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**HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO ANNOUNCES PROGRAM FOR ITS SUMMER SERIES, *FACETS*, PREMIERING AT THE HARRIS THEATER FOR MUSIC AND DANCE MAY 18-21**

Chicago's Premier Contemporary Dance Company to Close Milestone Season 45 with Two World Premieres and the Revival of Lou Conte's Classic *Georgia*

CHICAGO – Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (HSDC) has announced program selections for the final performances of its 45th Anniversary *Sapphire Season: Facets*, featuring two world premieres and acclaimed revivals from the company's celebrated repertoire, including founder Lou Conte's beloved *Georgia*. HSDC's Summer Series will be presented at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance (205 E. Randolph St) May 18–21 with two mixed-repertory programs.

Following a sold-out spring engagement at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Summer Series: *Facets* features two curated mixed-repertory programs. **Program A (May 18-19)** includes the highly anticipated return of **Lou Conte's *Georgia***, which had its world premiere at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago in 1987, instantly cementing itself as one of the company's most iconic and celebrated pieces. Program A will also present a world premiere by renowned choreographer **Rennie Harris**, who is celebrated globally as hip-hop's leading ambassador and the first street dancer commissioned to create an evening-length work for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The program also features revivals of *Coltrane's Favorite Things* by **Lar Lubovitch**, and the exuberant, joy-filled *Love Infinite* by **Randy Duncan**, which marked Duncan's HSDC debut last fall.

**Program B (May 20-21)** offers two additional performances of a thrilling mixed-repertory program: a world premiere by company alum and Chicago native, **Rena Butler** and another chance to experience the same piece by **Rennie Harris** that will have premiered in Program A. The program will also present captivating reprises of *Nevermore* by **Thang Dao** and *on a PATH* by **Hope Boykin**, both of which celebrated world premieres during the company's Spring Series: *Elements*.

"Our 45th Anniversary *Sapphire Season* has already been an incredibly memorable one," said Artistic Director Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell. "With our return to touring, we dazzled audiences from New York to Hawaii. We have already presented three World Premieres between last fall's *Refraction* and last month's sold-out run of *Elements*. Now with *Facets*, we will bring you two more World Premieres plus the very exciting addition of Lou Conte's *Georgia*. Bringing back a piece of Lou's is particularly significant to me personally; not only is Lou the founder of this remarkable company, but he is the one who hired me for my first professional job as a Hubbard Street Dancer."

Described by critic Hedy Weiss, then writing for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, as a "bittersweet duet of love and loss," *Georgia* was created by Hubbard Street Dance Chicago founder and former leader Lou Conte, and was the last piece he choreographed for the company. The piece was

influenced by the late Claire Bataille, a founding member of the company who went on to become director of the Lou Conte Dance Studio.

Tickets for Summer Series: *Facets* will go on sale Wednesday, April 12, and will be available by calling the Harris Theater Box Office at 312-334-7777 or visiting [hubbardstreetdance.com](http://hubbardstreetdance.com) and range from \$15 to \$110. Visit [hubbardstreetdance.com/facets](http://hubbardstreetdance.com/facets) to learn more.

Hubbard Street is grateful to the Season 45: *Sapphire* Season partners Athletico Physical Therapy, Chicago Athletic Clubs, and the Illinois Arts Council for their continued support.

The Season 45 Summer Series: *Facets* performance schedule is as follows:

**SUMMER SERIES: *Facets***  
**Thursday, May 18 – Sunday, May 21, 2023**  
**At the Harris Theater for Music and Dance**

PROGRAM A:

*Love Infinite* by Randy Duncan  
*Georgia* by Lou Conte  
*Coltrane's Favorite Things* by Lar Lubovitch  
A World Premiere by Rennie Harris

Thursday, May 18 at 7:30 pm  
Friday, May 19 at 8 pm

PROGRAM B:

*Nevermore* by Thang Dao  
*on a PATH* by Hope Boykin  
A World Premiere by Rena Butler  
A World Premiere by Rennie Harris

Saturday, May 20 at 8 pm  
Sunday, May 21 at 3 pm

**Choreographer Bios**

**HOPE BOYKIN**

Two-time Bessie Award winner, Hope Boykin was an original member of Complexions, danced with Philadanco, and most recently completed her 20th and final year with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Boykin has choreographed for numerous dance companies including Philadanco, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Minnesota Dance Theater, Ballet X, Ballet Black of London, American Ballet Theatre Studio Company, and has created three works for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, along with commissions ranging from contemporary dance to ballet by Damian Woetzel, the Kennedy Center, and Vail Dance Festival. Boykin has garnered much acclaim with her virtual work for Carolina Performing Arts, Guggenheim Works And Process Virtual Commissions initiative, and the National Black Theatre. As a motivator, Boykin has been an annual keynote speaker for Lincoln Center Activate, a national education forum, which has included a special *Weekend With Hope*, a series of talks with friends and dance industry professionals, discussing crucial topics in our dance world. Boykin serves as Artistic Advisor for Dance Education for the Kennedy Center and Artistic Lead for the Kennedy Center Dance Lab. She is Artist-In-Residence at USC Gloya Kaufman School of Dance and was

advisor for the Howard University Department of Dance for their 2021 spring semester. Boykin continues to build on her work, as a writer; blending her words and cadence as the foundation of her developing movement-language. As a director and dance-maker Boykin received a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for her own COVID-safe residency *#BoykinBubble* and in the fall of 2021 premiered a full evening of her choreography, *An Evening of Hope* at 92nd Street Y in New York City to much acclaim. Most recently she released *Beauty Size & Color*, a short film commenting on what has changed in the first twenty years of the 21st century on AllArts.org. As an educator, creator, mover, and motivator, Boykin firmly believes there are no limits.

## **RENA BUTLER**

Rena Butler hails from Chicago. She began her dance studies at The Chicago Academy for the Arts and later at Taipei National University of the Arts in Taiwan. She received her BFA from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance. Rena has performed with a range of companies in the USA, including Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (also a Choreographic Fellow), A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, David Dorfman Dance, Manuel Vignouille/M-Motions, The Kevin Wynn Collection, Pasos Con Sabor Salsa Dance Company, and Gibney Company, as a dance artist and the inaugural choreographic associate. Butler was a recipient of the prestigious 2019 Princess Grace Foundation Award for Choreography and has been commissioned by National Ballet of Canada, San Francisco Opera, Norrdans, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Lyric Opera of Chicago, BalletX, GroundWorks DanceTheater, Oregon Ballet Theater, Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Summer Program, Parsons Dance, Charlotte Ballet, The Juilliard School, Oklahoma City Ballet, and Boston Dance Theater. Additionally, she has created works for The New Orleans Museum of Modern Art in collaboration with Academy Award-Winning jazz composer Terence Blanchard, CHTV Stories in Switzerland, a film short in collaboration with Third Coast Percussion x Devonté Hynes/Blood Orange, The Young Choreographer's Festival in NYC, The Ailey/Fordham School, TEDxChicago Virtual Salon 3.0: Design Your Life, and more. She has been spotlighted in Dance Magazine's On The Rise feature in 2013, and was the featured cover story in Dance Magazine's November 2021 issue. She is active in mentorship and education and has served on the Consortium for Chicago Dancemakers Forum for 3 years, was on the annual panel for Black Girls Dance in Chicago, and co-created and directed DanceLab—a free, choreographic course for Chicago teens, empowering participants of varying socioeconomic backgrounds + identities to find commonality in creation. Has taught dance and choreographic workshops at L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Danse de Marseille in France, The Macau Cultural Center in China, and Ailey Camp Chicago, and currently serves on Dancewave's Artistic Advisory Council in NYC.

## **LOU CONTE**

After a performing career that included roles in Broadway musicals such as *Cabaret*, *Mame*, and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, Conte established the Lou Conte Dance Studio in 1974. Three years later, he founded what is now Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Originally the company's sole choreographer, he developed relationships with emerging and world-renowned dancemakers Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Margo Sappington and Daniel Ezralow as the company grew. He continued to build Hubbard Street's repertoire by forging a key relationship with Twyla Tharp in the 1990s, acquiring seven of her works as well as original choreography. It then became an international enterprise with the inclusion of works by Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato and Ohad Naharin. Throughout his 23 years as the company's artistic director, he received numerous awards including the first Ruth Page Artistic Achievements Award in 1986, the Sidney R. Yates Arts Advocacy Award in 1995, and a Chicagoan of the Year award from Chicago magazine in 1999. In 2003, he was inducted as a laureate into the Lincoln Academy of Illinois, the state's highest honor, and in 2014, was named

one of five inaugural recipients of the City of Chicago's Fifth Star Award. He has been credited by many for helping raise Chicago's international cultural profile and for creating a welcoming climate for dance in the city, where the art form now thrives.

### **THANG DAO**

Thang Dao resides between Los Angeles and New York City where he works as a freelance choreographer, educator, and coach. He is a graduate of Hollins University (MFA' 21) and New York University (MA' 09). Dao received his formal dance education from the Juilliard School and Boston Conservatory (BFA' 01). Dao has choreographed for Ballet Austin, Ballet Austin II, Ailey II, Ballet X, Philadanco, Taiwan National University of the Arts, Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program, Missouri Contemporary Ballet, Kennesaw State University, Troy University, Michigan State University, and the Boston Conservatory along with many universities and performing arts schools nationally and internationally. His works have toured throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia with acclaimed reviews. His ballet *Stepping Ground*, choreographed for Ballet Austin for the 1st Biannual New American Dance Talent, received the Audience Choice Award all four nights. Dao was the recipient of the 2008 Princess Grace Choreography Fellowship, the 2009 Special Project Grant, and the 2012 Vilcek finalist for Creative Promise in choreography. In 2012, his work *Waiting Women* was featured at NYCDAF Gala: *Destiny Rising* at the Joyce Theater in New York. Dao was part of the creative team for the James Brown Project: *Get On The Good Foot* commissioned and produced by the Apollo Theater in collaboration with Philadanco under the artistic direction of Otis Salid. In 2017, Dao garnered 1st Prize for his choreography at the DAP Festival in Pietrasanta, Italy. Dao was the recipient of the 2022 #launchPAD residency, an initiative of Works & Process at the Guggenheim. Dao is ecstatic for the opportunity to work with the artists of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago under the incredible direction of Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell. Follow Dao on Insta@tawndu.

[www.thangdaodancecompany.com](http://www.thangdaodancecompany.com).

### **RANDY DUNCAN**

Randy Duncan, a native of Chicago, who began his dance training with Ms. Geraldine Johnson and credits much of his artistic development with Harriet Ross, has the unique privilege to be a three-time recipient of Chicago's prestigious Ruth Page Award for Outstanding Choreographer of the Year. For 19 years, Duncan danced and upon the untimely death of Joseph Holmes, served the Artistic Director of The Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theatre. He has received numerous awards including the Artistic Achievement Award from the Chicago National Association of Dance Masters, three Black Theatre Alliance Awards, and the Gay Chicago Magazine After Dark Award. He earned an American Choreography Award Nomination for his choreography in the block buster movie *Save the Last Dance*, starring Julia Stiles. Mr. Duncan's work has been seen in the companies of Joffrey Ballet, Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago, Ballet Met, and many others. He has created choreography for such theatres as the Goodman, Manhattan Theatre Club, South Coast Repertory, Actor's Theatre, Court Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Washington Shakespeare Theatre, and Portland Opera. Most recently, Randy's work can be seen in season four of Showtime's *The Chi*. For the past 29 years he has been on the faculty of The Chicago Academy for the Arts, where he now serves as Dance Department Chair and received the 2019 Faculty Legacy Award. Randy has been choreographing the finale for Chicago's annual Dance for Life Gala since 1994 and has received the 2013 AIDS Foundation Chicago Civic Leadership Award for his work with Dance for Life. He sits on the board of Chicago Dancers United, and is a proud member of Actors' Equity and the Stage, Directors, and Choreographers Union.

### **RENNIE HARRIS**

Known for bringing social dances to the concert stage and coining the term Street Dance Theater, Rennie Harris has broken new ground as one of the first Hip-hop choreographers to set works on ballet-based companies such as Ballet Memphis, Colorado Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Philadelphia Dance Company (Philadanco), Giordano Dance Chicago, Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Cleo Parker Robinson, Dallas Black Dance Theater, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (DCDC) and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and more. He is also the first street dancer commissioned to create an evening-length work on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and to serve as a resident artist at the Alvin Ailey School for Dance. He's received three Bessie Awards, five Black Theater Alvin Ailey Awards, an Herb Alpert Award, and been nominated for a Lawrence Olivier Award (UK). He has also received a Lifetime Achievement Award in choreography (McCullum Theater, 2019). Harris was also voted one of the most influential people in the last one hundred years of Philadelphia's history (City Paper), and has been compared to Basquiat, Alvin Ailey, and Bob Fosse. In addition, he's received a Guggenheim Fellowship, PEW Fellowship, a USA Artist of the Year Fellowship, a Governor's Artist of the Year Award, and is noted as the first street dancer to receive two honorary doctorate degrees from both Bates College (Lewiston, ME) and Columbia College (Chicago, IL). He served as a cultural ambassador for Ronald Reagan's US Embassy Tour in 1986 and was invited to the White House by the Clinton Administration to share in the recognition of African American artists making a difference in the world (2001). Rennie Harris Puremovement has performed for such dignitaries as the Queen of England and the Princess' of Monaco, and was chosen as one of four US companies to serve as cultural ambassadors for President Obama's Dance Motion USA and toured Israel, Jordan, Ramallah, Egypt, Palestine, and surrounding countries. Lorenzo "Rennie" Harris is atop the Hip-hop heap as its leading ambassador. Harris is a recent recipient of the Doris Duke artist award (2020).

## **LAR LUBOVITCH**

Lar Lubovitch is one of America's most versatile and widely seen choreographers. He founded the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company in 1968. Over the course of 53 years, it has gained an international reputation as one of America's top dance companies, produced more than 120 dances and performed before millions across the U.S. and over 40 countries. Many other major companies throughout the world have performed the company's dances, including American Ballet Theatre, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Joffrey Ballet, Martha Graham Dance Company, and more. Lubovitch has created ice-dancing works for Olympians John Curry, Peggy Fleming, Dorothy Hamill, Brian Orser, JoJo Starbuck, and Paul Wylie, and he has created feature-length ice-dance specials for TV: *The Planets* for A&E (nominated for an International Emmy Award, a Cable Ace Award, and a Grammy Award) and *The Sleeping Beauty* for PBS and Anglia TV, Great Britain. His theater and film work includes Sondheim/Lapine's *Into the Woods* (Tony Award nomination), *The Red Shoes* (Astaire Award), the Tony Award-winning revival of *The King and I* (on Broadway and in London's West End), Disney's *Hunchback of Notre Dame* in Berlin, and Robert Altman's movie *The Company* (American Choreography Award). In 2016, he premiered *The Bronze Horseman*, based on the Pushkin poem, for the Mikhailovsky Ballet in Russia. In 1987, he conceived *Dancing for Life*, which took place at Lincoln Center. It was the first response by the dance community to the AIDS crisis, raising over one million dollars. Together with Jay Franke, in 2007 Lubovitch created the Chicago Dancing Festival, in collaboration with the City of Chicago and the Museum of Contemporary Art. It presented 10 seasons entirely free to the public. Recent awards: 2007 named Chicagoan of the Year by the Chicago Tribune; 2008 named similarly by Chicago Magazine; 2011 designated a Ford Fellow by United States Artists and received the Dance/USA Honors Award; 2012 his dance *Crisis Variations* awarded the Prix Benois de la Danse for outstanding choreography at the Bolshoi Theatre; 2013 honored for lifetime achievement by the

American Dance Guild; 2014 awarded an honorary doctorate by The Juilliard School; 2016 received the Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for lifetime achievement and the Dance Magazine Award, named one of America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures by the Dance Heritage Coalition and appointed a Distinguished Professor at UC/Irvine. In honor of his company's 50th anniversary, in 2018 he was presented with the Martha Graham Award for lifetime achievement.

### **About Hubbard Street Dance Chicago**

Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's mission is to bring artists, art, and audiences together to enrich, engage, educate and change lives through the experience of dance.

For 45 years, Hubbard Street has been one of the most original forces in contemporary dance – bringing top choreographers and works to Chicago and beyond. Hubbard Street's ever-evolving repertory, created by today's leading choreographic voices, makes them a company that dancers aspire to join and performance venues all over the world are eager to host. To date, the main company has performed globally in 19 countries and 44 U.S. states.

At home in Chicago, Hubbard Street performs 20 times a year and delivers renowned education programs in 50 classrooms across 17 Chicagoland schools. HSDC Education utilizes the choreographic process to teach essential problem-solving skills, creativity, and collaboration - expanding our reach beyond traditional concert dance audiences, ensuring that everyone has access to world-class dance and instruction.

Hubbard Street Dance Chicago grew out of the Lou Conte Dance Studio in 1977, and Conte served as Artistic Director for 23 years. Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell began her tenure at the company in March 2021. In January 2022, HSDC moved to their new home in Water Tower Place on Michigan Avenue. Visit [hubbardstreetdance.com](http://hubbardstreetdance.com) for more information.

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