

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Joel Hall

PERSON

Hall, Joel

Alternative Names: Joel Hall; Joel Hall;

Life Dates: April 20, 1949-

Place of Birth: Chicago, Illinois, USA

Residence: Chicago, IL

Work: Chicago, IL

Occupations: Choreographer; Dance Instructor

Biographical Note

Joseph “Joel” Hall was born in Chicago, Illinois, on April 20, 1949. Hall began his dancing career in 1968 under the tutelage of Ed Parrish, and the following year, he moved to New York City, where he studied under Denise Jefferson. Returning to Chicago, he earned his B.A. degree in sociology from Northeastern Illinois University in 1972.

In 1974, Hall and Joseph Ehrenberg co-founded the Chicago City Theatre Company, which later became the Joel Hall Dance Center. Hall now serves as the artistic director and principal choreographer for the Joel Hall Dancers, and director and chief instructor of the training studio. Over the years, the Joel Hall Dancers have gained an international reputation and Hall has been widely acclaimed as a choreographer. His company has performed three seasons at the prestigious Joyce Theater in New York, and he has led the company on nine international tours, beginning with the Glasgow May Fest in 1985. Hall has created ballets for the Chicago City Ballet, the Zenon Dance Company in Minneapolis and Ballet Tennessee in Chattanooga, as well as choreographing the opera *The Pearl Fishers* at the Chicago Opera Theatre and Goldie Hawn’s film, *Wildcats*. In 1991, Hall choreographed the 50th Anniversary presentation of Duke Ellington’s musical *Jump for Joy*. In addition to these productions, he has created more than forty ballets for his own company.

Hall has also gained attention as an instructor of jazz dance. He has taught at Wayne State University, New York State University, Northern Illinois University, and Western Michigan University. He has also taught internationally, conducting classes in Liverpool, Glasgow, Inverness, Kirkcaldy, Belfast, and the United Kingdom. At the

time of the interview, the Joel Hall Dance Center in Chicago offered A2004.170 more than 150 classes a week to students ranging from age three to adults.

Related Entries

Edward Jenner Elementary Academy of the Arts [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

St. Dominic's Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Austin O. Sexton Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Walter L. Newberry Math & Science Academy Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Cooley Vocational High School and Upper Grade Center [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Lincoln Park High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Northeastern Illinois University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Near North Career Magnet High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Chicago City Theatre Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1974 to ?]

Founder, Director, Choreographer