

Acia Gray

Contact Information

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Location: Austin, TX 78745

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Accomplished musician, dancer, choreographer, and educator with over 45 years of experience in tap and contemporary dance, over 50 in theatre and a career that started onstage as a seven year old drummer in the smokey bars of Houston, TX. Renowned for blending artistic direction, education, and performance. Founder of Tapestry Dance Company and the Soul 2 Sole Festival, with a legacy of innovative work in dance and public art. Known for exceptional leadership, creating cultural bridges, and promoting the art of tap dance globally.

Education

- Associate of Occupational Studies / Advanced Acting Technique / American Academy of Dramatic Arts, NYC, 1981 Graduate
- Inaugural Member of the First A.A.D.A. Repertory Company, NYC, 1981-1982

Tap Training Residencies

- First Creative Residency / Tap Dance, Colorado Dance Festival / Charles 'Honi' Coles, 1989
12 professional dancers chosen worldwide
- Second Creative Residency / Tap Dance, Colorado Dance Festival / Jimmy Slyde, 1990
11 professional dancers chosen worldwide

Influential Training & Workshops

Charles 'Honi' Coles, Brenda Bufalino, Sarah Petronio, Steve Condos, Eddie Brown, Buster Brown, Cholly Atkins, Jimmy Slyde, Sam Weber, Dianne Walker, Debra Bray
Numerous International Master Classes / Ongoing Study

Modern/Jazz/Ballet Training

AADA Faculty / Cunningham and Graham Techniques, classic jazz, ballet (1979–1982)
Deirdre Strand (TDC Ballet & Jazz Syllabus), Bruce King (Cunningham), Bruce Wood (Lar Lubovitch), Sharon Marroquin (Horton) / *Numerous International Master Classes*

Positions Held

- Co-Founder, Executive/Artistic Director, Tapestry Dance Company Austin, TX (1989 – Present)
- Artistic Director, *Soul 2 Sole Festival & Projects* / Austin, TX (1993 - Present)
- City of Austin Arts Commissioner / Austin, TX - District 6 (2021- 2026)
- City of Austin Arts in Public Places Commissioner / Austin, TX (2021–2023)
- Faculty / Texas State University / Theatre & Dance Department (2024-Present)
- President – The International Tap Association (2008–2016)
- International Tap Association Archivist / Community Connection Curator (Current)
- University of Texas at Austin - Tap Dance Pedagogy (1998)
- Austin Community College - (1990-1998)
- *Ongoing Solo Artist, Choreographer, Master Teacher*

Grants Awarded

- National Endowment for the Arts/American Masterpieces (2007, 2008)
The Souls of Our Feet / A Celebration of American Tap Dance
- National Endowment for the Arts/Project Grants (1995-present)
The Soul 2 Sole Festival (pre-2000 Austin Tap Jam)

- Texas Commission on the Arts, Artist in Education & Arts Create (1990 – present)
- City of Austin (1990 - present)
- St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation (2025 & 2026)
- Texas Commission on the Arts Touring Roster (1990–2020)
- NEA Choreography Initiative (2003) / Bowling Green, KY NEA Excellence (2004–2009)
- Heartland Touring Roster (1990-present)
- Hegardt Foundation (2008, 2009)
- Mid America Arts Alliance Touring Roster (1990 – present)
- 3M Arts in Education Grant (2002/2001/2000)
- Motorola, Applied Materials, Texaco Project Grants Meredith Foundation Grant (2006)
- Kleberg Foundation Grant (2007)
- Dougherty Foundation Grant (1992 / 1994)
- #1 Ranking, City of Austin Cultural Contracts / Tapestry (1990-2009)
- #1 Ranking, City of Austin Cultural Contracts / Austin on Tap (1983-1987)

Committees

The International Tap Association Steering Committee (1990)

Create Austin (2007)

The National Tap Plan / NEA (2007)

Honors

- 2025 HTX Tap Fest Leap Award
- 2019 Austin Creative Alliance Honor
- 2018 RIFF Dallas Honoree
- 2017 Dance USA Honoree
- 2016 “Bravest Dance Artist” (*Austin Chronicle*)
- 2016 Hoofer Award (NYC Tap Festival / American Tap Dance Foundation)
- 2012 “Best Choreography” Austin Chronicle Critics Table Award
- 2011 Praz Sky Pohar (Zig Zag - Prague, Czech Republic)
- 2010 Space City Tap Festival Honoree
- 2008 Texas Tap Legend (Dallas Dance Council)
- 2008 Legacy Award (Third Coast Rhythm Project)
- 2007 Tapology Award (Flint, MI)
- 2005 Austin Theatre Alliance Award
- 2002 Inaugural member of the *Austin Arts Hall of Fame*
- 2001 & 2002) Chosen to pay to tribute to Buster Brown, Eddie Brown, Charles ‘Honi’ Coles & Sarah Petronio, NYC Tap Festival
- 2012 — Austin Critics Table Award, Best Choreography - *April Fools*, Tapestry Dance Company / Acia Gray
- 2007 — Austin Critics Table Award, Best Dance Concert - *The Souls of Our Feet*, Tapestry Dance Company
- 2007 — Austin Critics Table Award, Best Ensemble - *The Souls of Our Feet*, Tapestry Dance Company
- 2007 — Austin Chronicle Best of Austin, Best Dance Company / Tapestry
- 2004 — Austin Chronicle Best of Austin, Best Dance Company / Tapestry
- 2003 — Austin Chronicle Best of Austin, Best Dance Company / Tapestry
- 2002 — Austin Arts Hall of Fame / Austin Critics Table Inaugural Inductee - Acia Gray
- 2000 — Austin Chronicle Best of Austin Critics Pick, “Best Casual Grace” - Acia Gray,
- 1999 — Austin Critics Table Award, Best Large Dance Performance / *Stayin’ Alive*, Dance Company
- 1999 — Austin Critics Table Award, Best Choreographer - Acia Gray, *Stayin’ Alive*
- 1994 — Austin Chronicle Best of Austin, Best Dance Company / Tapestry

Other

- Best Dancer, Austin Chronicle Reader's Poll, 1999 - Acia Gray
- International Tap Association Publications / Lincoln Center Archive Profiles
 - *The Souls of Your Feet*, by Marda Kirn, 1998
 - *Tap Composers*, by Brenda Bufalino, 1999
 - Featured Soloist, Dance Magazine Calendar, 1989
 - *A Taste of Texas*, Texas Agricultural Department Expo/NYC, 1986

Publications

- Author: *The Souls of Your Feet* / Grand Weaver's Publishing Company / ISBN# 0-9667445-0-0
(Category Bestseller, Amazon.com 1999)
- International Tap Association / Lincoln Center - *Closing the Gap*
 - Brenda Bufalino & Sarah Petronio, 1999
 - Jeni LeGon & Ernie Smith, 2000

Producer

NEA Masterpiece: Dance / *The Souls of Our Feet* (2006, 2007, 2008-2011)
Performing Artists: Tapestry Dance Company, Arthur Duncan, Dianne Walker
Choreography Directly Passed By: Brenda Bufalino, Dr. Jeni LeGon, Dr. Harold Cromer, Sarah Petronio

In Residence

- New York City Tap City Festival, *Biorhythms*, 2023
- International Festival de Danse Encore (Canada), 2009 (2003-2019)
- New York City Tap City Festival, *Rim Shot*, 2015
- New York City Tap City Festival, *Body Music*, 2009
- Tap Legacy Project, restaging *The Chair Dance*, *B.S. Chorus*, 2006
- Third Coast Rhythm Project, *Gravy Waltz*, 2006
- Chicago Human Rhythm Project, premiere restaging of Charles 'Honi' Coles' *Conglomerations*, 2002
- Third Coast Rhythm Project, *Anacruses*, 2002
- International Summer School / Cyprus, 1995, 1996
- T.A.S.I.S. London, 1997
- *The Famine Project* / Dublin, Ireland, 1998
- Tanzsommer U.S. Student Project, Austria, 1999

Faculty

Tapestry Dance Company / Austin, TX (1989-present)
Texas State University Department of Theatre & Dance (2023-present)
St. Stephen's Episcopal School / Austin, TX (guest artist 2002-2003)
University of Texas at Austin, 2008, 2001, 2000, 1998
Austin Community College, 1990 - 1998

Collaborations

- Zell Miller, III (Austin, TX Inaugural Poet Laureat) / *Visions in Rhythm* / *Passing It Forward* / *All the Notes Are Already Here* (2016 – present)
- Anu Naimpally, Anrea Ariel, Olivia Chacon, Sharon Marroquin, Jun Shen / *Precious Present Productions* (2021–2023)
Musicians: ATASH, Masumi Jones, Dylan Jones, Austin Kimble / *Precious Present Productions* (2021–2023)
- Erica Santiago, *Head to Toe*, 2008
- Anuradha Naimpally & Tasha Lawson, *Footprints*, 2007
- Bill Evans, *the Space Between Our Thoughts*, 2002
- Lambros Lambrou, *Homecoming*, Ballet Austin, 1996
- Stephen Mills, *Duel Fuel*, Ballet Austin, 1995
- Sally Jacques, *Scaffold Trilogy* 1999
- Andrea Ariel, *Time*, 1993
- Bruce Wood, *Intercession of Grace*, 1993
- James Clouser, *The Board Dance*, 1993
- Dee McCandless, *Reckless Nights & Turkish Twilights* (1994) / *Waterworks* (2002 and 2019)
- Deirdre Strand (see choreography)

Company Dancer

Tapestry Dance Company (1989 – Present) / *Touring Company* / *Holden Arts & Associates* (1989-2018)
It's About Time (Tribute to Sarah Petronio) / Düsseldorf (2022), Austin, TX (2023)
Austin on Tap, 1983–1989 / *Touring Company* - Siegel Artist Management, Washington, DC

Full Length Original Concert/Concept Works

Choreographed for Tapestry Dance Company (Modern/Jazz/Tap and Multi-disciplinary)

- *A Precious Present -Listen* — 2023
- *A Precious Present -The Jazz Element* — 2022
- *All the Notes Are Already Here* — 2022
- *Connections* (film) — 2021
- *A Precious Present - In Love & Light* — 2021
- *Looking Back/Looking Forward* (film) — 2020
- *A Jazz Tap Holiday* (livestream) — 2020
- *Austintatious* (reprise) — 2019
- *April Fools* (reprise) — 2018
- *Sound & Silence* — 2018
- *Passing It Forward - The American Dream?* (international) — 2017
- *Just Tap* (includes national tour) — 2017
- *Listen with Ears Wide Open* — 2016
- *One Step at a Time - A Journey Forward* — 2016
- *In Your Shoes* — 2015
- *Esprit!* (reprise) — 2014
- *Soul - Sole Connections* — 2014
- *Rhythm, Reason & Reality* — 2013
- *Time* — 2012
- *April Fools* — 2012
- *Are You Listening to Me* — 2011
- *Of Mice & Music - A Jazz Tap Nutcracker* — 2009–2019
- *The Souls of Our Feet* (NEA Masterpiece international tour) — 2008–2011
- *Head to Toe* — 2008
- *Footprints* — 2007
- *Safe & Sound* — 2006

- *My Funny Valentine* — 2004
- *Ears Wide Open* — 2004
- *Rhythm of a Life* — 2003
- *In the Pocket* — 2003
- *Austintatious* — 2002
- *Esprit!* — 2002
- *Jass* — 2001
- *.com* — 2001
- *Almost Virtual* — 2001
- *Soul & Body* — 2000
- *Swingin' Then & Now!* — 1997

Individual Dance Works

(outside of full-length concept works or collaborative productions)

- *Locomotion* — 1995
- *Pentimento* — 1995
- *The Souls of My Feet* — 1994
- *Musical Chairs* — 1994
- *Biorhythms* — 1993
- *Menage a Trois* — 1993
- *Anacruses* — 1990

Collaborations with Tapestry Co-Founder Deirdre Strand

(mixed repertory performances)

- *The Sign of the Times* — 2000
- *Stayin' Alive* — 1999
- *Ballet Eireann* — 1996
- *The Games People Play* — 1995
- *Genesis* — 1994
- *Listening For Esperanto* — 1994
- *Rhythmic Influences* — 1993

Short Works

(under 5 minutes) Available Upon Request

Solo Performance & Master Teacher

- Festival Copasetic / Sao Paulo, Brazil, 2026
- Luthier Tap Festival / Barcelona, 2026
- Keanne Sense of Rhythm – National Tap Dance Day / St. Paul, MN, 2023–2026
- HTX Tap Festival / Houston, TX 2025
- Legacy Tap Project / Dallas, TX, 2009 & 2025
- Stockholm Tap Festival / Sweden, 2025
- Utah Tap Festival / Salt Lake City, UT, 2024 & 2025
- Broadway Dance Center, 2002, 2008, 2024, 2025
- Monterrey Tap Festival / Monterrey, Mexico, 2017–2024
- RIFF Dallas / Dallas, TX, 2015–2024
- Tap Breizh / Rennes, France, 2024
- Tanzhaus – Tap Dance Days / Düsseldorf, Germany, 2023
- New York City Tap Festival / Tap City, 2002–2025
- Women in Tap (UCLA) / Los Angeles, CA, 2008
- Tap Legacy Project, 2007, 2009
- Southeastern Tap Explosion / Atlanta, GA, 1999 – 2006
- Chicago Human Rhythm Project, 2002, 2006
- Rhythm Explosion / Bozeman, MT, 2005, 2007
- Los Angeles Tap Festival / CA, 2007

- Vancouver Tap Festival, 2010
- Third Coast Rhythm Project / San Antonio, 1999 – 2012
- St. Louis Tap Festival, 1997–2004
- Columbus Tap Festival / Columbus, MO 2002
- New Mexico Rhythm Tap Festival, 2002, 2004
- Chicago on Tap / Columbia College, Chicago, IL, 1996
- Dance Educators of America, 1997, 2003
- Texas Association of Teachers of Dance, 1999
Pineapple Studios, London, 1998, 2024
- Texas Association of Health, Recreation & Dance, 1995, 2002
Dallas Dance Council, 2001, 2008
- Panoply / Atlanta, GA, 2002
- Dance Masters of America / Seattle, WA & Biloxi, MS, 1995
International Summer School, Cyprus, 1995, 1996
- Ballet Austin Summer Intensive, 1993, 1994 Colorado
Dance Festival, 1992

Additional presenters available upon request

TDC Company Performances

Mainstage Premieres (see choreography)

The Long Center, Austin, TX / 2008 - Current

Paramount Theatre, Austin, TX / 1993 - 2007

Helm Fine Arts Center, Austin, TX / (2006–2008)

Tapestry Dance Company – Touring (1989 -2019)

*Presenters available upon request / USA, Canada, Spain, Brazil, Austria, Czech Republic
and Republic of China*

Charles Santos' Austin Festival of Dance Galas / Paramount Theatre, Austin, TX (1992–2001)

Austin on Tap – National Touring / Theatres, Colleges & Universities throughout the U.S.

Documentaries / Featured

Tap or Die

A Class Act: The Magic of Honi Coles.

Thinking on Their Feet - Women of the Tap Renaissance (UCLA produced)

A Vision in Rhythm (Matt Ryan Productions)

Passing it Forward produced by PBS

Musical Theatre Choreography

Equity

- Live Oak Theatre / State Theatre, Austin, TX (1996-2005)
 - *Cabaret*
 - *Damn Yankees*
 - *Pump Boys & Dinettes*
 - *The Tempest*
 - *My Fair Lady*
 - *Dark of the Moon*
 - *Nunsense*
 - *A Christmas Carol*
 - *She Loves Me*

Non-Equity

- Zilker Hillside Productions / St. Stephen's Stages, Austin, TX (1998-2006)
South Pacific
Big River
42nd Street

Theatre/Acting

- *Vagina Monologues* Zachary Scott Theatre / Austin, TX / 2007
- *Key Exchange* Capital City Playhouse / Austin, TX / 1995
- *Cabaret* Live Oak Theatre / Austin, TX / 1995
- *Oedipus*, TX Studio 29 / Austin, TX / 1983
- *The Glee Club* Improv Comedy Troupe, NYC / 1981-1983
- *Passing Game* NYC / AADA Rep Co / 1981
- *The Shadowbox* NYC / AADA Rep Co / 1981
- *The Dutchman* NYC / AADA Rep Co / 1981
- *The Women* NYC / AADA Rep Co / 1982
- *Royal Gambit* NYC / AADA Rep Co / 1982
- *Lilly the Felon's Daughter*, Cabaret Theatre / Austin, TX (1981)
- *Star Warps* Melodrama Theatre / Austin, TX / 1980
- *Once Upon a Mattress* / Zachary Scott Theatre / 1979

Showcases / NYC (1980 – 1982)

- *The Museum*
- *Antigone*
- *I Am a Camera*
- *The Rimers of Eldritch*

References, additional collaborations, and full choreography and solo presentation list available upon request