



PHOTO BY MARC VON BORSTEL

BEST FOOT FORWARD Dancing icon Twyla Tharp

Dance Diva

A dance icon visits Chicago.

BY VICKI CRAIN

After nine years away setting her choreography across the globe, Twyla Tharp heads back to Chicago. Her dance roots here are deep. Tharp's first ballet (*Deuce Coupe* for the Joffrey Ballet in 1973) premiered at the Auditorium Theatre, her Tony Award-winning Broadway show *Movin' Out* (2002) previewed at the Shubert Theatre and she set seven works on Hubbard Street Dance Chicago in the '90s. This month she's back creating a world premiere for the critically acclaimed dance troupe for its Fall Series at the Harris Theatre. In an amazing feat, 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of her work and she's been revisiting her roots, which lead her back to Chicago. "In terms of culture, Chicago has a phenomenal history. Frank Lloyd Wright, Studs Terkel, Sal Bellow, Mike Nichols, Orson Wells, all of the improvisatory theater groups... these folks have made a massive difference," says Tharp. "It's important to have the opportunity to remember that legacy. It's a privilege to work here." Tharp has made more than 135 choreographic works and has a slew of awards to her name. She's conquered the concert stage, Broadway, movies, television, Vegas and has written three bestselling books. And at 70, Tharp shows no signs of slowing down. ■

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