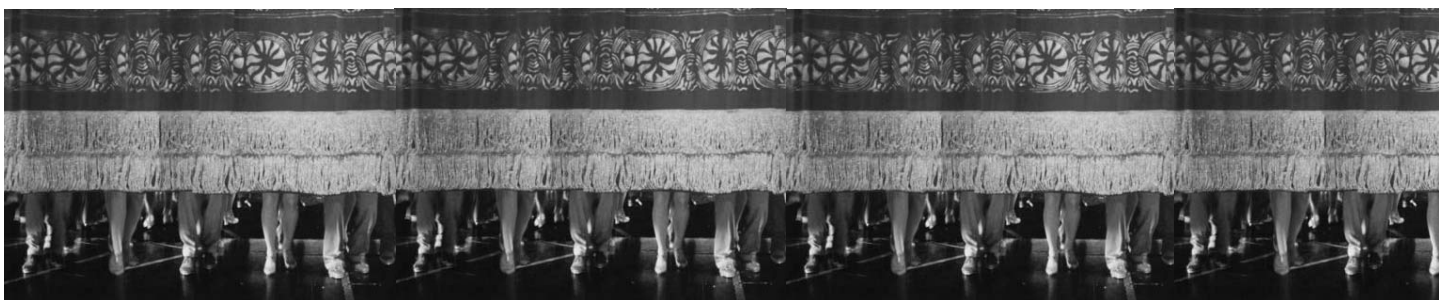
RM: Brenda Bufalino did a documentary on the Copasetics, *Great Feats of Feet*, and got them doing a performance and workshops in upstate New York on the college circuit. ... And Brenda and Jane

[continued on p. 54]

Peggy Sawyer Dances On and On and On: 42nd Street, 1928–2005



by jack cobb



In the middle of the Depression in 1932, Warner Brothers in Hollywood decided to make a big-budget talking movie about a Broadway show. One thing they did was to hire a chorus of 40 to 50 tap dancers. Nearly 50 years later, in 1980, a famous Broadway producer decided to turn the old movie called *42nd Street* into a Broadway show. One thing he did was to approve the hiring of a chorus of 40 to 50 tap dancers. But that's getting ahead of the story.

It really starts back in the '20s, when 23-year-old New York dancer Bradford Ropes wrote the novel *42nd Street*, about the backstage world of wisecracking chorus girls and sweet Peggy Sawyer from Allentown, Pennsylvania, who comes to New York hoping to sing and tap dance on Broadway.

Percussive dancing existed long before the 1920s, but in that decade, the new mix of jazz music and tap dancing became a staple of Broadway musicals and grabbed the public's attention. Ropes was a tap dancer right in the middle of this era, and he put some of his experiences down in his novel. But by the end of the '20s, Broadway producers felt that tap dancers were not "selling tickets," so they started looking for newer novelties. Many of the Broadway tap dancers moved on to Hollywood.

By the end of the 1920s, the talking motion picture had been created in Hollywood and directors were looking for material for the new medium. At the Warner Brothers studio, a director named Lloyd Bacon read the novel *42nd Street* and convinced his bosses that it could be turned into a "talkie," with singing and tap dancing. In the meantime, public enthusiasm for tap spread from New York to other parts of the country via new magazines like *Time* and

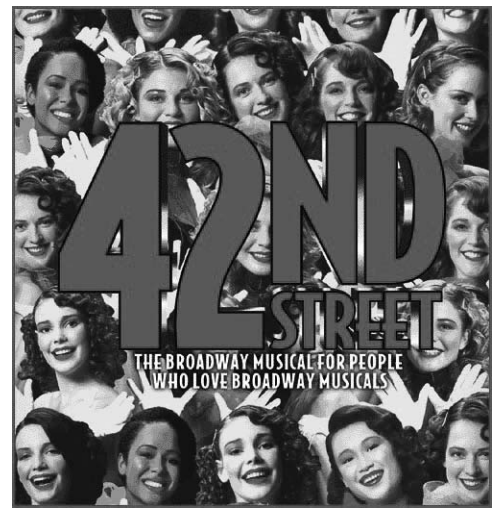
The New Yorker. Warner Brothers hired Ropes to help transform his novel into a screenplay. During this "Golden Age of Tap"—when tap was such a prominent part of the American entertainment scene—people like Bill Robinson, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, and Eleanor Powell were all tap dancing on Broadway before they moved to Hollywood. The 1928 novel and the 1933 movie relate important details in this larger story, and tell something about those times.

Enter Ruby Keeler. Rusty Frank calls Keeler "the first tap dancing star of the silver screen." Keeler was born in Canada in 1910, but grew up in New York City and was dancing in a Broadway chorus by the time she was 13. During her teen years she danced concomitantly at two New York night clubs, and in 1927 she was back on Broadway, waltz clogging in *The Sidewalks of New York*. When she was growing up, Keeler learned Irish jigs and hornpipes in clogging shoes with wooden soles, and in her movies and on Broadway, she says she never used metallic taps. She preferred to call herself a "hooper" or a "buck-and-wing dancer," but she always did her own tap choreography.

When Ruby Keeler was 22, Warner Brothers offered her the Peggy Sawyer role in the movie version of *42nd Street*. It was the middle of the Depression, and Warner Brothers desperately needed a hit. They hired tunesmith Harry Warren to write the songs, and Busby Berkeley did some of his earliest kaleidoscopic dance scenes for the film. The movie was a smashing success and turned Keeler into a star.

opposite page: (top right) Stairs Finale, *42nd Street*. Photo courtesy of Melba Huber
photos of dancin' feet from <http://www.42ndstreetthemusical.com/>

photos this page: (l) Gower Champion with Wanda Richert from www.42ndstreetthemusical.com/gallery/original/2.html; (r) *42nd Street* cover art from www.42ndstreetbroadway.com/home.htm



The public loved tap dancing Ruby Keeler, although her only tap solo scene in the film is very short. She went on to tap with Paul Draper in 1935 in a movie called *Colleen*, another Warner Brothers production. You can still rent or buy a video of the 1933 *42nd Street* movie. It was filmed in black and white of course. (As a side note, in 1971, when Keeler was 61, she came back to Broadway to star in the revival of *No, No, Nanette*. Her tap solo was to “I Want to Be Happy.”)

Tap dancing performances were scarce in the 1960s, but started to come back in the '70s. In 1980, legendary producer David Merrick decided to take the Ropes' novel plus the 1933 movie with its Harry Warren music and transform it into—what else?—a Broadway show about a Broadway show. He hired Gower Champion to direct and choreograph, and Champion—who was a famous choreographer but no tap dancer—got Randy Skinner and Karin Baker to assist with the tap routines. After the auditions were over and Peggy Sawyer had been cast, Champion changed his mind and hired Wanda Richert to play Peggy Sawyer.

The 1980 version of *42nd Street* was a big-budget show with bright lights and lots of glitter. It was also a big bet that the public would buy tickets to hear Harry Warren's Depression-era songs and see an ensemble of 36 dancers tapping to the music about a Broadway show from first rehearsal to opening night. *42nd Street* won the 1980–81 Tony Award for Best Musical, and Champion won the Tony Award for Outstanding Choreography. Richert won the 1981 Theatre World Award and was nominated for a Tony Award.

The big, bright tap extravaganza opened on August 25, 1980, and despite mixed reviews from critics, performances went on for eight and a half years. The show closed on January 8, 1989, after audiences had seen 3486 performances. When it opened in 1980, the longest running musicals on Broadway had been *Grease* (with 3388 performances) and *Fiddler on the Roof* (with 3242 performances). Only *A Chorus Line* has a current record of more performances.

From 1928 to 1989 would be a long enough history of tap dancing Peggy Sawyer and “the song and dance fable of Broadway,” as the 1980 show was subtitled; however, only ten years after it had closed on Broadway (for the first time), a Dutch producer started making plans for a revival of *42nd Street*. Joop van den Ende wanted to get some of the people from the 1980 production to put together an enhanced version of *42nd Street*, first to do a revival in Amsterdam, and then to take the revival back to New York and Broadway—an audacious and expensive idea. Van den Ende got

Mark Bramble to direct and Randy Skinner to choreograph the revival, and gave them the scope and budget to equal or outshine the original Broadway show. The Dutch production opened on September 17, 2000, with much new choreography and more of Warren's songs from the 1930s.

After the success of the Dutch version in Amsterdam, the Broadway revival opened on May 2, 2001, in the Ford Center for the Performing Arts in New York City. And get this: The theater is located on 42nd Street with a footlight-studded staircase almost as wide as the stage that was featured in one of the many production numbers. The ensemble of dancers makes up more than half the cast, and the tap dancing and the swingy songs are obviously what bring in the audiences. The story of Peggy Sawyer, who rises to the occasion when the star breaks her ankle, is just the trimming.

In the latest Broadway revival, Kate Levering from Sacramento, California, was Peggy Sawyer. As a teenager, Levering performed in 18 local musicals and came to *42nd Street* at 22 years of age. Having Susan Stroman as her mentor can't hurt. For her first big part on Broadway Levering won the 2001 Astaire Award for Best Female Dancer, and got a Tony nomination for Best Featured Actress in a Musical. And the show won a 2001 Tony Award as Best Musical Revival.

Would 21st century audiences like the 1930s costumes and music? A big, brash, old-fashioned musical comedy suitable for everyone older than eight years old? Yes! The show ran for another 44 months and closed January 2, 2005. However, once a Broadway show has lived this long, it starts to become international and never-ending. There have been companies performing *42nd Street* in recent years in London (Catherine Zeta-Jones portrayed Peggy Sawyer in the London performance), Tokyo, Australia, Moscow, and Stuttgart. It has also been translated into Spanish and performed in Mexico City.

Since 1980, *42nd Street* has provided employment to hundreds of tap dancers in cities across the globe. Its phenomenal success demonstrates that the public will support tap dancing performances—and lay out \$25 to \$100 for a ticket—to see a show with bright lights, glitzy costumes, a stage full of tap dancers, and a story about Peggy Sawyer, who gets her chance to become a star.

Ed. Note: For more information about choreographer Randy Skinner, see our current story on the next page and refer to “Randy Skinner: The Man behind 42nd Street” in vol. 4, no. 3, Spring 2003 issue of On Tap.



Randy Skinner, A CHAMPION OF GOWER

by melba huber

Randy Skinner. Photo courtesy of Melba Huber

After spending more than 12 years of his dance life associated with *42nd Street* and two long runs on Broadway, dancer, choreographer, and director Randy Skinner has a proven strategy to select cast members for a successful Broadway show. When Skinner auditions dancers for shows, he looks for four things:

1. A sound dance technique
2. A specific dancer look
3. A particular body type
4. A display of the love and joy of dancing

“I try to find all of that,” says Skinner. “Technique without joy is not interesting. Joy can’t be taught. It is inherent in dancers. There are people who have it all. Your eye goes to the people with that special quality and who also connect with the music. When you have a cast of that, you have a whole cast of power.”

In 1980, after graduating with a speech education teaching degree from Ohio State University, Skinner moved to New York. His bonding to *42nd Street* began—and his life changed—with one call.

“I received a phone call,” Skinner recalled, “‘This is Gower Champion and I’m working on a new musical. Come in and spend the day dancing in the studio to see how it all feels.’”

Gower, a Hercules of 1950s dance and musicals, and an acclaimed dancer and member of the Gower and Marge Champion dance duo, was the director and choreographer for a new musical, *42nd Street*. In that show, Gower was one of the first dance choreographers to be the director of a show as well. Gower was seeking an assistant choreographer to help him plan the steps and dances, and to train the dancers for the new musical. A dance arranger who had previously worked with Skinner recommended Skinner to Gower.

Skinner spent his trial day in the studio with Champion and another assistant, Karin Baker, who had already been hired. Champion also wanted a male assistant. Referring to the famous historical dance team of Gower and his wife, Marge, Skinner said, “I didn’t know a lot about Gower and Marge. I knew Fred and Ginger. I went back and watched Gower and Marge dance on film. Now I know they were the last of the great dance teams of the mid ’50s.”

Skinner’s previous experience included attending dance classes from the age of four, dancing in college shows at Ohio State University, and dancing in summer stock with the Kenley Players Company that toured in three cities. “John Kenley loved Ohio peo-

ple and tried to cast them,” Skinner said. “The theaters were large, seating 3000 to 4000 people. I had the opportunity to work with Cyd Charisse, Ann Miller, Mickey Rooney, Juliette Prouse, and many [other] stars.”

Skinner’s well-rounded experience and exposure to choreography prompted him to accept Gower’s job offer, despite his predisposition to perform. “I did choreography in college, but my focus had been on performance,” Skinner recalled. “I always knew I had a talent for it. It came easy for me, but I had not put a lot of serious thought into it.” With the opportunity to work with a legend like Gower, Skinner decided that he should break out beyond the performance arena and pursue this opportunity.

A friend of Gower commented that Skinner danced like Gower and was even physically built like him. Skinner cherishes the hard work and concentrated time spent with Gower. “It was an education to learn how to shape and create a show, pull things together, organize a musical, and to work on a show from the ground up and watch it come together,” Skinner recalled.

After months of hard work preparing for the first *42nd Street* show, Gower Champion died on opening night. “Karin and I watched over the show and it was a huge hit,” Skinner said. “It ran for eight and a half years. ... Twelve years later, the revival was planned. The revival has lasted three and a half years and has a huge cast: 24 girls, 12 boys, 4 swing girls, 2 swing boys, 11 principals and understudies, 53 cast members. That’s over 100 [people] backstage.”

Skinner wanted to pay tribute to the past with his revived *42nd Street*, much like Ann Reinking did for *Chicago*. He feels Reinking paved the way to pay tribute. Yet, Skinner also wanted to make it a whole new experience. “It took lots of rethinking and reinventing.”

In recognition of his efforts, Skinner received a Tony nomination for Best Choreography, nominations from the Outer Critics, and Drama Desk and Astaire awards for the revival of *42nd Street*.

Skinner believes the dance world has room for all types of tap—show tapping and hoofing. “The musical theater tap, jazz, and ballroom are our classic art forms of American Broadway musicals,” Skinner explained. “Ballet came from Europe. There is an element of dancing going on under what you are seeing in tap. [Whenever you see someone dance, you know that a lot of technique and training have been developed underneath what you are seeing to

“It was an education to learn how to shape and create a show...”

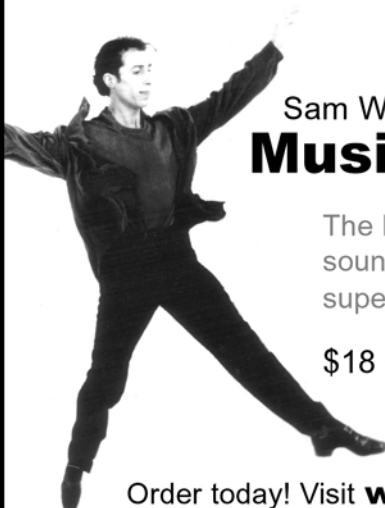
achieve that level of performance.] Our roots are important. We should keep stressing this priority, and teaching revivals and show training for new shows.”

Skinner does more than preach about training, guest teaching in New York at Steps and Broadway Dance Center, leading master classes, and giving lectures at colleges. Some of the other musicals that he has choreographed include *Ain't Broadway Grand* and *State Fair*, which he also co-directed.

For some people it might be sad to walk by the theater where their revived choreography played for more than three years, but Skinner is always looking ahead. He recently did ballroom choreography for *After the Night and the Music*, written by Elaine May. His current project is choreographing a new musical—*White Christmas*—that opens in San Francisco in November. And he is now in the process of casting three companies of *White Christmas* for Boston, Los Angeles, and a return engagement in San Francisco, with rehearsals beginning in October. “It is based on the movie with music by Irving Berlin. It is exciting to work with this music, lots of music of Fred and Ginger.” Skinner credits his parents for taking him to many movies that became the major influence in his professional life.

All bets are on that *42nd Street* will return in future years. Skinner is young enough to choreograph it one more time. Fans of Broadway will look forward to seeing, once again, the full dance cast entering from the top of the steps, near the end of the show, for the stair finale, for yet another great moment in tap and theater.

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TAP INTERNS:

GETTING THE INSIDE STORY

by deanna wantz

So you think you want to be an intern. Did you even know that tap festivals around the world have internships? You do some behind-the-scenes work and in return you get to take free classes. No sweat, right? It doesn't take much to run a festival.

Boy was I wrong! There are so many intricate details that go into putting on a tap festival that you don't ever see when you are just a participant. There is marketing, promotions, fundraising, running errands, schlepping, phone calling, schlepping, organizing, and more schlepping. Although my dance management education at Oklahoma City University prepared me for everything that I experienced, there is nothing like being thrown into the middle of it.

I walked into the Tap City office in New York three weeks before the festival was to begin, not knowing what to expect. Right off the bat I was put to work calling different tap organizations to get information to put into the welcome bags. After that project was finished I was immediately put to work on another project. The same was true for the other eight interns. There were so many things going on at once, I am amazed that tiny space held us all. As the festival grew closer it was astounding to see how everything came together. We even had some free time to take a tap mat out to Times Square to jam on the street while passing out flyers.

The actual festival was a whole other experience. Staff members are always the first to walk in the door and the last to leave. The



Buskin' at Columbus Circle at the 59th Street entrance to Central Park. (back row, l to r) Victor Fung, Dolores Sanchez, Leah Fox. (front row, l to r) Barbara Vargas, Vera Ivashina, Kimberly Lam, Deanna Wantz.

interns were in charge of checking in all the participants and giving them their name tags, making sure each studio was set up properly and teachers had everything they needed, answering questions, and doing any other grunt work that needed to be done. On top of working and helping to make things run smoothly, interns take classes. There is no doubt that this was an exhausting week, but it was well worth it. How can you beat those extra stories you hear from Dianne Walker when you are helping her get a cab? Or personally escorting Dr. Jimmy Slyde from the train station to his hotel? And, best of all, having Harold Cromer sing a show tune just for you? When I look back on the festival, I don't remember the sleep I didn't get or how tired my muscles were from lugging 108 cases of bottled water to various locations, but I do remember all the things I learned in class, Mable Lee's speech at the gala reception, and the all the stories from the great masters of tap. They are history and I got to hear the history from the source. That is priceless.



(l to r) Alicia Smith, Tohko Kosuge, and Hjordis Linn (festival manager), Alicia Tohko, and Kelly Kaleta (not pictured) were instrumental with their assistance of Michele Ribble with the youth program this year. Michael Barker, Manny Jaques, Kelly Kaleta, and Cindy Lou Parker (not pictured) rounded out the group of interns—all of whom worked very hard and provided fantastic support. Photo by Tony Waag

.....
Ed. Note: Our thanks to Hjordis Linn for forwarding this article written by one of her interns. If you would like to be an intern at a tap festival, contact the festival to determine whether they have an intern program and, if yes, how you can apply. Please note that in On Tap's Summer Festival Preview issue (April–June), we provide contact information for all the festivals and intensives we are able to find out about worldwide. To get last year's issue, email us at ita@tapdance.org.

tap answers in time



compiled by michele ribble

The purpose of this column is to help people of all ages and levels who are in need of valuable tap information but don't have access to professionals. All tap-related questions are welcome and we'll be sure to get your answers to you ... in time. All entries will remain strictly anonymous. Please email your questions to ontapsubmissions@gmail.com and put in the subject line: TAP ANSWERS IN TIME; snail mail them to TAT, International Tap Association, PO Box 356, Boulder, CO 80306 USA.

Several questions were submitted to Tap Answers in Time this summer, so we chose to divide five questions among two professionals.

DEBBI DEE—master instructor and tap artist, and owner of *Debbi Dee Productions, Inc.*, in Boynton Beach, Florida, USA, where her company produces tap dance instructional videos

Q. Can anyone please tell me what are tap judges looking for in competitions?

A. When I judge competitions, I like to see that the tapper is on time with the music as well as with his or her fellow dancers, that there is clarity in the footwork, and that the steps have shading and dynamics. It is also important that the routine be age appropriate for the dancer. Sometimes I hear music that is very suggestive, and the dancers on stage are eight and nine years old. When selecting your music and choreography, make sure it fits the ages of the dancers and that the difficulty of the routine also matches their abilities and they can execute all the steps correctly. If the levels are different, then the choreographer must use his or her imagination so that all dancers are showcased with a routine that fits everyone. If only four dancers can do wings, then let them, while the others are doing something else. I also look for formations, use of the stage, personality, upper body music, timing, stage presence, and costuming.

Q. I noticed the old/new trend of tap dancers singing in their acts now. How important is the triple threat now a day?

If you want to work in this business—[meaning] Broadway, nightclubs, Vegas, community theater, cruise ships and theme parks—you'd best be a triple threat.

Q. Please tell me where to start looking for colleges for tap dance, I know about OCU [Oklahoma City University], but I was wondering if there were any other options.

Mr. Tom Relabate is the head of the Dance Department at the State University at Buffalo and has a great tap program.

Ed. Note: Tony Coppola has also initiated a tap major program for commercial dancers at Mesa State College in Grand Junction, Colorado.

ACIA GRAY—executive/artistic director of *Tapestry Dance Company* and the founder of the *Soul to Sole Tap Festival* in Austin, Texas, USA

Q. What are your best suggestions for making slippery floors have more traction and sticky floors have more glide?

A. For slippery floors on the road or in the studio, I recommend SLIP NOMOR 2000 (www.stagestep.com): "Guaranteed to make any surface more slip resistant or your money back! A revolutionary no-rinse floor cleaner that both cleans and makes all wood, vinyl, linoleum, and stone surfaces more slip resistant. The more you use it, the better it works." SLIP NOMOR doesn't damage the surfaces like Coke (which has been used for years as a last-minute fix for slippery floors), but be sure the floors are clean. Talcum powder can be used to gain some speed (i.e., a "fast floor"), but unfortunately it's white.

Q. What can you do to help students who have fabulously fast feet to have good time and tonality?

A. Seems there are many dancers out there in this position. It takes time, practice, and maturity to realize that speed is not the "soul" ingredient to rhythm tap. But, guided by a good teacher, students need to be introduced to the tools of musicianship to gain the knowledge of timing, nuance, and shading. Bars, phrases, chorus structure, different time signatures, tempos, and volume all need to be ingredients in their consciousness when dancing. Students need to practice not only with their favorite hip hop tune (which can keep you in the same "pocket" of double time incessantly), but should practice to classic jazz of all tempos and styles. Play the melody. Then play the bass line, then the drums. Listen with your ears and



Acia Gray

with your feet. We are musicians as well as dancers and all of us are *communicators*. Communicate! Always know what you want to say. If you say the same thing all the time, people stop listening. You must have silence to have rhythm and you must have slow to have fast.



Michele Ribble and the ITA thank the On Tap readers who sent in their questions and give a huge tap thank you to all the teachers who responded with their great tap answers to "Tap Answers in Time." Without their expert advice and compassion to help other tap dancers in need, we would be tapping ... nowhere.



Primary ISTD tap students from Tanwood School of Performing Arts. Photo courtesy of Jo Scanlan

How Does a Syllabus Aid a Tap Dancer?

by jo scanlan

As an English tap dancer, the approach and the way we learn tap in this country is somewhat different than that of our associates in the US. The scene in the United Kingdom (UK), which includes England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, is somewhat quieter and there are fewer prospects for work. Like all things in life, opportunities don't just land in front of you. To find the tap scene here, you have to look!

In the UK, most tap dance classes are created from the various syllabi available, but there is also a good range of "free" tap classes. Free tap classes consist of exercises and routines set by the teacher, rather than by an examination board. The bigger dance studios such as Pineapple, Danceworks, and Dance Attic (all of which are located in London) offer a range of classes at varying levels, as does the organization ATD (Associated Tap Dancers), which keeps the tap scene accessible to many people via regular workshops and festivals with guest teachers held throughout England. [See the Tap UK Festival Report on page 16] Past workshops, for example, have been hosted in Nottingham, Hillingdon, Alcester, and Lincolnshire.

Why Use a Syllabus?

Working with a syllabus provides a number of benefits according to many people who use them. A syllabus can be ideal for the dance school that offers classes for the preschool child to the amateur adult or aspiring professional dancer. For children, the syllabus structurally helps them develop technique and gets them used to exploring different rhythms. Children can take examinations based on the syllabus beginning at the age of five. Examinations reassure parents that their child is progressing. In the UK there seems to be a lot of emphasis placed on achievement, and children are placed under the stress of school exams at a very young age. Activities don't seem to be necessarily about having fun, but are more about the outcome. Progress is usually judged on achievement, which is probably now a result of the schooling system here.

Other advantages for using a syllabus is that the teacher has clear guidelines, the syllabus is designed to be physically safe for each age group, and it takes into account the various stages a child goes through developmentally (physically, emotionally, etc.). Also, with a

syllabus, students have clear aims to work toward and know they have to reach a certain standard to progress. By the time they reach the age to go on to a full-time vocational school, they then have enough vocabulary and technique to continue.

Another benefit of the syllabus is its use as preparation for dance in academia. In the UK, dance training usually follows either the degree path or the diploma path. A degree is usually taken at a university, with a large percentage in the UK now offering a performing arts course in dance or drama. In recent years, a number of dance colleges have formed an affiliation with universities and now can offer degree courses alongside or in place of a diploma course. The remainder of dance colleges offer a diploma, which until recently didn't gain recognition—other than saying you graduated from a certain college.

In the UK, there are many different dance societies that offer syllabi in all dance genres. Many of them have been recognized for a considerable amount of time and are taught worldwide. These syllabi offer a structured grade that the student can follow and that is appropriate for their level.

Bigger societies include the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD; www.istd.org); the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD; www.rad.org.uk), which offers only ballet examinations; the British Association of Teachers of Dancing (BATD; www.batd.co.uk); the British Ballet Organisation (BBO; www.bbo.org.uk); the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA; www.idta.co.uk); the National Association of Teachers of Dancing Limited (NATD; www.natd.org.uk); the British Theatre Dance Association (BTDA; www.btda.org.uk); and the United Teachers of Dance (UTD).

The genres included in these societies range from ballet to ballroom, national (called “folk dance” in the US), South Asian, Latin and rock and roll, acrobatics and Scottish, and—of course—tap dance.

There are many dance societies operating in the UK offering examinations based on syllabi, with the larger ones being recognized by organizations such as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Council of Dance Education and Training, which are based in London and represent the entire UK. In addition, other societies such as the Northern Counties Dance Teachers Association (NCDTA; www.ncdta.com), the United Kingdom Dance and Drama Federation (UKDDF; www.ukddf.co.uk), and the United Kingdom Alliance (UKA; www.ukadance.co.uk) offer similar examinations. These organizations are all based in Northern England.

The goals of the societies are to promote dance to a high standard and give very clear guidelines of what is expected from the student and the teacher. Examinations based on the syllabi are used to measure whether the standards have been achieved. They are made accessible to all, whether for fun or as part of training for the dance profession. They can also give clear indications of the standard reached (of the student) when applying for further education programs.

With such a large number of examinations offered for dancers of all ages and for all standards—be it for pleasure or as a stepping stone to a dance career—it has only been within the last decade that regulations have been enforced, when the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) became involved with some of the dance societies.

The QCA is a non-departmental government public body that is accountable to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (based in London). It monitors qualifications in schools, colleges, and the workplace. Any type of organization can apply to have its



Fiona Robertson, vocational student at the Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts who received a grade of 93% in a recent ISTD Advanced 2 Tap Examination. Photo courtesy of Jo Scanlan

qualifications recognized, which then means that their exams come into line with academic qualifications. With the development of vocational examinations, which are used to obtain a certain level in dance, came the accreditation of syllabi and regulations for awarding dance organizations.

Currently, the ISTD, RAD, BBO, and BTDA have qualifications that are accredited. When this happens, these organizations are given a level that is equivalent to academic qualifications. Eventually I am sure all dance boards will have to have some form of accreditation, because dance is currently one of the few areas that is not closely monitored.

By accrediting dance teaching and introducing guidelines, stricter quality control can be placed on schools and teachers. Currently, anyone can set up a dance school in the UK regardless of whether they have a dance background. One of the major benefits to the accreditation process is that qualified dance teachers reduce the risk of injuring students.



Grade 5 ISTD tap students from Cirencester Creative Dance Academy. Photo courtesy of Ryan Dix Studios, Cirencester, England.

National Qualifications Framework in the UK

The chart on page 41 is used by the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) and refers to English dance school exams, but could be used as guidance for any national academic dance educational exam.

How the Exams Work

The societies structurally offer the same thing: graded examinations (for children and students) and vocational graded examinations (professional qualifications usually for the student who is serious about a career in dance). For example, the BTDA (British Theatre Dance Association) and BBO (British Ballet Organization) offer graded examinations from 1 to 8 and the ISTD offers graded examinations from 1 to 6. The ISTD and BBO offer vocational exams: intermediate foundation, intermediate, advanced 1, and advanced 2. The BTDA offers vocational examinations: intermediate, advanced foundation, advanced 1, advanced 2, and a diploma in theater dance. Other examinations include preprimary, primary, class assessments, medals, and adult tap tests (these are not accredited). The examinations are available in a wide range of dance genres, not just tap.

Because there are a number of these societies in the UK, I have decided to concentrate on the ones that are accredited by the QCA, because their outlines are generally the same.

The structure of the exams is generally as follows: warmup, barre exercises, floor patterns, rhythm exercises (including improvisation and responding to free rhythms in the higher grades and vocational examinations), compound steps (corner and center steps, again usually in the lower grades), turning steps, time steps, amalgamations or dance sequences, dance, and free work. Please note that this list includes a selection of exercises taken from QCA-approved societies. All the exercises would not necessarily be included in one exam.

Currently, as a result of the accreditation offered, the marks [grades] are allocated as pass, merit, or distinction, or (in the case of the ISTD) as A, B, or C. The marks are awarded in a variety of cat-

egories—poise, posture, clarity of beating (clearness of tapping), precision of footwork, line and style, timing, rhythmic interpretation, response and knowledge of syllabus, and performance.

Within these societies, regular events are also held, including competitions and festivals, congresses, seminars, scholarships awarded to talented students to attend regular guest classes, workshops, and regular lectures to keep up-to-date with the syllabi.

The majority of colleges that offer structured dance exams tend to offer ISTD examinations, usually starting with the vocational graded exams (intermediate to advanced 2) and teaching qualifications (FDI and CDE, formerly associate and associate diplomas). These exams are extracurricular, with colleges offering them during the evenings or on weekends with a certain number of hours of study required. Previously, only a practical exam had to be taken; now, modules need to be completed. This involves a lot of written work, (which includes health and safety, lifespan [child development], history on a chosen subject, etc.) as well as practical work. At this time, some colleges are not able to offer teaching qualifications at all, because they cannot allocate enough time to offer the exams.

How Do the Syllabi and Exams Affect Tap?

In my opinion, these regulations that are now being placed on dance exams are helping dance development in this country move forward. For a long time, dance in the UK has not been taken seriously, particularly in relation to academic subjects. Dance qualifications have had little recognition in relation to academic exams, and why shouldn't our qualifications mean something too? They are certainly not going to make someone a professional dancer, but they can definitely guide dance students along the way and give them a course of action to follow while training, by learning dance vocabulary and securing a strong technique.

I think for children learning dance, the syllabus is a good place to start. They will have the opportunity to learn correct technique and learn efficiently through repetition of movement. Of course, this is all completely up to the teacher—and this is where the syllabus can break down.

Teachers must still inspire their students and not rely wholly on just following the syllabus. Children will get bored quickly if they do the same steps every week. In addition, they can become too aware of the rhythms in their grade and may not be able to respond freely to new rhythms. This is why it is important that students be allowed to do plenty of free exercises (exercises set by the teacher, not by the examination board or through the syllabus) that vary weekly, and ideally in different styles.

Teachers need to attend events regularly led by their organization to keep them up-to-date with how dance is developing and to gain fresh ideas. Outside an organization it can be slightly more difficult to stay inspired or acquire new ideas. Once again, this is very much up to the individual teacher. As a teacher, I will very happily find a class to attend at a dance studio, but other teachers sometimes do not feel as comfortable about this. In the UK, after you've left the training process, it seems that for some teachers there is almost a "completion of learning," and once they qualify as a teacher, they tend to think that perhaps there is nothing left to learn. Unfortunately, there are not enough tap classes for teachers only, and so the learning stops for many.

I trained with the syllabus starting at the age of seven and I did not experience freestyle tap until full-time training at 16. Even

Level	General Qualifications ISTD	General Qualifications Equivalent	Vocational Qualifications ISTD	Vocational Qualifications Equivalent
Level 4 Level 3 (advanced)	Grade 6	A level	CDE FDI, Advanced 2, Advanced 1	First-year degree Vocational A Level/Advanced GNVQ
Level 2 (intermediate)	Grade 5, Grade 4	GCSE (A*–C)	Intermediate, Intermediate Foundation	Intermediate GNVQ
Level 1 (foundation)	Grade 3 Grade 2 Grade 1	GCSE (D–G)		
Entry Level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

KEY:
 CDE: Certification in Dance Education
 FDI: Foundation in Dance Instruction
 GCSE: General Certificate in Secondary Education
 GNVQ: General Vocational Qualification
 n/a: not applicable

English dances school exam chart used by the ISTD.

then, it was taught by someone who only had experience of the syllabi, so the style did not really change. Different exercises were taught, but the steps were still the same ones from the syllabus. The style remained fairly theatrical (we used to take part in dance competitions).

At 20 I was fortunate to take a class with a teacher who only teaches freestyle. Straight away he spotted I was a syllabus-trained dancer. This has both good and bad points: I was able to do lots of complicated steps and rhythms, and I was good at picking up new steps, but I wasn't individual, I didn't have my own style, and I tended to dance like other syllabus dancers.

As a teacher in a full-time vocational college, I now feel I am starting to get the balance right. My students have to take a freestyle class, during which I experiment with as many different styles that I can while exposing them to different music. I encourage them to have ideas and express them as individually as they can. Often these students have only learned tap with one teacher, and not always in a positive way. Their perception of tap can often be that it is old-fashioned and not the "coolest" thing to do.

By using music to which they can relate, I usually can get them in the groove right away. I find it extremely encouraging when students tell me they had a great class and didn't realize they could tap dance to that type of music. For example, within the first couple weeks of term, I tend to use a lot of hip hop and break beats, and the students usually respond with a louder sound and more weight into the ground.

In the UK, a lot of the syllabi encourage a light tapping style. I tend not to use too many "arm lines" (which means to place the arms in certain positions at specific times during the exercise), because the syllabus work often has set arm lines. I play with rhythms as much as I can, because some dance societies do a lot of tricky steps (wings, etc.), and syllabus-trained students may struggle rhythmically. The main differences between syllabus and freestyle tap are in the sound and rhythm. Syllabus tap concentrates on achieving a good tone (in particular, being light) and having secure rhythms. I try to have good tone, but play with rhythms a lot more so the students do not get too used to a certain rhythm, which

makes them think all the time. I personally believe the attitude of the dancers change when they are not doing syllabus work because there is a chance for them to be individual.

In my syllabus classes I tend to swap music around (there is set music for some of the societies). The music usually used for the syllabus classes is instrumental—mainly piano with percussion. When I give freestyle exercises I use jazz or blues. I know I got bored when I heard the same music the entire time I was in a grade, which is why I feel it is important to vary it as much as possible. It also makes students think, because often they just dance along without listening properly to the music.

By getting the right balance between syllabus and freestyle tap, I feel tap can be very productive here in the UK. Students will have a solid background and structure on which to base their learning. As they progress, they will then have a secure technique to allow them to excel in tap dance.

My experience is obviously only limited to the UK and I am unable to comment fully, because I have not been privy to teaching methods in other countries. In the UK we are not necessarily known for producing world-class tap dancers. Does this mean we are doing something wrong? Until I have traveled to the US and experienced methods that can work without a syllabus, and see the progress that US dancers make, only then will I be able to have a clear view of what I think works best and whether a syllabus really does aid a tap dancer.

About the Author

Jo-Anne Scanlan is a freelance choreographer and teacher. She works at the Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts, London, and guest teaches at various venues throughout the UK. She holds fellowship status within the ISTD in tap and modern dance. She has worked as a dancer and choreographer for corporate and cabaret events, and has recently been awarded the Lisa Ullmann Scholarship to allow her to travel to America to continue her studies in tap. She will report on her observations of American rhythm tap training methods in the next issue of *On Tap*. You may contact her at hype@scanlanj2003.fsnet.co.uk.

Live ... Love ... and Tap with Debbi Dee



Photo courtesy
of Avi Miller

by fallon star gechter

Her speed is mesmerizing; her sounds, melodic. When Debbi Dee puts on her taps shoes, she does not just dance. She is enflamed with a passion for her craft that most people spend their whole lives searching for. Dee has been teaching for 37 years and if there is one thing she has infused into her teaching, it is how a touch of class can transform dance to a whole new level. Her sophistication, the way she holds herself, and the way she commands attention when she is dancing and teaching are just some of the characteristics that make her stand out.

Dee has performed as a soloist at Broadway Lincoln Center and in USO shows, Las Vegas, and nightclubs. She is internationally known for her master classes, and teaches on such platforms as Dance Olympus, Dance Masters of America, and Dance Teacher Conference, with as many as 100 people in a class. Dee has had students make it to Broadway and national tours as well as find work on cruise ships, television, and movies.

Dee has held the positions of choreographer, dance captain, and assistant choreographer for industrials (shows for major corporate conventions), fashion shows, and professional and community theater. During a recent conversation I asked Dee what it means to her to be reaching out to students all over the world. She replied, "When a student is in a class because they want to be there, no matter what their age or level—it does not matter if they are a teacher, a professional, or just starting out—as long as they want to be there, then you as a teacher can touch their lives."

Aside from her large-format classes that she teaches at dance competitions, Dee has taught ongoing, smaller classes while a fac-

ulty member at both the Broadway Dance Center and Henry LeTang Studios. In her words, "I believe the definition of teaching someone is that they study with you for years. That is quite different than taking class with someone. I look at my teaching as a body of work."

For the past few years, teachers have frequently asked her if she would put together a smaller, more intimate type of learning environment. This year she held the first annual Debbi Dee intensive.

Because no more than 20 students were accepted, Dee was able to take time with each person in the room, myself included, to share her knowledge and experience of tap with all of us.

Dee is a walking encyclopedia when it comes to tap, and she began the intensive with a talk about where tap came from, and what the difference is between what she calls "contemporary" and "traditional" tap. According to her, "traditional" tap is defined as a body of beliefs, facts handed down from generation to generation—usually never written down, just passed down. "Contemporary tap," on the other hand,

she defines as what the dance teachers of today that she works with best understand.

The intensive was broken down into ten rigorous hours of classes, during which we experienced lectures in the form of notes, live examples, and class participation. Dee provided us with an 80-page binder full of typed notes that contained everything from basic implementations of steps to full-out descriptions of how to teach them. For a teacher, this information is invaluable. Each section presents instruction for different levels. She explains how to teach



Debbi Dee with Rebecca Leslie at 2004 Tap Intensive.

□ *When a student is in a class because they want to be there □ no matter what their age or level ... then you as a teacher can touch their lives. □*



Debbi Dee teaching at the "Dr. Henry LeTang Tap Experience" in NYC, May 2003. Photo by Avi Miller, courtesy of Tradition in Tap

steps to someone who is a beginner, and then shows how that same step can be transformed into intermediate and advanced levels. Roxie Roy, of the Arts Academy of Hollywood, Florida, describes the book as "priceless."

For Dee, the main objective to teaching is to "create a dancer." According to Valerie Weld, of the School of Dance Arts, "When you think you know it all, you should sit down and talk with Debbi. I have been teaching for 42 years and I can still manage to learn something brand new from [her]."

Of course, the focus of the intensive was to experience the Dee technique. Dee is known as a "teacher's teacher." In her own words, "I *teach* class. I do not *give* class. I am able to teach teachers how to teach, and so I think my technique is unique because of the understanding I have of their needs." During the classes, Dee left no stone unturned. She reviewed 30 different time steps, then 30 different progressions, and more than 20 different turns, starting with beginner steps and progressing to more advanced. When she taught the steps, we were shown how to do them, how to teach them according to her method, and then the class would get up and do them. Classes ranged from "Wings and Pullbacks" to "Flash Tap" to "Choreography." This type of intensive is a luxury for teachers who want to step up their game and bring Dee's passion into their own classrooms.

Being able to participate in the first annual Debbi Dee intensive was a great privilege. When asked what she hoped the teachers would take away, Dee replied, "To have the feeling they accomplished something new for themselves and that they learned something new."

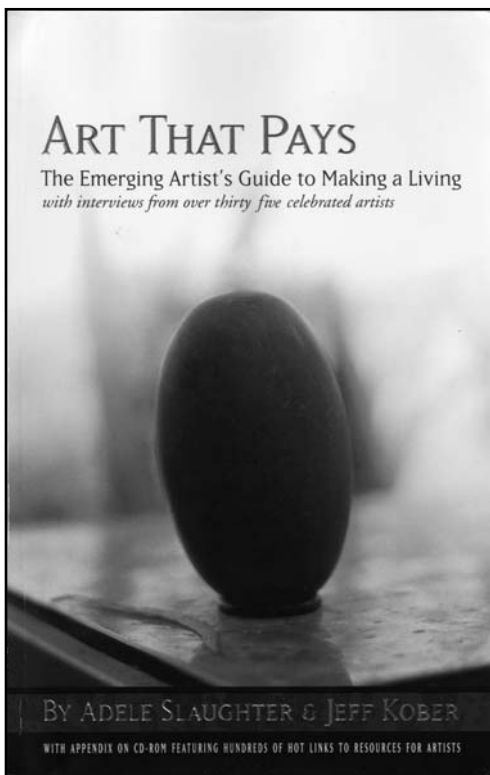
For more information, contact Dee's office at 561.736.3052 or write to Debbi Dee Productions, 9230 Sun Pointe Drive, Boynton Beach, Florida 33437 USA.



Cover art for Debbi Dee's catalog, courtesy of Debbi Dee

ART THAT PAYS: THE EMERGING ARTIST'S GUIDE TO MAKING A LIVING

by adele slaughter and jeff kober



Cover art for *Art That Pays*

Ed. Note: We are delighted to reprint the following excerpts from Art that Pays. Written for all kinds of artists—actors, writers, dancers, painters, etc.—it has a wealth of information that can be used by both young and old(er) tap artists. Although it was originally written nearly 20 years ago, it still offers stellar advice to aspiring and seasoned performers. Plus, it has a new CD that provides a wide variety of up-to-date resources of where to get more information for your own particular needs.

Chapter 2: “A” Job/“B” Job

“How have I always survived? Precariously. I just had all kinds of jobs.”

—Hubert Selby Jr., writer

In this book we characterize your ideal job—your artistic career—as your “A” job. The “A” job is the ultimate goal as you define it. Your “B” job is the job (or jobs) that you need to work in order to survive until your “A” job can become a consistent, financially stable reality. This chapter discusses what types of work constitute the best “B” jobs, and allow you still to have the time and energy to pursue your artistic vision.

There is an old joke in LA that there are no real waiters; they are all unemployed actors, and even the bagger at the supermarket has at least one script hidden under his apron. Odd jobs are what we do to survive. We [the authors] have worked more than a dozen different odd jobs, such as an assistant to a producer, teacher/professor, assistant director for a nonprofit, temp paralegal, taxi driver, limo driver, waiter, bartender, and caterer. We have worked for our mechanic and run a fashion line designed by a former spouse. Why? Because the landlord wants the rent and the acting jobs or writing jobs happen at irregular intervals. For most artists, finances can get pretty scary in between jobs, and “in between jobs” can be a long time.

No one becomes an artist in any field and immediately starts to make a living. “What about that 12-year-old girl who paints like Picasso?” you may ask. “She’s doing a lot better than just making a living!” True, but unless you’re a brilliant 12-year-old girl who paints like Picasso, get over it. You have to have a fallback. You have to have a way to eat, to keep a roof over your head, to be able to afford all those things you need to be an artist. What kind of job should you get?



Fred Strickler. Photos © Lois Greenfield

“I worked as a clerk, as a secretary ... any old thing. It took me about six years to finish my first book. I came home every night from work and just wrote. It took me six years.”

—Hubert Selby Jr., writer

Wallace Stevens was an insurance executive. Raymond Chandler sold life insurance. Novelist Jerry Stahl wrote for *Alf*. Ken Kesey worked nights in an asylum, and wrote there. J.D. Salinger wrote short stories for *The New Yorker*. (Salinger may have been the exception to the “no one immediately starts to make a living” theory.) T.S. Eliot was, famously, an accountant. William Carlos Williams was a doctor who made house calls and scribbled poems on scraps of paper. Charles Ives was another insurance executive. Tom Waits worked as a doorman at a rock club and got up and played between acts. Katey Sagal sang backup for Bette Midler. Micheal Keaton was a bartender at Café Figarp in LA. Everyone in the business knows the story of Harrison Ford, who worked for years as a carpenter.

“I wonder, if I didn’t have to spend so much physical energy on the [job], if I’d have had another six books. I don’t know. Maybe not. I really don’t know. To work—it just takes a lot out of you.”

—Hubert Selby Jr., writer

This book will discuss and establish how to create a spending plan. As you continue along you will discover which jobs are the most conducive to the skills you possess. We will talk about how to create an ideal schedule that includes making art and earning money. Your goal will be to define and obtain the job that pays you the most amount of money for the least amount of work. Find the job that does not suck the soul right out of your body. A job that leaves you with enough juice left over to be able to come home and do your work. A “B” job.

So, what kind of job for you? If you can make money in your area of interest, even if the job itself is not exactly what you want to be doing, it could be beneficial to your artistic career. Working in your field of interest can provide you with invaluable experience, contacts, and exposure to an otherwise competitive field. Rather than seeing yourself as “selling out,” you might think of yourself as a student of your own business.

... Modeling and commercial work, regardless of your shape or look, can be very lucrative. At least you’ll be working with a camera, and maybe you can barter to get someone to take a good head shot of you. Dancers and choreographers can broaden their expertise and make money by working at a theater tech job, such as lighting design or costuming; or teach classes in aerobics, dance, yoga, or Pilates. The holistic arts, such as acupressure or massage therapy, are ideal jobs in that your schedule can be your own.

Yen Lu Wong, formerly a choreographer who we hear more about and from in the chapter on dancers, in an interview 17 years ago with Judith Luther, had this to say (and it still holds true)

“The best ‘B’ job is the one that moves you toward your ‘A’ job.”

about employment: “In California there are many new immigrants willing to do good work for very little money. Dancers can’t compete in the unskilled labor market. If you’re going to be a waitress, don’t go to Marie Callender’s. Go to the most expensive restaurants and get a job as a hostess or a hat checker until a waitress job opens up. If you type, don’t just go to any office and type for minimum wage; type for studios that use Teleprompters. The money is better and your schedule will be flexible. Instead of teaching aerobics for \$10 an hour, learn to do Shiatsu and earn four times that amount.”

Such is the common wisdom: Do what you can do to do what you do. If you can eke out a living in some way that keeps you connected to your art or your craft, do it. If you cannot, then find another type of job that allows you to be free when you need to be free to get to auditions, rehearsals, and classes without driving a boss crazy. Find a job that gives you the amount of money you need to survive; that doesn’t require so much time and energy that you have none left over for your art; and, if you’re lucky, that allows you to have some sense of life and purpose even when you are not working in your chosen field.

“There are services that people want you to do,” says actor/theater owner Tom Ormeny. “I mean, I know people that do dog walking, I know people that clean houses, I know people that work half the night in a legal office because they’re pretty good at computer work and make a lot of money. So as an actor, you have got to have a skill that will let you survive, because there’s no guarantee that you’re going to walk into this town and make money.”

Still, the best “B” job is the one that moves you toward your “A” job. Often it shapes your art, and sometimes it provides you with stepping stones or opportunities you may not otherwise have. If you can, find a job that is specific to your artistic skills. If you can’t, find the job that takes you the least away from your life as an artist, yet pays you enough to support yourself and your art. Set yourself the task of finding a job that works for you rather than a job you work for. In the following chapters the working artists we interviewed discuss how they survived before their art became profitable. ...

Chapter 11: Dance Auditions

Rebecca Wright suggests that you come to an audition dressed for the part, be it a Broadway, modern dance, or ballet audition. “You have to be neat. You have to be trim. You have to be clean. You have to know how to present yourself in auditions. How are you going to look? How are you going to wear your hair? What is your face going to look like? You don’t have to look like a pale, gaunt little girl who wants to get into a company. A little bit of glamour can help a lot. You have to be sure your physical body form [weight] is in its proper place. That’s your maintenance. You

have to make sure that the shoes you wear are clean and neat. [If you’re a better or master dancer], keep them the same color as your tights—one long line.

“If you’ve made up your mind that you want to join the company, the only way to go into the audition is center front. You let them know you want them. If you stand in the second line off to the left, they’re going to know that’s exactly where you want yourself to be placed. Put yourself out front.

“You have to know a wide range of styles and movements: [for ballet or modern] classical, neoclassical, modern en pointe, modern in jazz shoes, modern in tennis shoes. You have to know how to count your music because they might not count it for you. Being able to develop a rapport with your teacher or auditioner is very important. Send out vibrations of being able to absorb. Don’t be afraid of criticism; take it constructively, not negatively. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Always be prepared. Have the shoes that you need and the right tights. Always take a needle and thread, Band-Aids, and safety pins. Always think of the most disastrous thing that could happen to you. The ribbon on your shoe breaks, your pointe shoe breaks. You always need two pairs of shoes in case one breaks down. Your bra strap could break. You don’t want to think negatively, but you want to be prepared for anything that might happen.”

Fred Strickler believes that networking helps you get work in the relatively small dance community. “You talk to people about what you’re doing and they’ll say they’ve got something coming up in six months and they need someone to do a tap dance thing and ask if you’re interested. Getting work is not always done through formal auditions. I think developing a really healthy social persona is important for a dancer. If you know somebody you’re interested in working with, let him or her know. Most choreographers choose people they’ve already met. Use the *Dance Magazine Directory* [email them at directory@dancemagazine.com] to locate someone whose work you admire, and call and introduce yourself. Say, ‘I’m doing a dance program and I’m very interested in working with your dance company at some future date. I would like very much for you to come and see my work.’ Nobody ever gets offended by having you say you want to work with them.”

Strickler admits that you might get turned down, but reminds dancers they will get rejected just as most artists will. Young, inexperienced dancers have to work for those plum jobs.

“It’s really about paying your dues. You work your way up—dance small parts, dance in workshops for free to get exposure, work with different choreographers. Learn to be psychologically flexible as well as physically. Rehearse for free and get minimal wages for performances. Sometimes you’ll even have to pay money to get a certain experience. [But] get lots of experience. That’s what paying your dues is.” ...



Agents

Many beginning dancers and dance companies serve as their own booking agents. Not only can this prove to be frustrating and arduous, it is also time-consuming. A good agent is talented, patient, persuasive, and worth the expense. You will rarely come across a dancer whose skills as an agent are on a par with his artistic skills, and unless you find it absolutely necessary, don't be both dancer and agent. Some options to consider include the following:

1. Forming a nonprofit arts management organization with other dancers or dance companies. Sometimes groups of artists get together and form an agency to handle bookings and to implement grant writing, marketing, and management services for artists in the collective. Sharing the costs, services, and office enables dancers and choreographers to save money and reach a wider audience.
2. Hiring a commercial booking agent. If you can afford one, you will benefit from the rapport and clout the agency has already established with sponsors you don't know. In addition to finding bookings, commercial agents will often make travel arrangements, including hotel reservations. They will also provide the press with press releases, up-to-date reviews, and a press packet.
3. If you are a dance company, an arts administration intern, a volunteer from the board of directors, or your company manager can serve as an agent (generally for a limited period of time—this is not a job that everyone can do well).

If you know a dancer who is happy with her booking agent and you like the gigs she's getting, ask her to introduce you so that you can find out if the agent might be willing to consider taking you on. The best agents are the busiest agents. An agent who can give you part of his time may be worth a lot more to you than an intern with lots of time and no contacts.

Unions

The *American Guild of Music Artists*, referred to as *AGMA*, is the union for ballet and concert dancers (as well as for choreographers, opera singers, choristers, stage managers, and stage directors). Many dancers also belong to *SAG* (*Screen Actors Guild*) and *AFTRA* (the *American Federation of Television and Radio Artists*). [Ed. Note: *The American Dance Guild* was noted here in *Art That Pays*, but unfortunately it no longer exists. *Dance/USA* is now a national nonprofit membership organization concerned with promoting the art of dance and serving the needs of dancers, choreographers, companies, agents, managers, and service organizations. WB: www.danceusa.org]



Fred Strickler. Photos © Lois Greenfield

“Find a job that works for you rather than a job you work for.”

In the Company of Dance

Deborah Oliver, who got her MFA from CalArts in 1981, currently has her own dance–booking agency in Los Angeles and represents various performing arts venues.

“After graduation, dancing became secondary to survival,” notes Oliver. “I never lost my strong desire to be a choreographer. I luckily worked with organizations that taught me the business of being an artist, and I learned to be a producer. Learning to work with video, to be a stage manager, and to design has all helped make my work stronger. No experience is ever wasted on the artist.”

Donna Wood, who began dancing with the Dayton Ballet Company, where the competition was not as fierce as it was when she came to New York to dance with Alvin Ailey, has a clear philosophy: Be filled with the essence of dance and don’t do anything halfway.

“You have to be open,” says Wood. “You cannot go into a class and say, ‘I don’t like this. I’m not going to do it.’ You have to be completely submissive in order to expand your knowledge of dance. Do whatever they tell you to do. Learn everything—every aspect, every technique of dance—in order to discover your true strengths and challenges.

“There is a company someplace for everybody. New York City is not for everyone. Investigate other places. A lot of New York companies are fed from other places. Many people need a secure foundation before they can deal with the major companies. Of course, you need training, but you need a life too. You have to have a balance. Dance is about people dancing, not just technicians. It doesn’t matter if you can do ten pirouettes if you are a bore.” ...

Serendipity stepped in for Fred Strickler, who helped form the Jazz Tap Ensemble. “After our first concert in January 1979, we started getting about a booking a month. Regional stuff. By the end of the year we were in New York at the Dance Theater Workshop, a very, very good place to be because it is certainly one of the most established places for new dance companies to perform. Recognition and success came quickly for us, perhaps because we combined art with entertainment. We brought a modern dance choreographic sensibility into an art form that was associated with entertainment.

“It was intensely creative. It was popular. It came just at the right time, when there was a big upsurge and interest in tap dancing, and we were doing it at a pretty high level of artistry. We were a good package that was organized and could be toured. We also got good reviews, which is very important.

“It’s tough doing collaborative work, because ultimately a decision is made by mutual agreement or through struggling until one person’s idea wins out. In our first two years we did more than 30 productions on practically no money. Public relations is essential, and that’s a lesson I learned with Jazz Tap Ensemble. It doesn’t matter how good your work is, if nobody knows you’re

performing, it’s not going to pay off. You have to do continuous PR in order to compete in the marketplace.

“We found a manager and a booking agent. We wrote our own press releases. In the beginning, we did it among ourselves and started sending out press packets, piecing it together, Xeroxing reviews. A lot of the funding came out of our own pockets. We weren’t smart enough in those days to know that we needed a nonprofit corporation. If you want to dance, you make it work. You fight. You’re willing to go through the artistic battles to get what you want.”

Career Transition for Dancers

... “Keep in mind that more than probably 99% of people who have dance careers are finished with their performing careers between ages 35 to 40, sometimes earlier,” says Strickler. “You have to think, even at 18, about what else you can do to support yourself. Develop something else. Perhaps a business skill. Find something else that you can do to make money, something with flexible hours. Dancing is not an economically viable occupation for 95% of the dancers.

“There are other dance-related fields: dance management, teaching dance history, research assistant, dance notation, dance therapy. Broaden yourself in all of the arts. Know art history, contemporary art, the various arts media like video and film. Learn to read music, a great advantage to a choreographer. Get involved in your community so that you’re in touch with what is going on around you. Don’t isolate yourself by being an artist in a hothouse studio. There are distinct advantages to concentrating on your own vision, but if your vision is not bigger than yourself, it’s not a very big vision. You have to know who else is out there in your field and who is influencing them.” ...

.....
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Fred Strickler is now a Distinguished Professor of Dance at the University of California, Riverside, since his days with Jazz Tap Ensemble (1979–1986) and *Rhapsody In Taps* (1990–2003). He continues to think about, make, teach, and perform new tap dances that challenge him to keep growing. He can be reached at fred.strickler@ucr.edu.

Ed. Note: Special thanks to Warren Christensen, President, National Network for Artist Placement (NNAP), for allowing us to reprint these excerpts from Art That Pays. NNAP has been helping artists launch their careers since 1983. It offers consulting services and has many useful directories, services, and publications that can help artists shorten the distance between “emergence” and life as a fully paid professional. Visit their Web site to order Art That Pays, and for more details on publications and helpful information on seeking a more financially successful career. WB: www.artistplacement.com

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(l to r) Terra Mullen, Carol Lawrence, Whitney Morrison, Arlene Kennedy, Zelde Malevitz, Marta Lee, and Cheryl Devall. Photo by Michelle Morrison

ZELDE MALEVITZ DISCOVERS THE THERAPY OF TAP

by melba huber

Zelde Malevitz, a 50-year-plus young woman who sometimes can't walk because of the pain in her foot, and a former motorcycle mechanic, seems an unlikely practitioner and promoter of tap. Until you hear her story.

Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001, Malevitz proceeded to have a lumpectomy followed by chemotherapy and radiation. She had severe reactions to chemo treatments, and spent three days in the hospital during most treatments. She had never tap danced before.

During one of many stays in the hospital, Malevitz announced to her friend Whitney Morrison, "After chemo, we're going to tap ... in the old style of the great hoofers." Morrison replied, "OK, Zelde." It was like a pact. Between chemo and radiation, Malevitz contacted the [then] California representative from the International Tap Association, Sam Katz, to find a teacher and facility. Katz told her about the Kennedy Universal Dance Design Studio in Los Angeles, owned and directed by world-renowned tap teachers Arlene Kennedy and her brother, the late Paul Kennedy. The studio was only a mile from her home.

Malevitz wasn't your typical beginning tap student. In 1981, while working as a motorcycle mechanic, she had an accident that resulted in a severe foot injury. "I didn't walk for a very long time, not even from the bedroom to the bathroom," Malevitz recalled. "I used a wheelchair and then special crutches, and my car had to be specially outfitted so that I could drive. As a result of many hours of physical therapy and my insisting—over the doctor's prediction that it would not get better—I did return to walking."

The trauma of the injury and the three surgeries resulted in reflex sympathetic dystrophy: chronic pain. She has constant pain and never knows when her foot is going to give out from under her.

Morrison and Malevitz signed up for one tap class a week as beginners. "The minute we got to the studio, it was home for me," Malevitz stated. "Miss [Arlene] Kennedy intuitively understood my need to be there. Her teaching resonated with both of us. During radiation or on days when I had a small surgical procedure, I would still make it to class. I'd sit on the bench and move my feet, trying not to undo my surgical stitches. I remember during one of those times when I really felt awful, I said to Miss Kennedy, 'I just need to be here.' Her reply: 'I know.' The class was magical for me. No matter what happened I made it to the studio. It really kept me going. I can't express enough appreciation for the Kennedy family and especially for Miss Arlene Kennedy. It is truly a Ministry of Dance. Our Wednesday night class is a close group of women, and all of them have been supportive. On Saturday I take a class with teenagers and love their energy."

With the constant pain, some days she may not be ambulatory, but during that magical hour in tap class she is transformed. Malevitz may limp in and limp out, but the tap classes are thrilling and joyous to her, and a great form of physical therapy.

It is not surprising that Malevitz would choose tap. Even though she had never tapped, she always loved the music. While growing up in New York she heard almost every great jazz player. In the early '70s she worked in New York City for the Dean of Jazz, Ed Beach, at WRVR jazz radio. On Saturdays she volunteered

at the New York Jazz Museum headed by Jack Bradley. "There were tap jams almost every week, with all the jazz and hooper greats, such as Baby Laurence, Chuck Green, Buster Brown, Jimmy Slyde, Honi Coles," Malevitz stated. "I've always been a great fan of Honi's tremendous elegance. I also had a chance to meet him at the Apollo Theater, where I did jazz remote broadcasts of the Newport/New York Jazz Festival."

Malevitz also did production work on jazz remotes and worked with the personnel of bands of Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Sarah Vaughan, and many other jazz greats. At the radio station, she handled the record library, interfaced with record promo people, and answered telephone queries about such things as, "Who played the saxophone solo last Tuesday at 2 pm?"

"A lot of people can play the notes, but that doesn't mean it swings," Malevitz commented. "I have seen many people dance. The Kennedy dancers have that something extra. They dance with that extra elegance just like jazz musicians. The notes are not what make it. It is what is in between. The Kennedy Tap Company has what is in between. They have that higher calling that is filled with the sound of surprise, with head or hand movements, and the joy of smiles."

Her early life's love of jazz continues with saxophone and clarinet lessons from Phil Sobel, 85, who also tap danced, and with Jeff Clayton.

"Zelde has an excellent ear," Arlene Kennedy said. "She knows music so well that she can hear the rhythm and how it's connected to the music. She was truly driven to tap, and when she couldn't dance, she would sit on the side and take notes. When I took the



(l to r) Zelde Malevitz and Dr. Jeni LeGon. Photo courtesy of Melba Huber

Kennedy Tap Company to Finland, she got the tap class together at her home to practice."

Malevitz travels back to New York frequently to check on her mother and family, and often these trips just happen to be when Savion Glover is performing. She recently traveled on the Glover cruise and loved it. "Savion is on fire," she stated.

Malevitz hopes that others will use tap as therapy. Through her early work in jazz radio and the Jazz Museum, her love of jazz music continues. This new tap diplomat has not only connected to the music, but to the members of the world's tap family, who applaud her courage and share her love of tap.

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND NEWS

Tap Fests Abound!

by marda kim

It used to be there were no tap festivals, and then they were just in the US and just in the summer, and then in other countries as well, but just in the summer. Now they are spreading throughout the year too. Here are two more we know about.

January Summer Tap in Rio: The Tap in Rio Festival will celebrate its fifth birthday January 24-28 2006, during the height of the Brazilian summer. The five-day event features workshops and master classes in tap, percussion, body percussion, Brazilian dance, Lindy hop, and improvisation, as well as performances, jam sessions, video showings, and roundtable discussions. The festival draws students come from all over this vast country and features mostly teachers from the Brazilian tap scene, aspiring to boost local interest for the art form as well as raise awareness for tap in Brazil. For more information, visit <http://tapinrio.stop.to>.

Northwest Tap Fest in February: The Northwest Tap Fest presents beginner through advanced classes and performances February 3-5, 2006, in Kirkland, Washington, with Dianne Walker, Sam Weber, Terry Brock, Lane Alexander, Johnson & Peters, and Tim Hickey. PH: 425.821.4578, WB: nwtapfest.com

Princess Grace Foundation Announces '05 Dance Awards and Upcoming Deadline

by marda kim

The Princess Grace Foundation announces that tap artist Joseph Wiggan is a recipient of the 2005 Princess Grace Dance Fellowship through the nomination and sponsorship of the Jazz Tap Ensemble (JTE). Additionally exciting, Wiggan will also receive the Chris Hellman Dance Award, a special award granted through the Foundation and endowed by San Francisco Ballet and Royal Ballet dancer Chris Hellman.



Joseph Wiggan. Photo courtesy of Princess Grace Foundation and Jazz Tap Ensemble

The awards will be given at the Foundation's gala in New York City on October 26, during which time Mikhail Baryshnikov will also receive the Foundation's Prince Rainier III Award. Larry King will be the emcee.

Wiggan said, "I am honored to receive these awards especially since so few tap dancers have been selected in past years. Organizations like the Princess Grace Foundation reward hard work, then advocate for it. So this next year will be one of growth and maturity as I take a more focused approach performing with the Jazz Tap Ensemble." Wiggan will perform with JTE November 22-27 at the Joyce Theater in New York City (see page 61).

The Princess Grace Foundation was founded in 1982 and is dedicated "to identifying and assisting young artists in theater, dance, and film." Since then, it has awarded more than 400 grants. In dance, the Foundation recognizes and honors diverse talent from classical ballet to modern dance to ethnic dance to tap.

Previous tap recipients, the years they were awarded, and the companies who sponsored them include Derick Grant (1993, JTE), Dormeshia Sumbry (1994, JTE), Michael Minery (1997, Manhattan Tap), and Channing Cook Holmes (2001, JTE).

Foundation awards in dance take the form of scholarships and fellowships. Scholarships are given for tuition for professional training at a nonprofit school located in the US, where the applicant has been enrolled for at least one year. Fellowships are awarded for salary assistance for an apprentice or new member in a dance company, where the applicant has joined the company within the past five years.

"We've always been impressed by the caliber of emerging artists nominated for Princess Grace Awards," says Toby Boshak, Executive Director, Princess Grace Foundation-USA. "Joseph Wiggan is a beautiful dancer with incredible stage presence. Panelists described him as 'brilliant,' 'charming,' and demonstrating 'killer tapping!' He epitomizes both the incredible talent that comes through Jazz Tap Ensemble and that the Princess Grace Awards recognizes."

Bonnie Oda Homsey, chair of the Foundation's Dance Selection Committee and a member of its Arts Advisory Board, adds, "Joseph Wiggan, who joins the ranks of the five previous Princess Grace Award tap recipients, is distinguishing himself as a rising star with his mix of brilliant technique, charming persona, intelligence, and

that megawatt smile! I look forward to supporting his continued artistic achievements and leadership contributions to the broader dance field.”

In addition to the dance awards for scholarships and fellowships, in 2005, the Foundation created the choreography fellowships to recognize the nation’s most promising young choreographers. “The primary intention of this new grant,” noted executive director Boshak, “is to identify and support the emerging, practicing choreographer who is poised at the next step toward important creative and artistic advancement.”

The Choreography Fellowship was the brainchild of Homsey, who was a dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company and artistic director of American Repertory Dance Company. “The Choreographic Fellowship grants were initiated to fill the gap in the dance awards by recognizing and advocating the other fundamental component of our art form: the choreographer,”

she noted. “We expect that such a fellowship will encourage our professional dance companies to present new work that enhances their existing repertory, while providing exciting artistic challenges to the company artists.”

The Foundation also stays in touch with those who have won Foundation scholarships, fellowships, or grants and rewards further those of particular merit. As Homsey explains, “The Princess Grace Awards is unique in our life-long commitment to former recipients, who are eligible for Special Projects grants for significant career-enhancing opportunities and the prestigious Statue Award in recognition of outstanding achievements to their field.” Project grant amounts vary and are very open-ended, available for training, travel money for touring, making a dance video, etc. The Statue Award is now \$25,000 and could conceivably be more in the future. Applications for next year’s Princess Grace Dance Awards must be postmarked by April 29, 2006.

Applicants must be US citizens or have permanent resident status at the time of application. Awards are given based on the applicant’s past artistic merit, significance of the award to her/his current artistic development, and the potential for future excellence and impact on the field. Typically, grants in this category range from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

To be nominated, the artistic director of a dance company or the dean or department chair of a professional nonprofit dance school must sponsor a candidate and the grants are awarded through that school or company.

A complete list of past award winners and the 2006 applications available for downloading can be found on the Princess Grace Awards’ Web site :www.pgfusa.com. For further information, visit the site’s new FAQ section, or contact Christine Giancattarino, Grants Coordinator, at 212.317.1470.



book review

Brenda Bufalino’s *Tapping the Source: Tap Dance Stories, Theory, and Practice* (Codhill Press)

by richard wells (for Amazon)

Generous and Useful

With *Tapping the Source*, Brenda Bufalino has given us a brilliantly titled and generously written professional memoir that also opens a view into the personal impulses that have driven her creative process.

The book is divided into two sections. Part one is a memoir in the guise of “Tap Dance Stories.” Part two, “Theory and Practice,” is a master class for experienced tap dancers, but is not to be skipped by the in-, un-, or less experienced, as Brenda continues the memoir even while she notates rhythms and offers teaching tips.

Full disclosure: I count myself as one of Brenda’s many friends, and my wife has produced her work in Seattle over the course of the years. From that vantage point, I’ve been witness to a few of the events in this book, and have also been a willing audience for many of the stories. A conversation with her, especially if it’s a group event, is often like a tropical storm, and when she said she was writing a book, I wondered how she’d be able to master the elements on a table as rigid as a page. Now, Brenda may be an improviser, but that’s not to say she isn’t disciplined, and she found the discipline (form) for the book (function) without sacrificing the art of the story. The book is a good read. It’s witty, filled with tap history, opinionated, and touching in its personal reminiscences—most notably of her mother, her mystical involvement with people and place, and her long association with Honi Coles.

Brenda is an Artist, with a capital A. As a being, she transcends her chosen forms. Her book will be purchased by dancers, but it’s a book for artists. So, if you are on the path, *Tapping the Source* is a useful map.

Tapping the Source may be purchased from www.codhill.com, Amazon.com, www.brendabufalino.com, or www.ADTE.org.



Brenda Bufalino. Photo by Debi Field. Courtesy of American Tap Dance Foundation

Goldberg, they started applying for grants. ... I guess you might say they started opening up some other markets, performing in the colleges and schools.

KB: Your movie. It was 1975. That was the first time tap—when they got the grant from the National Endowment for the Arts—that was the first time tap had ever received a major government grant. So what did you think about the film *Great Feats of Feet*?

RM: Awesome. Man, to me it covered every dimension of what the Copasetics was about. And not only that, it had all the best dancers all there at one time performing in the colleges and they're teaching and they're talking, their routines and stuff that they don't even do today.

KB: It's a great film.

BB: And then that's when they started booking the Copasetics into all the different colleges.

RM: It opened up a lot more doors.

KB: Was it just upstate New York?

BB: Everywhere. We went all over, to all the different colleges.



KB: [You brought] up the issue of not getting credit. Even with the tap renaissance, the revival of it, bringing it back to the theaters and to the colleges, who were some of the people who spearheaded that? I know at one point Cookie was teaching—

RM: Jane Goldberg. The first time I actually saw Brownie dance live was here in Chicago in 1985 on a show called *Show Me Why I'm Happy*, which was produced by Jane Goldberg. I saw him and his partner Cookie. And when Brownie came here to retire, Jane Goldberg was studying as a protégé under Cookie. So they started working together. Like Brenda Bufalino, who was already tapping when she met Honi Coles and became his protégé. Dianne Walker, who teaches Leon Collins' stuff [was Leon's protégé]. So you started learning material from other dancers, like I'm learning from Brownie.

KB: Passing it on.

RM: Passing it on and keeping alive the great dancers' legacy. That's why I tried to stress a lot about when you are trying to become a dancer, it's just as important for [the dancers] to get tradition under their belt as well as all the contemporary stuff too. Because tradition, that's forevermore. Because a lot of them, when they miss that, they end up going back to it at some point, or they're incomplete.



BB: I said, you never know what's going to come from fusion. Just like that stuff that's happening now, what they call hip hop and all that kind of stuff. Who knew that was going to come up and was going to be as popular as anything else, because it don't last. This type of entertainment we used to do, it'll last forever, because people can understand what the hell they're doing.

KB: Jumaane, you are steeped in tradition, because you did have older teachers and were forced to learn that. But at the same time, you are kind of a part of a new school or breed. Speak on how knowing history and tradition, talking to people like Brownie, Reggio, how has that enriched you as a dancer?

JT: If you're claiming that you're a tap dancer, you want to know who created it. You want to know who opened the doors. You just want to know the people that provided the gateway for you. They made the way for you to be on that stage. Why wouldn't you want

to know who danced before you?

BB: And how it all came about.

RM: To gain a direction, you need something to guide you. You jump out there and you need a guideline. You need to understand that there's a soft shoe. What's the soft shoe about? They're doing the Shim Sham. This is the tap dancer's national anthem. This is something you've got to learn at some point. When you're doing a tap festival, they don't rehearse the Shim Sham. It's just like, "Hey, you-all, we're ending the show with the Shim Sham. Everybody get up and do it!" They know traditionally you close out the show with the Shim Sham. So these are things that dancers got to know, they got to learn. And this is no matter where you are in the world. This is the tradition.

KB: Tap is different all around the world, yet it does have the potential to be a universal language. It is, actually.

RM: It is a universal language, and it will continue to be. You have to have people to continue to protect this, people to take it when you leave off and keep it going. The next generation, you've got to just keep it going. So it's like a preservation that has to take place.

KB: Right.

RM: That's why I like up in New York, where Avi Miller and Ofer Ben have traditional workshops on tap where they bring in people to teach nothing but traditional tap routines.

KB: How much emotion and heart do you put in your dancing? I know there's the routine, but are there other things going on when you're on stage? How are you feeling the music?

BB: It just feels good to me. I enjoy doing it. That's what I've been doing mostly all my life anyway, just dancing. (sings) "Dancing all over the world, no matter where you go."

KB: What does it mean to you?

RM: (laughs) (sings) "There's no business like show business!" (laughter) It's rough.

BB: It's something I like doing. Most of the time you made a living doing it. What else could you ask for? ...

KB: So just the emotion, that personal attachment to it, adds a deeper level to the performances.

RM: Sometimes when we're out there on stage, something might come to mind that Brownie did 30 years ago. He'll do it right on the spot on the stage and I'm just stuck improvising and following that. Everything we did, people might think we rehearse a lot. We don't rehearse worth nothing.

BB: (laughs)

RM: What made you want to be a tap dancer, Jumaane?

JT: Seeing tap dancers, seeing them on stage. When I first saw that, I fell in love, man. ... I was in about fourth or third grade. My older sisters were taking a tap dance class at Chicago Park District Fieldhouse at Jackson Park. They had one of these shows, recital kind of shows, where the park put all their activities together and had one big show. I saw them dancing, saw one guy dancing with all the chicks, I said, "Oh, man!"

BB: That's for me!

KB: Brownie, how did it feel being back on stage without Cookie [after Cookie passed]?

BB: I never was off the stage.

RM: He was like a born-again Christian! "I'm born again. Hallelujah!" (laughter)

KB: I mean, not that you ever left, but now you-all work a lot. You're at the festivals. You're doing shows. How does that feel?

BB: All right. It feels good. We're always around with everybody

that dances.

KB: What do you think about what you see going on now at the festivals and the concerts?

BB: Oh, wonderful, because mostly all of them that we see there are dancers that have been around and whatever they have learned, it's the sort of things that they're doing today, I mean as far as we're concerned.

RM: But it's good, because they have all the older guys and they have the young guys, so they cover the ground. It's not like if you go to a festival, there's only one style. I like it because they have the older generation, like Brownie, and they've got people like Jumaane coming up. They've got hip hop tap. They've got tradition. I think that's what makes it awesome: the variety. And I like that about tap. You don't throw the dancers out after they get to a certain age like they do in some of the other art forms; they're washed up at 30. These guys, like Brownie, as long as they can move and want to come on stage, come on. I like that, and I think that tap really sets an example for what dance should be like as far as that's concerned.

KB: Jumaane, so you're 19. You can see yourself doing this for the next 70 years. Brownie, what would you say to him about how to keep going, even when it slows down? What would you say?

BB: I don't know. You just have to keep doing it, that's all.

KB: No matter what. ... For the last question, Brownie: What would you like for your legacy to be in tap? How would you want to be remembered? What would you want to say you added to tap dance?

BB: I didn't add nothing to it. I just enjoy doing it. If somebody would still be living after I'm dead and would want to mention me, it's all right with me. But I did my own style. Ain't nobody else ever doing that.

RM: "I did it my way." But it worked for Brownie. And he is part of the history and legacy of tap. I would like to add the fact that Brownie being pretty much the only living Copasetic right now, I feel very blessed at having the opportunity to bring the Copasetic Chair Dance back into the forefront, and [we're] working on the Cane Dance next. So he passed [the Chair Dance] on to me, and [we've] been able to revive it, save it. We've been going from city to city to do that. Now we'll go to LA to do it again. But I'm just glad we were able to save it before it became just a lost work, and then you have people trying to put just anything together and calling it the [Chair Dance]. But by [Brownie] being here with me, and a part of that legacy, everybody knows that what we do is genuine. So I think that is good, what we did. And, even though I have my own style, I work on choreography right now. I've been also like, kind of what Brownie was doing out there a little bit first: just passing it on. ...

KB: And now people like Jumaane have it, and it's up to them to teach it. ... [Brownie and Reggio], what's next for you two together? What do you-all have coming up?

BB: Keep on dancing.

RM: We don't sit around waiting for opportunities, for people to call, people to see us. We get out and make things happen. Like when we was in New York and Brownie was given the Hoofers Award, so was Tommy Tune, the choreographer for *Singin' in the Rain*. It was amazing. One of Tommy Tune's staff that worked with him was so inspired by Brownie's and my performance that she asked us to do a photo shoot. So we did, and we shot it at Tommy's

house. We were in his Broadway costumes, the top hats and the tuxedo coats, which was way too big for us. ... because Tommy's over six feet. It was just beautiful. So it seems like if we continue to dance, things happen for us. So we keep on dancing and we'll see what happens.

KB: How many festivals do you plan on attending this year?

RM: Right now we're doing three: Chicago, St. Louis, and LA. In the meantime, we're performing here and there, and we have some workshop stuff. So, yeah, we do pretty good. I mean, I'm doing it for a living. Sometimes Brownie, he's just waiting in the bullpen while I'm out there teaching and doing stuff to continue making a living. When major stuff comes up, I call him in. We're dancers, 100%, 24/7. That's what we do.

BB: That's a key point.

KB: You're never going to stop dancing! (laughs)

BB: I don't think so.

.....
About the Artists:

Kalisha Buckhanon is a fiction writer and African-American cultural historian currently living in Chicago. She is the author of the novels *Upstate* (2005) and the forthcoming *Conception* (2006), both from St. Martin's Press. And she is a huge fan of tap!



Kalisha Buckhanon.
Photo by Bruno Passigatti

Reggio "The Hooper" McLaughlin began his career dancing in the subways of Chicago and since has become known as a Chicago tap icon. McLaughlin has performed at colleges, libraries, museums, and major tap festivals, where he has shared the stage with some of the best tap dancers in the world. He has appeared in the Duke Ellington musicals *Beggars Holiday* and *Jump for Joy*, in the theatrical version of *The Sammy Davis J. Story in Chicago*, and also on Broadway. He has been profiled in magazines, books, newspapers, and television programs. Film credits include the tap documentary, *JUBA-Masters of Tap*, (partnering with the legendary Ernest "Brownie" Brown), and a documentary on singer Nat King Cole, scheduled for release in 2005. In addition to the US, McLaughlin has performed internationally in Japan, Canada, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland contributing, as he writes, "to raising tap dancing to a status of recognition and admiration."

Jumaane Taylor began dancing at the Sammy Dyer School of Theatre. He has studied and performed with Dianne Walker, Idella Reed Davis, Jimmy Payne Jr., Jay Fagan, George Patterson III, Jason Samuels Smith, Sarah Savelli, and Ted Levy. He has performed nationally and internationally with *M.A.D.D. Rhythms*, and in numerous shows with *ETA Creative Arts Foundation*. *Dance Spirit* named him one of the top 20 hoofers under 20, and he won first place in the first annual *Chicago Tap Off*.

Ed. Note: Special thanks to Circuit Productions (Susan Goldbetter, Executive Producer) for providing photographs of Charles "Cookie" Cook. For further information on Circuit Productions events and artists contact Evan Bjornen. PH: 718.638.4878, WB: www.circuitproductions.org.

opportunities & awards

compiled by mary fowler



If you are a member of the ITA and would like early notification of Opportunities & Awards, please email your email address to us at ita@tapdance.org so we can include you in our TapAlert! emailings.

All information in Opportunities & Awards is subject to change. Please contact the organization or granting agency listed to be sure you and/or your project are eligible before submitting an application.

JOBS/INTERNSHIPS/AUDITIONS

Deadline Oct 30: Grants Management Internship, Hippodrome State Theatre Research govt., private charitable fdn. grants; assist in writing funding applications, reports; maintain accurate, up-to-date, accessible databases, incl. detailed records, solicitation activities tracking; must have a car. Complete description contact Kelly Dugan at education@thehipp.org

Deadline Nov 15 (Spring), Jan 1 (Spring/Summer), Mar 1 (Summer), Jul 1 (Fall): Nat'l Dance Education Org. Internship Prog. Volunteer interns gain experience in arts legislative, policy issues, dance arts education. May earn univ./college credits. Schedules accomm. academic calendars, may be negotiated; usually 20–40 hr/wk for 6 wk to 6 mo. Contact Nat'l Dance Educ. Org., 4948 St. Elmo Ave., Ste. 207, Bethesda MD 20814 USA, 301.657.2880; FX: 301.2880.2882; ndeo@erols.com

Deadline Nov 16: Helios Now booking diverse musical, dance, performance art shows for fall season. Interested in playing at Houston's most eclectic venue, contact David Garcia at bookshows@heliosrising.org, www.heliosrising.org

Deadline Ongoing: Elsie Management Internships for Booking Agents Summer: Jun–Aug; Fall: Sep–Nov; Winter: Dec–Feb; Spring: Mar–May. Apply 6 wk. before 1st month of the time period you would like to work. Send letter of interest, resumé to meghand@elsiemanager.org, www.elsiemanager.org

RESIDENCIES, GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Deadline Nov 1: Challenge Grants; Collaborative Research Grants; Scholarly Editions Grants; Deadline Nov 3: Television Projects–Planning & Scripting Grants; Production Grants See www.neh.gov/grants/grantsbydivision.html

Deadline Oct 31: German Chancellor Scholarship Program 10 scholarships/yr. to US citizens, under 35 w/BA, in private, public, nonprof., cultural, acad. sectors. 12 mo. Prog. starting 9/1/05. No prior German req. Contact Alexander von Humboldt Fdn., US Liaison Office, 1012 14th St. NW, #301, Washington DC 20005, 202.783.1907, www.humboldt-foundation.de

Deadline in Nov (also May): Kanoria Center for the Arts, India 3–6 mo., any discipline. Open to int'l grad., postgrad. students. See www.kanoriacorp.com/art.htm

Deadline Nov 1: VSA Arts Panasonic Young Soloists Award Honors 2 promising musicians w/disability, ages 25 or younger. Open to instrumental or vocal musicians w/disability, Performers of all types of music incl. classical, country, jazz, rap, rock. Contact info@vsarts.org, www.vsarts.org/x22.xml

Deadline Nov 1 (also 5/1): Global Connections \$500–\$5K awards. Provides support for composers to cover composer's appearance fee, travel, accomm., per diem costs related to travel abroad for live performance of their works or for research, develop. See www.meetthecomposer.org/programs/globalconnections.html

Deadline Nov 1 (annually): American Harlequin Corp. Dance Scholarship Program 5 \$5K award. Open to students 15–21 yr. by nomination by dance instructors. Selected by random drawing of eligible applicants. Contact Amer. Harlequin Corp., 1531 Glen Ave., Moorestown, NJ 08057, USA, 800.642.6440, FX: 856.231.4403, dance@harlequinfloors.com, www.harlequinfloors.com

Deadline Nov 1 (annual): Nat'l Dance Project Touring Grants 15–25% of artist fee. Funding for distrib., present., (touring) of dance work. Funds support artists costs related to touring work. See www.nefa.org/grantprog/ndp/index.html

Deadline Nov 1: Henry Cowell Performance Incentive Fund \$500–\$5K awards. Supports, encourages public perf., recordings of Henry Cowell's music by nonprof. prof. perf. ensembles, presenting instits., indiv. perfs. See www.amc.net/resources/grants/cowell.html

Deadline Nov 1: TCG Observership Program Open to TCG members to observe admin., artistic work of other theaters, meet w/colleagues. See www.tcg.org/frames/programs/fs_ap_grants.htm

Deadline Nov 1: Kurt Weill Fdn for Music Open to indivs., nonprof. orgs. for funding of projects related to perpetuation of Weill's artistic legacy. Funding categories incl.: travel & research grants; symposia; publication assistance; dissertation fellowships; college/univ. perf./prod. grants; recording projects; broadcasts; prof. perf./prod. grants. See www.kwf.org

Deadline Nov 1: American-Scandinavian Fdn. Fellowships \$18K Fellowships, \$3K grants to pursue research in 1 or more Scandinavian countries for up to 1 yr. Open to US citizens, perm. residents. See www.amscan.org/fellowship.html

Deadline Nov 1: Soros Fellowships for New Americans 30 \$20K fellowships + ? tuition. Open to indiv. who is (1) resident alien (i.e., holds Green Card), or (2) naturalized as US citizen, or (3) child of 2 parents, both naturalized citizens. May pursue grad. degree in any prof. field or scholarly disc. Must have bachelor's degree or be in final yr. of undergrad. Must not be older than 30 yr. by 11/1/05. See <http://pdsoros.org/>

Deadline Nov 1 (also 5/1): Ethel Louise Armstrong Fdn. \$1K–\$5K awards. Funds progs. of nonprofit orgs., which are led by or support adults w/disabilities. Areas: education, advocacy, the arts. See www.ela.org/-grants/grants.html

Deadline Nov 4: (1) Jack Straw Productions Artist Support Program (2) New Media Gallery Program (1) Open to artists of all disciplines whose projs. incl. sound as a major component. Receive recording studio time, engineering assist. in full-service recording studio. (2) Open to estab./emerging artists, any disc./genre to create new work for exh. in which sound has integral part or exclusive role. Receive studio time, exh. in gallery. See www.jackstraw.org

Deadline Nov 9: (6 times/yr.): Caroline H. Newhouse Scholarship Fund Limited funding for tuition, retraining, or seed money central to fledgling business enterprises is available to current, former professional dancers. Call Ann Barry at 212.764.0172 ext. 224 to determine eligibility. See www.careertransition.org/elig.html

Deadline Nov 10: Asia Pacific Performance Exchange Open to US, Asian trad., contemp. perf. artists. 6-wk. intensive int'l artists residency program (Jul–Aug '06, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, USA) that promotes cross-cult. dialogue, interdisc. exploration, devel. rigorous art-making strategies that reflect nuances of cult. differences. 5 days/wk. artists engage in all-day master classes, studio workshops, experimentation, collab. projects. Weekends and evenings, participants will be introduced vibrant arts and cultural context of host city through specially planned field trips, concerts. Incls. travel expenses, shared accomms., meals. See www.wac.ucla.edu/~cip/appex/index.htm

Deadline Nov 12: Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships in Humanistic Studies 85 fellowships covers full grad. tuition, fees for 1st year of grad. study + 1-yr. stipend of \$17.5K. See www.woodrow.org/mellon/competition_2005.html

Deadline Nov 30 (annually): Rockefeller Archive Ctr. Grants for Research in Philanthropy, Other Fields \$2.5K awards. Makes available for scholarly research papers of Rockefeller family, records of various philanthropic, educ. instits. founded by family. Coll. of records incl. papers from non-Rockefeller philanthropies, covers wide variety of subs., incl. agriculture, the arts, African-Amer. hist., educ., int'l relations, econ. devel. labor, medicine, politics, population, religion, social sciences, social welfare, women's hist. Contact Camilla Harris, Rockefeller Archive Ctr., 15 Dayton Ave., Pocantico Hills, Sleepy Hollow NY 10591-1498, USA. 914.366.6311, www.rockefeller.edu/archive.ctr/

Deadline Early Dec: Rocky Mtn. Nat'l Park A-I-R Open to prof. writers, composers, visual and performing artists. Hist. cabin for 2-wks., Jun-Sep. No stipend. Artists asked to donate 1 piece of work. \$25 appl. fee. Contact A-I-R Program, Rocky Mtn. Nat'l Park, Estes Park, CO 80517, USA, 970.586.1206

Deadline Dec 1 (also 3/1, 6/1): NFAA Astral Career Grants Up to \$200 to support music, dance artists in need of immediate assist. for career devel. opports. Contact NFAA, 800 Brickell Ave., Ste. 500, Miami FL 33131, USA, 305.377.1140, 800.970.ARTS, www.nfaa.org/artprograms/astral.htm

Deadline Dec 1: VSA arts Young Soloist Awards for Performing Artists w/Disabilities 4 awards, perf. at JFK Ctr. for Perf. Arts. Open to musicians max. 25 yr. w/except. talents as vocalists, instrumentalists. See www.vsaarts.org/x1485.xml

Deadline Dec 15: Sundance Instit. Theatre Lab Program 3-wk. workshop. Open to playwrights, directors, choreogs., composers, solo performers, ensembles. Time, space, supp. to devel. new plays, musicals, explore new approaches to existing scripts. Contact Sundance Instit. Theatre Program, 8857 W. Olympic Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211, USA, 310.360.1981, www.sundance.org

Deadline Dec 15: AAUW Educational Fdn. Career Development Grants; Int'l Fellowships; Selected Professions Fellowships; University Scholar-in-Residence Award; Deadline Jan 15: Community Action Grants See www.aauw.org/fga/fellowships_grants/index.cfm

Deadline Dec 15 (also 3/15, 9/15): Footpaths to Creativity Ctr. New Writer/Artist Residency & Retreat in Azores offering artists (visual, writers, poets, composers, musicians, etc.) worldwide an opport. to focus on their craft free from distractions, worries, and sometimes harrowing pace of daily life. 1 wk.-1 yr. \$20 appl. fee. See www.terraincognitacenter.org/

Deadline Dec 16: Kennedy Ctr. Jazz Residency for Young People 3/23-4/1/06. Open to musicians max. 30 yr., jazz perfs./composers. Incl. tutelage by experienced artist-instructors who coach, counsel them, helping to polish perf., composing, arranging skills, travel stipend, modest honor. See <http://kennedy-center.org/jazzahead>

Deadline Dec 30: Puffin Fdn. \$1K-\$2.5K grants. Open to emerging artists in visual arts, music, theater, dance, photo, literature whose work, due to genre and/or social philos. might have difficulty being aired. Contact Puffin Fdn., 20 E. Oakdene Ave., Teaneck, NJ 07666, USA, 201.836.8923, www.puffinfoundation.org

Deadline Dec 31 (annually): Alden B. Dow Creativity Ctr. Open to US citizens working in arts, humans., sciences. 120 mi. N. of Detroit, MI. Incl. housing, workspace, lunch, \$500 travel, \$750 materials, \$1,750/10-wk. residency. \$10 fee. Contact Alden B. Dow Creativity Ctr., 4000 Whiting Dr., Midland MI 48640, USA, 989.837.4478, FX: 989.837.4468, creativity@northwood.edu, www.northwood.edu/abd/

Deadline Dec 31 (also 6/30): Taipei Artist Village Open to artists, writers, composers, etc., blacksmithing, dance/choreog., digital media, exhibition/install., film/digital editing, music (piano studio), painting, photo,

sculpture, woodworking. All levels of prof. develop. who come from across Taiwan/around world. 8-12-wk. residencies. Fellowships available. Contact A-I-R Prog., No. 7 Beiping East Rd., Taipei 100, Taiwan, 886.2.33.937.377, FX: 886.2.33.937.389, bt-tav@mail.tcg.gov.tw, www.tav.tcg.gov.tw

Deadline Jan 1: Berlin A-I-R Programme Open to int'l known as well as young painters, sculptors, writers, composers. 15-20 positions. 12 mo.; 6 mo. for filmmakers. See www.daad-berlin.de

Deadline Jan 1 (also 8/1): Yaddo Residencies 2 wk.-2 mo. residencies to artists of all disciplines. \$20 appl. fee. Contact Yaddo, PO Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866, USA, 518.584.0746, chwait@yaddo.org, www.yaddo.org

Deadline in Jan: John Lennon Scholarship for Young Songwriters 1 \$10K award, 2 \$5K awards. Open to students ages 15-24 from 50 select schools. Contact LennonScholarship@bmifoundation.org, www.bmifoundation.org/pages/JLennon.asp

Deadline Jan 14 (also 4/1, 6/1, 10/1): Creative Connections (formerly Meet the Composer) \$250-\$5K. Open to composers actively participating in events featuring the perf. of their music. Contact Meet the Composer, 75 9th Ave., Fl. 3R Ste. C, New York, NY 10011, USA, 212.645.6949, www.meetthecomposer.org

Deadline Jan 15: Humanities Fellowships for Folklife & Cultural Heritage 6 awards, incl. stipend, travel allow. 6 wk.-5 mo. Primary focus of '05-'06 fellowships is relation bet. cultural heritage and economic pursuits. See www.folklife.si.edu/opportunities/fellowships_RE.html

Deadline Jan 15 (also 5/15, 9/15): Hambidge Ctr. for Creative Arts & Sciences, Rabun Gap, GA Open to artists working in all areas of creative arts, sciences incl. writing, poetry, ceramics, visual arts, music comp., perf., dance, envir. arts, mixed media. 2 wk.-2 mo. Incl. housing, studio, 5 meals/wk. See www.hambidge.org/

Deadline Jan 15 (also 5/15, 9/15) Virginia Ctr. for the Creative Arts Open to painters, sculps., printmakers, poets, fict. writers, screenwriters, playwrights, composers, perf. artists, choreogs., video artists. Incl. housing, studios, food. Artist pays \$20 fee, voluntary \$30/day, travel, maters. Contact Virginia Ctr. for the Creative Arts, Mount San Angelo, Sweet Briar, VA 24595, USA, 804.946.7236, FX: 804.946.7239, vcca@vcca.com, www.vcca.com

Deadline Jan 15 (also 4/15): Bogliasco Fdn., Italy Fellowships to qualified persons engaged in adv. creative work, scholarly research in archaeol., archit., classics, dance, film/video, hist., landscape archit., liter., music, philos., theater, visual arts. 32 days. Housing, meals, studio. See www.liguriastudycenter.org/

Deadline Jan 20: US Artists Int'l Grants \$1K-410K grants. Open to US dance, music ensembles that have been invited to participate in int'l festivals in European Union. See www.midatlanticarts.org/programs_usartists.htm

Deadline Jan 27: USC Annenberg/Getty Arts Journalism Program Fellowships 5/5-26. 3-wk. multi-disc. prog. that aims to improve arts coverage by bringing together artists, curators, theater dirs., admins., funders, colleagues against background of LA's cult. life. See <http://annenberg-usc.edu/getty>

Deadline Jan 31: Nominations Invited for Jazz Masters Fellowships 6 \$25K awards. Awarded on basis of nomination only. Must be US citizens, perm. resident. See www.nea.gov/honors/jazz/index.html

Deadline Rolling: Centrum Creative Residency Program Open to artists, creative thinkers, activists, performers. Space-available basis, week-long blocks. \$300/wk. residency fee. See www.centrum.org

For More Info on Int'l Artists' Residencies Res Artis is largest existing network of artist residency programs, w/over 200 orgs. in 50 countries worldwide offering int'l artists facilities. See <http://www.resartis.org/>



ASIA

JAPAN

Tokyo

Nov 19–20

Studio Tap presents a showcase featuring 72 students with special guest Fabien Ruiz at the Sanbyakunin Theater. PH: +81.3.5485.1785

Tokyo

Dec 23–25

Jam Tap Dance Company presents the *New Tap Generation* at Studio 9. PH: +81.3.3910.8648, EM: jamtapdancecompany@aol.com

Tokyo

Jan 1–3

New Year Tap Intensive (11th Tap Maniac) at Artn Tap Dance Studio. Faculty includes Avi Miller & Ofer Ben, Ayako Ukawa, Yukiko “Smilie” Misumi, and more TBA. PH: +81.3.3401.2302, EM: artn-tap@basement-tokyo.com, WB: www.basement-tokyo.com/artn_studio/

Tokyo

Ongoing

Tap jam session with live music every first Monday of the month at Pensacola, 7 pm. Hosted by Kazuhiko Fujita and Ayako Ukawa. PH: 81.35261.5254, WB: www.rockbar-pensacola.com/Enter.html

Tokyo

Ongoing

Hoofers tap jam session off-and-on at Roppongi. Hosted by Kazunori Kumagai. EM: hoofersjapan@hotmail.co.jp

AUSTRALIA

Melbourne

Dec 16

Swift Rhythm Kids perform on Swanston Street Walk, 1–3 pm during December school holidays for some busking sessions, plus Tap Christmas Party in a park tbd with African drums and tap boards all around. WB: www.funktap.com

Melbourne

Ongoing

Tap jams at Dizzy’s Jazz Club Saturday nights 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Guest appearances by the Swift Rhythm Hoofers and the Swift Rhythm Kids last Saturday of each month. EM: grant@funktap.com

Melbourne

Ongoing

Swift Rhythm Kids perform at the Royal Children’s Hospital every month. EM: grant@funktap.com

All programs are subject to change. Contact each listing for more information.

Editor’s Note: To be included in the calendar, please email ontapsubmissions@gmail.com or mail the following information for your event—in the following order:

Country • State/Province • City/Town • Event dates (MONTH, DAYS, YEAR OR “ONGOING” THROUGH _) • Event title or type (JAM SESSION, CLASSES, FESTIVAL, PERFORMANCE, ETC.)

Presenter (FOR PERFORMANCES, FESTIVALS, WORKSHOPS) • Brief description (or list of teachers/performers) • Specific location (NAME OF DANCE STUDIO OR THEATER) • Contact information (PH, FX, EM, WB if available) *Incomplete submissions will be returned to the sender for completion.*

Receipt deadlines are as follows:

November 15, 2005	for Vol. 16, No. 4	Spring	Feb/Mar
January 15, 2006	for Vol. 16, No. 5	Summer Preview	Apr/May/June
April 15, 2006	for Vol. 17, No. 1	Summer	Jul/Aug
June 15, 2006	for Vol. 17, No. 2	Fall	Sept/Oct
August 15, 2006	for Vol. 17, No. 3	Winter	Nov/Dec/Jan

EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Salzburg

Nov 1

Jazz Tap Ensemble performs at the 10th Annual Salzburg Autumn Jazz Festival. PH: 310.475.4412, EM: JTensemble@aol.com; PH: + 43.1.504.85.00, EM: info@viennaentertainment.com, WB: www.viennaentertainment.com

Vienna

Nov 12–13

Max Pollak gives a workshop. EM: t3@chello.at, WB: www.tapdoCs.at

CZECH REPUBLIC

Prague

Nov 12–13

Dance studio ZIG-ZAG Tap & Swing holds a tap dance workshop in Cultural Center DELTA with special guest Sam Weber from San Francisco. PH: +420.2.20563459, CL: +420.603.954074, EM: studio@zig-zag.cz, WB: www.tapdance.cz

FINLAND

Helsinki and Karis

Aug 2–11, 2006

The 10th anniversary for the International Feet Beat Tap Festival. Master classes, performances, jams, and more. PH/FX: 358.9.621.4363, EM: sofi.kyrklund@kolumbus.fi, WB: www.feetbeat.fi

Helsinki

Ongoing

Monthly tap jams to live music. Hosted by Sofi Kyrklund/Feet Beat at Jagellonica, Uudenmaankatu 16–20. EM: jussi.tap@netti.fi, WB: www.kolumbus.fi/feetbeat

FRANCE

Limoge

Apr 1–2, 2006

Rubén Sanchez teaches a tap workshop for all levels. Association Prise de Step. PH (Jacky Calian): 0033.0663364392, EM: prisedestep@wanadoo.fr

Montpellier

Jan 14–15

Rubén Sanchez and Lynn Shwab teach a tap workshop for all levels. PH (Eric Scialo): 0033.467201282

GERMANY

Ed. Note: More show, workshop, and competition dates in Germany can be found at www.german-tap.de

Aachen

Nov 17–20

Max Pollak teaches at the Studio, and performs (Nov. 19) at the Ludwig Forum at 8 pm. EM: eva.weissenboeck@onlinehome.de, claudia.schmitte@online.de, WB: www.tanzraum-aachen.de

Berlin

Ongoing

Tap jam session with live music every last Friday of the month at TapaToe. Dancers and musicians welcome. PH (TapaToe, das Steptanzstudio): 49.30.44010711, EM: info@tapatoe.de, WB: www.TapaToe.de

Freiburg

Nov 3

Sam Weber, Uwe Meusel, Vivian Kleiser, and Dunja Lenz present “A Tribute to the Great Jazz Pianists” at the Augustinum, with the music of Dave Brubeck, Oscar Peterson, Count Basie, Jacques Loussier, Bill Evans, and Erroll Garner. PH (Uwe Meusel): 0049.761.383336, WB: www.musical-tap-company.de

Wiesbaden

Dec 3

“Rhythmania” at the Tattersall Wiesbaden. PH (Natalie Westerdale): 0049.611.443544, WB: www.fiddle-and-feet.de

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam

Ongoing

Edwin Baaij organizes tap jams every Friday night. EM: taplindy@hotmail.com

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh

Dec 30

Tap Olé, featuring Guillem Alonso, Roser Font, and guitarists Alejandro Perez and Roger Raventos. PH: 0034.93.232.4517, WB: www.tapole.com

SPAIN

Arrigorriaga, Sondica Nov 26–27

Tap Olé, featuring Guillem Alonso, Roser Font, and guitarists Alejandro Perez and Roger Raventos. PH: 0034 93 232 4517, WB: www.tapole.com

Barcelona

Ongoing

Tap jam with jazz trio, hosted by Guillem Alonso and Laia Molins. PH: 0034.932.324.517, 0034.932.254.331

Barcelona

Nov 11–12

The new tap company Tracatap premieres with jazz trio and tap dancers. Featuring Roser Font (director), Adriana Aguilar, Ludo Hombravella, Pep Lopez, and Toni Sans. At Auditori de les Corts. PH: 0034.93.2324517

Barcelona

Nov 11–12

Tapeplas premieres “BoomBach” at Teatre Zona Nord with performers Sharon Lavi (artistic director), Yaron Engler (musical director), Rubén Sánchez, Laia Molins, Anna Llombart, Agnès Padrós, and David Beneito. PH: 0034.93.4236277, EM: info@tapeplas.com, WB: www.tapeplas.com

Barcelona

Apr 13–17, '06

The Ultimate Dance Competition “Europe” with classes, shows, and competitions. PH: +81.426.64.5991, +81.3.3401.2302; EM: marcebarbieri@tiscali.it; WB: www.web.tiscali.it/danceawards2005

Madrid

Apr 13–17, '06

The Ultimate Dance Competition “Europe” featuring classes, shows, competitions. PH: +81.426.64.5991, +81.3.3401.2302; WB: www.web.tiscali.it/danceawards2005

Madrid

Ongoing

Camut Band Company performs the show *Life Is Rhythm*, with African–Latin percussion by Toni Español and Jordi Satorra, and tap dancers Guillem Alonso, Sharon Lavi, and Luis and Rafa Méndez at the Apolo Theatre. PH: 0034.93.309.9850, WB: www.camutband.com

Santiago de Compostela Nov 21–Dec 3

Rubén Sanchez teaches tap and body percussion workshops for beg and int. At Espacio Aberto. PH: 0034.981588290.



Steven Harper and Adriana Salomão, organizers of the Tap in Rio Festival. Photo by Mauro Kury

SWITZERLAND

Biel

Nov 26–27

Max Pollak teaches a workshop. EM: info@lukasweiss.ch

Zurich

Ongoing

Tap workshops with various artists at Backstagestudio. PH: +41.43.311.68.68; EM: info@backstagestudio.ch; WB: www.-backstagestudio.ch

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

Rio de Janeiro

Jan 24–28, '06

Steven Harper and Adriana Salomão present the fifth annual Tap in Rio festival, with workshops, master classes, performances, jam sessions, video showings, group conversations, and the now-traditional spaghetti party. WB <http://tapinrio.stop.to/>

NORTH AMERICA

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Edmonton

Nov 11–13

Tap master classes and performances with Skip Cunningham, Karen Callaway–Williams, Germaine Salsberg, the Israeli Hoofers Avi Miller and Ofer Ben, and Tap Tel Aviv Dance Troupe. PH (Adrian Wouts at Hats Off Mgmt): 403.294.3412, EM: AJwouts@telus.net

Toronto Area

Nov 11–13

The first annual Eastern Canadian Tap Collective Conference. Artists include What's On? TAP!, Downbeats, T.O. Tap, M.A.D.D. Rhythms (Bril Barrett, Tré Dumas, Lisa LaTouche), and others TBA. EM: kimike@sympatico.ca, WB: www.whats-on-tap.com

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA

Alameda

Ongoing

Adult tap classes with Pamm Drake and performance opportunities for all levels; some paid. Dance/10 Performing Arts Center. PH: 510.339.3345, WB: www.dance10.org

Berkeley

Ongoing

Rhythm tap with Debbie Sternbach. Tuesdays (5:30 p.m., beg; 6:30 p.m., int) at The Beat, 2560 9th Street. PH: 510.548.5348, WB: http://users.lmi.net/~thebeat/

Berkeley

Ongoing

Rhythm tap with Gregg Geoffrey. Saturdays (9 a.m., int; 10 a.m., int) at The Beat, Sundays (10 a.m., beg; 11 a.m., beg; 12 noon, intro) at The Beat, 2560 9th Street. PH: 510. 548.5348, WB: http://users.lmi.net/~thebeat/

Los Angeles

Jan 20-23

Tap On Water. Second annual three-day tap cruise from Los Angeles to Ensenada. Master classes with Emmy Award-winning Jason Samuels Smith. Performances by Yvette Glover, Samuels Smith, and more. Tap jams on deck nightly hosted by Chloe Arnold and Samuels Smith. Private DJ, karaoke, and dancing, plus all the rest of the amenities this cruise has to offer. PH (Monica Bracken Travel): 310.215.1940, EM: monicabracken@sbcglobal.net

San Francisco

Ongoing

Rhythm tap with Caren Cadile. Mondays (6:30-8 p.m. beg/int) at Dance Mission Theatre, 3316 24th Street. PH: 415.826.4441, WB: www.dancemission.com

San Francisco

Ongoing

Rhythm tap with John Kloss. Tuesdays (5:30 pm, beg; 6:30 pm, int; 7:30 pm, adv) at Rhythm and Motion Dance Center. PH: 415.621.0643; WB: www.rhythmandmotion.com

San Francisco

Ongoing

Rhythm tap with John Kloss. Thursdays (6:00 p.m., beg/int; 7:00 p.m., int/adv.); Sundays (12 noon; performance and choreography), San Francisco Dance Center, 26 Seventh Street. PH: 415.863.3040, WB: www.sfdancecenter.org

COLORADO

Arvada

Ongoing

The Arvada Center for the Arts & Humanities offers a variety of tap classes at various levels, children through adults. PH: 720.898.7237, EM: cnoel@arvadacenter.org, WB: www.arvadacenter.org

Boulder

Ongoing

Gene GeBauer teaches beginner through advanced tap at Mosaic Movements Arts, 1840 55th Street. PH: 303.402.9777

Boulder

Ongoing

Ellie Sciarra teaches at the Pearl Street Studio. Levels I-IV. PH: 303.443.5612

Broomfield

Dec. 8

Grace Studios School of Dance presents the annual Holiday Spectacular Recital at 7 pm at the Broomfield Auditorium. PH: 303.465.5678, WB: www.Grace-Studios.com

Broomfield

Ongoing

Grace Studios School of Dance offers tap classes for ages 3-adult, beg-adv. PH: 303.465.5678, EM: Christy@grace-studios.com, WB: www.grace-studios.com

Denver

Ongoing

The Gwen Bowen School of Dance Arts offers tap classes for children and adults of all levels. Adult beginners welcome. PH: 303.722.1206 or 303-922-0011, EM: PremiereDance@aol.com, WB: www.bowendance.com

FLORIDA

Ft. Lauderdale

Jan 8-15

International All Adult Dance and Talent Competition and Caribbean cruise; classes, cash awards, ages 21-80+. WB: www.allamericandance.com

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Nov 4-Dec 4

Dance Chicago 2005 at the Athenaeum Theatre. More than 300 companies and 3,000 dancers. Tap companies to perform: M.A.D.D. Rhythms Chicago, Tap Theatre, Footprints Tap Ensemble, Jump Rhythm Jazz Project, and Reggie "Nut Tapper." PH (Ticket Master): 312.902.1500

Chicago

Nov 12 TBA

Footprints Tap Jam, guests TBA. PH: 847.816.1711, WB: www.footprintstap-ensemble.org

Chicago

Nov 18-20

The Chicago Human Rhythm Project (CHRP) presents "Global Rhythms" with Jason Samuels Smith's company ACGI (Anyone Can Get It) and Vata Tap (Brazil) at the Museum of Contemporary Art. PH: 312.397.4010, EM: CHRProject@aol.com, WB: www.chicagotap.org.

Chicago

Nov 19

Footprints Tap Jam estimated date November 19, 2005, guests TBA. PH: 847.816.1711, WB: www.footprints-tap-ensemble.org

Chicago

Nov 25-26

CHRP presents "Global Rhythms" with Sheketak (Israel) and Stripes (Japan) at the new Harris Theater for Music and Dance. PH: 312.334.7777, EM: CHRProject@aol.com, WB: www.chicagotap.org

Chicago

Ongoing

The Chicago park district, Rhythm, and M.A.D.D. Rhythms, Inc., present T2: Tappin' at the Shore, a weekly open-floor tap jam hosted by Bril Barrett, Martin "Tré" Dumas III, and the M.A.D.D. Rhythms Family at South Shore Cultural Center Dance Studio, 8-10 p.m., first and third Tuesdays, all ages; and at Rhythm, 9-11 p.m., second and fourth Tuesdays, must be 21. PH: 773.604.1899

MARYLAND

Silverspring

Ongoing

Knock On Wood Tap Studio offers classes for all ages and levels. PH: 301.495.0395; WB: www.knockonwood.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Brookline

Ongoing

Julia Boynton hosts monthly tap jams at Springstep Center For Traditional and Contemporary Arts. PH: 617.522.6016, EM: jb@juliaontap.com WB: www.Julia-OnTap.com

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Ongoing

Jessica Fiala hosts "1st Sunday of the Month" tap jams at the Ballare Teatro Dance Studio. PH: 617.721.8619

NEVADA

Las Vegas

Ongoing

Group and private lessons with Henry LeTang, beg.-adv. PH: 702.877.6627

Las Vegas **Ongoing**
Bunny Briggs available for coaching and lessons. Contact the ITA for info. PH: 303.443.7989, EM: ita@peakpeak.com

NEW JERSEY
Vineland **Mar 5, 2006**
Tony Waag's *Tap City on Tour* presents the best of the annual New York City Tap Festival, since its inception in 2001. Performance Sunday 3 pm at Cumberland County College. PH: 646.230.9564, EM: info@atdf.org, WB: www.atdf.org

NEW YORK
New York City **Nov 4-6**
Tradition in Tap presents the Prof. LaVaughn Robinson Tap Experience, with original choreography by the master himself, master classes by leading tap artists, Tradition In Tap Award presentation, tap history talks, video clips, tap technique, teacher's program, special program for young tappers, and participants showcase. Featuring Prof. LaVaughn Robinson, Germaine Ingram, Prof. Nicole Hockenberry, Lance Liles, Vanessa Sonon, Germaine Salsberg, Melba Huber, Prof. Hank Smith, Avi Miller, Ofer Ben, and more. PH: 718.486.5947, WB: www.TraditionInTap.org

New York City **Nov 22-27**
Jazz Tap Ensemble performs at the Joyce Theater. PH: 212.242.0800

New York City **Feb 17-20, '06**
The American Tap Dance Foundation presents its annual winter tap intensive including master classes (all ages/all levels), new choreography showcase, special events, and tap jam. PH: 646.230.9564, EM: info@atdf.org, WB: www.atdf.org

New York City **Ongoing**
Avi Miller and Ofer Ben: beg., int., adv. classes at Broadway Dance Center. WB: http://BroadwayDanceCenter.com

New York City **Ongoing**
Buster Brown jam session continued in his memory, Sundays, 6-10 pm. Tappers, musicians, singers invited. Swing 46 Jazz and Supper Club. PH: 212.262.9554

New York City **Ongoing**
The American Tap Dance Foundation with the New York Dance Center in Chelsea present classes with Barbara Duffy, Lynn Schwab, Brenda Bufalino at the New York Dance Center. PH: 646.230.9564, WB: www.atdf.org

New York City **Ongoing**
Roxane Butterfly teaches tap classes at Steps and the 92nd Street Y. PH: 212.874.2410, WB: http://beauteez.free.fr
New York City **Ongoing**
Classes with Ray Hesselink. Intermediate Theater Tap, Thursdays (6-7 pm) and Saturdays (5-6 pm) at Fazol's Rehearsal Studio. WB: www.rayhesselink.com

New York City **Ongoing**
Circuit Productions, in collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Library, the Brooklyn Children's Museum, and the Museum of the City of New York, presents a series of tap, jazz and African dance workshops and performances. PH: 718.638.4878, WB: www.circuitproductions.org

Poughkeepsie **Nov 19**
The Roya Gala 2005, with dozens of tap dancers alongside featured artists Harold Cromer, Mable Lee, Michele Ribble, Kendrick Jones, David Rider, Tony Waag, and more. Master classes all day long. Show at 8 pm at The Bardavon Theater. PH: 845.473.2072, 845.876.3303

Red Hook **Ongoing**
Tap classes for all ages and levels at The Rhinebeck Dance Centre with Michele Ribble, Kendrick Jones, David Rider, and Joel Hanna. PH: 845.876.3303

Red Hook **Ongoing**
Michele Ribble teaches Advanced Tap Fast at the Rhinebeck Dance Center, Friday evenings at 7:15. Private lessons also available. PH: 845.876.3303

OKLAHOMA
Ardmore **Mar 10, '06**
Tony Waag's *Tap City on Tour*. Performance Friday 8 pm and master class Friday TBA; Charles B. Goddard Center Theater. PH: 646.230.9564, EM: info@atdf.org, WB: www.atdf.org; info@atdf.org

Idabel **Mar 11, '06**
Tony Waag's *Tap City on Tour*. Performance Saturday 8 pm and master class Saturday TBA; Idabel Regional Arts Council in the W. Darrell Buzan Auditorium. PH: 646.230.9564, EM: info@atdf.org, WB: www.atdf.org

PENNSYLVANIA
Harrisburg **Jan 18-19, '06**
Tony Waag's *Tap City on Tour*. Community tap jam Wednesday evening, performance Thursday 7:30 pm; The Rose Lehrman Arts Center at Harrisburg Area Community College. PH: 646.230.9564, EM: info@atdf.org, WB: www.atdf.org

TEXAS
Austin **Ongoing**
Tapestry Dance Company & Academy (home of The Soul to Sole Festival) offers beg. to prof. classes for adults and children taught by Acia Gray and members of Tapestry. PH: 512.474.9846, WB: www.tap-estry.org

Beaumont **Mar 9, '06**
Tony Waag's *Tap City on Tour*. Performance Thursday 8 pm; Jefferson Theatre. PH: 646.230.9564, WB: www.atdf.org; info@atdf.org

Dallas/Fort Worth **Ongoing**
Arts Fifth Avenue, a community arts space directed by Gracey Tune, offers tap classes and presents performances. PH: 817.923.9500, EM: Artsfifthavenue@aol.com, WB: www.artsfifthavenue.com

WASHINGTON STATE
Kirkland **Feb 3-5, '06**
Northwest Tap Fest 2006 with classes and performances with Dianne Walker, Sam Weber, Terry Brock, Lane Alexander, Johnson & Peters, and Tim Hickey. PH: 425.821.4578, WB: nwttapfest.com

WEST VIRGINIA
Charleston **Jan 21, '06**
Tony Waag's *Tap City on Tour*. Performance Saturday 8:00 pm; Charleston Municipal Auditorium. PH: 646.230.9564, EM: info@atdf.org, WB: www.atdf.org;

WISCONSIN
Madison **Ongoing**
Tap classes at TAPIT/new works Studio with Donna Peckett and Dorie Turpin. PH: 608.244.2938, WB: www.Tapitnewworks.org



your ita community

representatives

The people listed here are all ITA Community Reps in the geographic area surrounding their city location in the states or countries listed. If the city or area where you live does not yet have a Community Rep and you are interested in becoming one, please contact us and we will send you guidelines, eligibility requirements, and application materials. The people listed below are all those who applied and were accepted as reps at press time. For more information, contact Erica Boyce, Membership Director, at itaerica@peakpeak.com.

international

ARGENTINA

Liber Scal & Alicia Batana 54.297.455.8791
F.F.C.C. Argentinos 785, Bo.Pte.Ortiz, Km.5
9000 Comodoro Rivadavia, Chubut
Email batana@qi.fcen.uba.ar

AUSTRALIA

Grant Swift 03.9525.9248
20/30 Balaclava Road, Balaclava VIC 3183
Email grant@funktap.com

BELGIUM

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Rue de la Révolution, 18, B-1000 Bruxelles
Email fredacademy@yahoo.fr

BRAZIL-Rio de Janeiro

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on tap for you

THE INTERNATIONAL TAP ASSOCIATION



The International Tap Association's mission is "to promote the understanding, preservation, and development of tap dance as an art form." The ITA is open for membership not only to dancers, but to anyone interested in tap. The ITA currently has nearly 950 members in 28 countries—people of all ages, races, nationalities, and beliefs—including performers, teachers, choreographers, students, historians, writers, critics, producers, presenters, dance companies, studios, schools, universities, and libraries, among many other organizations and individuals from all walks of life.

Through advocacy programs and special projects, the ITA strives to educate dance professionals and the public about tap as an art form, helping tap take its respected place in the larger world of dance. In addition to its membership benefits, the ITA works behind the scenes to establish support mechanisms and communication networks for tap and its needs. It encourages the creation of new performance venues and touring circuits and the informed presentation of tap, which helps increase job opportunities. The ITA recommends tap artists to presenters, producers, and others when they call through its clearing house of tap information. By encouraging archival documentation and tap research, the ITA assists in preserving an art once in danger of being lost. The ITA encourages tap artists to unite, to define tap's challenges and goals, and collectively to work toward positive solutions for advancing the field as a whole.

If you have ideas or suggestions for the ITA or *On Tap*; if you would like to volunteer your time, expertise, or resources; if you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution; or if you would like to help us grow the ITA in other ways, please give us a call or email: 303.443.7989, ita@tapdance.org.

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