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## **Broadway Star Gregory Hines -- A True Believer**

By Steve Kelly, managing editor

What does Tony Award winning Broadway musical star Gregory Hines think of chiropractic. "I just think it's the greatest thing," he said in his soft spoken manner. "I can really feel it working."

The multitalented dancer, singer, movie and TV star is not a newcomer to chiropractic. "The first time I went to a chiropractor was 1967, when I was 21-years-old," he recalled. "I had a terrible spasm in my back and a good friend knew a chiropractor. I went to him and he helped me."

In 1981, while starring on Broadway in "Sophisticated Ladies," Gregory heard about Manhattan chiropractor Roy Siegel who treated many of the Broadway dancers. "I went to see him. There were about 10 dancers from 'A Chorus Line' in his office. As soon as I saw them, I knew I was in the right place," he said with a laugh. Hines and chiropractic have been together since.

Gregory feels so strongly about chiropractic that when the CBS-TV program "60 Minutes" decided to do a segment on him, he insisted the CBS crew come to Dr. Siegel's office and film his treatment session. CBS came, saw, and recorded.

In March, when CBS aired the prime-time program, they saluted Gregory Hines as the man who has revived the art of tap dancing, and rightly so. But they never showed the film footage in Dr. Siegel's office. A pity: "60 Minutes" is number one in the Nielsen ratings, with 23 percent of the households in American tuning in every Sunday evening.

If you missed "60 Minutes" or are unfamiliar with Mr. Hines' work, he won Broadway's equivalent of the Oscar (the Tony) in 1992 as best actor for his portrayal of jazz man Jelly "Roll" Morton in the production of "Jelly's Last Jam," the hit of the 1992-93 Broadway season. Gregory had previously received three Tony nominations for his work in "Eubie," "Comin' Uptown," and "Sophisticated Ladies."

If you missed his work on Broadway, you have perhaps seen him in the films "The Cotton Club;" "Running Scared" (with Billy Crystal); "White Nights" (Mikhail Baryshnikov); "Tap" (with the late great Sammy Davis Jr.); "Rage of Harlem" (Danny Glover); "Off Limits" (Willem Dafoe); "History of the World, Part I" (Madeline Kahn); "The Wolfen"; and "Deal of the Century" (Sigourney Weaver and Chevy Chase), among others.

If you watch the little screen, you may have caught him in the Emmy winning PBS production "Gregory Hines: Tap Dance in America," or his Emmy nominated performance in "Motown Returns to the Apollo." He hosted Showtime's "Dance of the Decade" series and starred in the made-for-TV movies "T-Bone and Weazel," and "Louisiana Black."

Gregory even had a number one song on the Black Single's chart: "There's Nothing Better than Love," a duet with Luther Vandross. How's that for versatility?

Gregory began dancing professionally at the precocious age of five with brother Maurice. They were the Hines Kids, and hung out back stage at the famous Apollo Theatre in Harlem, picking up pointers from the legends of tap dancing. Later they became the Hines Brothers, and when their father Maurice Sr., joined them, they were known as Hines, Hines and Dad.

They toured internationally and made frequent appearances on "The Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson. But Gregory tired of the routine and travel and left the trio. He settled briefly in Venice, California and formed a jazz-rock band.

When he returned to live in New York, he won a role in "The Last Minstrel Show," which led to his Broadway success in "Eubie," "Sophisticated Ladies," and "Jelly's Last Jam."

"Once I got in 'Jelly's Last Jam,' which began in April of '92, I knew the role was going to be very physically demanding," Gregory said. "I got together with Roy and we just decided that I visit his office twice a week just to say well. I knew that the jazz and tap dancing would definitely cause a certain degree of compression, and I just wanted to make sure that I was on top of it. Sure enough, I've been able to do the shows without missing any and just feel real strong on stage. It's been a great year. I give a lot of credit to Roy and his concept of wellness."

The case of Roy Siegel, DC, a graduate of Cornell and New York Chiropractic College, is an interesting one. Just out of NYCC, Dr. Siegel wanted to investigate the weakness of muscles of the lower extremities in relationship to low-back pain history. A theater director suggested he use dancers for his study. Dr. Siegel arranged to muscle test dancers from "A Chorus Line" and correlated that with their histories of musculoskeletal problems.

He also spoke to the dancers about chiropractic and ended up treating half the company that night. From then on, he was getting calls from dancers from most of the Broadway musicals. In the first few years of his practice, 90 percent of his patients were dancers; over the next decade, it was 80 percent; today, 65 percent. Dr. Siegel estimates that he has treated over 5,000 dancers.

What ailments do the dancers present to Dr. Siegel? "Everything that we get, but accentuated," he replied. "Because they do eight shows a week, they don't get a chance to heal. They depend on chiropractic care to keep themselves well-aligned and injury free."

Gregory Hines seconds that: "Roy has a healing way about him. Right from the beginning I knew I had really found somebody that could help me, not only help me when I was hurt, but help me prevent injuries."

Dr. Siegel's philosophy is simple: "Dancers that subscribe to preventive care or wellness care usually do much better."

The regular chiropractic treatments have payed off for Gregory: "I can really feel the difference going on a steady basis. At the end of the year, I feel fresh."

Gregory left "Jelly's Last Jam" in May after a year's run. He plans to go on tour, and in June he'll take his family down to Barbados for a little R & R.

One last question Gregory: "Does anyone else in your family use chiropractic?"

"My wife, my mother, daughter, oh yeah," he emphasized, "I believe in it."

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