

# LEIDA “LADY SOL” VILLEGAS

## P E R S O N A L P H I L O S O P H Y

My practice as an arts educator encompasses collective responsibility for the personal and professional development of inner-city youth.

## P R O F E S S I O N A L E X P E R I E N C E

### **FootworKINGz / Sol Arts Inc.** **Founder / Director**

- Founder of the first professional ensemble to present Chicago’s style of “footwork”.
- Direct and assist lead choreographers in creating spectacular shows for international touring.
- Ensemble has performed in San Francisco, New York, Florida, Las Vegas, and internationally with Madonna on “Sticky & Sweet Tour 08 & 09.”

### **Urban Gateways, Center for Arts Education, Chicago** **Artist in Residence, August 2005 – Present**

- Serve as a resident dance artist teaching various in-school and after-school residency programs throughout CPS.
- Curriculum based in urban dance history and techniques that explore: Locking, House, Jazz/Hip-Hop choreography coupled with Afro-Latin dance movement.

### **After School Matters (ASM) / Kuumba Lynx, Apprenticeship, Chicago** **Urban Dance Projex (UDP), Lead-Instructor, October 2004 – April 2009**

- Apprenticeship model engages participants in various professional training and performance experiences that provide a foundation for developing life skills.
- Workshops educate apprentices about the history & technique of urban dance styles: Locking, Popping, and Footworking. Workshops include Jazz, Modern & African movement.
- Each ten-week program ends with a culminating performance in conjunction with other ASM programs. UDP has worked with various high schools including Crane, Little Village, Westinghouse, Fenger, Carver, and Kelvin Park.

### **Multi-Cultural Arts High School, Chicago** **Artist in Residence, October 2005 – Spring 2007**

- Teach weekly urban dance workshop to female teen-age population.
- Workshops employ ethnic dance, as a tool for developing cross-cultural understanding between African American and Latino youth.

### **Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago Teacher’s Center, Chicago** **Urban Dance Artist, Summer Institute 2005**

- Developed and taught five-week Hip-Hop history, culture, and dance curriculum.
- Middle-school aged youth from six schools were grouped under a Hip-Hop & Social Justice inquiry titled: “**Hip-Hop Culture, a Tool for Social Empowerment?**”
- Student field trips included visits and Q&A’s with WGCI urban radio station, Chrewd, Urban Marketing, and a theater viewing of “Rize,” a Los Angeles urban dance documentary.

**Truman College, Gear Up / Youth on Youth, Chicago**  
**Youth Arts Instructor**, Summer 2004 & 2003

- Worked with Truman College's neighboring middle school (Arai) teaching poetry writing and ethnic cultural dance workshops.
- Poetry writing workshops focused on community exploration.
- Ethnic cultural dance movement workshops exclusively designed for female students teaching West African and Latin movement.

**After School Matters, Club 37, Chicago**  
**Hip-Hop Culture & the Art of B-Boying, Co-Instructor**, February 2004 - June 2004

- Co-instructed and implemented after-school Hip-Hop studies curriculum, including street dance workshops that included fundamentals in Locking, Popping and Breaking at Roberto Clemente High School.

**Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles**  
**Artist in Residence Grant Recipient** 2003, 2001

- Created, developed, and implemented hip-hop arts and education youth programs for the Echo Park teen community and the Bresee Youth Center.
- Workshops included discussions and film studies about Hip-Hop history and culture.
- Performing arts workshops taught by several professional hip-hop artists in the areas of spoken word, urban dance and mural art.

**Armory Center for the Arts, Los Angeles**  
**Poetry and Movement Workshop Artist**, December 2000 - February 2003

- Developed and taught poetry writing workshops alongside resident visual artist.
- Students explored canyon and mountain terrain as inspiration for creating art and poetry.
- Workshops utilized dance movement and drumming as tools for interpreting student writing.

**Nubian Sol Arts Collective, Chicago, Los Angeles**  
**Partner/Choreographer**, January 1997 – December 2001

- Directed, choreographed, staged, and auditioned dancers for various projects.
- Directed recording artists in preparation for stage and television performances.
- Former clients include superstars, **Tyrese, Busta Rhymes, Guy, and Sparkle.**

**Performing Tree, Los Angeles**  
**Resident Artist**, September 2000 - December 2001

- Developed and taught dance residencies that integrated science and language arts.
- Ten – fifteen week curriculum addressed the California State Academic Learning Goals and Standards in the Performing Arts.
- Basic Vocabulary taught in Modern, Ballet, and Jazz dance.
- Completed 4-day professional development institute, **Arts Exploration: Dance & Theater**

**North Lawndale Learning Community, Chicago**  
**Resident Artist**, September 1997 – June 1999

- Developed, created, and taught 3rd – 8<sup>th</sup> grade after-school and in-school dance (ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop) programs for two elementary schools.

## **C O M M E R C I A L   W O R K / S P E C I A L   P R O J E C T S**

Professional choreography and dance credits include music videos / performances with:

**Busta Rhymes, Tyrese Gibson, Blaque, Mack 10, Monifah, Wyclef Jean, Patra, Fufees, Heavy D., Black Street and Guy.**

Television appearances and choreography credits include: UPN's **Source Sound Lab, Soul Train Awards, WGN Morning News, MTV, BET, Fox's Motown Live, NBC's Suddenly Susan** starring Brooke Shields and New York's **Showtime at the Apollo.**

Local print and television journalism (**247HH.com**) interviews with Hip-Hop stars, **Busta Rhymes, The Game, Wyclef Jean,, Lauryn Hill, Black Eye Peas, De La Soul, Erykah Badu, Common, A Tribe Called Quest, and Redman.**

Guest speaker, performances, and/or master dance classes include: Numerous youth conferences at **University of Illinois** in Chicago & Champaign, **University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA), Marymount University,** Los Angeles Unified School District's Annual Dance Festival '02 at **East LA College, Boys & Girls Club West Coast Keystone Conference '02,** and the **National Crime Prevention Council Youth Conf. '03.**

Contributing writer for the Latino Entertainment Media's **Latin Heat Publication,** Urban Network, Chicago Dance Coalition's **Newsflash,** Chicago's **Fly Paper,** and the **Chi-Town Low Down** Newspaper.

## **E D U C A T I O N**

**New York University,** School of Education, New York, NY  
A.A., Liberal Arts, Spring 1995

**Northeastern Illinois,** Chicago  
Modern Dance & Performance with Venetia Stifler & Jim Morrow, Spring 2005

**Old Town School of Folk Music,** Chicago, IL  
West African Dance with Iddy Ciss of Muntu Dance Theater, Fall '04 – Fall '05

**Urban Dance Master Classes ('94 - '04):** Poppin Chuck (LA); Rennie Harris Pure Movement (PA); Rock Steady Crew (LA); L.A. Breakers; Don Campbell Lock (LA); Brian "Footwork" Green of World Soul (NYC); Buddah Stretch Mop Top (NYC); Jamal & Rosero (Usher), Fatima (Micheal Jackson), Marty Kudelka (Janet J.).

**Professional International Travels:** Italy, London, Mexico, and South Africa (1996-1997)

**Lincoln Park Performing Arts High School,** Chicago, IL  
Graduated June 1993  
Dance Major (Ballet, Modern, Jazz) with **Efe McWorter**

**Joseph Holmes Dance Theater,** Chicago, IL  
Ballet, Modern, and Jazz Training, 1990 - 1991