



DANCE CELEBRATION

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**RIVER NORTH CHICAGO DANCE COMPANY KICKS OFF THE NEW YEAR FOR
ANNENBERG CENTER'S DANCE CELEBRATION SERIES WITH
SEVEN PHILADELPHIA PREMIERES
JANUARY 14-16, 2010**

Philadelphia, PA — **River North Chicago Dance Company** will feature seven Philadelphia premieres when the troupe hits town January 14-16, kicking off the New Year for the Dance Celebration Series at the **Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA.**

Known for its jazzy, sizzling, theatrical style, **River North Chicago Dance Company (RNCDC)** brings to the stage “energetic, marvelously trained performers and a gutsy, entertaining repertoire,” according to the *Chicago Sun Times*. This season’s program, performed by 13 high-powered dancers, several with Philadelphia connections, features choreography by **Frank Chaves** (RNCDC Artistic Director), **Sherry Zunker** (RNCDC Co-Artistic Director Emerita) and **Monique Haley** (RNCDC company member who trained in Philadelphia at the University of the Arts and Philadanco). Highlights include:

- ***Evolution of a Dream*** (2009), a full ensemble work choreographed by Sherry Zunker to music by David Stewart and His Rock Fabulous Orchestra. As the program opener, and celebrating the company’s 20th Anniversary, the work is a re-imagining of their classic signature piece, *Reality of a Dreamer* which garnered two Chicago Emmys prior to being picked up and aired by PBS, launching the company’s national presence.
- ***Forbidden Boundaries*** (2009), a full company work, choreographed by Frank Chaves set to music by Evan Solot (a Philadelphia composer and University of the Arts faculty member), Michael Cusson, Ryuichi Sakamoto, and Gustave Santoalalla.
- The program also includes ***Ella*** (2010), a Company premiere preview generously underwritten by The Jane Beber Abramson Creative Fund, and featuring Lauren Kias, with the timeless music of Ella Fitzgerald, costume design by Jordan Ross and lighting design by Burke Wilmore. Also, 2001 University of the Arts graduate, Monique Haley makes her choreographic debut with **RNCDC** performing ***Uhuru*** (2009), another full company work whose name means “freedom” in Swahili, set to the music of Akoya Afrobeat.
- Frank Chaves’ riveting, colorful and richly-seductive ***Habaneras, The Music of Cuba*** (2005) closes the program. Set to the 1950 orchestral music of Cuba’s popular composers, Ernesto Lecuona, Carlos Puebla and Silvio Rodriguez, this six-part full company work captures the aesthetics and spirit of Chaves’ early Cuban roots. Chaves’ other works on the program include ***Sentir Em Nos (Even For Us)*** (2009), an evocative duet, performed by Michael Gross and Melanie Manale-Hortin, and ***Tuscan Rift*** (2009), a small ensemble work, to music by Rene Aubry and Andrew Bird.

(more)

2-2-2-2 RIVER NORTH CHICAGO DANCE COMPANY PERFORMS PHILA. DEBUT JAN 14-16

RNCDC was founded in 1989 by four choreographers –Mark Dow, Karen Frankel Jones, Ronna Kaye and Julie Burman Kaplan. In 1990, Sherry Zunker was named Artistic Director. In 1992, Chaves joined her as Associate Artistic Director after producing his first **RNCDC** work, *In the Still of the Night* (1991). In 2001, Chaves assumed sole artistic directorship. The repertory features a core of works by Chaves and Zunker and dances choreographed by Daniel Ezralow, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Ashley Roland, Randy Duncan, Harrison McEldowney, Kevin Iega Jeff, Sam Watson, Ginger Farley, and Paul Christiano.

Under the artistic direction of Randy Swartz, **Dance Celebration, presented by Dance Affiliates and Penn Presents**, maintains the tradition of bringing to Philadelphia the world's best contemporary touring dance companies. This season's **The Magic of Movement** pays tribute to American dance and showcases its diversity of styles, from tap to Broadway, jazz, contemporary, hip-hop, multimedia, and dance theater.

Performances will take place on Thursday, January 14 at 7:30 pm, Friday, January 15 at 8:00 pm and Saturday, January 16 at 2:00 pm and 8:00 pm. Ticket prices are \$28 - \$48 (evening) and \$24 - \$42(matinee). Tickets may be purchased by calling the Annenberg Center Box Office at 215-898-3900 or by visiting www.AnnenbergCenter.org

In addition to performances, RNCDC will offer outreach activities including two master classes as part of the *Artist to Artist Series* and a special school performances as part of the Annenberg Center's *Student Discovery Series*. For more information about the *Artist to Artist Series* call 215-636-9000 ext.110 or visit www.danceaffiliates.org. For more information about the *Student Discovery Series*, call 215-898-6789 or visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org/studentdiscovery

This tour of RNCDC is made possible by a grant from Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts Regional Touring Program.

Significant funding for the 2009-10 Dance Celebration season is provided by the William Penn Foundation and also in part by Business Friends of Dance (Affiliates), The Connelly Foundation, Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation, Samuel S. Fels Fund, Friends of Dance (Affiliates), Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Pennsylvania Dept. of Community and Economic Development, Pennsylvania Presenters, The Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and the Virginia C. Mulconroy Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation.

For more information on RNCDC and Dance Celebration's 28th season or for press tickets and/or interview requests, please call Nina Zucker Associates at 610.667.0706 or email nzapr@aol.com. For more information on the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, please contact Lauren Saul at **215-573-8537** or visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org.

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