

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CHICAGO RHYTHM FEST CONCLUDES THE AUDITORIUM THEATRE'S INAUGURAL "MADE IN CHICAGO" DANCE SERIES, MAY 13**

Featuring Five of Chicago's Most Prominent Percussive Dance Ensembles:  
Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater, Mexican Dance Ensemble, Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago and the Trinity Irish Dance Company

CHICAGO — [The Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University](#) presents the culminating performance of the city-wide [Chicago Rhythm Fest](#), a showcase of events, mini-concerts and panel discussions celebrating the diversity of the percussive arts, highlighting five of the city's premier dance groups. Led by [Chicago Human Rhythm Project](#) (CHRP), the finale performance reimagines CHRP's inaugural National Tap Dance Day concert 25 years ago with an eclectic program featuring [Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater](#), [Mexican Dance Ensemble](#), [Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago](#), [Trinity Irish Dance Company](#), as well as **Chicago Human Rhythm Project** in concert Wednesday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets (\$27– \$67) are available at [AuditoriumTheatre.org](#), by calling (800) 982-ARTS (2787) or in-person at the Auditorium's Box Office (50 E. Congress Pkwy).

"Chicago has a long and venerable history when it comes to the percussive arts," said Auditorium Theatre Executive Director **Brett Batterson**. "We're excited to host five of the country's best ambassadors of the art form in one night, a chance to present an extraordinary range of talent and diversity. Each of these companies brings a unique cultural perspective to the art form, and the juxtaposition of each over the course of an evening will be fascinating and informative."

*The "Made in Chicago" Dance Series is sponsored by **The Boeing Company**.*

**Chicago Rhythm Fest Programming**

The Chicago Rhythm Fest finale highlights critically acclaimed works from each company's respective programming, featuring original choreography and the presentation of authentic cultural traditions from around the world. The Auditorium Theatre program on May 13 includes:

**Chicago Human Rhythm Project**

Chicago Human Rhythm Project co-founder and artistic director and NEA American Masterpieces Award winner **Lane Alexander** brings "**Prisms**" to the stage, performed by CHRP's resident ensemble and accompanied by noted jazz pianist Vijay Tellis-Nayak. Inspired by classically structured jazz compositions and modern jazz rhythms, this 2004 original, set to music by renowned pianist-composer Chick Corea, creates a visual and aural quilt of sound. Joined by

guests from Chicago's large tap community (Chicago Tap Theatre, M.A.D.D. Rhythms, Jus' LisTeN), CHRP closes the 2015 Chicago Rhythm Fest with the seminal "**Opus 1**," created in 1943 by legendary hooper, comedian and vaudeville trailblazer **Harold J. Cromer**. The perennial crowd-pleaser delights with hints of comedic nuance and light-hearted ingenuity, evoking feel-good sensibility and charm.

### **Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater**

Ensemble founder **Dame Libby Komaiko** and **Paco Alonso**'s extraordinary "**Zapateados**" features a cast of a dozen men and women in traditional gaucho attire and giant poles to strike the earth, invoking the history of the Latin-American dance for the cowboy. "Zapateados"—translated to mean "tap dance" in Spanish—stems from traditional Andalusian traditions. Ensemble Español currently boasts a repertoire of 125 works, including Spanish ballets, traditional folkloric suites and Flamenco dramas.

### **Mexican Dance Ensemble**

The Mexican Dance Ensemble, founded in 2001, highlights "**Michoacan**," an authentic folk dance derived from the southwestern pacific region of Mexico. Dating back to pre-Hispanic times, the region's lively folk dances feature playful parodies and charismatic salutes to family hierarchies, performed during festivals and special events throughout the year. The company also brings "**Guerrero Caliente**," defined by fast, successive beats, as depicted in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. The Mexican Dance Ensemble has performed in renowned venues around the world, and first appeared at the Auditorium Theatre in 2013 as part of Music + Movement Festival.

### **Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago**

Chicago's premiere African dance ensemble, considered the nation's longest operating African dance company, brings two works to the Auditorium's landmark stage. "**Djole**," a traditional mask dance rooted in the provinces of Guinea, West Africa and Sierra Leone, is characterized by celebratory rhythms of the drums and the feet. Muntu also presents "**No More Trouble**" by company member and Chicago native **Stacey Letrice**, an eclectic blend of reggae, dancehall, and afrobeat styles mixed with the traditional elements of African dance.

### **Trinity Irish Dance Company**

The Emmy Award-winning Trinity Irish Dance Company brings a three-piece presentation—"The Dawn" | "Push" | "Black Rose"—to the landmark stage, choreographed by Trinity founder and artistic director **Mark Howard**. The company has garnered international acclaim over its 30-year history, leading to appearances on The Tonight Show, Good Morning America and PBS, among others.

*Program subject to change.*

### **STOMPING GROUNDS**

Leading up to the finale performance is **STOMPING GROUNDS** (through May 8), a free concert sampler taking place in various Chicago communities, highlighting African, Irish, Mexican, Spanish and American cultural traditions. For more information and a schedule, visit [chicagotap.org/StompingGrounds.aspx](http://chicagotap.org/StompingGrounds.aspx)

*STOMPING GROUNDS* is made possible by major support from the **Chicago Free For All Fund** at **The Chicago Community Trust** with additional funding from the **National Endowment of the Arts**.

### **Performance Schedule and Ticket Information**

Wednesday, May 13, 2015 | 7:30 p.m.

Tickets (\$27 – \$67) are available online at [AuditoriumTheatre.org](http://AuditoriumTheatre.org), by calling (800) 982-ARTS (2787) or in-person at Auditorium Theatre's Box Office (50 E. Congress Pkwy). Discounted tickets for groups of 10 or more are available at (312) 341-2357 or [sales@auditoriumtheatre.org](mailto:sales@auditoriumtheatre.org).

### **Auditorium Theatre's 2014 – 15 Season:**

The Auditorium Theatre 2014 – 15 Season also includes [Lila Downs](#) (May 6); [Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg](#) (May 8 – 10); "[His Way - A Sinatra Centennial Celebration](#)" (May 30); [A.R. Rahman](#) (May 31); [The Royal Ballet's "Don Quixote"](#) (June 18 – 21); and [Jake Shimabukuro with The City Lights Orchestra](#) (June 24). For a complete listing of events at the Auditorium Theatre, please click [here](#).

### **125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season Sponsors**

The Auditorium Theatre would like to thank their 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season Sponsors: Lead Corporate Sponsor **Nicor Gas**, Lead Foundation Sponsor **Robert R. McCormick Foundation** and **David D. Hiller**, International Dance Series Sponsor **NIB Foundation**, and "Made in Chicago" Dance Series sponsor **The Boeing Company**. Media sponsors include **Chicago Magazine** and **WXRT**, and the **Pasquinelli Family Foundation** is the Gala Dinner Celebration Sponsor. Student Matinee Series Sponsors for the 2014-15 Season include **The Private Bank** and **The Robert Thomas Bobins Foundation**.

### **About the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University**

**The Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University**, located at 50 E. Congress Pkwy, is an Illinois, not-for-profit organization committed to presenting the finest in international, cultural, community and educational programming to Chicago, and to the continued restoration and preservation of the National Historic Landmark Auditorium Theatre.

In September of 2014, the Auditorium Theatre was awarded the inaugural Fifth Star Award by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. On December 9, 2014, the Auditorium Theatre celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> Birthday with a proclamation from the City of Chicago declaring it "Auditorium Theatre Day." For the first time in over 50 years, the **NFL Draft** returns to Chicago and will take place at the Auditorium Theatre April 30 – May 2.

The Auditorium Theatre is generously supported by the **MacArthur Foundation**, the **Illinois Arts Council**, the **Sage Foundation**, and the **Palmer House Hilton**. For more information about programming, volunteer and donor opportunities or theatre tours, call (312) 341-2310 or visit [AuditoriumTheatre.org](http://AuditoriumTheatre.org).

### **About Chicago Human Rhythm Project**

Founded in 1990, Chicago Human Rhythm Project (CHRP) builds community by presenting American tap dance and contemporary percussive arts in world-class and innovative performance, education and community outreach programs. Celebrating its 25th anniversary,

CHRP has produced multiple community-based collaborations including the annual National Tap Dance Day concerts, Thanks 4 Giving, the establishment of the American Rhythm Center (ARC) and curating the first ever, full-length performance of concert tap dance on a main stage of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on December 7, 2012. CHRP's 25th Anniversary Season concludes with Rhythm World, four weeks of classes and concerts, July 6 – August 2 including the presentation of 10-time Tony Award winner Tommy Tune on July 30 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

CHRP's vision is to establish the first global center for American tap and percussive arts, which will create a complete ecosystem of education, performance, creation and community in a state-of-the-art facility uniting generations of diverse artists and the general public. For information visit [chicagotap.org](http://chicagotap.org).

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