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## CHICAGO DANCING FESTIVAL @ HARRIS THEATRE, MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART AND PRITZKER PAVILION AT MILLENNIUM PARK

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## CHICAGO DANCING FESTIVAL @ HARRIS THEATRE, MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART AND PRITZKER PAVILION AT MILLENNIUM PARK

Dance Review by Sarah Frye, August 28, 2015

Rating 4 Out of 4



In its ninth year, the Chicago Dancing Festival dazzles with companies from across the nation and from right here in Chicago. Founded by Chicagoan Lars Lubovitch and Jay Franke, the Chicago Dancing Festival presents a variety of dance forms and genres from visiting artists every summer. Due to the generous funding of the Festival's supporters, the Festival has remained free to the public since its inception; thus allowing new audiences to experience the joy of dance.

The highlight of the Festival is the World Premiere of an exquisite performance commissioned solely for the Festival featuring three of Chicago's premiere companies. The Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Ensemble Español and Trinity Irish Dance collaborate on *In The Meantime*. Exploring the concept of rhythm in different cultures that has evolved over time from ancient languages and dialects is an edge of your seat exhilarating performance. These three companies showcase the sounds of their own individual styles and come together in the end for a show stopping collaboration. If you missed this performance the first time around, you can catch it Saturday, August 29 at Millennium Park.

New to the Festival this year was an entire evening-length program devoted to "**Modern Women.**" This program showcases the work of the pioneers of modern dance: Isadora Duncan and Martha Graham. Rarely do these programs come to the city and it was inspiring to see these women's work honored on stage at the Museum of Contemporary Art. It is worth noting that that some 75-100 years later, these women still have an impact on our dance world and their companies are still thriving. Capping off the night was Jesse Bechard's solo performance in

Hubbard Street's *A Picture of You Falling* that night mesmerizing. Special recognition goes out to Mayor Emanuel for making an appearance at the "Modern Women" night. Having a mayor that was a former dancer definitely helps the city's cultural credence.

These are just a few of the numerous spectacular performances that I saw over the past three days. Friday night featured a first-ever Gala honoring Festival Lars Lubovitch. The Festival concludes on Saturday with a performance at Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park entitled "Dancing Under the Stars." Where else can you cap off the summer with performances from the nation's best dance companies for free? This event should not be missed if you haven't experienced the Chicago Dancing Festival before. It's a taster menu of a variety of styles of dance that's sure to leave you dancing in your seat.

While there can't be every type of dance form on the festival's lineup, I will say that I'm a little disappointed that there don't appear to be any hip hop or jazz companies represented on the roster. Let's hope for those to be included next year.

**Chicago Dancing Festival** presents four nights of free dance programming at **Harris Theatre, Museum of Contemporary Art and Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park** August 25–29. Regular performance times are 7:30p.m at the Harris at Pritzker and a 6pm and 8pm showing of "Modern Women" at the MCA. Tickets are free and general admission. [www.chicagodancingfestival.com](http://www.chicagodancingfestival.com).

Photo by Todd Rosenberg

[www.theatreinchicago.com](http://www.theatreinchicago.com) (<http://theatreinchicago.com/>)



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