

**Mary Francis “Cissy” Whipp** has been working as a performer, choreographer and dance educator for over 30 years. She received her BFA in Choreographic Design from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and her MA in Performing Arts: Dance from the American University in Washington, DC. She founded Louisiana’s first professional modern dance company, *Moving South Dance, Inc.* She toured for several years with *Young Audiences of New Orleans* and performed in France and Belgium with *La Compagnie Louisianaise*. She has taught for university dance programs at American University, George Washington University, Potsdam State University of New York, and most recently at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where she directed the *Children’s Dance Guild* and choreographed for the *State of LA Danse* Concert series. Ms. Whipp has been active with the Acadiana Arts Council’s *Bright New Worlds* program which brings professional artists into the classroom, in their *Arts Grants for Teachers* program which brings artists and teachers together in collaborative programs and mini-residencies and in their *Professional Development for Teacher’s* programs for which she has created numerous workshops on dance in the curriculum. She has been on the Louisiana State Artists Roster since 1986. In 1997 she was honored with the *Acadiana Arts Award* for outstanding contributions to the arts in Acadiana. In 1999 she was invited to join the *John F. Kennedy Center’s roster of Teaching Artists* and presents workshops nationally for teachers on integrating dance into the curriculum. She has served on the committee for developing arts assessment standards for the Louisiana Department of Education and for the revision of the state arts content standards and benchmarks. She served as Middle School Dance chair for the committee to write the official arts curriculum for the state of Louisiana. She is currently teaching dance at the J. Wallace James Elementary School for Arts & Technology and mentors emerging performing artists who are entering the Teaching Artist field. Ms. Whipp continues to choreograph and perform as an independent artist, working collaboratively with a variety of musicians, actors, poets, and dancers.