



Joel Hall | Founder & Artistic Director, Joel Hall Dancers & Center | www.joelhall.org

Joel Hall — a native of Chicago’s Cabrini Green neighborhood — established and co-founded the Chicago City Theatre Company in 1974. This unique performing arts organization includes the Chicago City Theatre Company, the Joel Hall Dancers, and a training facility, the Joel Hall Dancers & Center. Hall is the Artistic Director and choreographer for his dance company and the Chief Dance Instructor for the training studio. He has now mentored dancers who direct Joel Hall Dancers II and Joel Hall Dancers Youth Company.

During the past 40 years, Hall has achieved an international reputation for his Dance Company and acclaims as a choreographer whose work; in his own unique dance style based in jazz, expresses a rich vocabulary embracing both the classical and modern dance idioms. Mr. Hall also served as one of Mayor Harold Washington’s international ambassadors for the arts. “Jazz dance at it’s best” says *Dance Magazine*.

Mr. Hall has studied both in Chicago at the Chicago Dance Center with Nana Shineflug , Al Gossan, Harry Laird, Ed Parish, Denise Jefferson, Sarah Singleton, Tom Baker. In New York with Thelma Hill, Pepsi Bethel, Lynn Simonson, Nat Horn, Robert Christopher, Michelle Murray, June Lewis and Finis Jung.

Since the 70’s, Joel Hall has created more than seventy ballets for his own company and is noted in two major books on the contemporary dance arts; *Black Dance* by Edward Thorpe, dance critic for *The London Standard* and *The Black Tradition in American Dance* by Richard Long. Susan and Thomas D. Kuczmariski note him in the book *Apples are Square: Thinking Differently About Leadership*, *Black Theater is Black Life*, by Harvey Young and Queen Meccasia Zabriskie.

Over the years, Joel Hall has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including:

- The Northeastern Illinois “University Alumnus of the Year”
- The King/Chavez/Parks “Visiting Scholar Award” from Western Michigan University
- Guest professorship at Northwestern University Theater/Dance Department
- “The Katherine Dunham Award”
- Two “Awards of Merit” from the Black Theater Alliance

Mr. Hall is also the recipient of the "Black and Hispanic Achiever of the Year Award" from the Metropolitan YMCA of Chicago, for his contributions to the community. In 1993, he was also inducted into the Chicago Gay & Lesbian Hall of Fame. Hall has been further saluted by The Chicago Dance & Music Alliance with their prestigious "Lifetime Achievement for Service to the Field" award — and has also earned a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Jazz Dance World Congress.

His choreography for *In the Shadow of Nina Simone* was hailed with the African American Arts Alliance "Black Excellence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance" — and, he was the recipient of the "New Business of the Year Award" from the Edgewater Chamber of Congress.

His recent work — *Civil Rights Movements* — was a collaboration with the Civil Rights Opera. Joel Hall is profiled in The History Makers series online, and in 2014 his History Makers interview was officially archived by the Library of Congress.

In July 2014, Mr. Hall served on the esteemed dance adjudication panel for the NAACP ACT-SO National Convention in Las Vegas — and was honored to review young dancers of color in the national gold, silver & bronze competitions.