

Swing Time!

www.bigtimeswing.com || bigtimeswing@comcast.net || 312-371-4753

About Us

Swing Time! is a partnership between Riley Wimes Jr. and Margot McGraw Toppen, two Chicago-area performers who have been dancing and teaching together since 1998. They are well versed in swing, ballroom and Latin partner dances, as well as the history of jazz music and dance. They routinely teach in the Chicago area as well as perform and lecture grade school and high school students on jazz dancing and music. Their dynamic dance style is athletic and very high-energy. They strive to capture the spirit of Harlem's Savoy Ballroom back in the heyday of our nation's great Swing Era.

Margot: Education and Experience

- Began studying classical ballet and jazz at age 5 and continued through college
- Taught ballet to 3-10 year olds from 1989-1991
- Received a BSJ in 1995 from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism
- Performed as a member of Grafitti Dancers, Northwestern University's premiere dance troupe
- Began swing dancing in 1997
- Continues her dance education by taking workshops and private lessons with internationally known instructors in dances ranging from hip-hop to Argentine Tango
- Began teaching swing dance to adults in 1998
- Began teaching swing dance and music to children in schools throughout Chicagoland in 1999

Riley: Education and Experience

- Began dancing socially at a young age and grew up in a family and community surrounded by music and dance
- Lead Clarinetist, Drum Major, Band President, and Gold Medal of Music Recipient in High School
- Received a B.A. in Communications in 1984 from Western Illinois University
- Began swing dancing in 1997
- Continues his dance education by taking workshops and private lessons with internationally known instructors in a variety of social dance styles
- Began teaching swing dance to adults in 1998
- Began teaching swing dance and music to children in schools throughout Chicagoland in 1999
- Promotes live jazz music for dancers and listeners through weekly events.
- Deejays swing/jazz music on a regular basis

Competition, Teaching & Performance Highlights for Riley & Margot

- **World Olympic Committee Performance:** Invited performer for the 2007 World Boxing Championship Opening Ceremonies at the Chicago Theatre. Audience members included members of the World Olympic Committee, Chicago Olympic Bid Committee, Mayor Daley, and Muhammed Ali.
- **Chicago Summerdance:** Featured instructors for the City of Chicago's Summerdance program (1999-2005); Chosen for promotional appearances on various local news programs and live performances on State Street.
- **Great Lakes Regional Dance Champion:** First place in the American Lindy Hop Championships American Showcase Division regional qualifier for 4 years running (1999-2002)
- **The Living Room Dance Contest:** 1st place in 2001 & 2002 (first Lindy Hop team to ever win title)
- **Chicago Shag Team:** Conceived and produced a 4-minute routine for 8 dancers that won 2nd place at the American Lindy Hop Championships Cabaret Division (2000)
- **For Dancer's Only Tour:** Live on-stage performance with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra at Navy Pier Grand Ballroom (2000)
- **Dance Chicago 2000:** Choreographed and performed a 4-minute piece (Chicago Shag Team)
- **Dance Chicago 1998:** Contributed choreography & performed a hip hop/lindy hop routine with Chicago Swing Half Breeds
- **Film:** Featured dance appearances in 'The Road to Perdition', Wisconsin Department of Transportation TV commercial; Signcast in-bar promotional footage; Dance related interviews and performances on ABC, WGN and CLTV news shows
- **General:** Numerous spotlight performances and demos at corporate events, festivals, sporting events, etc. (1997-present)