

# The Lady Hoofers

Raising the Profile of Rhythm Tap



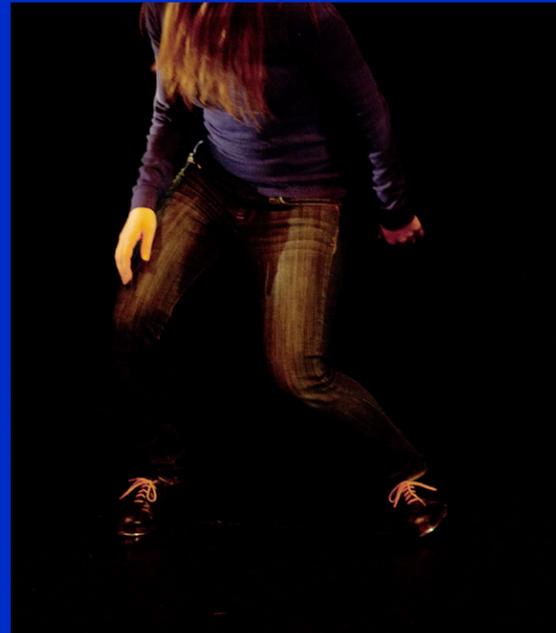
**PRESS KIT**

*[ladyhoofers.org](http://ladyhoofers.org)*

# ABOUT

## QUICK FACTS:

- Notable performance credits include: The Kimmel Center, The Forrest Theatre, The Wilma Theater, Suzanne Roberts Theatre, and Philadelphia's City Hall
- Grants received: Philadelphia Cultural Fund 2017-2019, Philadelphia Council on the Arts Project Stream 2015-2016, and Philadelphia's City Hall Presents series 2012
- Best of the Trans(m)it Film Festival for "Dollar: A Rhythm Tap Short Film"
- First and only tap ensemble featured in Koresh's Come Together Festival in 2014
- Only tap ensemble selected to perform at the 2013 DanceUSA Conference
- Produce annual Holiday Concert for sold out audiences in Philadelphia featuring live jazz musicians and Youth Ensemble performers
- Produced sold out all-female, full-length tap concert "Too Darn Hot" for the 2011 Philadelphia Fringe Festival



The Lady Hoofers Tap Ensemble is Philadelphia's premier all female tap ensemble. Founded by Kat Richter in 2010 to raise the profile of rhythm tap, the ensemble brings together local dancers and musicians to create both original choreography and improvised works. Described as "classy, hard-working gals, preserving and propagating an important piece of culture" (ThINKing DANCE), the ensemble's dancers have become known for their elegant but contemporary style. Now under the direction of Managing Director, Katie Budris, and Artistic Director, Kat Richter, the company continues to produce innovative choreography as well as provide a variety of programs to engage with the Philadelphia community.



**MISSION:** To provide educational resources and professional performance opportunities to promote the art of rhythm tap by:

- Presenting choreographed works while respecting and upholding the tradition of improvisation in tap
- Collaborating with local jazz musicians to create new works that challenge the public's perception of percussive dance
- Partnering with existing tap companies, educators and tap artists to offer master classes, jams, performances, residencies, community outreach programs and workshops

ThINKing Dance, by Whitney Weinstein (Holiday Concert 2016)

The Lady Hoofers have class. They've got cool and creativity. These women can click a fierce heel and throw a tender, thoughtful glance in the same moment... A brigade of many feet united in what sounded like one set of taps, impelling a collective exuberance. Rhythms from the striking, clapping, cheering, and stomping linked everyone in the room, like an invitation for accord with one's neighbors. As the cadence built, so did the audience's enthusiasm. We hollered with joy and pride, celebrating the strengths and capacities of the dancers, and feeding the energy onstage.

THE DANCE JOURNAL, by Lewis Whittington (Come Together Dance Festival 2014)

Meaty choreography was not an issue for The Lady Hoofers Tap Ensemble... a lamppost and some milk crates set the filmic scene for some street tap- a capella with the eight hoofers tapping in bare feet. They tap out a rap backbeat and quicksilver slide to classic tap patterns (loved the percussive sampling of a famous, and very difficult, Gregory Hines group riff). Eventually, the dancers put their taps on and keep blending routines.



*"Stripped down to skill, demonstrating a wider range of rhythmic vocabulary... [the dancers] wear a nonchalant demeanor and tap with all sides of their feet to make sound. Hoofers. Ladies. Indeed."* -Debbie Shapiro, ThinkingDance 2012

*"The Hoofers not only can spark the floor, they take tap in unexpected directions."* -Lisa Bardarson, ThinkingDance 2014



THINKINGDANCE, by Lisa Bardarson (Holiday Concert 2014)

With lighting suggesting falling snow and the over-used holiday music of Vince Guaraldi... we were transported onto a skating rink where triple Salchows were replaced by twirls and tapping feet. In spite of my weariness of ice and snow, even the theatrical kind, I found this wintry skating theme a clever device to showcase these seven dancers.

Choreographed by [Theresa] DiSipio, "Soles in the Raw," was my favorite of the pieces that The Lady Hoofers presented. In their bare feet the dancers were able to drop their weight further into the floor, giving the movement more depth. I heard subtleties in the footwork that shoes would have obscured making this piece more about listening and less about sound.

# Repertoire Highlights



Part 1: Soles in the Raw choreography by Theresa DiSipio  
Part 2: Rhythm Unplugged choreographed by Amy Smith  
*Music: Acapella*

Pushing the boundaries of tap with barefoot dancers, spoons and milk crates, Reinvention premiered at the 2014 Come Together Festival at the Suzanne Roberts Theater. Describing its inventive polyrhythms, dance critic Lewis Whittington wrote "The Hoofers not only can spark the floor, they take tap in unexpected directions" (Philadelphia Dance Journal). The work explores both the medium and vocabulary of percussive dance to create an organic layering of cadence and groove: a simultaneous nod to our roots as hoofers, and look to the future.



Part 1: It Don't Mean a Thing choreographed by Kat Richter  
Part 2: Honeysuckle Rose choreographed by Becky Mastin  
Part 3: Life Goes to Party choreographed by Kat Richter  
*Music: Count Basie, Jane Monheit, and James Horner*

Drawing inspiration from 1930's jazz standards, this suite celebrates tap's early years. Choreographers Kat Richter and Becky Mastin construct an intricate and flirtatious display of fast-paced footwork, complete with high heeled tap shoes. The work premiered at the 2013 DanceUP Presenter's Showcase.



Part 1: Silent Ladies choreographed by Kat Richter  
Part 2: Shim Sham Variations staged by Michelle West  
Part 3: Got to Get It improvisation  
Part 4: Unchain My Heart choreographed by Katie Budris  
*Music: Marvin Gaye and Ray Charles*

This suite pays tribute to the rhythm and blues roots of tap, to the camaraderie built through the Shim Sham Shimmy, and the tradition of a tap challenge. In creating the final section of this piece, Budris references the styles of tap masters such as Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown, Chuck Green, and Bunny Briggs. Unchain My Heart premiered as part of the DanceUP Presenter's Showcase and was selected for performance at the 2013 DanceUSA Conference.

The Lady Hoofers Tap Ensemble also performs a variety of dance styles and is available for performance programs focusing on: Vaudeville, The Roaring 20's, Broadway, Vintage 1940's, Moulin Rouge, Historic Tap Tributes, Acapella, Rhythm Tap, Improvisation, The Shim Sham Shimmy, and much, much more

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING

*The Lady Hoofers Tap Ensemble is committed to arts education. As part of our mission to raise the profile of rhythm tap, we offer performances, classes, lecture demonstrations, workshops and long-term residencies.*

- **Free Performances:** Each year, the ensemble gives a number of free performances at community events and festivals such as West Park Arts Fest, Franklin Square, Headhouse Farmer's Market, and World Dance Day. We have also provided entertainment at fundraisers for numerous non-profit organizations including Pennsylvania Ballet and Pig Iron Theater Company.
- **Classes:** The ensemble offers weekly Open Company Classes for advanced tap dancers. We also organize Master Classes taught by guest artists and offer scholarships to these classes whenever possible.
- **Lecture Demonstrations:** Since 2011, The Lady Hoofers have been offering engaging Lecture Demonstrations for a variety of clients and organizations. Programs last between 30 and 60 minutes and include tap history, listening exercises and a performance by The Lady Hoofers.
- **Workshops:** We offer workshops for both children and adults lasting between one and three hours. Programs include basic tap technique and vocabulary, listening exercises, improvisation games, and a performance by The Lady Hoofers. Workshops can also be tailored for specific curriculum connections (i.e. geography, music, history, anthropology, etc).
- **Residencies:** Residencies provide students with a long-term immersion in the arts. Our current residency is in its third year at Mascher Space Co-op, supported by grant funding by the City of Philadelphia Activities Fund and The Bartol Foundation. With each residency, over 60 fifth grade students from Moffett Elementary School receives free tap shoes thanks to Access 2 The Arts and free tap lessons on a weekly basis for three months.
- **Donations:** We are always accepting donations of new or gently used tap shoes for our education programs and for distribution to local students.

# TESTIMONIALS

“We were delighted to feature Lady Hoofers as part of our City Hall Presents concert series in 2012. The ensemble is a joy to work with, as friendly as they are talented. Their performance was engaging from start to finish, and a great fit for audiences of all ages.”

*Josh Dubin | Special Projects Coordinator Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy City Hall Philadelphia, PA*

“Thank you so much for inviting us to your concert and offering the master tap class. The dancers LOVED the master class. And your tap performances were outstanding. You truly have a talent and an unique group of tappers. They were amazing! For us, we all had an easy ride to and from the city, there were plenty of restaurants for the parents and dancers to eat, the master class was wonderful and the concert was outstanding. It was a relaxing Friday night (before our 12 hour Nutcracker rehearsal Saturday) and it help to put us all in the holiday spirit. Thank you for this opportunity and we hope we can do it again next year.”

*Denise Gucwa | Denise Gucwa's School of Dance Harleysville, PA*

“Many thanks to the Lady Hoofers for helping to make the 2013 Multicultural and Diversity Festival at Springside Chestnut Hill Academy a success. Everyone looked terrific in the pink and white costumes. The dancers had great energy and actively engaged the audience with a mini tap lesson. Our students and families really enjoyed your performances!!!”

*Anne O'Malley Castellanos | Professor of Dance Co-Chair SCH Academy Multicultural Festival Eastern University Wayne, PA*

“It was truly great to have Philadelphia's Lady Hoofers at the Headhouse Farmers' Market! They were a pleasure to work with, had a fun holiday program and I noticed many of our shoppers and their families stopped to watch them. In addition, the Lady Hoofers did a great job working around the various obstacles at market that day (Historical landmarks, a Christmas tree, cobble stones, etc...) and positioning themselves so they were visible, but not in the way of the market flow. It was perfect and exactly the kind of holiday cheer the market needed. Thanks Lady Hoofers!”

*Nicky Uy | Senior Associate Farmers' Market Program The Food Trust Philadelphia, PA*

# MANAGING DIRECTOR

**Katie Budris, MFA** hails from Chicago where she trained in multiple forms of dance and began cultivating her love for tap as a founding member of Footprints Tap Ensemble. She minored in dance at NASD accredited Hope College where she performed with InSync Dance Theatre, Michigan's only professional tap and jazz company. Katie's early tap performance credits include Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, The Nutcracker on Broadway, Walt Disney World's 25th Anniversary Celebration, Dance Chicago, Chicago Human Rhythm Project, and Chicago Tap Theatre's Liason.

Katie's choreography is performed regularly by The Lady Hoofers, and has also been featured in several high school productions and Footprints Tap Ensemble's annual Tap Jam. Her piece "Unchain My Heart" was selected for performance at the DanceUSA Conference in 2013. In addition to directing The Lady Hoofers, Katie is a writing professor at Rowan University and Community College of Philadelphia.



**Kat Richter, MA** began her apprenticeship with the New Jersey Tap Ensemble at the age of nine. She trained under Karen Callaway Williams, Paris Mann and the Ensemble's Artistic Director, Deborah Mitchell, and was promoted to Principal Dancer while still in high school. In 2005, she received a scholarship for a year of study at Oxford University, where she choreographed several productions, and returned to the UK in 2009 to pursue her Masters in Dance Anthropology.

A regular performer at the London Tap Jam, Kat wrote her MA dissertation on the performance of tap's "national anthem," the Shim Sham Shimmy, and continues to teach and present research throughout the US and the UK. She also writes for Dance Teacher Magazine, Dance Spirit and the Philadelphia Dance Journal, and has set works for numerous companies including Chorégraphie Antique, the Bryn Mawr School for Girls and The Lady Hoofers.

# ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

# Technical Requirements

20-foot wide x 25-foot deep performance space, preferably sprung, with wood or masonite surface suitable for tap dancing. Standard theatrical lighting with basic booms and overhead lighting. Floor microphones for footwork and additional microphones for musicians and vocalists if using live accompaniment. Contact us for a complete list of technical requirements.

**Note:** Although standard performance spaces are preferred, the ensemble can perform in spaces as small as 12-foot wide x 6-foot deep and owns several portable floor panels for use in smaller spaces.



# Booking Info

The Lady Hoofers have performed for a variety of audiences throughout the Philadelphia region, ranging from the DanceUSA Conference and regional dance festivals such as the Come Together Festival, to community and private events.

The Lady Hoofers have produced:

- Evening-length concerts featuring top-notch jazz musicians
- Engaging lecture demonstrations
- Informal tap jams at local jazz clubs

The Lady Hoofers are available for:

- Private events and receptions
- Customized educational programs and lecture demonstrations
- Fundraisers and banquets

Contact: [info@ladyhoofers.org](mailto:info@ladyhoofers.org)



# The Lady Hoofers

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*ladyhoofers.org*

*photo credits: Frank Bicking, Bill Hebert, Brian Mengini*