# Lindy Hop TIMELINE

## pre-1920s

Precursor jazz dances like the Charleston & Black Bottom

#### 1929

Lindy Hop first appears on film in After Seben

#### 1930s

Savoy Ballroom era

#### 1930s-1940s

Lindy Hop appears in Hollywood films

#### 1935

Benny Goodman at the Palomar

#### 1950s-1980s

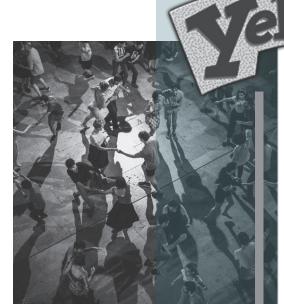
Popular music evolves, leading to new dances

## 1980s to today

Swing resurgence

and glory. It's just that I would like others to know what a happy dance this is.

I'm not interested in fame



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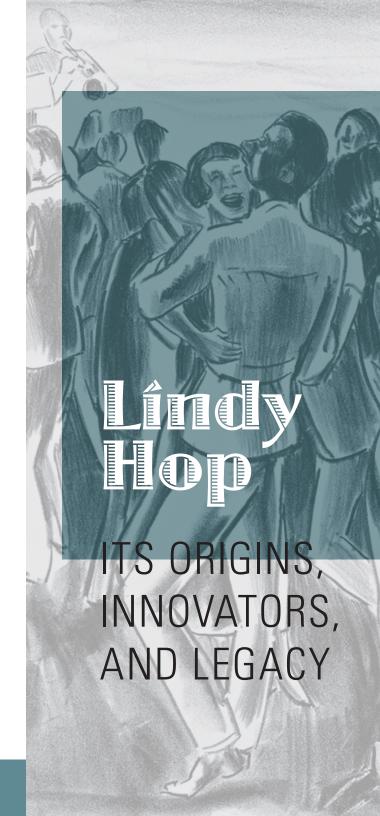
We invite you to learn more about the history of Lindy Hop.

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# **DANCE WITH US!**

Mission Mondays, San Francisco The Breakaway, Oakland Woodchopper's Ball, San Francisco Wednesday Night Hop, Palo Alto Cats' Corner, San Francisco 9:20 Special, San Francisco For Dancers Only, Sunnyvale Dancers Den, Oakland Bal Haus, San Francisco Bootlegger's Ball, San Francisco Lindy in the Park, San Francisco



## ROOTS

Lindy Hop was danced predominantly by Black dancers starting in the 1920s. Many of them lived in Harlem, where there were dance clubs such as the Savoy and Alhambra Ballrooms.

Lindy Hop emerged in America as a defiant, joyous response to financial hardship caused by the Great Depression, harsh living conditions, and systemic racism.

The dance evolved out of several forms of social dance that preceded it, such as the Cakewalk, partnered Charleston, and the Breakaway. A uniquely American dance, Lindy Hop combined the African traditions of social and circle dance with European



### THE SAVOY

Nicknamed the "Home of Happy Feet," the Savoy Ballroom stretched over a full city block in downtown Harlem. Two bandstands allowed continuous live music all night, and provided the setting for famous battles of bands led by house bandleader Chick Webb and other swing-era greats such as Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Benny Goodman.

World-class dancers like "Shorty" George Snowden and "Big Bea," and second-generation dancers such as Frankie Manning and Norma Miller would throw down at the Savoy till the early morning hours.

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers were also formed at the Savoy, when the club bouncer Herbert "Whitey" White brought some of the best dancers together and became their de facto agent. These dancers went on to become ambassadors of Lindy Hop on film, stage, and through worldwide tours.

they got the best dancers.



The Savoy was <u>the</u> ballroom because it had the best orchestras, and from that

-FRANKIF MANNING



As America's popular music evolved, Black dancers continued to develop new forms of social dance to accompany the new sounds including Hand Dancing, Hip Hop, and House. In the 1980s, younger dancers from New York, California, and Sweden saw Lindy Hop on film, sought out the folks who pioneered it (including Frankie Manning and Al Minns), and invited them to show the new generation how it's done.

The Lindy Hop we dance today is very different from the Lindy Hop of the 1930s. It's influenced by the original dancers, the dances that sprung up around and after it — Balboa, Carolina Shag, West Coast Swing, Boogie Woogie, St. Louis Shag, and more — and by those who teach and dance it. While dancers of color remain important contributors to the dance, the international scene now looks a lot whiter and more affluent than where it began. It's important that we learn about and honor the past while we continue to bring the dance into the future.

The spirit of Lindy Hop today is about inclusivity, creativity, and improvisation. Lindy hop is now a flourishing community with tens of thousands of dancers worldwide — throughout the US, Europe, and countries like South Korea, Lithuania, and South Africa.



The opening of the Savoy marked a change in the social pattern. For the first time in history, the status quo in America was challenged.

- NORMA MILLER