



AWARDS PRESENTATION & COMMUNITY CELEBRATION



Homer Hans Bryant

Legacy Award

Homer Hans Bryant is a former principal dancer with the world renowned Dance Theater of Harlem. His professional credits span from a command performance for the Royal Families of Norway and England to Timbuktu, with the Legendary Eartha Kitt, and the motion picture The Wiz with Diana Ross and Michael Jackson. Mr. Bryant was a former member of Prima Ballerina Maria Tallchief's Chicago City Ballet. His teaching and training experience include working with Canada's mesmerizing Cirque Du Soleil productions of Mystere, Alegria, Quidam and Saltimbanco; many of Mr. Bryant's former students are in various Cirque Productions around the world.

Bryant's core mission is to bring the opportunity for dance training to all of Chicago. In 1992 he founded the Bryant Ballet School, later renamed the Chicago Multi-Cultural Dance Center to reflect the diversity of dance and the student body. Mr. Bryant is currently also Assistant Artistic Director for Gus Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago.

CMDC is the only contemporary ballet school in the world that teaches Hiplet™, a ballet class that fuses classical pointe technique with Hip-Hop and urban dance styles. Bryant created and trademarked Hiplet™ to make ballet accessible to all, by mixing it with current popular songs that will be familiar to audiences who don't normally attend ballet performances. Since going viral in 2016 thanks to appearances on Good Morning America and BuzzFeed, the company has amassed over a billion views on Youtube, starred in a feature documentary entitled #hiplet™, made a cameo in Shawn Mendes' "Youth" music video, and performed across the world. The Hiplet Ballerinas are also often found in high-fashion campaigns from the runways of Paris Fashion Week to ads for Desigual and Swarovski Crystals. More recently, the Hiplet Ballerinas were featured on Season 16 of "America's Got Talent" as well as ABC's Nightline.

Known as a strict disciplinarian, his slogan "The Fun is in the Discipline, The Discipline is in the Fun" has become a mantra for his current and former students and their parents, and has established Mr. Bryant as one of the most respected teachers in the country and around the world. Homer Bryant has participated in the Dance Open Ballet Festival in Russia, where he assisted Mr. Arthur Mitchell, teaching his unique body alignment/floor barre technique at the Bolshoi Ballet Academy, the Kirov Ballet Academy and the Boris Eifman School.

Mr. Bryant and students of CMDC had the privilege of being a part of the first White House Dance Series in 2010, honoring Judith Jamison. In 2011, he was appointed to the City of Chicago's Advisory Council on Cultural Affairs and Special Events, where he still serves.

Other awards and accolades include the Helen Coburn Meir & Tim Meier Achievement Award; The Arts Legend Award, Arts Alliance Illinois; Chicago Tribune's 2009 Chicagoan of the Year in Dance; induction as a member of "The History Makers"; the Chicago Defender's "Men of Excellence"; and the inaugural Human Potential Award presented by the Foundation for Human Potential.



Ginger Farley

Distinguished Service to the Dance Field Award

Ginger Farley has been fortunate to work in the field of dance in Chicago for her entire career.

As a child she studied dance with Toby and Juanita Nicholson, both members of Sybil Shearer's company, performing children's roles in high school productions. She enjoyed the public school system in Evanston, choreographing and dancing in everything available. She went on to be an early member of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago during its seminal period from 1978-88. Later, with colleague Cameron Pfiffner, Farley led The 58 Group, a dance and music ensemble. She taught for many years at the Lou Conte Dance Studio, Columbia College Chicago, and the Chicago Academy for the Arts.

In 2002 Farley served as a consultant to the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation and participated on its behalf in the "Excellence in Dance Initiative" at The Chicago Community Trust. To expand upon the purview of this initiative, she led a study of small, mid-sized and independent dance artists in Chicago. This study was influential in the creation of the Chicago Dancemakers Forum (CDF).

In 2003, CDF's inaugural year, Farley received its Lab Artist award. Subsequently, she served as Project Director, then Consortium member, and in 2015, became its first Executive Director. Under her leadership Chicago Dancemakers Forum incorporated, delivered more than \$1.2 million in grants to dancemakers, and attracted the Regional Dance Development Initiative, a national stimulus for dance, to Chicago. In her CDF position, Farley gathered community stakeholders and artists to create CDF's first strategic plan which addressed diversity, equity and inclusion; leadership succession, and a sustainability plan for the future of the organization. Farley completed her tenure with CDF in December 2021, a new executive director was named in 2022.

Farley has served on numerous boards and committees in the service of live art in Chicago. These organizations include the Chicago Artists Resource, the Chicago Dance History Project (founding member), Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, the Museum of Contemporary Art Performance Programs, and Partners for Sacred Places. She is honored to receive this award from CDF's sister organization, See Chicago Dance.

