

THODOS DANCE

CHICAGO



***Inspiring Expression through Dance Education
Dance Creation and Dance Performance***

THE COMPANY

“Breathtakingly athletic,” “powerfully beautiful,” performing “vibrant choreography” are among the many critical accolades that Thodos Dance Chicago (TDC) has received since its inception. Founded in 1992 by artistic director Melissa Thodos, this ensemble of well-rounded artists delivers contemporary dance to its audience with an appealing style that incorporates a variety of dance forms. The Company’s unique mission of inspiring expression through dance education, dance creation, and dance performance has established Thodos Dance Chicago as an innovative presence in American contemporary dance.

Highlights of the Company’s annual performance season include its home concerts, national and international touring engagements and the critically acclaimed New Dances choreography performance series. The Company has performed in more than 50 dance venues in 17 states, including a recent 9 city tour to Alaska as well as in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the International Istanbul Dance Festival, the Ankara Music and Dance Festival, the Busan International Dance Festival, South Korea and at Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival. TDC has collaborated with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Remy Bumppo Theater, and three times with Fulcrum Point New Music Project, as well as with numerous individual studio artists and musicians.

In addition to performing choreography of its resident artistic staff, TDC performs a diverse array of works created by other well-known choreographers: Tony Award-winner Ann Reinking, Lar Lubovitch, Shapiro & Smith, Lucas Crandall, Jon Lehrer, Brock Clawson, Michael Anderson, Zachary Whittenburg, Amy Ernst, Ron De Jesús and Gustavo Ramírez Sansano. In addition, TDC ensemble members themselves create highly-charged, illuminating world premieres every year in the Company’s acclaimed New Dances choreography series that audiences have found “exquisite,” “phenomenal,” and “inspirational.” Selected works from the series are chosen to become part of the Company’s repertoire each year. Other works from New Dances have been performed by The Joffrey Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and many other companies.

Reaching young minds through dance education is vital to Thodos Dance Chicago. As a teaching company, members of this highly trained ensemble hold BA’s and MFA’s in dance, and teach at the elementary, high school and university levels. TDC is well suited for residency programs where performances, lecture demonstrations, workshops and master classes go hand in hand. TDC is in residence at The Menomonee Club for Boys and Girls where it teaches daily classes, operates a Youth Ensemble, and hosts weeklong intensive programs every summer geared to pre-professional and professional dancers.

For more information about programs and upcoming performances of Thodos Dance Chicago, please regularly visit our website at www.thodosdancechicago.org.

***Thodos Dance Chicago is professionally represented for touring
by Jodi Kaplan and Associates, New York
Phone: 212.352.0400
www.bookingdance.com***

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Melissa Thodos has been described by critics as “a choreographer with a bright and lively imagination.” The *Chicago Sun-Times* wrote: “Thodos displays a fine musicality and elegant lyricism; there is a sort of New Age mysticism about much of her work. Everything is fluid, and she is able to create beautiful stage pictures in which lots of things are going on simultaneously. She is a skillful and eclectic choreographer with a talent for creating a well-defined mood and interesting group patterns. She also pays considerable attention to elements of design.” Or, as Tony award-winning Broadway legend Ann Reinking put it, “she has this way of moving, of approaching dance that is informed by history, based on her personal experience, and totally unique. Wherever she puts her energy, she does so with grace and talent.”

These are just examples of the accolades Thodos has received as a performer, choreographer and director. In 1992, Thodos founded Melissa Thodos & Dancers (later renamed Thodos Dance Chicago) and has developed it into one of Chicago’s most innovative and top performing companies. The environment Melissa has created also serves as an incubator for its artists as choreographers and as teachers. Ensemble members are invited to join Thodos Dance Chicago based on an audition and an in-depth evaluation of their achievement as performers, educators and choreographers. The Company holds a very unique position in the national community of dance for this very reason. The company’s fresh, athletic, award-winning style has been well received by critics worldwide: *British Herald* - “Serene athleticism...every aspect of the choreography is truly satisfying”; *Chicago Reader* - “The Company’s repertoire is so rich...the dancers are superb.” The *Chicago Sun-Times* - “strong and attractive...engaging...lovely...they perform with solid strength and feeling.”

Thodos Dance Chicago clearly serves as a platform for over 30 acclaimed works that Melissa Thodos has created over her career. Of her work, the late Gerald Arpino of the Joffrey Ballet wrote “highly innovative and technically strong.” Teaming up with Tony-award winning choreographer Ann Reinking in 2011, Melissa and Ann collaborated to create the critically acclaimed story ballet “*The White City: Chicago’s Columbian Exposition of 1893*”, a ballet currently being toured by Thodos Dance Chicago. Melissa has created in collaboration three times with Fulcrum Point New Music Project under the artistic direction of Stephen Burns. In November 2006, Melissa choreographed a work for TDC in collaboration with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra set to Igor Stravinsky’s “*The Soldier’s Tale*,” and in 2007 was commissioned to create “*Cascade*” set to music by Maurice Ravel for the Ruth Page Festival of Dance at Chicago’s Ravinia Festival. Most recently, she created a work for Luna Negra Dance Theater in collaboration with their Artistic Director, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano titled 4+4.

An honored veteran of the Chicago dance community, Thodos, born in Evanston, received early dance training at the Evanston School of Ballet. She continued her study of both classical and contemporary technique at Skidmore College in Saratoga, New York, and then the Ruth Page Dance School, the Dance Center of Columbia College and the Lou Conte Dance Studio, all in Chicago.

Thodos founded Thodos Dance Chicago following years of success as both a performer and choreographer with The Chicago Repertory Dance Ensemble on the local, national and international contemporary dance circuits, performing her own work as well as works by Paul Taylor, Lar Lubovitch, Zeva Cohen, and very established Chicago based artists. Since then, the Company with its unique mission to perform, create and educate, has gained its own acclaim and has been invited to perform in some of the most prestigious dance showcases and venues throughout the world. Thodos’ work has been presented in venues coast to coast in America including Alaska; in Paris on numerous occasions; Edinburgh, Scotland; Australia; and in Turkey for two festivals, at the International Ankara Music and Dance Festival and Istanbul Dance Festival, at the Busan International Dance Festival in South Korea and at Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival. Thodos Dance Chicago repertoire consists of works by Melissa Thodos and selected works of ensemble members, as well as those of acclaimed guest choreographers Ann Reinking, Lar Lubovitch, Shapiro & Smith, Amy Ernst, and Ron De Jesús, among others.

Thodos has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants for her work including Illinois Arts Council Fellowships; Ruth Page Award nominations; a Chicago Dance Achievement Award nomination and an award from the State of Illinois as a Greek American for nurturing and training dancers and choreographers in Chicago. One of her signature works, “*Reaching There*”, won her international acclaim in Paris in 1988 at the Internationale Dance de Paris. In 1998, Thodos was featured in Today’s Chicago Woman as one of Chicago’s “100 Women in Chicago Making a Difference,” and was voted one of Chicago’s “top ten hidden talents” by the Chicago Tribune. In 2008, Melissa was one of nine finalists selected nationally for the “Women of Worth” award in New York City. Her collaboration story ballet “*The White City*” created with Tony-award winning Ann Reinking was voted the best dance of 2011 by the *Chicago Sun-Times*. Thodos’ works “*Anasa*” and “*Cascade*” won second place in the “*Dancing Under the Stars*” choreography competition in 2008 and 2010 at The McCallum Theater in Palm Desert.

Through her company, Thodos participates in community outreach programs, bringing dance to inner city and suburban school children. She has set more than 20 works on high school and university dance companies. Melissa continues to serve on the faculty of The Broadway Theater Project, co-founded by Debra McWaters and Ben Vereen where she teaches master classes and choreographs alongside such noted artists as Ben Vereen, Desmond Richardson, Charlotte d’Amboise, John Kander, Chita Rivera, Christopher d’Amboise and Jeff Calhoun, among others.

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TOURING PROGRAM 2013-2014



Fosse Trilogy

-Cool Hand Luke, Tijuana Shuffle and Mexican Breakfast
Choreography by Bob Fosse, staged by Ann Reinking
Awarded a "Dance Masterpieces" Award by the
National Endowment for the Arts
Three trios for 9 dancers

The White City: Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1893 One Act Story Ballet

Choreography: Ann Reinking and Melissa Thodos
Music: "Songs Without Words" by Bruce Wolosoff
Named "Best Dance Performance in 2011"
by the *Chicago Sun-Times*
12 Dancers



Ann Reinking



A new story ballet: **A Light in the Dark**, the story of
Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan
New one act story ballet
Choreography: Melissa Thodos and Ann Reinking
Music: An original score by Bruce Wolosoff
commissioned especially for this dance.
9 Dancers

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TOURING PROGRAM 2013-2014 (CONT.)



Rest Is Not Always Possible

Choreography by KT Nelson

KT Nelson is the co-artistic director of ODC Dance Company, one of the leading contemporary dance companies in the United States. She has received numerous awards and honors. Her work *Velveteen Rabbit* has been seen by over 350,000 people.

12 Dancers

Cascade

Choreography: Melissa Thodos

Cascade was commissioned by the Ravinia Festival, and received second prize in the Dance Under the Stars International Choreography Competition

4 Dancers



Hopelandic

Choreography: Kellie Hodges

Hopelandic has delighted audiences from Alaska to Busan, Korea

3 Dancers



Subtle Passages

Choreography: Melissa Thodos

A new work that imbues fluid change and transition, hope, thought and movement through time. It is an ensemble piece create for five men and five women.



Getting There

Choreography: Melissa Thodos

A more recent work coupling three fearless, very athletic dancers with a large rolling wheel. Thodos' first dance incorporating the same wheel, *Reaching There*, premiered in Chicago in 1986 and subsequently earned Thodos a choreography finalist award in the Concours International De Danse De Paris in 1988. Returning to the wheel with *Getting There* more than 20 years later is a playful nod to Thodos' company coming full circle – literally – since she founded TDC in 1992.



Photos by Cheryl Mann

WHAT THE MEDIA SAYS

“dance that grabs you with the first images and never lets go”

-Chicago Tribune

“rich, theatrical work, limited only by gravity”

-Chicago Sun-Times

“their 90-minute show Thursday night at the Discovery Theatre was a delicious surprise...(and) an open invitation to come back”

-Anchorage Daily News

“I named “The White City: The Columbian Exposition of 1893,” the best dance event of 2011”

-Hedy Weiss, Chicago Sun-Times

“exquisitely well trained, technically proficient in all manner of movement”

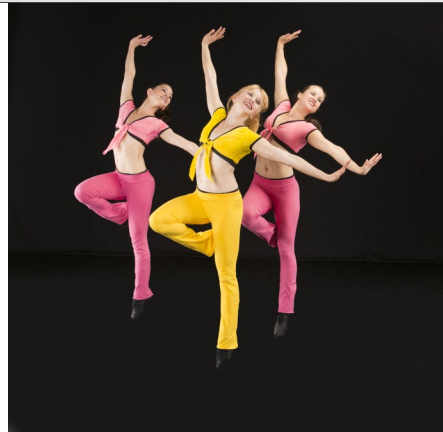
-Sanibel Islander

“serene athleticism, every aspect of the choreography is truly satisfying”

-The British Herald

“the company’s repertoire is so rich...the dancers are superb”

-Chicago Reader



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WHAT THE PRESENTERS SAY

**Dottie Demark, Executive Director
Skagway, AK Arts Council**

"Skagway just loved Thodos. As you heard, we had a record turnout for the performance and I'm still hearing positive comments and thank yous from folks around town. Everyone in the company was so enjoyable, my eyes teared up when I said goodbye to them at the ferry terminal. Thanks to Thodos for your help in making this happen. And, you must keep us in mind for future tours."



**Stuart Sector, Executive Director
Clark State Community College Performing Arts Center, Springfield, OH**

"Everyone with Thodos Dance Chicago went above and beyond, and did it with such grace, style and genuine appreciation. It created an impact on our community/region that will long be remembered."



**Tiffany Hill, Artistic Director (former)
Art and Cultural Center of Hollywood, FL**

"I am very impressed with the Company's ability to work so well with our young audiences and then turn around and deliver a stellar show for our adult patrons. Thodos Dance Chicago is a creative, inspirational troupe who will provide any audience with a truly memorable experience."

**Kathleen Light, Executive Director
Ketchikan, AK Arts Council**

"the company was a pleasure to host--and their artistry and enthusiasm for what they do transferred directly to the audience. I was completely charmed not just by their love to dance but their love to dance with each other. A joy to see. Melissa Thodos was perfect on the radio, and the audience loved the curtain talk. All around, we couldn't have asked for a better season closer!!"

**Laurel Canan, Executive Director (former)
Janesville, WI Presents**

"Your stellar reputation for excellence played out on our stage. Many who attended the concert said it was one of the finest dance performances they have seen."



**Kenley Jackson
Sitka, AK Arts Council**

"Sitka had a wonderful time with Thodos! The elementary assembly was well done, engaging, and very informative for students and adults. The performance was very well attended (508 patrons)!--a huge show for us. The company was delightful and the dancing was inspiring and gorgeous."

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EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING



Assemblies / Residencies / Master Classes

Thodos Dance Chicago (TDC) is a 21 year-old teaching company in residence at the Drucker Center, Menomonee Club for Boys and Girls in Chicago. Whether it is a pairing with schools, community centers, libraries, or Universities, Thodos Dance Chicago is adept at creating educational programming tailored to the specific needs of your organization and community. With education being the foundation upon which Thodos Dance Chicago was created, artists are selected from among the crème-de-la-crème in contemporary dance. Most ensemble members hold B.A. or M.F.A. degrees in dance from highly reputable colleges and universities.

Thodos Dance Chicago artists teach youth and adults participating in the Thodos Dance Chicago Dance program at the Drucker Center, 1535 N. Dayton, Chicago.

***Imagine Dance* Assembly Performance: Grades K-8**

Imagine Dance is an exciting 40 minute interactive dance assembly that educates students about the concepts and tools employed in creating dance. Professional dancers from Thodos Dance Chicago perform three acclaimed dances from current repertoire and, along with a narrator, demonstrate the concepts, stages and tools needed to create a dance. The program contains three participatory exercises requiring student generated ideas and the execution of those ideas by students themselves onstage with the dancers. Students use their ideas throughout the assembly as dance concepts are learned and developed by way of students working together with professional dancers. Study Guide Available!

***Dancing Green* Assembly Performance: Grades 4-8**

Dancing Green is an exciting 40 minute interactive dance assembly that educates students about conservation and the environment using dance as a demonstration and teaching tool.

***Dance Smash* Educational Performance:**

Jr. and Sr. High School

A full company one hour repertory concert with lecture demonstration, best performed in a theater setting. Acclaimed dances in the repertory of Thodos Dance Chicago are performed by the entire Company for the student body with full production elements inclusive of lighting and costumes. A question and answer session with the entire Company is conducted with the students following each performance.



Unique Residencies

Thodos Dance Chicago thrives on creating unique residencies to interested presenters. Examples include a work with youth at a juvenile detention center, teaching yoga and Pilates at the local fire department, a dance presentation to the local Rotary Club, setting a work on local dancers to be performed at a Thodos Dance Chicago concert and more.

Master Classes - for beginners to the advanced

Thodos Dance Chicago can teach a single class, all dance forms (styles) and at all levels. Classes can be taught in technique, choreography and composition, improvisation and repertory, yoga and Pilates mat classes.

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PERFORMANCES 2012-2013 SEASON

Subtle Passages (Premiere) Selected TDC Works The Four Seasons choreographed by Shawn Bible; music performed by award winning violin soloist Rachel Barton	October 22, 2012	Grand Valley State University Allendale, MI
The White City & Season Repertoire	November 9, 2012	Ball State University Muncie, IN
The White City & Season Repertoire	February 9, 2013	Moraine Valley Community College Palos Hills, IL
Premiere: A Light in the Dark, the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan & Season Repertoire	February 16, 2013	North Shore Center for Performing Arts Skokie, IL
Chicago Premiere: A Light in the Dark , the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan & Season Repertoire	March 2-3, 2013	Harris Theater for Music and Dance Chicago, IL
Concert with Fulcrum Point New Music Project	March 9, 2013	Logan Center for the Arts Chicago, IL
Season Repertoire	April 6, 2013	Millikin University Decatur, IL
Spring to Dance Festival	May 24, 2013	Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall St. Louis, MO
New Dances 2013	July 19 - 21, 2013	Ruth Page Center for the Arts Chicago, IL

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