

RETURN OF THE SUN

SAN FRANCISCO  
**ETHNIC DANCE  
FESTIVAL**

.....  
31st ANNUAL



# Welcome

In January, thousands of dancers and musicians participated in the annual audition process for this *Festival*. Two long weekends were filled with an awe-inspiring presentation of dance from around the world performed to cheering audiences, with long lines of people waiting for someone to leave so that a seat would become available. This is the Bay Area dance ritual that so many people look forward to each year—but this year's experience felt palpably different.

Although the weather outside the Palace of Fine Arts was dreary and cold as usual, there was a spark in the air—the excitement of a new era dawning following the election of a hopeful president. On the Sunday before Inauguration Day, the dancing seemed particularly joyful with words of anticipation echoing throughout the crowds.

At the same time, we were in the process of developing our annual arts education program for children, called *People Like Me*. This program celebrated its 15th Anniversary Season this year, presenting dance from five world cultures to over 11,000 Bay Area children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Each year, these shows are created around a story, and this year master storyteller Brenda Wong Aoki chose to tell the story of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, an ancient Japanese creation myth.

From this confluence, emerged this year's *Festival* theme: Return of the Sun.

There are so many myths, rituals, and creation stories centered on the Sun—the center of our solar system and the nearest star. It makes me pause when I am reminded that all life on earth depends on the sun's existence for survival. Every night we sleep trusting that the sun will rise again in the morning. And the sun's daily return is a powerful metaphor for renewal.

In the same spirit, we continue each year to prepare, organize and present another *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival*, trusting that you, our dear audience members, will come to participate in the ritual. For this, we thank you and honor the thousands of people who come together to make it all possible. You, the audience, the artists, the funders, and hundreds of volunteers shine brightly to sustain us year after year.

We are proud to bring you four magnificent weekends of dance and music showcasing the extraordinary breadth of artists sustaining important cultural traditions throughout Northern California communities. May the beauty inspire you to dance, support dancers, and consider a financial contribution to keep it all going—ticket prices cover only 30% of the funds needed to bring you this *Festival*. The remaining 70% needs to be raised and these days, in particular, we need all the help we can get.

Enjoy the show!



Julie Mushet  
Executive Director

RETURN OF THE SUN



All Photos: RJ Muna  
Obakòso Drum & Dance Ensemble

# 2009 LINE-UP

## Weekend 1

JUNE 6 & 7

Compañía Mazatlán Bellas Artes  
(IMBA)

Athira Pratap

Presidio Dance Theatre\*

Sri Susilowati

Murphy Irish Dancers†\*

INTERMISSION

Gamelan Sekar Jaya†\*

Theatre Flamenco

Barbary Coast Cloggers

Te Mana O Te Ra\*

\* Performing a World Premiere Piece

† San Francisco Foundation 2009 Choreography  
Commission Award Recipient

## Weekend 2

JUNE 13 & 14

KARIKTAN Dance Company

Hālau o Keikiali'i

Mountian International  
Dance Company

Grace Lee Grant

Grupo Folkórico Raíces de Mi Tierra

INTERMISSION

PAMPA Dance Academy

El Tunante

Yaelisa & Caminos Flamencos

Diamano Coura West African  
Dance Company

*\*For the Saturday night Gala, there will be a special  
performance by Swiss artists Lisa Ward-Diller,  
Martin Gisler, and Steve and Sue Fox.*



Los Lupeños  
de San José

## Weekend 3

JUNE 20 & 21

Leung's White Crane Lion  
& Dragon Dance Association♦\*

Savitha Sastry

Luis Valverde\*

Los Lupeños de San José

### INTERMISSION

Sanhiti

Samar Nassar

Imani's Dream\*

Obakòso Drum & Dance Ensemble\*

Las Que Son Son\*

## Weekend 4

JUNE 27 & 28

Four Winds & Sweet Water Singers

### Return of the Sun:

First Voice - Mark Izu and Brenda Wong Aoki

Ensamble Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco

De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association

Northern California Korean Dance Association

Shreelata Suresh

Parangal Dance Company

### INTERMISSION

Ensamble Ballet Folklórico  
de San Francisco\*

Jubilee American Dance Theatre

De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association\*

Wan-Chao Chang Dance

Fua Dia Congo\*



Jubilee American  
Dance Theatre

# FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

Welcome to the 31st season of the *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival*.

I have witnessed and participated in most of the auditions and programs since the inception of the *Festival* thirty-one years ago and have seen an amazing progression from a handful of groups of really varied proficiency to the present wealth of excellent dancers sustaining traditions with innovation and creativity.

This year's performances show beyond a doubt that the ethnic dance community in the Bay Area is more vibrantly alive than ever before, in spite of the problems that seem to be besetting the world at present. Of the 105 auditioning groups and soloists this year, CK Ladzekpo and I have been able to include only slightly more than one third of them in this year's season due to the constraints of programming.

There were only a limited number of places available in each program, and our goal was to present a dynamically balanced and exciting program for each of the four weekends. It is a difficult process and we are always frustrated by not being able to include some excellent groups and soloists in our programs. There is no seniority or preference in the process, and with so many accomplished artists who audition it would be easy to have, for example, an all-Mexican, African, European, Chinese, or Indian focused program—even an all children's program, since there are so many fine youth groups bringing honor to their teachers, masters, and gurus in our area.

This year's *Festival* includes some of the youngest dancers ever. Two of our outstanding soloists have just turned ten and fourteen years old, as well as others ranging from five to seven years old who will astonish audiences with their abilities and artistry.

Thus, I dream on with hopes of someday seeing this potential manifested in its entirety with the support of grants, corporations, donations, and continued audience attendance. Yes, I do dream, and knowing how so many of my dreams have become a reality, I have much hope for the continued success and expansion of our *Festival*.

Working with my distinguished colleague, CK Ladzekpo, and the entire staff of the *Festival* has been a great joy and challenge, and I hope that the results of our efforts will thrill you with its variety, excellence, and joyousness.

Vive la Danse!



Carlos Carvajal

A subliminal theme in my mind as we designed the 31st annual season of the *Festival* was that *we speak in many voices of the world*.

Each weekend's programming presents powerful expressions from various cultures worldwide.

There are thirty-seven companies representing dance traditions from more than twenty cultures and featuring more than 500 of Northern California's most acclaimed dancers and musicians. *Yes, we speak in many voices of the world.*

Enjoy the thrill of the best in world music and dance.



CK Ladzekpo



# 2009 AUDITION PANELISTS

**RAMAA BHARADVAJ**, Artistic Director of Angahara Dance Ensemble, is a performer, choreographer, writer, and dance activist. She is trained in both *bharatanatyam* and *kuchipudi* Indian classical dance forms by legendary gurus Vazhuvoor Ramaiah Pillai and Kamala, and Vempatti Chinna Satyam. A winner of multiple Lester Horton Dance Awards as well as the California Arts Council Director's Award, Bharadvaj became the first Indian dancer in over forty-five years to be featured on the cover of *Dance Magazine*. She was also selected as one of twenty-one exceptional South Asian women living in the United States, whose lives and stories are presented in the book *Spices in the Melting Pot*. In 2007, PBS nationally broadcasted "Jwala-Flame," a choreography based on the immigrant experience that she created alongside her daughter Swetha Bharadvaj. She is currently on faculty at Orange Coast College and Pomona College, and she will join the faculty at Nada Bindu in Pune, India.

**MARIA CHENG's** choreography, informed by Chinese classical and minority forms as well as Western modern technique, has been presented by major festivals across four continents including the Beijing Dance Festival and garnered her four fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and several awards from major foundations such as the Rockefeller and McKnight Foundations. In 2005, she was featured as the White Demon Skeleton of the Children's Theatre Company's *The Monkey King*. Theater choreography includes productions for the Guthrie Theater and Minnesota Opera. She directed the dance program at the University of Minnesota to national prominence with three consecutive invitations to the Kennedy Center. Cheng has served as a consultant for numerous state arts councils and organizations including Artistic Advisor for Minnesota's Chinese American Dance Theater and Affiliate Artists of New York. She is a practitioner of the chen and yang styles of tai-chi chuan in solo, push hands, and weapon forms.

**MALIA DEFELICE** is best known for her knowledge of authentic Middle Eastern and North African dance including *raqs sharqi* and various regional folkloric dance styles of Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria,

Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf, and the Levant. She has an academic background in cultural anthropology with a focus on dance and ethnomusicology. For over thirty-five years, she has served as a dance and musicology researcher, educator, and entertainer within the Middle Eastern, North African, and San Francisco Bay Area communities and beyond. Her mentors include Jamila Salimpour, Aisha Ali, and Ibrahim Farrah. Additionally, De Felice performed for ten years as a core dancer with Rosa Montoya's Bailes Flamencos. She conducts on-going classes, workshops, and seminars and has performed as a soloist and with her Middle Eastern Dance Ensemble in several *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festivals*.

**JERRY DUKE**, professor emeritus and retired Coordinator of Dance Studies at San Francisco State University (SFSU), holds a PhD in dance research, an MA in dance ethnology & folklore and an MA in modern and ballet dance. Duke has studied dance and ritual in many areas of Europe, including the Balkans and Greece, as well as among the Māori of New Zealand and the Yaqui of Arizona. His published ethnological field studies include dances in the Appalachian Mountains, United States; social dance and Mardi Gras celebrations among the Cajuns in central and western Louisiana; step dancing in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia; and folk dance and Apokries celebrations in Northern Greece. He was a dancer and choreographer for several folk ensembles, and his choreography has been presented at major concert halls and festivals throughout the United States and Europe. He has also directed many folk and ethnic dance events of the San Francisco Bay Area including the *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival*.

**JUANA SALUDADO** has been studying regional Mexican dance and music for more than thirty years. Her training and experience include research, dance instruction, and performance with instructors from the United States and Mexico such as Maestro Gustavo Acosta Zacarias (San Luis Potosi), Hugo Betancourt (Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli, Veracruz), Dra. Ma. Guadalupe Castro Paramo (Grupo Folklórico Oyohualli, Bakersfield, California), Maestro Pedro Montes (Teposcolula, Oaxaca), Patricia

Florencia Pulido (Tamaulipas), Maestro Andres Saenz (Conjunto Tipico Tamaulipeco, Tamaulipas), and Jose Tena (Nuevo Mexico). Currently, Saludado works with elementary school students in Tulare County and high school students in Kern County along with her community-based folkloric dance group in Bakersfield, California. She has been a Board member of Danzantes Unidos de California since 2001 and the Stage Manager since 2004.

**RUDI C. SORIANO** founded LIKHA - Pilipino Folk Ensemble and has served as Artistic Director since 1992. He studied Philippine folk dance under the late Philippine National Artists for Dance Lucrecia Reyes-Urtula and Ramon Obusan; ballet under Lianne Dayde of the Paris Opera; and modern dance with Rosella Hightower's dance company in Cannes, France. He has performed as a soloist, toured extensively with Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company and has choreographed dance pieces for GAPA dance company and several university folk dance organizations in the Bay Area. In 2001, he was honored by the Pilipino community with a Pamana Award in Folk Dance Art Education, and in 2007, was a recipient of the Choreography Commission Award from the San Francisco Foundation. He is the founding Executive Director of Asian Arts Federation.

**MĀHEALANI UCHIYAMA** holds a BA in dance ethnology and an MA in Pacific Islands studies from the University of Hawai'i. She is the founding Artistic Director of the KaUaTuahine Polynesian Dance Company, which appeared in the 2004 *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival*. She has studied extensively with one of Hawai'i's premier hula masters, Joseph Kamoha'i Kahā'ulelio, and has performed with numerous Hawaiian, Tahitian, and Caribbean dance ensembles. In addition to producing her own series of instructional and performance videos, CDs, and cassette tapes of Hawaiian and Tahitian music and dance, she has also appeared in numerous television programs and commercials. Uchiyama is currently the producer of the annual Hulalaule'a Polynesian Dance and Music Workshops, and the founding Director of the Center for International Dance in Berkeley.

# COMPAÑÍA MAZATLÁN BELLAS ARTES (IMBA)

## Mexico

Compañía Mazatlán Bellas Artes (IMBA) presents typical dances from the state of Tabasco, Mexico. *Fiesta Tabasqueña* a suite of four pieces, represents the beginning of a new season for the cultivation of corn in Tabasco. The community gathers to bless the new harvest and celebrate the coming season, and the townspeople enjoy Tabasqueña music and dance.

In *Pelegracion*, the community gathers for a blessing of the corn. The men arrive from a day of work in the fields, and the women bring baskets of food for the fiesta. Next, in *Rojo y Azul* (Red and Blue) and *Flor de Maiz* (Flower of the Corn) dancers celebrate the cultivation of the corn and its unique colors in the region. The final dance, *Tigre*, is a more free dance form about the hunting of a (possibly legendary) tiger. The male costume represents the *traje choco*, shirt and pants used for field work. The women's blouses are embroidered with vibrant images of flowers and animals, and their hair is pulled back and fastened with a row of brilliant combs.

The Mexican state of Tabasco lies in southeastern Mexico, north of Guatemala and south of the Gulf of Mexico. This coastal region is lush and flat, with marshes, jungle, and fertile river plains, where farmers raise cacao, corn, beans, rice, bananas, coconut, and sugar cane. Agriculture is the basis for Tabasco's indigenous folk music and dance forms—originating in a Maya culture called Chontal. The light and energetic music can be recognized as indigenous, but it also has a noticeable Afro-Caribbean rhythm. The style is played on reed flutes specific to Tabasco and by *tamborileros* on the *tambores machos y hembras* (male and female drums).

This piece was choreographed in 2004 for IMBA by Zenón Barrón, and the dances are typical dances in Tabasco. This piece was restaged by the company in 2008 and performed at Sacramento Community Center Theater, Wells Fargo Center for Arts, Gallo Center for Arts, and Mondavi Center for Arts.

Instituto Mazatlán Bellas Artes de Sacramento was created in 1998 under the direction of Yolanda Colosio and Steven Valencia, with a goal of training dancers in the art of Mexican folk dance and contemporary ballet. In 2000 IMBA

formally established a performing company, which creates many of its own works. All dancers for IMBA studied in the IMBA school of dance and have been trained by Artistic Director Steven Valencia. Valencia studied with Los Decanos de la Universidad de Guadalajara, Sacramento and San Jose State Universities, as well as under the Universidad Veracruzana, Vera Cruz, Ballet Folklórico de México, Zenón Barrón, and ANGF (National Folkloric Organization).

**Dance Origin:** Mexico • **Genre:** Ballet Folklórico  
**Title:** *Fiesta Tabasqueña* • **Artistic Director:** Steven Valencia • **Choreographer:** Zenón Barrón  
**Dancers:** Dominique Adams, Zulema Balderas, Jose Bercerra, Carlos Camacho, Brenda Colosio, Eric Diaz, Tomasa Duenas, Alejandro Hernandez, Elizabeth Lizardi, Silvestre Martinez, Jannete Perfect de Sencion, Ricardo Pina, Jessica Ramos, Danielle Rodriguez, Eric Rubio, Jasmine Santacruz, Steven Valencia, Raymond Zamarrippa  
**Musicians:** Zenón Barrón, Fernanda Hernandez, Jose Roberto Hernandez





# ATHIRA PRATAP

India

Ten-year-old Athira Pratap performs a pure *bharatanatyam* dance. She depicts Saraswathi Devi, the Goddess of Knowledge, and Mahishasura Mardhini, Shakti, the Goddess of Power. *Bharatanatyam* is a classical, devotional dance form that developed and flourished in the temples of Tamil Nadu in South India. It is the oldest of all classical dance forms in India - a dance of mind and soul, known for its grace, purity, tenderness, and statuesque poses. It uplifts both dancer and the beholder to a higher level of spiritual consciousness.

Athira's dance tells a traditional Indian story—the origin of the Kollur Moogambika temple in South India, built in honor of Saraswathi Devi. Once, Sage Adi Shankaracharya appealed to Devi Mahashakti (mother goddess), to accompany him to his home state, Kerala. The goddess accepted his wish on one condition—that she would follow behind the sage and he was not allowed to look back. Sage Sankaracharya walked in front, and he kept a short enough distance between them so he could hear her anklet bells jingling. Before he reached the town, the sound

of the Devi's anklet bells stopped. The confused sage looked back. The Devi told him she would stop on this spot, and this is where the temple stands today. In the second part of her performance, Athira depicts the Goddess of Power, Shakti, who is the center of universal motherhood. This ending celebrates universal equilibrium: because evil cannot take over and good manifests in different forms, the universe balances itself.

The dance song, "Amma Aananda Dayini," is a classical *varnam* (the centerpiece of a *bharatanatyam* concert). It has been re-composed by world-renowned musician Padma Vibhushan Dr. Balamuralikrishna as classical fusion and was recorded in India with both western and eastern instruments.

The dancer wears a specially-made *bharatanatyam* costume of brightly colored silk, bordered by gold thread work. Her limbs are adorned with traditional jewelry made of semi-precious stones set in gold leaf. Her single long braid is decorated with flowers, and her ankles are circled with bells to emphasize the rhythms of her feet.

At age seven, dancer Athira Pratap was awarded first place in the North American

Classical Talent Search conducted by Asianet (Indian TV). She placed second in the India Waves World TV's non-classical talent search and Tri-City's (Alameda) Young Artist Showcase of 2007.

*Ohm Kaara* was choreographed by Bindu Pratap, mother of the dancer, herself a highly accredited Bay Area dance choreographer. Bindu began learning classical dance under the guidance of her guru, Meera Nambiar, disciple of renowned Padmabhushan Dhananjayans.

**Dance Origin:** South India • **Genre:** Bharatanatyam  
**Title:** *Ohm Kaara* (The Eternal Voice)  
**Choreographer:** Bindu Pratap • **Soloist:** Athira Pratap



# PRESIDIO DANCE THEATRE

WORLD PREMIERE

## Ukraine

Presidio Dance Theatre presents two dances from the Ukraine. The girls perform the *Ukrainian Girls Dance*, a traditional line dance, and both boys and girls revel in the *Hopak*. Artists and designers of the Mariinsky Theatre (formerly Kirov Ballet) created the traditional costumes for these young artists, from the floral headpieces down to the traditional dance boots.

The *Hopak* began as a Cossack celebratory dance in the 16th century in what is present-day Ukraine. The Cossacks (Kazaki) were descendants of Scythian warriors living on the open plains of southern Ukraine and in Russia's Don River basin. They lived by hunting, fishing, and piracy, and they formed military-like organizations. Russian rulers began recruiting them as mercenaries, and bought their loyalty by providing them with weapons, money, and food. At one time, the Cossacks could provide 70,000 highly skilled and fearless horsemen. Their all-male military camps allowed for victory after-parties; boisterous affairs with fast, acrobatic Cossack dance.

In contrast to Cossack dance, the traditional dances of the region were reverent ritual

dances performed by women. As the Cossacks became integrated into society, the two styles merged, resulting in the *Hopak*. Boys continued to lead, while girls danced traditional circle forms and movements in pairs. In the early 20th century, dance researcher Vasyly Verkhovynets gathered authentic village steps throughout central Ukraine, and in 1935, presented his choreography in London. It was called "The London Hopak" and it was a three-part dance, with a men's dance, much like the original Kozak dance; a slower women's segment; and a rousing closing with both male and female dancers. This form was adopted by professional folk dance ensembles, and the modern-day *Hopak* is choreographed to look improvised, with soloists performing jumps, spins, and acrobatic feats, and the female dancers in constant motion.

Ukrainian Suite was previously performed in Presidio Dance Theatre's 2008 spring season of performances, including Children's Day at the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House; Youth in Arts at the Marin Center; *Dancing Across Cultures* at the Palace of Fine Arts; and in Russia at the 2008 *Saint Petersburg White Nights Festival* and the 300th Anniversary of Tsarskoye Selo. The choreography has

been adapted especially for members of Presidio Dance Theatre Junior Company.

Since 2007, Artistic Director Sherene Melania has served on the San Francisco Arts Commission, representing the field of dance. Presidio Dance Theatre has earned numerous national awards for exemplary artistic presentation, choreography, and educational programs including: Nickelodeon Television's national *Best Artsy Program*; Jefferson Award for Public Service; San Francisco Unified School District's Creative Achievement Award; and the Award of Excellence from the Presidio Trust.

**Dance Origin:** Ukraine • **Genre:** Traditional Folk Dances • **Title:** *Ukrainian Suite: Girls Dance & Hopak* • **Artistic Director:** Sherene Melania  
**Executive Producer:** Judy Bretschneider  
**Choreographer:** Sherene Melania, based on the work of Igor Moiseyev • **Dancers:** Charlotte Bennington, Mia Blaine, Tabitha Block, Genevieve Brignetti, Madeline Chan, Ryan Chan, Anise Crump, Chandler Crump, Carmela Davis, Sofia Dillingham, Anahita Ghiai-Chamlou, Aryana Ghiai-Chamlou, Caroline Haigood, Tricia Hinck, Drew Johnson, Olivia Kleier, Alayna Kwan, Alyssa Kwan, Arynn Kwan, Madeleine Lamm, Alexis Levit, Sophia Madhavan, Norberto Martinez, Corrine Pelosi, Sabrina Perrell, Hanna Persky, Tarah Rogers, Hope Rohrbach, Alison Shimon, Rainier Styles, Asel Tynybekova, Julia Zwiefach



# SRI SUSILOWATI

## Indonesia

*Jaipong Tablo* (Mourning Dance) tells the poignant story of a woman mourning the loss of her beloved. The dancer wears black to show her grief, and she recalls her sad, happy, and joyful memories. The vocalist sings:

*The painful longing for my love is  
somehow sweet  
Because through it he is present  
through my memory...*

Jaipongan is one of a number of indigenous styles that evolved only thirty years ago in Sunda, West Java. (“Jay-ee-pong-an” is an onomatopoeic reference to music.) The form’s influences come from: *ketuk tilu*, a harvest-time courtship dance; *bajidor*, a dynamic, joyful, and sensual dance style from the northern coast of West Java; and *pencak silat*, an Indonesian martial art. The movement is supple and strong with an emphasis on the romantic interaction between partners. The *jaipongan* style is danced solo, in pairs, and in groups, with women often emphasizing *ketuk tilu* and *bajidor* and men emphasizing the martial arts. In West Java, a joyful *jaipongan* choreography is danced at weddings, with audiences joining in.

It is important to note that “folk dance” in Indonesia (as in many cultures) refers to highly-trained, rigorous forms, which originated outside of the court. Some speculate that influences from 1960s Western rock and roll inspired Indonesian musicians and choreographers to develop the “flashy” *jaipongan* style, but to the Western eye the influence may be hard to catch. Indonesian’s classical theatrical dance is subtle and symbolic. In contrast, *jaipongan* is fresh, emotional, bold, and direct.

The costume is formal Sundanese clothing, with a hair piece (*sanggul*), blouse (*kebaya*), and batik cloth/sarong (*kain*). The movements—simple steps, repeated gestures with the hand or head—sometimes follow each musical beat, and sometimes speed up or slow down. The music was recorded by Robot Percussion, with Ega Robot and Rita Tila, using the *ketuk*, a set of three small kettle gongs, as well as larger gongs and keyed metalophones. The most important revolution in *jaipongan* was the use of the *kendang* drum with a flashy, dramatic style, and an expanded battery of drums.

Sri Susilowati choreographed the piece in 2006–2008 and presented it as part of her full evening length concert *Vrihatnala*,

June 6–8, 2008 at the Electric Lodge in Los Angeles. Susilowati studied traditional Indonesian dance since she was a child, and learned *jaipongan* from Sri Dinar Munsan at the Indonesian Institute of Arts in Yogyakarta. In the United States, she has lived and danced in the Bay Area, Washington D.C. and Los Angeles—where she founded Harsanari and Sri Dance Company, and where she earned a MFA degree in choreography and performance at UCLA. Susilowati’s mission is to preserve traditional Indonesian dance by using its vocabulary in new choreographies and contexts.

**Dance Origin:** West Java, Indonesia • **Genre:** Sundanese  
**Title:** *Jaipong Tablo*  
**Choreographer/Soloist:** Sri Susilowati



# 2009 MALONGA CASQUELOURD LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

## Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney



Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney is the Founder of Murphy Irish Dancers. She began dancing at an early age. First picking up steps from her mother, Hannah O'Sullivan, at age four, she was further encouraged by Irish nuns at her grade school. Her first formal dance teacher, Annie Slattery, was an Irish immigrant, and upon Slattery's retirement in 1963, Murphy-Feeney (then

Mary Jo Murphy) started her own dance company. Starting with thirty-five members, today the company boasts as many as 175 participants. Her daughter, Patricia Feeney-Conefrey, and grandchildren continue the family tradition, and there are numerous siblings in the company.

Murphy-Feeney sees the learning and performing of Irish dance as a way for young people to connect to a rich tradition while building lasting friendships. Her dance school, with locations in San Francisco and the Peninsula, has worked with thousands of children and families spanning three generations. The students range in age from three to sixty-three years old. "My aim as a teacher is to develop self confidence; self esteem, keep up Irish culture, and have my dancers learn a difficult and intricate type of dance while having fun," said Murphy-Feeney. "I love Irish dance—it has brought me great joy and many friendships throughout my life," said Murphy-Feeney.

Over the years, she has taught thousands of children, and hundreds of her students have become regional and national champions. She has had teams and soloists who have qualified and placed in the World Irish Dancing Championships held in Ireland every year. (The Irish

Dance Commission has just begun holding them outside of Ireland, they have been in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and just this past year in America for the first time.)

Murphy-Feeney is respected nationally for her knowledge and experience of Irish culture, and has been a judge at the world dance championships and numerous national competitions throughout North America. She was the first western region teacher/adjudicator to be invited to judge the All Ireland and World Championships.

The Murphy Irish Dancers have performed for Irish presidents and other dignitaries from around the world, and were chosen to perform for Pope John Paul II during his visit to San Francisco.

The Irish Consul General, Jerry Staunton, and members of the Irish community participated in a tribute to Murphy-Feeney on May 31st, where Cheryl Jennings of ABC/Channel 7 presented her with a San Francisco Proclamation from Mayor Gavin Newsom's office announcing May 31, 2009, as Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney Day in San Francisco. The award will be presented by Diarmuid Philpott, president of the United Irish Society, at the June 6th Saturday night performance.



# MURPHY IRISH DANCERS

WORLD PREMIERE

## Ireland

Murphy Irish Dancers present *Tir Na nÓg*, a suite of Irish dances based on a fairy tale. Tir Na nÓg is a magical island beyond the edges of the map, a place of eternal youth and beauty, music, strength, and life. An immortal Celtic princess, Niav (“Neev”) of the Golden Hair, skims across the waves on her magical white horse; but she can never touch the ground, or the weight of her lost years would crush her. This bittersweet theme—the passage of time—is celebrated in today’s performance across the generations. Murphy’s youngest students are joined by adult dancers who began with the company twenty-five years ago.

The story begins with Oisín (“O-sheen”), the graceful and strong son of the Celtic king, Finn McCool. Murphy’s young soloist performs a reel as he explores the Irish countryside. At the crossroads, he meets villagers who celebrate with a traditional set dance. Next, a hypnotic slip jig celebrates the meeting of the prince and princess. Niav has been searching for her prince for seven years. The couple falls in love, and, Naiv brings Oisín home to Tir Na nÓg, where flowers always bloom, and no one suffers illness, age, or death.

At her golden castle, banner-carriers welcome the couple by dancing a 12-hand figure reel. Crowds gather for the festivities, and the wee flowers and wee brownies dance an Irish jig.

Countless years pass, and finally Oisín longs to see his homeland. Niav lends him her white horse, but she warns him not to set foot on the soil of Ireland, or all his lost years will fall upon him. When he reaches Ireland’s distant shore, Oisín recognizes no one; he has been away for so long. He races around with such anger that he falls off the white horse, stomps to the treble reel, and becomes an old man. Luckily, St. Patrick is wandering through Ireland right then: he keeps Oisín alive long enough to dance a celebration for the ancient king.

Murphy’s Irish Dance Company was founded in 1963, and is run by mother-daughter team Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney and Patricia Feeney-Conefrey. Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney first learned Irish dancing in her kitchen on Second Avenue, from her mother Hannah O’Sullivan from Country Cork, Ireland. The school now immerses generations of students in dancing, singing, language, art, and other aspects of Irish tradition. Company dancers perform frequently in the Bay

Area and internationally, and they have won western regional, national, and world titles. *Tir Na nÓg* was choreographed by Patricia Feeney-Conefrey for this 2009 performance.

**Dance Origin:** Ireland • **Genres:** Irish Step, Celtic • **Title:** *Tir Na nÓg* (The Land of the Youth) • **Artistic Directors/Choreographers:** Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney, Patricia Feeney-Conefrey • **Dancers:** Maggie Baglin, Maura Baglin, Brooke Brunaman, Karen Byrne, Andria Camp, Rachel Carter, Christine Collins, Carolyn Cody, Michael Conefrey, Brigid Crossan, Letitia Crossan, Eileen Danz, Katie Danz, Katelyn Dwyer, Jake Grey, Dan Guiney, Gavin Haskell, Grace Haskell, Will Haskell, Brendan Healy, Siobhan Healy, Jack Harte, Brendan Kennelly, Jane Lange, McKenzie Lynch, Julia Maxwell, Marie Maxwell, Rachel Maxwell, Claire Manion, Katie McFadden, Hannah McGowan, Sara McGowan, Julia McGuire, Molly McDowell, Gina McGhee, Claire Naughton, Emily Naughton, Paddy Naughton, Alannah Ortega, Molly O’Toole, Lisa Perera, Annie O’Connor, Ellen O’Connor, Sean Rielly, Anthony Sheridan, Joe Sheridan, Melissa Sheridan, Melissa Spinelli, Christina Spiers, Anne Marie Sequeria, Colleen Tiernan, Evan Trudell, Tara Walsh • **Musicians:** The Bushmill Irish Pipers, Eileen Danz, Melissa Lundy, Richard Lundy, Lewis Milligan, Frank Rooney



# GAMELAN SEKAR JAYA

WORLD PREMIERE

## Indonesia

In the Indonesian archipelago, experts are urging *UNESCO* to nominate the traditional Balinese water irrigation society—Subak—as a World Heritage Site. The system is complex, and its pattern of trenches brings water to terraced fields on the entire island. Subak also encompasses a culture and belief system with water temples, priests, and community decision-making, where life-giving water is fairly allocated. Farmers follow the philosophy of *tri hita karana* (universal harmony) where divine, human, and natural worlds are interdependent and equally essential. The management of water honors village life, animals, circadian rhythms, growth cycles of rice, gardening, and small-lot farming.

The dance *Subak* is a new work by I Made Moja, inspired by and in honor of Goddess Dewi Sri Lakshmi, goddess of rice harvest and fertility. The dancers mimic digging trenches to branch water routes through fields; they till the soil and plant rice shoots. Then they hold a ceremony for abundance, carrying an image of Dewi Sri Lakshmi to the *jineng*, the traditional home granary. In Bali-Hindu culture, cycles of life and seasons are

honored in ritual and offerings. Balinese dance also abstracts movements from the natural world. This choreography includes *lasan megat yeh* (lizard crossing water); *ngelo* (bird soaring); *ukel* (the shape of a young fern); as well as various evocations of grasses, trees, or palm fronds swaying in the breeze. Water is suggested obliquely, as dancers mimic birds that see their reflections in the shallow water of the paddies.

Many centuries old, Balinese music and dance continue to evolve as a living tradition, and both dance and *gamelan* (the traditional Indonesian gong orchestra) are inextricably linked. Performances offer praise and gratitude to Hindu deities invited down from the heavens. The music for this dance doesn't use the familiar bronze gamelan, the *gong kebyar*. Instead, we hear the *gamelan jegog*, an orchestra of giant bamboo marimbas that evolved in West Bali. *Jegog* uses natural plant materials of bamboo and wood, and the deep resonance of this rare orchestra underlines the themes of nature in *Subak*.

Gamelan Sekar Jaya had its humble beginnings in a Berkeley living room nearly thirty years ago. Now acclaimed internationally, the group has presented

more than four hundred concerts throughout North America and Bali, and created over sixty collaborative projects with performing artists on both sides of the Pacific Rim. The company was honored with the Dharma Kusuma, Bali's highest award for artistic achievement, never before given to foreign performers. Working often with Bali's most gifted artists, Sekar Jaya's success arises from its devotion to traditional repertoire and its passion for innovative work.

**Dance Origin:** Bali, Indonesia • **Genre:** Balinese  
**Title:** *Subak* • **Choreographer:** I Made Moja  
**Guest Dance Director:** Emiko Sarawati Susilo  
**Composer:** I Dewa Putu Berata • **Director of Gamelan Sekar Jaya:** Wayne Vitale • **Jegog Ensemble Coordinators:** Kathy Bouvier, Samuel Wantman • **Dancers:** Sean Aquino, Anna Deering, Nina Herlina, Dewa Ayu Dewi Larassanti, I Made Moja, Rose Nisker, Maria Omo, Gayatri Saldivar, Emiko Sarawati Susilo, Samara Lotri Tana • **Musicians:** Dan Bales, Scott Barnes, I Dewa Putu Berata, Susanna Benningfield, Kathy Bouvier, Alexis Brayton, Phil Cox, Matthew Gleeson, Barbara Golden, Diana Graue, John Noble, Laurel Pardue, Heather Sansky, Monina Sen, Samuel Wantman, Kwan Wong



# THEATRE FLAMENCO

## Spain

In *Encuentro* (Encounter) an enormous red rose adorns the traditional shawl—the *mantón de Manila*—as a symbol of passionate love. In this *flamenca caña*, a couple falls in love (or dreams it) and dances an intense and intimate duet, with tightly responsive footwork. When the couple parts, they leave the rose *mantón* on the stage. So the ending of love is like a death; when the beloved is gone, something beautiful is left behind.

*Cuando yo canto la caña  
El alma pongo en el cante  
Porque me acuerdo de ella  
Creo que la tengo delante*

*When I sing the caña  
The soul is in the song  
Because I remember her  
And I think she is here with me now.*

Flamenco songs were born in Andalusia in southern Spain. Roma, Greeks, Visigoths, Sephardic Jews, and Moors—persecuted during the Spanish Inquisition and marginalized for centuries—expressed suffering, protest, and hope in song. In the 19th century, Spain's sophisticated *Café Cantantes* produced today's highly-

polished art form, a close collaboration between dancer, singer, and guitarist. The essence of flamenco is the *cante* (song). *Cante jondo* or *cante grande* (profound or deep songs) are intensely sad; songs of death, anguish, despair, or religious sentiment. The *flamenca caña* is a *cante grande* distinguished by distinctive cries of 'ay.' It is possibly a pre-flamenco traditional Andalusian style; also connected to a popular 18th century folk dance.

The delicate *mantón de Manila* is a hand-embroidered silk shawl named for the city of its origin. When Spain colonized the Philippines in the 16th century, Manila became a busy port of call. Spanish workers and aristocracy began wearing dainty shawls made in nearby China, and eventually they brought the style to Seville.

Carola Zertuche and Juan Siddi created and choreographed *Encuentro* in 2008 for the Juan Siddi Flamenco Theater Company, and performed it in 2008 in Santa Fe, New Mexico; at the Fountain Theater in Los Angeles; and at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts and the Cowell Theatre in San Francisco.

Founded in 1966 by Adela Clara, Theatre Flamenco is one of San Francisco's outstanding performance companies. It was the first American resident dance company to stage full productions of Spanish dance in the United States, and it is forty-two years old this year! Theatre Flamenco has welcomed many wonderful Bay Area performers to its stage, and continues to develop a varied repertoire from classical Spanish, Escuela Bolera, regional folk, and flamenco traditions. In 2008, long-time Artistic Director Miguel Santos was recognized for his substantial contributions to the Bay Area and to flamenco by the Isadora Duncan Dance Awards (Izzies) and was given a Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award by this *Festival*. The company is currently under the Artistic Direction of Carola Zertuche.

**Dance Origin:** Spain • **Genre:** Flamenco • **Title:** *Encuentro* • **Artistic Director:** Carola Zertuche  
**Choreographers/Dancers:** Juan Siddi, Carola Zertuche • **Musicians:** Felix De Lola (singer), Kerensa DeMars (palmas), Keni "El Lebrijano" (guitar), Cela Luna (palmas)



# BARBARY COAST CLOGGERS

## United States

Barbary Coast Cloggers showcase Appalachian buck-style clogging in a trio of dances. Traditional steps carry the dancers through arches and dives, right-left grands, circles, and weaving rings based on old mountain traditions. Today's performance also honors the company's 1981 founders with music and costuming from thirty years ago.

In *Steamerlane Breakdown*, the cloggers perform to the Doobie Brothers, with a "buck-style" chorus of tapping, syncopated heels. *Cripple Creek* is danced to Buffy Sainte-Marie's recording of the bluegrass drinking song with a choreography inspired by old-time improvisations. In *Gone But Not Forgotten*, the group cuts loose to a raucous country-western tune by Asleep at the Wheel.

American clogging was born when early American Appalachian communities gathered to dance and share a wide variety of styles and steps. Irish step dancing and jigs showed off fast and fancy footwork. German leaps and stamps contributed to the rowdier and bigger movements in American clogging. The German *schuhplattle*, shoe-slapping,

inspired the clogging step "plodde." African diaspora communities, mostly prohibited from dancing and making music, resorted to "patting juba" or clapping, stomping, and patting on the body; their syncopated triplet beat is now the standard run in clogging. The Dutch sound of wooden shoes was carried over by English clog dancers. A stomp and dragging step from the Cherokee "stomp dance" became the clogging "slur." Add the subdued Scotch-Irish footwork, the African banjo, European fiddle, a bit of improvisation and competition at a mountain party—and a distinctly American style was born.

Immigrants danced their way westward, and clogging steps also migrated into big circle dances, square dancing, and line dances. With a refinement of style (and better posture) clogging evolved into tap. Clogging continues to evolve and remain popular—as different cultures make contributions and various fad dances—from the Charleston to Madonna's version of vogue to hip-hop—are incorporated into clogging circles.

Janice Yee Hanzel (Founder) choreographed *Steamerlane Breakdown* in the mid-90s. Matthew Ellinger recently choreographed *Cripple Creek* and *Gone But Not Forgotten*.

*Cripple Creek* was performed in 2008 at the Fresh Meat Festival in San Francisco. This is the first performance of *Gone But Not Forgotten*.

The Barbary Coast Cloggers are named for San Francisco's partying, dancing, and brawling neighborhood of the 1849 Gold Rush. The company was founded in San Francisco to bring the unique spirit of clogging out of the Appalachian Mountains to the West Coast. Performing since 1981, the company's innovative style is a synergy of traditional American dance imbued with originality, flare, and Californian creativity. Artistic Director Matthew Ellinger studied the form extensively both in California and in the Appalachian region.

**Dance Origin:** Appalachia, United States  
**Genre:** Clogging • **Titles:** *Steamerlane Breakdown*, *Cripple Creek*, *Gone But Not Forgotten* • **Artistic Director:** Matthew Ellinger • **Choreographers:** Matthew Ellinger, Janice Yee Hanzel • **Dancers:** Doug Chin, Matthew Ellinger, Ian Enriquez, Dan Goldes, Dale Petros, Jeff Porter, Richard Ridley, Rick Sherwin, Ramon Torres, Richard Willyard, Brian Wines





# TE MANA O TE RA

WORLD PREMIERE

## French Polynesia

Created specially for this year's *Festival*, *Tani e Pahu* is a dance about love—love that is colorful and playful, powerful and destructive, joyous, and without limits. The company begins in unison, showing the strength of the Tahitian people united. Then a partner dance displays the celebration of love between couples. The dancers wear and dance with colorful, printed *pareos*—decorated with the *tiare*, Tahiti's national flower—to highlight the many colors of love. They also wear feathers, shells, greenery, and fresh flowers flown in from the islands, bringing a bit of the tropics to our stage.

The volcanic islands of French Polynesia dot a vast area of the South Pacific. Tahiti, the largest of Polynesia's Society Islands, has always passed down its legends, history, and politics through music and dance. Today, elders continue to share their skills, pride, and humanity personally, passing cultural knowledge only from mentor to student. Tahitian dancing was traditionally a sacred event, with perhaps a hundred dancers enacting scenes from wars, sea voyages, or home, often in spectacular abandon. Missionaries found the dance disturbing, and prohibited it in 1819.

Then, in 1956, choreographer Madeleine Moua resurrected the old forms, and developed today's refined style: dancers' feet are flat on the earth, their knees are bent, their hips sway, and their shoulders remain elegantly (and miraculously) motionless.

Tahitian dance movements are precisely executed and timed with the percussive music. For today's performance, Musical Director Rey Aguilar researched and directed a unique drumming sequence, merging traditional Tahitian rhythms with syncopated beats from the Cook Islands. The tall standing bass skin drum, *pahu tupai*, "the heartbeat of Tahiti," directs the beat. Rey was born and raised in the Philippines and came to the United States in 1975. He played with Dances of the Pacific, Drums of Polynesia, and has played in England, Spain, and the Pacific.

Lisa Aguilar, celebrating thirty-four years of teaching dance, created and choreographed *Tani e Pahu*, assisted by *Fa'atia* (Assistant Director) Charity Offril. Aguilar has studied extensively with local and Tahitian dance communities. She co-directed *The Drums of Polynesia*; has taught all forms of Tahitian dance; and researched dance with legendary masters and historians of Tahitian dance in Tahiti—Coco Hotahota, Heikura Nui, and Makau Foster.

Te Mana O Te Ra is a multi-award winning Polynesian dance company based in Walnut Creek, directed by Lisa and Rey Aguilar. It perpetuates and presents the traditional culture of Tahiti locally and worldwide. The company has approximately 185 members, and was established by the directors in 1997. The company name means "energy of the sun," the force that gives us life, strength, and the ability to grow as individuals.

**Dance Origin:** Tahiti, French Polynesia • **Genre:** Tahitian • **Title:** *Tani e Pahu* (The Heartbeat of Tahiti) • **Ra'atira Pupu (Directors):** Lisa & Rey Aguilar • **Fa'atia (Assistant Director):** Charity Offril • **Choreographer:** Lisa Aguilar • **Musical Director:** Rey Aguilar • **Dancers:** Joaneline Abria, Monsy Agleham, Christine Astillero, Desiree Bills, Melissa Cheung, Lauren Chow, Tiana de los Santos, Joseph Duff, Chanel Durley, Tammy Durley, Tina Galande, Nadia Gutierrez, Hershel Hicks, Terri Hollidge, Olivia Isaac, Zachary Isaac, Stephanie Jung, Ala'koka Kailahi, Joanne Kwon, Shennen Manaoat, Alexis Mariano, Vanessa Mariano, Diego Ochoa, Charity Offril, Sarah Padrones, Jill Patacsil, Chrissy Raymundo, Justin Raymundo, Sammy Raymundo, Caesar Sabadlab, Nicole Smith, Keoni Umbay, Marie Valmores, Daniel Velasco • **Musicians:** Rey Aguilar, Virgil Asuncion, Jeremiah Castillo, Andy Gutierrez, Rick Isaac, Zachary Isaac, Heneli Kailahi, Robbie Macaraeg, Michael Manlapeg, Fabian Martinez, Arne Ragadio, Jeff Raymundo, Soane Veamatahau, Ahmad Yamato



# KARIKTAN DANCE COMPANY

## Philippines

Mindanao was a layover on the ancient Southeast Asian trade routes, and for centuries, this southern Philippine island entranced Arab, Hindu, Chinese, and Persian merchants. In the 1500s, Mohammed Kabungsuwan established a sultanate, and over time, the form of Mindanao-Muslim dance became known for its mysticism, royalty, and beauty. In this trio of dances, dancers show the particular elasticity and suppleness of the form—they emphasize curves with their apparently joint-less, back-turned hands, their flexible arms, and their rounded posture.

The first dance, *Vinta Sails*, reenacts the pre-historic immigration to the Philippines in one of humankind's greatest maritime feats: crossing the Pacific in open *vinta* boats.

*Paunjalay* is a pre-nuptial dance of the Yakan tribe of Basilan Island. It features complicated footwork and *paunjalay* movements that imitate fish. The white dots on the couple's faces hide their identity from evil spirits.

*Singkil* is a well-loved Maranao (northern Mindanao) dance from the ancient *Darangan Epic*. In the classic story (named after a princess's ankle bells) a princess is wooed by a prince. Here, we witness the regal splendor and grace of the southern sultans, with an umbrella-holding attendant, and fan-wielding ladies of the court. And we can admire the royal couple's elegant hauteur, even as bamboo poles threaten to catch their ankles! Tradition has it that royal daughters learned this dance as a sign of courtly accomplishment.

*Vinta Sails* was recently researched in the Philippines and there is no known choreographer. This piece was staged for the first time by KARIKTAN in 2008. *Paunjalay* and *Singkil* are signature dances of KARIKTAN, presented with new choreography, and greater pomp and pageantry.

The costumes are typically Mindanao-Muslim: bright colors with gold, intricate jewelry, the tubular *malong*, embellished with pearls and rhinestones, bamboo poles and long swords, shields with emblems, and an embroidered umbrella decorated with the *Sarimanok*, the mythical bird of the southern islands. The music is also typical, played by an ensemble

similar to Indonesia's gamelan: the *kulintang* (a series of eight small brass gongs); the *agong* slit drum; the deep, resonant *gandingan* (a series of four huge flat slit drums); the *dabakan* drums; and the *gabang*, a bamboo xylophone.

KARIKTAN Dance Company is a not-for-profit cultural group, based in Concord. It was formed in 2003 by Artistic Director Polly Herrera, a former performing artist and choreographer with Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company. Having previously performed under the name of Marharlika, KARIKTAN means beauty, splendor, and brilliance in the Filipino language, and the group shares the beautiful culture and heritage of the Philippines through music, dance, and song.

**Dance Origin:** Mindanao, Philippines • **Genre:** Filipino • **Titles:** *Vinta Sails*, *Paunjalay*, *Singkil*  
**Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Polly Manalo-Herrera • **Dancers:** Jonathan Aburquez, Winston Balingit, Bless Bravo, Andrew Cauilan, Anthony Cauilan, Rachel Cauilan, Lexie Cosas, Joyce Cueto, Janice Dalida, Collin Domingo, Andro Dongallo, Angelica Dongallo, Ric Dongallo, Bo Falcon, A.J. Gawaren, Valerie Geronimo, Stephanie Herrera, Vanessa Hovan, Rachel Meren, Carrie Villanueva, Marlo Villanueva  
**Musicians:** Janine Castillo, Mick Herrera, Polly Herrera, Robbie Herrera (lead instrumentalist)



# HĀLAU O KEIKIALI'I

## Hawai'i

This program commemorates Hawai'i's last chieftains and queens while celebrating diverse styles of Hawaiian *hula kahiko* (ancient dance). The dances, in order, honor:

King Kamehameha I. The accompanying chant, written at the time of the king's birth, describes signs that foretold his greatness, including Halley's comet (1758). King Kamehameha unified Hawai'i, but during his rule western disease and violence decimated the ancient society.

King Kamehameha's wife, Queen Ka'ahumanu (1772-1832), whose views on the position of women began to erode male-dominated tradition.

King Kamehameha II (1797-1824), who, along with his wife, died of the measles while touring London.

Queen Lili'uokalani (1838-1917). When her brother, King Kalākaua, who brought *hula* back into the light, died in San Francisco in 1891, she rode a train around the leeward side of O'ahu to reassure her people.

The pieces are in *aiha'a* (close to the ground) style, a form that honors specific gods, *ali'i* or chiefs, and natural places. The steps are flat-footed, to draw energy from the earth, and offer gratitude back to her. In the Hawaiian oral tradition, chant, song, and dance documented history and acted as guides to proper cultural etiquette. Also, in the oral tradition of *hula*, lineage is crucial: these dances were passed down from Tiare Maka Olanolan Clifford, stemming from Helen Kekua-Waia'u on Kaua'i; Harriet Keahilihau-Spaulding, stemming from Mary Ahi'ena on Hilo; and Rae Kahikilaulani Fonseca, stemming from George Na'ope on O'ahu & Hawai'i islands. The two middle dances are ancient, and the opening and closing pieces are choreographies by Kumu Hula Kawika Keikiali'ihiwahiwa Alfiche, based on traditions. This piece has not yet been performed in its entirety. Kumu Kawika presents it today in part to protest the Hawaiian government's recent proposal to sell pristine land held in trust for the Hawaiian people.

The implements and clothing are hand-made, to build *mana*, spiritual energy for the dance. The colors represent the earth, from which dancers draw energy and inspiration. The primary *ho'opa'a* (chanter/drummer) plays the *ipu heke* (double gourd); the

sacred *pahu* drum symbolizes beginnings as it calls to the gods; and the dancers' time-keeping implements are an extension of the dance.

Hālau o Keikiali'i and the Kaululehua Hawaiian Cultural Center formed in 1994 in San Francisco, and now has more than 150 members, from 3-85 years old. The center preserves and perpetuates the art of *hula* and all things Hawaiian. Kumu Kawika teaches at his South San Francisco *hālau* and works with groups in Utah, Vacaville, and Sacramento.

**Dance Origin:** Hawai'i • **Genres:** Hula Kahiko, Hula Pahu • **Titles:** 'O Kamehameha He Inoa - Hula Ali'i (Song for a Chief), E Ka Pua Hau o Maleka - Hula Ku'i (Stomping Hula), Maika'i Ke Anu o Waiimea - Hula Pa'i Umauma (Chest Slapping / Stomping Hula), 'O Lanakila Ke Kaahi Ali'i - Hula O'ull'uli (Gourd Rattle Hula) • **Kumu Hula:** Kawika Keikiali'ihiwahiwa Alfiche **Choreographers:** Kawika Keikiali'ihiwahiwa Alfiche, Rae Kahikilaulani Fonseca, George L. Naope • **Dancers:** Kaimana Allerton, Kalei Alonzo, Courtney Chung, Kahaku Desai, JR Diaz, Tiffany Evangelista, Valerie Evangelista, Kawika Fernandez, Leilani Fernandez, Catie Flannery, Cristen Fong, Ann Giron, Kris Giron, Marz Hernandez, Kellee Hom, Apana Lei, Lulu Masaganda, Kia'i Maurille, Raena McBride, RJ Mendoza, Kaleipua'ena Monce, Antonio Nunez, Gabi Panonon, Anjal Pong, Puna Quiroz, Jennifer Tan, Rebecca Wong • **Musician:** Kawika Keikiali'ihiwahiwa Alfiche



# MOUNTIAN INTERNATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

## Russia

The Imperial Russian Navy was created by decree of Czar Peter the Great in 1696. Over the next 150 years, Russian sailors won numerous military campaigns, undertook over forty circumnavigations and distant voyages, explored the “Far East,” and also contributed to the discovery of Antarctica. Why were the mariners so able, fit, and cooperative? Because the military held dance competitions as a way to recruit soldiers and sailors—a man was recruited if he could dance. During the long months at sea, sailors relieved the tedium by inventing competitive and athletic dance steps: Mountian’s skilled young dancers show off some of these moves, dancing to the tune of *Yablochka*, a Russian maritime anthem. The youngest dancers wear replicas of Russian “parade dress” uniform, and the outfit worn by the older dancer is official Russian naval issue.

The Soviet state established the first official troupe of Russian folk dancers in 1937 under the guidance of Igor Moiseyev. Moiseyev outlined traditional steps and forms of Russian folkloric dance, celebrating its creativeness and joy in professional performance.

The company and the form became famous worldwide, and the company’s performances, tricks, and concepts were integrated into Russian companies and repertoire. Russian folk dance has a theatrical aspect, heavy emotionality, exhilaration, and employs strong elements of exhibition, athleticism, and pride. Vassilii Mountian’s young dancers execute the *presyatka* heel dance, barrel turns, mid-air splits, and floor-level kicks. They traverse the stage on their shins, launch themselves horizontally into space, and perform the familiar and always impressive “coffee grinder,” with one leg passing through the other leg and the center of balance on the toes. As one British dance writer said, these dance moves “might have spared a thought for the Cossacks’ foes over the centuries. Had I been an invader and caught a whiff of this, I’d have changed my mind pretty quick.”

Choreographer Vassilii Mountian is the Founder and Artistic Director of Mountian International Dance Company and the choreographer of this Russian Sailor’s Dance, which is being performed by his students. Mountian was one of the lead male soloists of the Moiseyev Dance Company in Moscow and is one of Russia’s leading authorities in the

fields of folk and character dance. He choreographed and produced major state festivals and shows for the Russian government: for the 75th Anniversary of the October Revolution; for the opening and closing ceremonies for 1986 Moscow Goodwill Games and Kolominskaya Festival; and for Russia’s leading Olympic athletes. In the United States he has worked with numerous dance companies. This is Mountian International Dance Company’s first appearance at the *Festival*.

**Dance Origin:** Russia • **Genre:** Folk Dance  
**Title:** *Russian Sailor Dance* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Vassilii Mountian • **Executive Director:** Julia Zachariah • **Dancers:** Tristan Brosnan, Zachary Bukarev, Eric Debono, Ian Debono, LeVander Moore



# GRACE LEE GRANT

China

...We give our attention to  
beautiful poems.  
When the mind is exalted,  
the body is lightened  
And feels as if it could float in  
the wind...  
- Wei Yingwu (Tang Dynasty)

Beside flowing water, and under the shadow of majestic mountains, a young girl enjoys writing a poem. She dances alone and focuses herself to create the beautiful calligraphy. As the spirit flows through her; music, dancer, brush, and word become one.

5,000 years ago, the ancient Chinese chose dance as the art form to pay respect to heaven and the divine, to appreciate the universe and life, and to praise kindness and virtue. Dance was celebrated in many regional forms and genres for centuries. Then in 1919, the unique system known as classical Chinese dance was born, when dedicated artists began to document and formally combine cultural diverse elements. Artists merged elements of folk operas; ballet technique, including the *port de bras* with its flowing movement, rounded

arms, and simple and graceful hands; and Chinese martial art forms—including flips and tumbling. Classical dance is highly technical. Movements called “body techniques” are accurate and precise, and every movement is interconnected. The form also reflects the divine, and so dancers must “let the movements be lead by spirit” and perfect their moral character and willpower.

Grace wears a Tang Dynasty court dance costume decorated with plum blossoms, symbols of resilience and perseverance. Her silk fan pantomimes the brush. The music of a classic Chinese palace *guzheng* (a form of zither) evokes a cascading waterfall, flowing water, and scenic countryside.

This dance was created in 2001 for the China Classic Dance Competition by Tong Rui. It was performed at San Jose Montgomery Theater for the China SiChuan Earth Quake Donation in 2008. Grace Lee Grant is performing it for the first time today. This choreography is famous among Chinese dancers for its high technique; it is also unusual for the untraditionally strong feminine role, as the girl boldly writes her thoughts.

Grace Lee Grant is American-born Chinese and has been studying Chinese culture since she was four. She has trained in Western ballet and received merit scholarships with the San Francisco Ballet, School of American Ballet, and American Ballet Theater. She won many dance awards at a young age including YAGP Regional Grand Prix and Championship of United States International Multi-Arts Festival. She dances to share the vivid stories and ancient wisdom of Chinese history and traditional culture, a recognition which Grace says, “emphasizes one’s cultivation, self-control and harmony... and helps one resist the temptations of the modern world.”

**Dance Origin:** China • **Genre:** Traditional Chinese Classic Dance • **Title:** *Brushing On My Heartstring*  
**Manager:** Ping Yan • **Choreographers:** Ms. Tong Rui, Mrs. Yang Lion • **Soloist:** Grace Lee Grant



# GRUPO FOLKLÓRICO RAÍCES DE MI TIERRA

## Mexico

*Costa de Sinaloa* honors the Mexican state with a suite of courtship dances and regional celebrations. The men's characteristic dance style—strong high-knee steps, dipping and breaking to the side, and rolled-up sleeves—emphasizes masculinity, while the women's dance emphasizes femininity, with smooth moves across the dance floor and the flash of floral skirts, white blouses, and vibrant flowers.

These five songs and dances from Sinaloa show a deep appreciation for nature, agriculture, and livestock.

1) *In Vuela Paloma*, “doves” soar with wing-like sleeves

2) *De Mazatlán a Acaponeta* sings of marching between two important cities in Sinaloa

3) *El Novillo Despuntado* sings: *I am looking for a young bull and searching for love between young men and women*

4) *El Toro Mambo* enacts the vitality of a bull and expresses the joyful and loving nature of the people of Sinaloa

5) *El Sauce y la Palma*, speaks of love and nature—*The Sauce tree and the Palm sway calmly together / Soul of my soul, you are beautiful...*

Sinaloa is a narrow strip of land on the Pacific Coast of Mexico. Fertile valleys and rivers bless its agricultural center, and it was traditionally home to Cáhita farmers. During colonial rule, Spanish and French “recruited” Mayo, Yaqui, and Acaxees to work in their fields resulting in the creation of Sinaloa's folkloric traditions. Native musicians—who played strings and percussion—were influenced by Austrian marching bands, polkas, and waltzes, and incorporated brass instruments from German immigrants. The result was the wonderful hybrid music called *tamborazo*, which evolved into the *banda* of Sinaloa. The bass line is carried by a *tambora* bass drum and the *sousaphone* (tuba). The alto horns play rhythmic chords; trombones and trumpets fill-in; and singers carry the melody.

Manuel Alejandro Pérez choreographed *Costa de Sinaloa*, and taught it to the company. The dances combine songs from Sinaloa with favorites from Raíces' repertoire.

Raíces de Mi Tierra celebrates its 14th year as one of Sacramento's premier adult Mexican dance companies. It was founded at CSU Sacramento by Jose and Roxana Borrego, as a family of college students and alumni dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Mexican dance. The company has a strong commitment to community: it produces and presents performances, hosts workshops, and teaches folklórico dance in local schools.

**Dance Origin:** Mexico • **Genre:** Traditional Mexican Dance • **Title:** *Costa de Sinaloa: Vuela Paloma, De Mazatlán a Acaponeta, El Novillo Despuntado, El Toro Mambo, and El Sauce y la Palma* • **Artistic Director:** Roxana Borrego  
**Choreographer:** Manuel Alejandro Pérez  
**Dancers:** Irma Abella, Regina Abella, Sarah Abella, Karen Angel, José Borrego, Roxana Borrego, Evelia Fernández, Angelica Hernández, Abelina López, Victor Medina, Luis Navarro, Alli Pantoja, Manuel Pérez, Laurie Perry-McCord, Alvaro Ramírez, Osvaldo Ramírez, Lorena Ruedas, Emilio Ruíz, Antonio Sarabia, Mario Sosa  
**Musicians:** Banda Perla Azul



# PAMPA

## India

Ganesh is the Hindu elephant-headed god. According to sacred Hindu texts, Lord Shiva's wife, Parvati, asked her son to guard her bath and let no one in. Angry, Shiva waged war against the boy. But Parvati's son repeatedly defeated Shiva's armies. At first single-handedly, and then with Kali's help, Shiva cut off the boy's head, and Parvati instructed the gods to bring the head of the first creature that crossed their path. So—an elephant's head was attached to the boy's body. In light of the boy's courage, Shiva accepted the boy as his son, named him Ganesh, and appointed him commander of his guard.

PAMPA's dance is an invocation to Lord Ganesh. The setting is an ancient *gurukula* school, where more than 2,000 years ago, sages recited holy texts. The sacred hymn *Ganapati Puja* invokes the twelve names of Ganesh: PAMPA's dancers represent each holy name with its traditional *bharatanatyam* movement:

*Ganesh, the refuge of his devotees / Vakratunda, the one with curved trunk / Ekadanta, the one with single tusk / Krishnapingaksha, the one with fawn*

*colored eyes / Gajavaktra, the one with the elephants' mouth / Lambodaram, the pot-bellied one / Vikata, the gigantic one / Vighnaraja, the king of obstacles, and the remover thereof / Dhumravarna, the smoke-colored one / Balachandram, with crescent moon on his forehead / Vinayaka, the great leader of Shiva's army / Ganapati, the lord of Shiva's warriors / Gajanana, the elephant-faced one*

The music was created and recorded in Bangalore by Praveen D. Rao. Rao set rhythm cycles to recreate the ambience of an ancient *gurukula* and to reflect the intonation of Sanskrit hymns. His composition employs violins, cellos, tabla, mridanga, veena, sitar, sarangi, drums, and synthesizer. Nirmala Madhava's elegant costumes are based on ancient Vedic dress. The cloth is dyed with turmeric root, as saffron is the auspicious color of traditional temple dancers. The dancers' ornaments are made from seeds of the holy basil plant.

Nirmala Madhava is Chief Choreographer at PAMPA Dance Academy. She earned a BA degree in dance from Bangalore University and her choreography reflects extensive training in *bharatanatyam* and *kathak* dance, as well as her belief that Indian dance should evolve while

maintaining its essence. She studied with the late Guru Lalitha Dorai, Guru Narmada, Vidwan Shri Gopinath Das, Guru Sri. Lakshmi Narayan Udipi, and Dr. Maya Rao in Bangalore.

PAMPA Dance Academy was established in California in 1992 by its president, Purna Prasad. The academy offers classes in Indian dance, vocal, and instrumental music, and theoretical and practical performing arts. They take pivotal roles in highly acclaimed dance and dance-drama productions in the United States and Canada.

**Dance Origin:** India • **Genre:** Bharatanatyam  
**Title:** *Sankashta Ganapati* • **Creative Director/Choreographer:** Nirmala Madhava • **Dancers:** Tejasvi Jaladi, Aishika Kumar, Nirmala Madhava, Saarini Madhava, Rema Menon, Manisha Murgude, Kamakshi Narasimhan, Indira Priyadarshini, Vaishnavi Sridhar, Roshni Verma, Pooja Vora  
**Alternate Dancers:** Shalini Bhakshi, Nehali Mehta, Lavanya Rao, Ashwini Srivatsan



# EL TUNANTE

## Peru

The music starts. A man and a woman look into each other's eyes. The challenge begins. She raises her handkerchief and smiles, offering enchantment. He greets her, hat in hand, and announces with elegant and decided steps that he is a great connoisseur of this game. They dance around each other, testing that sweetness of moving close. Feet pound the floor in *zapateo* rhythms. Barefoot, she whirls her skirt, escaping his advances. The would-be-conqueror is conquered, his handkerchief playing in his fingers like a dove...

This is the popular *marinera*, the national dance of Peru. Its exact origin is unknown, but the forms and elements of Peruvian dance and music can be traced to distant Andean ancestors, 16th to 19th century Spanish colonialists, and Peruvian Africans. The *marinera* has roots in Creole symbolism, and influences from the Spanish *fandango* and *jota*, the French minuet, the Afro-Peruvian *zamacueca* and the Inca *huaynos* (as seen in ancient Inca *huacos* clay statues). The couple performs a complex choreography of sequences, while keeping time with a handkerchief—a sign of aristocracy—

grasped in one hand. The man struts in a wide-brimmed straw hat and poncho. The woman wears a lace Moche dress; and her feet are bare so they can communicate more eloquently. The dance was named *marinera* in honor of the Peruvian Navy in 1879, and it was first written down in musical notation in 1894.

Like life in Peruvian communities, this dance is a synthesis that continually evolves. *Marinera* festivals are held all over the country, and part of the competition is adding a personal touch. Regional differences are clear: in Lima, for example, *marinera Limeña* is in a major musical key and is danced with shoes—upbeat, elegant, and festive; in Trujillo and the North, *marinera norteña* (the form on our stage today) is more lively. Some versions employ sweeping foot movements and leaps, some are danced with hats and handkerchiefs, and some use more elements from indigenous Andean and *huayno* dances, or imitate the cadence of Peruvian Paso horses. The *marinera costeña* (from the coast) alternates between minor and major keys; it is vibrant, sensual, coquettish, and quick. In every form, dancers typically are accompanied by four Spanish guitars, a *cajón* (the Afro-Peruvian wooden box drum), spoons that substitute

for Spanish castanets, and *palmas* or handclaps.

Nestor Ruiz, Director of El Tunante, was a national dance champion in Peru in 1978. With the growing number of Peruvians immigrating to the Bay Area, Señor Ruiz founded El Tunante in 1999 to promote the Peruvian folklore within the youth of his community. Sonia Porros Niño De Guzman is an accomplished dancer and guest artist from Seattle, Washington, and is also a four-time national dance champion in Peru.

**Dance Origin:** Peru • **Genre:** Marinera • **Title:** *Marinera Norteña* • **Director:** Nestor Ruiz • **Choreographer:** Nestor Ruiz • **Dancers:** Erica Clancy, Sonia Porras Niño de Guzman, Nestor Ruiz, Stephan Sester • **Musicians:** Oscar Abanto (guitar), Marina Marchena (vocals), Javier Muton (cajón), Vladimir Vucanovich (guitar)





# Yaelisa & Caminos Flamencos

## Spain

An eloquent trio of dancer, guitarist, and *palmista* performs a *rondeña* in the style of Ramón Montoya, set to music by Jason “El Rubio” McGuire. Yaelisa’s original choreography features percussive footwork and a poetic story of inspiration. The performance begins with a lyrical duet between dancer and guitarist; then the performance quickens, and percussive *palmas* lead to a dynamic rhythmic conclusion.

Flamenco was born from the song and suffering of poor communities in Andalusian Spain—communities oppressed and marginalized by the Spanish Inquisition. The songs were originally complaints, mostly sung by Moorish, Jewish, and Roma trades people, and the music shows influences of the Celts, Visigoths, and Byzantines. Flamenco developed gradually, and by the 18th century, it became a characteristically Spanish art form, a lyrical and improvisational collaboration between singer, guitarist, and dancer.

The evocative *rondeña* is danced in a *libre* (free) style with a rhythmical structure, and its lyrical interpretation

suggests a feeling of melancholy and brooding. The style was first created by guitarist and composer Ramón Montoya in the 1930s from a spiritual inspiration: he was moved by the pealing of church bells in Ronda, and wanted to mimic the mystical sound.

Yaelisa has centered her choreography on the exquisite original music of Jason “El Rubio” McGuire, and her *rondeña* evokes a quiet spirituality. Her dance conjures a quiet night, and the elusiveness of the muse; an understanding that inspiration can be caught momentarily, but ultimately, like a wild bird, must be set free. An earlier version of this piece was originally performed at this *Festival* in 1996. It was recently re-set, and performed in 2008 at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

Yaelisa & Caminos Flamencos was founded in the mid-1990s to educate dancers—through company classes and Spanish guest artists—and present innovative and traditional works which reflect the “nuevo flamenco” movement in Spain today.

Yaelisa is an EMMY® Award-winning choreographer and Artistic Director of Caminos Flamencos and the New World

Flamenco Festival. A second-generation flamenco artist, Yaelisa has been honored with an Isadora Duncan Dance Award and by ABC-7’s “Profiles in Excellence” Hispanic Leadership Awards. Yaelisa’s unique knowledge and history lend an authority to her workshops and classes, and many of her students and dancers have gone on to study and perform in Spain and the United States. Guitarist Jason “El Rubio” McGuire is the award-winning Musical Director for Caminos Flamencos and for the New World Flamenco Festival and is a skilled instructor with a successful online guitar teaching website, Flamenco-Lessons.com. Melissa Cruz is a highly respected dancer and choreographer who has danced with Rosa Montoya’s Bailes Flamencos, Madrid’s acclaimed Noche Flamenca, “Flamenco en Vivo” in Houston, and with the Azahar Dance Foundation.

**Dance Origin:** Spain • **Genre:** Flamenco • **Title:** *Contratiempo... A La Luz De La Luna* • **Artistic Directors:** Jason “El Rubio” McGuire, Yaelisa • **Choreographer/Dancer:** Yaelisa • **Musicians:** Melissa Cruz (*palmas*), Jason “El Rubio” McGuire (guitar)



# DIAMANO COURA WEST AFRICAN DANCE COMPANY

Liberia

*The Breaking of the Sande Bush* is a rite-of-passage dance of the Lorma ethnic group. It comes from one of Liberia's more remote regions—Lofa County, in the northeast mountains. The Lorma have two secret societies which initiate and care for their members—*poro* for males, and *sande* for female. Young Lorma girls are taken from their families to a Sande Society or *Zardaygai*—a center of learning—in the bush. There, they are guided by *zoe*, spiritual leaders of the female society. Maintaining total secrecy from men, they learn how to cook, dance, and sing; study biology; and learn how to conduct themselves as women. This *zaazi* dance, as it is called in Liberia, celebrates the girls return to their parents and their initiation into adulthood. Under the eye of the *zoe*, the girls display their skills.

The ceremony celebrates differences—between women and men, forest and village, and invisible spirits and visible maskers. Dancers in full-body masks embody the spirit of the African bush and of the community. The *ZaaZi* (the first mask to enter the stage) is the girls' guide and protector; it announces their

readiness to leave and dances to celebrate their achievements.

The young women wear thread skirts woven on a hand-held loom. Beads around their waists represent protection and show their status. Dangling threads hide the girls' faces, as no one except family should see them. The white chalk signifies purity.

Diamano Coura's percussionists evoke Lorma's traditional sounds: a cow horn announces the masked dancers; an uncut gourd laced with seeds—the *sa-sa* or *kpokui*—imitates various forest birds. The *kingi* log-drum communicates directly with the dancers and the "masks": it provides signals for movement and its beats emphasize specific gestures. It is understood that the *kingi* drum speaks a language, and the initiates must learn the *Kingi* language before graduating from bush school. Musicians also play the *badige* or *sagban* drum and the *gbe-gbe-ge* bass drum.

The origin of *The Breaking of the Sande Bush* is unknown, as the secret Sande Society has no written history. Artistic Director Naomi Diouf studied the dance with Nimely Napla of the National Cultural Troupe in Liberia and in Oakland, CA. The

company, in apprenticeship, researched and trained intensively in movement and song. It was performed in 2006 at the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts in Oakland.

Diamano Coura is a non-profit community arts organization, located at the Malonga Center, dedicated to the preservation, education, and appreciation of traditional West African music, dance, theater, and culture. Founded in 1975 and incorporated in 1999, it is under the Emmy Award winning Director Dr. Zak Diouf and Artistic Director Naomi Diouf.

**Dance Origin:** Liberia • **Genre:** Lorma & Gio, Initiation & Masked Dances • **Title:** *Zaazi*  
**Director:** Dr. Zakarya Diouf • **Artistic Director:** Naomi Diouf • **Costumes/Staging:** Nimely Napla  
**Dancers:** LaTashia Bell, Tamika Davis, Stefon Dent, Esallama Diouf, Ibrahima Diouf, Kine Diouf, Naomi Diouf, Fikpee Flomo, Diony Gamoso, Paul Griffith, Ebony Henderson, Patrice Henderson, LaDonna Higgins, Antoinette Holland, Dedeh Jaimah, Kelly Kouyate, Sekou N'Diaye, Nimely Naplah, Djen Tie, N'Deye Penda Toure, Stephanie Wilson • **Musicians:** Madiou Diouf, Dr. Zakariya Diouf, Bli Bi Gore, Josh Jacob, Mohammed Kouyate, Darian LaFoucade, M'Bay Louvouezo, Gbassay Zinneh



# LEUNG'S WHITE CRANE LION & DRAGON DANCE ASSOCIATION

WORLD PREMIERE

## China

China's lion dance originated over 1500 years ago. The lion is not native to China, but was introduced by travelers along the Silk Road, when a performing lion and a trainer were given as a tribute to Emperor Shun (126-145 BCE). Travelers from India and Nepal carried in Buddhist images of the lion, a symbol of strength and dignity. Throughout China, the lion came to symbolize strength, luck, and joy, and acrobats donned costumes to bring the lion alive. For over a thousand years, China's lions have been dancing—to entertain imperial courts, and to bless farming societies, official celebrations, temples, plantings and harvests, religious rites, and in modern times, business openings, births, and weddings.

The southern lion dance, performed today by Leung's White Crane Lion & Dragon Dance Association, remains a dance of entertainment. China's early choreographers had never seen a lion, so the southern lion looks and acts more like a cat, and this northern lion—short, stocky, and furry—resembles an oversized Pekinese. One performer holds the lion's head with both hands and another crouches at the lion's tail. The dancers make great use

of the animal's prancing legs, and their movements follow a specified sequence. The dance is highly acrobatic and it requires extensive training in martial arts. Traditionally, a martial artist leads the dance; with a pair of adult lions and one or two young cubs. The traditional payment for lion dancers is also amusing: it is made through the *Choy Cheng*, or "Eating of the Green (Vegetable)." A leafy green vegetable is tied to a lucky red envelope filled with money. The lion approaches, tests the food to make sure it's not a firecracker, dances to ward off competitors, and then eats its pay.

Leung's White Crane Lion & Dragon Dance Association was founded in 1971 by Leung brothers, Kuen, Kwan, and Allen. The brothers' long association with the lion dance began as children playing in China: at home, they invented a lion costume out of a large bamboo basket and a blanket, and danced while banging on empty kerosene cans. Boyhood play grew to a serious study of martial arts and lion dancing in China, and they brought their skills to the Bay Area. Over thirty-seven years, Leung's White Crane has promoted and participated in a long list of shows, celebrations, films, competitions, and charity work all over North America and Asia. In 1992, the

Leung's took 2nd place in the Hong Kong World Lion Dance Tournament, and their amusing and joyful lions dance annually at the grand finale of San Francisco's Chinese New Year Parade. Kuen's son, Daniel, is headmaster of martial arts; Kwan's son, Jimmy, coaches advanced lion dance; and Allen's son, Clifton, manages operations.

**Dance Origin:** China • **Genre:** Chinese Lion Dance • **Title:** *Curious Lion Seeking Immortal Green Flower* • **Artistic Director:** Jimmy Leung • **Choreographer:** Daniel Leung • **Dancers:** Danny Luong, Peter Luong • **Musicians:** Morgan Liao, David Luong, Victor Leung



# SAVITHA SASTRY

India

*Anjali* means “offering,” and in this *bharatanatyam* performance, soloist Savitha Sastry invokes the guardians of different directions. The dance is traditionally performed at the opening of temple-dance performances, to clear the space of negative emotions. Savitha begins with a well-known sacred gesture—the *anjali mudra*. With palms pressed together, she offers unconditional thanksgiving. She raises the *mudra* to honor the gods; lowers it to her temple to salute gurus and teachers; and holds it before her heart to greet the audience. Then she lets go in an explosion of spontaneous dance.

*Bharatanatyam* is a temple dance form from South India, originally created to celebrate the eternal universe through the beauty of the material body. It combines *bhava* (spiritual emotion); *raga* (music); and *tala* (rhythm) to bring scriptures and sacred Veda texts alive. *Bharatanatyam* developed three forms: *abhinaya* is the dramatic art of storytelling; *nritta* is composed of pure dance movements and visual depiction of rhythms; and *nritya* combines both storytelling and form. Savitha’s performance is an

example of the *nritta*—pure dance form: the dancer gives herself to the higher energy flowing through her, to elicit an uplifting joy. This choreography also reflects an exciting evolution in India today, an erasing of lines between schools of *nritta*—pure dance. As more dancers engage in yoga and athletic activity, classical dance is moving towards perfection. Savitha focuses on clean lines and careful delineation of poses, and turns the space around her into geometric perfection.

The *bharatanatyam* costume is silk, and the traditional nine-yard sari has been replaced with a silk pajama with v-shaped pleated cloth. The dancer’s jewelry reflects ornaments worn by ancient temple deities, and her makeup emphasizes her ever-moving eyes and hands.

The music is Carnatic classical music from South India, one of the world’s oldest forms. It was composed for this piece by veteran Carnatic composer Meera Nathan and recorded in Fremont by Asha Ramesh, vocals; Ramesh Babu, mridangam; Krishna Kutty, violin; and V.K. Raman, flute. Like Hindustani classical music, Carnatic music is comprised of ragas, or melodies, and *taals*, or rhythms; but its emphasis is on vocals.

The piece was created in 2006 by Savitha Sastry, performed in an *arangetram* (solo recital) in 2006 at Santa Clara University, and set again for this performance. Savitha Sastry trained with gurus Dhananjayans and Adyar K. Laxman in Chennai for over fifteen years, studied *abhinaya* facial expressions with Smt. Kalanidhi Narayan and percussion with Shri Ramesh Babu. She has performed in television and film, choreographed, and directed full-length productions. She is Artistic Director of Sadhana Dance Academy in San Jose, formed in 2005.

**Dance Origin:** India • **Genre:** Bharatanatyam  
**Title:** *Anjali* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer/**  
**Soloist:** Savitha Sastry



# LUIS VALVERDE

WORLD PREMIERE

Peru

*Tamaaaaaaleeees....!*

*El tamalero llegoooo...!*  
(The tamale vendor arrived ...!)

*El tamalero suaaaaaveeee...!*  
(The “cool” tamelero...!)

In Old Lima City, Peruvian street vendors sang this *pregón*. Selling tamales is a way to make a living, but this tamale seller is really a dancer, and he is quickly lost in the joyful rhythms of his feet. Luis Valverde's piece allows him to showcase the complex footwork of Peruvian *zapateo*. His choreography starts out easy, and then builds in energy, culminating in the “fatal jump” (which Luis has fortunately lived through every time).

The Peruvian *zapateo* (shoe-tapping) combines the rhythmic striking of heels and toes against the floor or each other, with slapping and patting the arms, legs, and feet. Occasionally, one sees an *escobilladas*, a brushing movement of the shoe or bare foot along the ground. The dance is one of the most important traditional Afro-Peruvian forms. It originated in 16th-century coastal communities as

enslaved Africans mixed African rhythms with Creole, Spanish Roma, European, and indigenous Peruvian. Over time, *zapateo* evolved as a contest of skilled footwork, and its judges enforced a complex set of rules: dancers performed five *pasadas* (footwork patterns) in order; then performed the same *pasadas* in reverse order; then ended with a *redoble* (footwork roll). Contestants began their careers improvising in a style borrowed from a master dancer, and gradually became known for their own distinctive steps. The *pasada* describes each unit of the *zapateo* step, and it also names the turn taken by a dancer in competition.

The piece was created and choreographed in June 2008 by Luis Valverde. Luis' *tamalero* costume was based on a watercolor by Pancho Fierro (Lima, 1807-1879), an artist who painted popular characters of the early Peruvian republic.

The music and *zapateo* style is *Lima-Cañete*. *Zapateo* is one of the varieties of the *fiestejo* genre, usually in 6/8, with a slow tempo. Dancers traditionally perform to one song or two, played on a guitar or violin. Today's guitarist performs a medley of *zapateo* melodies, a revival from several different sources.

José Roberto Hernandez studied ethnomusicology and folklore in the Federal District of Mexico. He has performed as lead guitarist in music ensembles throughout Mexico and Northern California, and is the composer and arranger of the Bay Area music ensemble HanakPacha.

Luis Valverde began his career in Lima in 1991. His work brings the extraordinary variety of the Andean and Afro-Peruvian dance to American audiences. He choreographs for Peruvian Dance Company, The Andean Project, and collaborates with Afro-Peruvian Master Lalo Izquierdo and the group Sukay.

**Dance Origin:** Peru • **Genre:** Zapateo Negro  
**Title:** *El Tamalero* • **Choreographer/Soloist:** Luis Valverde • **Characters:** Adolfo Narrea, Miguel Santos • **Musician:** José Roberto Hernandez (guitar)



# LOS LUPEÑOS DE SAN JOSÉ

## Mexico

*Salón México, 1952, Mexico City, late night club... After the jazz craze, before rock and roll, there occurred a moment of elegance and hope: Silk stockings with seams, dancing close, but moving a bit apart... Shy girl, cool guy, whiskey sour, the flirt, the man with slick moves, tall dancers, short dancers, every shape and size... Cuban elegance, Afro-Caribbean rhythm.*

Los Lupeños de San José present three ballroom dances (*bailes de salón*) also classified as *bailes tropicales*: *el danzón*, *la cumbia*, y *el mambo*... The first dance is *Almendras a Danzón* which originated in 1880s Cuba and quickly captivated Mexico. It's an elegant dance that terminates in an improvised *montuno*, allowing the dancers to turn up the heat.

*La Pollera Colorá* is a cumbia, originally an Afro-Colombian flirtatious dance with an open-partner formation; also performed as a folkloric dance with drum, clave, and guitar. In the 1940s, the cumbia's musical ensemble expanded, influenced by the big band sound. The dance reinvented itself, so couples could dance close (but not too close), or a

group of women could dance free-style. The lyrics are:

*Cuando le canto a Soledad  
Es que estoy yo contento  
Porque con su movimiento  
Respiración ella me da*

*When I sing to Soledad  
It's because I am happy  
For with her movement  
She gives me my strength*

*Mambo #5*: The mambo developed—from the Cuban *son*—into a dance craze in Mexico and New York in the 50s and 60s, and into an exhibition dance for cabaret. As a free-for-all that mixes partners, “mambo is the dance where the movement gives you a chance.”

The dancer's costumes evoke nightclub styles in 1950's Mexico City. The war was over and conservative dress gave way to more elegant and daring outfits, influenced by Europe and the Caribbean. Traditionally, each dance would have its own orchestra and instrumentation, but today, a lively Latin band, Futuro Picante, interprets the various music styles.

Dr. Susan Cashion choreographed the piece, based on her research in Cuba,

Mexico, and Colombia, and the suite was restructured for the *Festival*. Los Lupeños performed a variation in 2008 at San José's Mexican Heritage Plaza.

Los Lupeños de San José promotes the awareness, appreciation, and understanding of Mexican culture through traditional and traditionally-inspired folk dance. Founded in 1969, the company performs a varied repertoire from master teachers on both sides of the border. A program of the Mexican Heritage Corporation, Los Lupeños—under Artistic Director Tony Ferrigno—has produced original full-length concerts and collaborations, and toured with Linda Ronstadt and Mariachi Los Camperos.

**Dance Origin:** Mexico • **Genre:** Mexican Contemporary • **Title:** *Salón México* • **Artistic Director:** Tony Ferrigno • **Choreographer:** Dr. Susan Cashion • **Dancers:** Ramon Alemán, Imelda Chávez, Marco Chávez, Nicholas Dareau, Larry Estrada, Kyrsti García, Martha García, MandyRose Gutiérrez, Juan Carlos Miranda, Alex Ocampo, Teresa Ocampo, Veronica Ramírez, Laila Sahagún, Esmeralda Sánchez, Gerardo Silva, Jaimee Skyberg, Angela Szymusiak, Ambrosio Torres, Eduardo Torres, Jessica Torres, Malena Vega • **Musicians:** Futuro Picante - Sergio Durán (Co-Director, conga, timbal), Karl Force (keyboard), Miguel Govea (Co-Director), Araceli León (trumpet), Jose León (Co-Director), Mireya León (bass), Cecilia Peña-Govea (trumpet), Ruben Sandoval (trombone)



# SANHITI

## India

*Kummi Adi* is a suite of traditional folk dance forms from Tamil Nadu, in the southernmost Indian peninsula. For over 2500 years, the region has been the homeland of the Tamils—an ancient culture as sophisticated and varied as other classical civilizations of the world. At a village carnival, the loud tones of the auspicious *nadaswaram* (wind instrument) weave with the festive song—*Kummi Adi Hoi, Let's clap our hands together, with beautiful bangles clanging one another, with bees buzzing along to the flowers in our head. Let's pray to The Almighty to ward off the evil eye and be happy on this wonderful day.*

Sanhiti presents: (1) *Karagam*, “dancing with a pot on the head.” Traditionally, dancers carried mud water pots, to praise the Hindu rain goddess *Mari Amman* and river goddess *Gangai Amman*. (2) *Kavadi*, “dancing with a decorated arch around one’s shoulders.” As an offering to Lord Muruga—Hindu saint and patron of Tamil Nadu—dancers dress in sacred saffron. The dance dates back to ancient Tamil pilgrimages, when travelers tied sacred offerings to sticks balanced on their shoulders and sang and danced to

enliven the journey. (3) *Kummi*, “dancing and clapping to rhythmic beats.” (4) *Poi Kaal Kudirai*, the “dummy horse dance” connected to the worship of Ayyanar – an ancient clan-based deity of nature and fertility. Enormous statues of Ayyanar guard rural villages—a strong, well-fed deity riding a horse. (5) *Kolattam*, is the “dance with sticks.” Women dressed in colorful *pavadi thavani* costumes play rhythm sticks. In Tamil tradition, dancers performed this dance for ten days, beginning on *Amavasi*, the new moon night on the Hindu calendar. (6) *Silambam* is based on an ancient martial arts form, originated in the Tamil Nadu's Kurinji Hills some 5,000 years ago, when indigenous people fought off animals with bamboo staves.

Choreographer Roopa Parameswaran learned Tamil Nadu dances in South India, created this piece in 2007, and first staged it at the McAfee Center in Saratoga. The song “Kummi Adi” is by contemporary Tamil poet Vaali and composer A.R. Rahman, who recently won Academy Awards for Best Original Score and Best Original Song for the film *Slumdog Millionaire*.

Sanhiti was founded in 2004 by Janani Narayan, Priya Krishnamoorthy, and

Roopa Parameswaran. Sanhiti performs annual fundraisers to benefit Bay Area non-profit organizations. Their mission is to promote the rich and diverse South Indian dance culture, to bring together dance enthusiasts, and to provide an opportunity to perform. Artistic Director Roopa Parameswaran studied *bharatanatyam* and folk dance forms in India for fifteen years. She and Priya Krishnamoorthy continue to study with the Vishwa Shanthi Dance Academy. Janani Narayana trains in *bharatanatyam* with Lasya Dance Company. Company dancers have studied with instructors in South India and the Bay Area.

**Dance Origin:** South India • **Genre:** Folk dances from Tamil Nadu • **Title:** *Kummi Adi* • **Artistic Directors:** Priya Krishnamoorthy, Janani Narayanan, Roopa Parameswaran • **Choreographer:** Roopa Parameswaran • **Props:** Siva Kollipara, Subashinee Krishnamurthy • **Dancers:** Rajalakshmi Avadaiappan, Koushik Balasubramanian, Venkatesh Balasubramanian, Suman Chandra, Suraj Chandrasekaran, Seshank Kalvala, Vijay Kolappan, Priya Krishnamoorthy, Pavan Kumar, Raji Mahalingam, Kavitha Nagarajan, Balaji Natarajan, Naveen Nathan, Roopa Parameswaran, Ram Periathiruvadi, Sowmya Rajaraman, Priya Rasetty, Sridhar Sailappan, Priya Saranathan, Suresh Seshamani, Ram Subramanian, Swapna Vaidyanathan, Srinivasan Venkatachary, Poornima Venkatakrishnan, Chitra Venkatramani, Janani Viswanathan



# SAMAR NASSAR

## Middle East / Lebanon

Lebanese style Middle Eastern dance is explosive, upbeat, and energetic with wide movements and an emphasis on percussion. In *Drum Solo*, Middle Eastern dance is stripped down to the basics: it highlights the soloist's technique, as she responds to every single beat.

In the United States, the term "belly dance" was coined for this form because of its isolation of movements in the pelvis and torso. In the Middle East, the dance is called "*raqs baladi*," meaning "local dance." The evolution of the form is hard to trace, but it includes styles and movements from Lebanon, North Africa, Egypt, the Arabian Gulf, and Turkey. At Middle Eastern family gatherings, all members of the family, women, men, and children, dance together in celebration of their culture and music. A formal and technical style of the dance became popular on the stages of fancy nightclubs throughout Egypt. Then, in the 1940s, the Egyptian film industry brought gifted Middle Eastern dancers to the silver screen, and audiences fell in love with the form. The dance is popular today worldwide as a medium where women

find confidence, health, and a celebration of their feminine power. In performance, it is a highly technical form, and the dancer's quick response is essential, as she expresses the emotional, lyric and rhythmic qualities of the music.

Samar's dress was designed by Eman Zaki; a prominent Egyptian fashion designer to the stars. The cut accentuates curves and helps the audience see the subtle movements. The Isis wings evolved from the traditional veil usually worn for a dancer's entrance.

Rhythm in Arabic music is organized into cycles of beats and pauses, each with a fixed number of pulses. Within these pulses, strong beats, weak beats, and silent beats define a groove. The *baladi* beat is a *masmoudi* beat contracted into 4/4 time. The drum is called a *dumbek*. For strong beats, called *doum*, the dominant hand strikes the "sweet spot" of the skin. Weaker beats, called *tek* and *ka*, are played on the drum's rim.

Samar Nassar choreographed this piece in January of 2006, and adapted it for this program. *Drum Solo* was originally commissioned for a performance at the de Young Museum in 2006.

Samar Nassar is first generation Lebanese-Peruvian who has been belly dancing for over thirteen years. She has performed on stages all over the world and produced many belly dance events for the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. She credits her belly dance style to her Lebanese heritage, a country she visits often. She is the Owner/Creative Director of Hipline Belly Dance Studio in Berkeley.

**Dance Origin:** Middle East/Lebanon • **Genre:** Raqs Baladi/Middle Eastern Dance • **Title:** *Drum Solo* • **Choreographer/Soloist:** Samar Nassar • **Musicians:** Susu Pampanin, Faisal Zedan





# IMANI'S DREAM

WORLD PREMIERE

## *United States*

The radio station's call letters are LYFE; and 143 means "I love you" in a text message. It is a fictional call-in program that sets the stage for six heartfelt dances about the challenges of love. In these inventive hip-hop pieces, young people call in with their concerns—looking for love in all the wrong places, trying to understand adult love, learning to express a person's inner beauty—and Imani's Dream showcases two distinctly American dance forms.

Modern dance deliberately employs gravity and invites choreographers to use emotions and moods to design their own steps. Hip-hop is a street dance form that evolved in New York's African American and Latino communities in the 1970s, with roots in funk, reggae, soul, R&B, toasting, the James Brown Superbad Slide, African poets, Latin dance, signifying, scat singing, and the talking blues. Jamaican born DJ "Kool Herc" dubbed his Bronx dancers "break-boys" and "break-girls," and break-dancing came to signify an agile, energetic solo dance. Hip-hop gave young people freedom to express the issues they faced daily in inner city communities. Tony Tone, of the

pioneering Cold Crush Brothers, noted that, "Hip-hop saved a lot of lives."

Today, hip-hop thrives in every corner of the world. California's original street dancers invented their own forms, some of which appear on today's stage. "Popping" uses quickly-contracting and relaxing muscles to jerk a dancer's body. The "boogaloo" is a loose and fluid style in which the body seems to lack bones; using circular rolls, and isolation and sectioning, such as separating the rib cage from the hip. "Strobing" and "ticking" are faster versions of "popping"; "floating," "gliding," and "sliding" use footwork to float the dancer's body smoothly across the floor. "Liquid dancing" and "waving" form undulations throughout the dancer's body.

Caprice Armstrong designed and wrote *LYFE Radio Station 143.7* after asking her young dancers—"What human stories are inside the book covers we show others?" The lively choreography is by Caprice Armstrong, Lauren Benjamin, Machante Brown, and Tarik Rollerson.

Imani's Dream was formed eight years ago by Artistic Director Caprice Armstrong. Armstrong trained with Betty and CK Ladzekpo and Sarah Crowell. Her dance

style combines hip-hop, African, modern, and jazz dance, and since 1999, she has taught dance at Destiny Arts Center, an innovative multi-cultural youth program in Oakland providing classes in dance, martial arts, conflict resolution, self-defense, and youth leadership. Destiny supports students to develop an individualized sense of artistic expression, leadership skills, and personal empowerment that they know has impact on their communities.

**Dance Origin:** United States • **Genres:** Hip Hop, Modern • **Title:** *LYFE Radio Station 143.7* • **Artistic Director:** Caprice Armstrong • **Co-Artistic Director:** Lauren Benjamin • **Administrative Director:** Dzinya Ladzekpo • **Choreographers:** Caprice Armstrong, Lauren Benjamin, Machante Brown, Tarik Rollerson • **Dancers:** Sarie Babino, Thea Barry, Clayton Bui, Destiny Courtney, Sanobia Crocette, Kimiko Delatorre, Dave Dickson, Devyn Gaines, Kyanna Greenlee, Evan Ivery-Long, Natalia "Nikki" Johnson, Nabu Judah, She'Nee A. Linzie Morris, Anisha Perry, Cartia Powell, Zari Robinson-Goss, Tarik Rollerson, Ebon'i Route, Simona Sanders, Tareana Shelton, Joi Stewart, Shadow Tarmarchenko, Haley Walker, Shameila Watkins, Delexus Woods



# OBAKÒSO DRUM & DANCE ENSEMBLE

WORLD PREMIERE

Cuba

In Yoruba, *Obakòso* means “king” (*oba*) “does not hang” (*kòso*). It refers to Shango, the fifth king of Oyo, Nigeria; who was hanged but did not suffer. The fierce essence of Shango’s spirit conquered death and he returned to his place in the sky—so, despite even mortality, his *ashe* (divine life force) is eternal. In both African and Cuban *orisha* traditions, Shango is known as the *orisha* (deity) of thunder and lightning; he is unmatched in his mastery of the dance and is owner of the sacred *batá* drums. His power is evident in the resonance of the drum and in the scream of thunder, heard simultaneously in heaven and earth. Shango—and *Obakòso*—represent connection and interdependency: between heaven and earth, drum and the dance, dance and the spirit, community and tradition.

The Yoruba people, from what is now southwestern Nigeria, were the second major ethnic group brought to Cuba from Africa, arriving mostly in the 1820-1860s. Despite adversity, they maintained ancestral religions now referred to as *Regla de Ocha* in Cuba and *Lukumí* in the United States. The spine of this cultural

tradition is the sacred *Odu* scripture, or *Ifa*—a vast body of oral teachings and history containing the 256 scriptures and detailing the essence of the *orishas* (deities). Artistic Director José Francisco Barroso works from the root of this tradition by creating choreography directly inspired by the *patakin* (stories) of the sacred text.

Fabrics, colors, patterns, combinations of cloth, appliqué, and trimming materials are specifically coded to the *orisha* Shango. Adornments such as cowry shells are organized according to the signature number of the *orisha* according to *Odu*.

The three hourglass-shaped, double-headed *batá* drums “talk” to each other in a conversation that is understood in *arun* (the spiritual realm). The *batá* drums are *fundamento* (consecrated) for ceremonial use or *aberikula* (profane) for performance. The complex rhythmic patterns imitate the sounds of the spiritual energies, and *oriki* (praise language) to the *orisha* Shango. The songs are in the original Yoruba language as they were preserved in Cuba, presented in traditional African call and response. The following lyrics sing the praise of Shango in battle:

*Shango, were were ina jo  
Ina jo oku’jeje.*

*Shango, the fire grows and grows  
The fire busts through the roof tops.*

Obakòso Drum & Dance Ensemble was founded in 1996 by José Francisco Barroso in devoted effort to educate and preserve the profound knowledge and resilient beauty living within traditional African Cuban music and dance. Director Barroso began his professional career at the age of eighteen with Havana’s renowned Raíces Profundas. The members of Obakòso come with a variety of ethnic, cultural, and dance backgrounds, each one a dedicated student of Barroso.

**Dance Origin:** Cuba • **Genre:** African-Cuban  
**Title:** *Shango, King of Oyo* • **Administrative Coordinator:** Colleen Barroso • **Choreographer/Soloist:** José Francisco Barroso • **Musicians:** Colleen Barroso, Heather Easley-Kasinsky, Emiola Gaia Randolph, Matt Lucas, Sandy Perez, Sherri Taylor, Rosita Villamil, Chris Walker



# LAS QUE SON SON

WORLD PREMIERE

Cuba

Enter *La Clave Reina*, “The Clave Queen.” On wooden clave sticks, she sounds the emblematic 3/2 heartbeat of Cuban music, life, and tradition. Skirts billow, hips sway, and the rich history of Cuba simmers and sizzles—in three rumba dances: *yambú*, *guaguancó*, and *columbia*.

*Yambú* is the oldest known form of rumba: dramatic, slow, and seductive. The dance displays the woman’s coquetry towards the man, with the male dancer in a secondary role. *Guaguancó* is fast, complex, and defined by the *vacunao*, a rapid masculine thrust from the hips, hand, or foot—an attempt of the male to achieve union with the female, which she repeatedly encourages then rejects. The *guaguancó* reflects a natural sensuality without impropriety and is danced by young and old alike. It has been compared to the courtship of barnyard fowls, with its ruffled costumes, and flounced skirts used expertly to ward off male advances. *Columbia* developed in Cuba’s inland hamlets, with elements of Congo dances and Spanish flamenco. Solo male dancers vie with each other and goad the drummers—especially those on the smallest drum (*quinto*)—to play complex rhythms.

Dancers respond to the beat with inventive acrobatic moves. Contemporary dancers add break dancing and hip-hop moves, and Cuban women now cross gender barriers to dance this aggressive, improvisational form.

Rumba was originally condemned by the Cuban elite as overtly erotic, and was danced only by marginalized Afro-Cubans. Today, rumba has gained popularity and is respected as Cuba’s foremost national dance. Elements of it were most likely transplanted from the Congo during Cuba’s four-century-long Atlantic slave trade, then developed in the provinces of Matanzas and Havana. Many of its rhythms are from the Abakuá—an Afro-Cuban male secret society which honored forest dieties—combined with Bantu traditions of the Congo.

Las Que Son Son’s costumes draw on both the cabaret style popularized by Carmen Miranda—flounces, leg-revealing skirts—and the simpler dress of folk tradition from which the rumba emerged. For the last dance, the female dancers cross-dress, wearing versions of traditional male costumes.

The ensemble plays “Ave María Morena” for *yambú*, and “Vale Todo” for *guaguancó* (featuring a partially improvised *canto*, and

a group call and response.) For *columbia*, “Aguado Koloza”, a *palito* rhythm is beaten with two sticks on bamboo and conga rims—reviving the drum patterns and chants of religious Cuban Abakuá traditions.

This piece was envisioned by Las Que Son Son and choreographed by José Francisco Barroso and Yismari Ramos Tellez in 2008, and set for this premiere.

Las Que Son Son is an all-women dance ensemble, with professionals from many fields and backgrounds, trained by prominent Cuban, Haitian, and Brazilian dance instructors in the San Francisco Bay Area. A five-person steering committee serves as “Artistic Director.” The ensemble was formed in 2006 to study and perform dance in a collaborative and mutually supportive atmosphere.

**Dance Origin:** Cuba • **Genre:** Rumba - Yambú, Guaguancó, and Columbia • **Title:** *La Clave Reina* • **Artistic Director:** Yismari Ramos Tellez • **Choreographers:** José Francisco Barroso, Ysmari Ramos Tellez • **Dancers:** Stella Adelman, Erick Barberia, Cora Barnes, Adriene Harrison, Jamaica Itule Simmons, Royland Lobato, Mary Massella, Kristina Ramsey, Yismari Ramos Tellez, Mítzi Ulloa, Deborah Valoma • **Musicians:** Colin Douglas, Mijaíl Labrada, Matt Lucas, Rosa Magdalena Menendez, Sandy Pérez, Tobiah Sucher-Gaster, Sulmary Valverde, Jesse Weber



# FOUR WINDS & SWEET WATER SINGERS

## *Native American Plains*

Four Winds presents four dances from the North American Plains: the *Spear and Shield Dance*, a dance of a warrior preparing for battle; the *Hundred Year Fancy Dance*, a dance of victory; the *Northern Traditional Dance*, danced by a warrior to relate his hunting experience; and the *Hoop Dance*. Some say the *Hoop Dance* was given to a dying man from the Northern Plains who wanted a gift to leave behind. The Creator gave him a series of wooden hoops, one for each living thing he created. In the Southwest, it is said cliff-dwelling children practiced this dance for dexterity.

Eduardo Madril describes the *Hoop Dance* as both an ancient and contemporary story of creation. The dancer begins with a single hoop, evoking the circle of life, with no beginning and no end; the circle through which the first humans arrived; a single cell; the circle of day and night; the Krebs cycle; the shape of birds nests, of the strongest winds and waters, and of animals' burrows. Next, two hoops represent man and woman; day and night; cold and hot; and the balance of life. The third hoop represents the birth of new life, and four hoops evoke stages

of life, four seasons, four natural colors and four directions. The dance continues to add circle upon circle, representing all living beings, and from a single cell, comes one sphere—our living world.

Every Native song, dance, and gesture is an expression of Native American heritage and life rooted in an ancient past. Although these Plains dances are social, they are also actions of deep spiritual significance, the embodiment of prayers to the Creator, danced regularly at inter-tribal powwows throughout the United States. Some of the songs and yells, called vocables, come from harmonized prayer. The drumbeat is the heartbeat of all living things. Dancers wear traditional regalia, representing nature and spiritual connection. The clothing is hand-stitched from porcupine hair, quills, seed beads, brain-tanned elk leather, angora hides, eagle feathers, satin, and animal skins. Feathers represent an eagle's strength, and shows that the dancer is in conversation with the Creator.

Traditional live music by Dirk Alphin, John-Carlos Perea—GRAMMY® Award winner for Best New Age Album in 2007—and Luke Taylor of Sweet Water Singers accompanies Four Winds for this *Festival* performance.

Tony Fuentes and Eduardo Madril founded Four Winds Native American Dance, celebrating their 25th anniversary this year. The company presents dance and culture of the United States Plains Indian tribes from Southern Canada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma, performing throughout the western United States. Eddie presents residencies in Bay Area schools, encouraging appreciation and respect for Native American dance, music, cultural history, art, and sign language. He has taught Native American music at SFSU, and was a three-year recipient of the California Arts Council Artist-in-Residence grant. In 2008, he was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Best Individual Performance of the year.

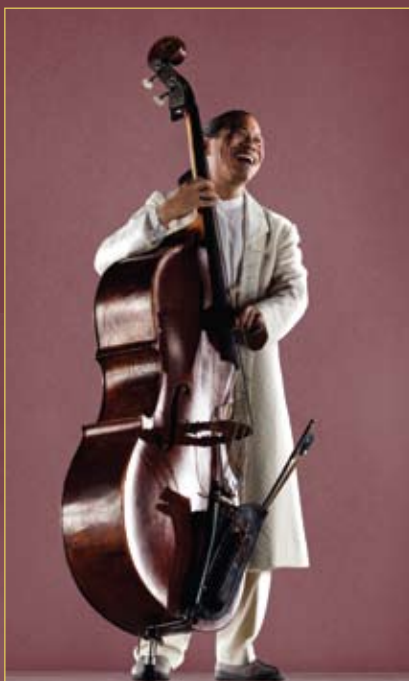
**Dance Origin:** Native American Plains • **Genre:** Native American • **Titles:** *Spear and Shield Dance*, *Fancy Dance*, *Northern Traditional Dance*, *Hoop Dance* • **Dancers:** Tony Fuentes, Eddie Madril, Marcos Madril • **Musicians:** Dirk Alphin, John-Carlos Perea, Luke Taylor



# FIRST VOICE: MARK IZU AND BRENDA WONG AOKI

## *Japan & United States*

First Voice—Brenda Wong Aoki and Mark Izu—combine Japanese noh and kyōgen theater, Commedia dell’arte, modern dance, jazz, and Japanese court music to weave this weekend’s presentation—the Japanese tale of the Sun Goddess, *Amaterasu*. While on a study fellowship in Japan, Mark and Brenda became fascinated with a recent underwater discovery of pyramids off the coast of Okinawa. Some people believe the structures are the remains of the world’s oldest civilization, the lost continent of Mu. Also called The Land of the Sun, Mu has been described as a highly advanced civilization that predates ancient Egypt, with colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, all with sun deities and pyramids. Brenda Wong Aoki believes that the legend of *Amaterasu* may be a story passed down from Mu. On today’s



stage, in Wong Aoki’s capable hands, this ancient, archetypal tale of a dark world moving into the light becomes a surprisingly timely message, one of hope and renewal in today’s changing world.

The generous simplicity of Wong’s style originates in the Japanese noh-kyōgen tradition, performed since the 14th century. Noh evolved from popular, folk, and aristocratic art forms into a formal and stylized form of dance/music/theater. Actors, all male, use masks, few props, and simple sets; and the musicians play onstage. Noh plays have an immediacy, a quality reflecting the traditional Japanese aesthetic of transience. As musicians, dancers, and actors interact, tempos change and evolve, and each discipline is given full voice. Kyōgen developed alongside noh, with humorous skits to break the solemnity. Kyōgen actors use slapstick and satire, exaggerated movements, and dialogue, so the action is easy to understand.

Izu’s original score uses gagaku—the world’s oldest continuously practiced orchestral musical tradition, developed over a thousand years ago with roots in China, Japan, Korea, India, and Persia. This musical form was once only performed before those known as

“Descendants of the Sun”—the emperors of Japan. Izu’s score includes improvisation for a jazz trio, Peruvian *cajón*, Chinese *sheng* (playing a haunting version of Ornette Coleman’s *Lonely Woman*), acoustic contra bass, six-string electric bass, and a ritual Tarahumara rain drum. The waltz at the end of the program is an original composition.

Performer/co-writer Brenda Wong Aoki is fully versed in traditional noh and kyōgen theatrical traditions, as well as contemporary storytelling and movement. Musical Director Mark Izu is a contemporary jazz composer who has studied and performed gagaku for almost twenty years. Izu is also the 2008 recipient of the Northern California Regional EMMY® Award for Outstanding Musical Composition/Arrangement. Highly acclaimed artists since 1979, the duo formed First Voice in 1995: to create, develop, and present the stories and music of people living between worlds. Critical to this mission is “personal experience” or “voice” as essential to authentic contemporary global culture.

**Origin:** Japan/United States • **Genres:** Noh & Kyōgen Theater, Commedia dell’Arte, Jazz, Japanese Court Music • **Master Storyteller/Narrator/Co-writer:** Brenda Wong Aoki  
**Musical Director/Original Compositions:** Mark Izu



# RETURN OF THE SUN



## *A Storytelling performance featuring:*

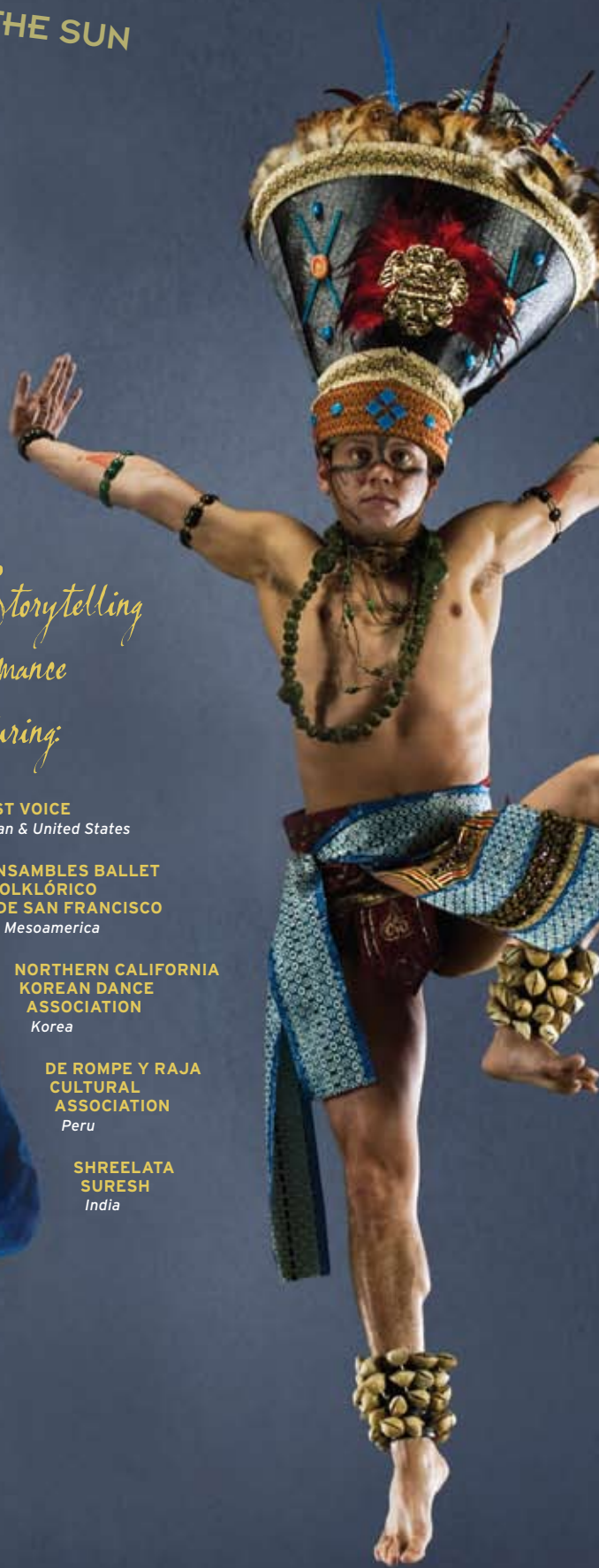
**FIRST VOICE**  
*Japan & United States*

**ENSAMBLES BALLET  
FOLKLÓRICO  
DE SAN FRANCISCO**  
*Mesoamerica*

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA  
KOREAN DANCE  
ASSOCIATION**  
*Korea*

**DE ROMPE Y RAJA  
CULTURAL  
ASSOCIATION**  
*Peru*

**SHREELATA  
SURESH**  
*India*



# RETURN OF THE SUN

For fifteen years, World Arts West has presented *People Like Me (PLM)*, the Arts Education program of the *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival*. Filling auditoriums around the Bay Area, 12,000–14,000 grade school students each year enjoy an engaging one-hour performance—in an inspired approach to multicultural curriculum, the California education content standards, and the arts. Best of all, students experience the rich culture and history of people from around the world, expressed with exuberance by some of the Bay Area's most accomplished dancers and musicians. To honor *PLM*'s fifteenth successful year, we present an adapted version of this year's performance. The educational theme was mythology, legends, and folklore, presenting *Return of the Sun*, the story of *Amaterasu*, the Japanese Sun Goddess.

In Japanese mythology *Amaterasu* was the daughter of the supreme Japanese deity who created the world. She was a beautiful and compassionate goddess who ruled both the sun and the heavenly fields of rice that fed the Japanese people. After a conflict with her mean-hearted brother, the God of Darkness and Winter Storm, *Amaterasu* hides away in a cave in the mountains. Without her, the world is in darkness, and the rice fields begin dying while the people grow hungry. **Brenda Wong Aoki** tells the story of how she is coaxed from the cave, while dancers from the traditions of Mexico, Peru, Korea, and India bring the story to life.

The story opens in an ancient time when people lived together in contentment. **Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco** portrays a thriving civilization. This scene is a partial reprise of *Ensembles' dance, The Royal Court of the Ancient Maya*. *Zenón Barrón's* original choreography is based on wall paintings from the Temple of the Murals, Bonampak Pyramids, in Chiapas, Mexico. Grand frescoes, painted in about 790 AD, show life-sized scenes of ancient Maya royalty, including ceremonial costumes and gestures. **Ensembles** bases their dramatic presentation on in-depth research of Maya hieroglyphs, frescoes, bas-relief carvings, and inscriptions. The photo on the facing page shows the detail of costumes.

The Sun Goddess and her attendants are danced with fierce dignity by Hyeon Chung and **The Northern California Korean Dance Association**. This choreography is a reprise of the traditional Korean dance of *gum mu*.

In striking masks, dancers from **De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association** portray the brother of the Sun Goddess—the Storm God—and his attendant. Fortunately these fearsome dancers calm down when the Sun Goddess returns, reassuring us that darkness, storm, and winter will always balance and complete the light. This section uses masks and choreography from the Afro-Peruvian dance *Son de los Diablos*.

Soloist **Shreelata Suresh** is the Goddess of Dawn, the bridge between darkness and light. *Shreelata* adapts South Indian *bharatanatyam's jathiswaram* as she gathers the stars into a brilliant mirror; and she dances *pushpanjali* to beseech the Sun to leave her hiding place.

*Please see the following pages for more info about these dance pieces.*

**Brenda Wong Aoki** created and conceived *Return of the Sun*, using her ongoing research on Japanese myth and choreography from the dancers' previous set performances.

**Jeff Raz** wrote the piece. Jeff is the Founder and Director of the Clown Conservatory at the San Francisco Circus Center. He has performed nationally and internationally with *Cirque du Soleil*, *The Pickle Circus*, *Lincoln Center Theater*, *Vaudeville Nouveau*, *Dell'Arte Players*, *Berkeley Repertory Theatre*, and *Marin and SF Shakespeare Festivals*. Jeff teaches physical theater and circus arts throughout schools in the United States and China.

**Jael Weisman** directed the piece. He is a founding member of the *Dell'Arte Players Company* and has received many awards for his directing with *Dell'Arte* and *The San Francisco Mime Troupe*. He has worked with many artists, including *Brenda Wong Aoki* and *Mark Izu* for over twenty years, and with *Peter Sellars*, the *Berkeley Symphony Orchestra*, *Carlo Mazzone-Clementi*, and *Joseph Chaikin*.

*Weisman* taught theater at many colleges in the Bay Area including *Mills*, *USF*, *Stanford*, and *SF State*.

**Ruth Mankin** is the Arts Education Director with World Arts West and Program Director for *Return of the Sun*. She holds a MA in education and has worked in the field of arts education for over twenty years.

## MUSICIANS INCLUDE:

**Mark Izu** composed the music and plays the double bass and *sheng*, a Chinese multi-reed organ. He is joined by *Pedro Rosales* on vocals and the *cajón* box drum; *David Pinto* on a 6-string electric bass; and *Jung Il Moon* on three Korean instruments, the *tae pyung so*, *jangu* and the *piri*, a double reed wind instrument.

**Pedro Rosales** began playing the *cajón* at age fourteen. He has played with many ensembles and accomplished musicians, including *Fogo Na Roupa*, and various Peruvian touring artists. In 1995, with much appreciation to his mentor, *Lalo Izquierdo* of *Peru Negro Cultural Association*, *Pedro Rosales* co-founded *De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association* with choreographer *Gabriela Shiroma*, guitar player *Carlos Pastor*, and vocalist, *Juan Cuba*.

**David Pinto** has established a prestigious career in Peru as one of the best and most innovative bass players and arrangers of his generation. He is best known as accompanist for the renowned Afro-Peruvian singer *Susana Baca*, and he was featured on her CD, *Lamento Negro* which won the Latin GRAMMY® Award for Best Folk Album in 2002.

**Jung Il Moon** is a Korean instrumentalist and composer. He earned a BA and MA in Korean traditional music at *Hanyang University*, Korea and was principal *piri* player for the Korean Broadcasting Station's Korean Traditional Music Orchestra. He is currently a Korean traditional music professor at *Woosuk University*, Korea and conductor of *Junra Bookdo Youth Orchestra*.

# NORTHERN CALIFORNIA KOREAN DANCE ASSOCIATION

*Korea*

*Gum Mu* is a reprise of a measured and elegant dance, which originated in Korea's Shinra period (57 BCE to 668 CE). The story is told that in ancient times, a seven-year-old boy, Hwang Chang Yang, became famous for his skill with the Korean sword dance called *gum mu*. The boy was invited to perform for Shinra's enemy, the king of Baekjae, and while dancing, he stabbed the king to death. The king's guard killed the boy, and Shinra's people mourned for him. They crafted masks to look like the young hero and danced the sword dance in his honor, and the dance became a favorite in royal courts. Originally, only men danced the *gum mu* with swords and masks. When women began dancing it in the Chosun period (1392-1910), they dropped the masks. Over the centuries, the once dangerous dance has evolved a deliberate and ritualized beauty, and its quiet movements offer grace and peace.

Hearan Chung's dance is characterized by elegance, and her choreography incorporates symbolic elements of earth, air, and water, demonstrating her interpretation of the spirit of Korea. She performs a dynamic solo with a long

sword and is also joined by dancers who move in synchronization, rotating thirty-centimeter-long steel swords in each hand. *Gum Mu* is traditionally performed in the costumes worn by ancient Chosun's government officials: *junrip* (black hats), *junbok* (blue vests), and *jundae* (red belts). It is also performed with traditional music, played on Korean wind, string, and percussion instruments. A percussion instrument called *bak* signals the changes of rhythm and speed, and the clash of opening and closing swords sounds a slow, insistent, and elegant marking of time.

For *Return of the Sun*, Hearan Chung presents *Gum Mu* as she fulfills her role as the Sun Goddess.

The Northern California Korean Dance Association, created in 2004 by Artistic Director Hearan Chung, fosters and develops Korean culture and dance as cultural exchange between Korea and other nationalities, local Korean immigrants, and Korean Americans. Hearan Chung has mastered various fields of Korean dance including court, folk, and creative dance, beginning her training at age five. She earned an MA from Ewha Women's University, taught for over twenty years in Korean universities, and immigrated

to the United States in 2000. She has choreographed over forty-six works of dance, published four theses, and has performed at the *Festival*, the Asian Art Museum, and the *Women on the Way* festival at Dance Mission Theater. She was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award in 2005 and 2007, and was featured in the PBS 2006 SPARK Program. In 2007, Chung received a grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the Alliance for California Traditional Arts.

**Dance Origin:** Korea • **Genre:** Korean Sword Dance • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Hearan Chung • **Title:** *Gum Mu* • **Dancers:** Hearan Chung, Esther Lee, Lydia Lee  
**Musician:** Jung Il Moon





# SHREELATA SURESH

India

Shreelata Suresh performs as a soloist in *Return of the Sun*, adapting two *bharatanatyam* dances for her role as Goddess of Dawn. *Bharatanatyam* is a South Indian classical dance form. The name derives from *bha* for *bhava* (mime and physical expression), *ra* for *raga* (song), *tha* for *thalam* (rhythm), and *natyam* (dance). Ancient story claims it originated with Lord Shiva, and ancient artworks show how it developed and flourished in the temples of Tamil Nadu in southern India over two thousand years ago. Traditionally, young maidens called *devadasis* (servants of god) danced this form in praise and prayer, and to tell ancient Hindu stories.

Shreelata's first piece is *Jathiswaram* (danced to create the mirror for the Sun Goddess), an example of the pure dance form of *bharatanatyam*. Usually danced as the second piece in a performance, its choreography is simple, introducing the audience to basic movements and postures. As the dance progresses, the dancer performs increasingly complex steps, displaying her skill. *Jathiswaram* is based on Carnatic music—the South Indian classical music using composed

melodies, ragas, and improvisation—and the dance follows the improvised melodies of the musicians. This form originated with dancers who loved the exceptional beauty of Carnatic music, and wanted to respond to it with their own art form. In *Jathiswaram*, the dancer blends sequences of rhythmic syllables—expressed in footwork, gesture, and posture—that follow the instrumentalists' rhythmic cycles and melodic phrasing.

Shreelata's second piece, *Pushpanjali*, (danced to entice the Sun Goddess out of her cave) is another *bharatanatyam* pure dance item. In Sanskrit, *pushpam* means “flower” and *anjali* means “offering with folded hands.” Here the dancer offers flowers to Mother Earth; then she offers her respects and invokes the gods controlling the eight directions. She offers respect to her guru as well as respect and welcome to the audience. The dance concludes with pure dance movements in a rhythmic sequence.

Shreelata Suresh is trained in both *bharatanatyam* and *kuchipudi* Indian classical dance forms. She studied in India with Vyjayantimala Bali, and presently trains with V. Krishnamoorthi of New Delhi, whose unique and innovative choreography has encouraged her to

create a distinct style of her own. Shreelata has given numerous stage and TV performances, dancing in most regions of the globe. She has received many awards for her efforts to restore and share the sacredness and spiritual significance of South Indian dance. Shreelata is also a contemporary teacher of *bharatanatyam* in the pure classical style. She founded Vishwa Shanthi Dance Academy to promote peace through dance and other allied arts and to help dancers find joy and a higher expression of their true self through dance.

**Dance Origin:** India • **Genre:** Bharatanatyam  
**Titles:** *Jathiswaram, Pushpanjali*  
**Choreographer/Soloist:** Shreelata Suresh



# PARANGAL DANCE COMPANY

## Philippines

From Mindanao Island in the Philippines, Parangal Dance Company presents narrative bird dances, as they are performed in Lumad festivities. Lumad means “indigenous”—it is the collective name used by eighteen non-Islamic ethno-linguistic groups. The Lumad are about a fifth of the country’s population: some live a modern Filipino lifestyle, and others live in remote forests, lowlands, and coastal areas. Their dances remain deeply rooted in place; agricultural rites, marriage ceremonies, and tribal gatherings are celebrated with dance, and the choreography shows a close attention to nature.

*Madal* is in six parts:

*Madal Prelude* is a world premiere, inspired by Lumad dances.

*Lawin-Lawin* is a *Bagobo* rite-of-passage dance performed by sons of the *datu*, or chieftan. The dance shows the maturation of an eagle (*lawin*) from egg to adulthood. As the eagle battles with strong mountain winds, he eventually finds his strength.

*Madal Taho/Madal Blelah* is a *T'boli* dance portraying a mythical bird whose feathers contain the colors of all known birds. Note the beauty and careful dress of *T'boli* women—embroidered tops, tubular *lewek* skirts, hilot girdles, and hair in well-kept locks.

*Blit-B'laan* is a courtship dance of the *B'laan*, imitating birds during mating season. The females scurry away, burying their heads under their wings, and the males enjoy the chase. The *B'laan* women wear elaborate blouses, necklaces, anklets, tiny bells, aromatic roots, and flowers. The men wear equally ornate jackets over tight-fitting trousers.

In *Makatod*, a rite of passage from the *Davao Mandayan*, a young prince is born high by courtiers. The *Mandaya* dress uses distinctive block designs, line patterns, rickrack, and scrolls.

*Madal Final*, also a world premiere, is an original piece that affirms the community’s unity and distinct identity.

Traditional Lumad instruments pace the dancers: the *agung*, *bamboo*, *gabang*, and *dabakan* pace the first five pieces. In the last piece, the *kulintang* (eight graduated, small gongs) provides the melody and rhythm.

Parangal, meaning tribute, was founded in May 2008. The company gives tribute to the Philippines by preserving and promoting tradition through dance, music, and costumes. It aims to inspire, entertain, and educate the diverse San Francisco Bay Area and beyond about the Philippines and its culture and traditions.

**Dance Origin:** Philippines • **Genre:** Lumad - Bagobo, T'boli, B'laan, and Mandaya • **Title:** *Madal*  
**Artistic Director:** Eric Solano • **Music Director:** Major Julian • **Choreographers:** June Arellano (*Makatod*), Julius Claros (*Madal*), Ritchel Gazo (*Madal*), Eric Solano • **Original Choreography:** Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company (*Madal Blelah*, *Blit-B'laan*, *Makatod*), Ramon Obusan (*Madal Taho*, *Lawin-Lawin*), Parangal Dance Company (*Madal* Intro, Finale) • **Dance Masters:** Julius Claros, Marlon Dumlao, Ritchel Gazo, Gilbert Laylay, Jet Tagle • **Dance Consultant:** Karina Fantillo • **Dancers:** Millet Alcanices, Rey Amado Arcilla, June Arellano, Hazel Benigno, Julius Claros, Marissa Cruz, Mark Diao, Marlon Dumlao, Karl Gavero, Ritchel Gazo, Ali Ignacio, Hebert Jamir, Gilbert Laylay, Maricris Macabeo-Ong, Melisa Mayeda, Ron Mendoza, Klyden Roca, Jet Tagle, Renalyn Tan-Salazar, Andrew Tiña, Shelly Tomas-Camisa • **Musicians:** Armando Gazo (*agung*), Major Julian (*kulintang*, *gabang*), Jojo B. Malabuyo (*agung*), Eric Solano (*dabakan*)



# ENSAMBLES BALLET FOLKLÓRICO DE SAN FRANCISCO

WORLD PREMIERE

## Mexico

When Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula was ravaged by locusts in the mid-1500s, the people of Villa de Campeche prayed for relief. They erected a small church in honor of San Román Mártir (St. Roman Martyr) and imported a Black Christ statue from Italy. Today, the state of Campeche is known for the deep faith of its people, and the architectural beauty of *Iglesia del Cristo Negro de San Román* (Church of the Black Christ of Saint Roman), drawing many visitors and pilgrims.

Ensamble Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco performs four dances from a centuries-old festival that honors *el Cristo Negro de San Román*. Zenón Barrón choreographed the piece for today's stage. He learned the dances from Maestra Victoria Mendoza, a native of Campeche. As in many dance forms, these Campeche folklórico dances—described in order below—emerged from indigenous dance forms, dances of Spanish colonialists, and movements and rhythms from displaced Africans.

The first dance, *Sarao Campechano*, exudes an air of old Spain, having been a favorite at celebrations by the elite

Spanish class on large colonial estates. *Jarabe Cubano* is a short energetic dance set to music written in six octets. Partners alternate sets of *zapateado* (complex Spanish footwork patterns) as they execute rapid turns.

*Baile del Almud* is a dance with pre-Hispanic (Maya) roots. The dancers perform on top of a small wooden box called *almud*, once used by indigenous communities to measure produce at the market. In a 6/8 rhythm, the dancers perform intricate *zapateo*: sets of complex percussive footwork with African origins and Spanish influence.

*Jarabe Criollo* is from the 18th century. The *jarabe* is a traditional song form in mariachi music, and this *jarabe* is one of the oldest known in Mexico. The dancers' footwork imitates the church bells that assemble the faithful and joyful followers of the *Cristo Negro de San Román*.

The dancers are in traditional dress, showing indigenous and Spanish influences: the women's *huipil* tunic, hand-embroidered blouse, Spanish-brocade skirt and shawl, and sandals from Spain's Moorish past; and the men's white *guayabera* (a style that possibly originated in Maya Yucatán),

with black pants, a red silk band, and Spanish boots. The music is performed by a *jaranera* orchestra, with the clarinet, trumpet, tuba, *güiro* (Caribbean gourd scraper), and *trombón*.

Ensamble Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco was founded in 1992 to preserve the tradition of Mexican folk dance with quality and authenticity. Ensamble's work has been recognized in the United States, various states in Mexico, and China. In 1999, Ensamble began creating and designing full-scale productions, which show the rich tradition and ritual of Mexican folkloric and dance history.

**Dance Origin:** Mexico • **Genre:** Campeche  
**Title:** *Fiesta del Cristo Negro de San Román*  
**Executive Director:** Juan Carlos Tovar  
**Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Zenón Barrón  
**Maestra:** Victoria Mendoza • **Dancers:** Lupe Aguilera, María Anaya, Salvador Arellano, Zenón Barrón, Maricela Benavides, Luis Cel, Diana Chavez, Jesus Cortes, Hugo Flores, Isela Galvez, Monica Giese, Jesus Gomez, Ashley Hernandez, David Herrera, Vanessa Lopez, Wilfredo Manalo, Norberto Martinez, Juan Orosco, Andrea Parber, Daniela Rueda, Jordan Salvador, Vanessa Sanches, Nayeli Silva, Karla Toledo, Juan Carlos Tovar, Elena Trejo, Lupita Troncoso, Sandra Valadez • **Musicians:** Zenón Barrón (güiro), Juan Caballos (clarinet), Sergio Duran (timbales), Miguel Corea (Director), Cecilia Pena Covea (trombon), Elijah Probst (clarinet).



# JUBILEE AMERICAN DANCE THEATRE

## *United States*

Jubilee presents two early American dance forms: square dancing and Appalachian clogging. The set begins with a square dance, a form developed in early New England communities, combining elements of English Morris dances and contra dances, the French quadrille, Irish country dances, and African dance. The “caller” is America’s only unique contribution to the square dance: as the dance evolved increasingly complex patterns, a caller gave cues to the steps and formations. This piece shows the dynamic form of square dancing that evolved in the 1950s, with formations like the “Harlem rosette” and the “teacup chain.”

The next piece features precision Appalachian clogging. Jubilee presents a high-spirited demonstration of precision clogging footwork as it is used in traditional formations: America’s big circle dance, the square dance, and the running set. You will see traditional American square dance moves such as “duck for the oyster, dive for the clam” as well as an overlap of common formations in both dances—right and left-hand stars, do-sa-dos (partners passing

around each other while facing forward), seesaws, and elbow turns. Along with hambone, tap dance, and step dance, Appalachian clogging is a percussive form that is rooted in British and Irish origins and subsequently blended European, Native American, and African-American elements.

The costumes suggest “the American feel”—men wear plaid shirts and suspenders, and women wear calico dresses. This clothing was seen in 1950s rural communities and casual settings. Like the dance, the “ol’ timey” music has roots in British and Irish music. It was further influenced by the songs of enslaved Africans who laid railroad tracks through the mountains. To the European fiddle, dulcimer, and pipes, mountain musicians added the banjo, a traditional African instrument, as well as the then-evolving guitar and mandolin.

Internationally known teacher Erik Hoffman choreographed the square dance number and wrote the “calls” in 2006; this piece debuted in Kaustinen, Finland, and was last performed at the Gannat (France) International Folk Dance Festival in 2008, and was reset for this stage. Jubilee’s Artistic Director, Hilary Roberts, choreographed the Appalachian clogging

piece in 1999. It debuted on the *Festival* stage in 2000, and has since been performed locally, and in Italy, the Czech Republic, Mexico, Finland, and France. It was also reset for this performance.

Jubilee American Dance Theatre was formed in 1999 to represent historical, social, and ritual North American dance forms, bringing to life the dances, music, songs, and stories of the folks who made America, from Appalachia to Baja California, from the swing era dance hall to Cajun country and North American whaling.

**Dance Origin:** United States • **Genre:** American Folk • **Title:** *Appalachian Afternoon: A Barn Dance* • **Artistic Director:** Hilary Roberts • **Choreographers:** Erik Hoffman (squares), Hilary Roberts (clogging) • **Dancers:** Eric Bennion, Dee Brown, Becky Coulter, Mary Ann Davis, Rebecca Davis-Navarette, Lew Douglas, Oscar Erickson, Debbie Evenich, Fabian Goulay, Diana Greenleaf, Michelle Ito, Joe James, Sandra Koenig, Vicki Lapp, John Lozynsky, David Nelson, Monica Oakley, Hilary Roberts, Steve Rottell, Mark Ryken, Lonnie Stevens, Ruth Suzuki, Barbara Vernon • **Musicians:** David Brown, Chip Curry, Alan Dreyfuss, Hap Engle, Ken Olcott (caller), Tony Phillips



# DE ROMPE Y RAJA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

WORLD PREMIERE

## Peru

*Son de los Diablos* (Song-dance of the Devils) is an Afro-Peruvian street masquerade dance that originated in colonial Lima. In the 1500s, Spanish colonialists prohibited Africans generally from dancing, but also forced them to perform traditional African dances in morality plays and Corpus Christi pageants, dressed as devils in straw and goatskins. By the time slavery was abolished in 1854, Afro-Peruvians had appropriated this dance as a symbol of cultural resistance. The *Son de los Diablos* dance was paraded through Afro-Peruvian neighborhoods during carnival time. Dancers painted their faces with flags of African countries, performed stunts and tricks in masks, and burlesqued and parodied devils, with marching *cuadrillas* (teams of dancers and musicians) of little devils kept in line with the *Diablo Mayor's* (Head Devil's) whip. These performances evolved into fierce *zapateo* competitions, lengthy theatrical pieces, and religious parodies, such as one in which the *Diablo Mayor* forced the little devils to form a choreographic cross.

President Manuel Prado banned the increasingly "wild" *carnaval* in the 1940s,

but the devils kept coming back. In the mid-50s, visionary folklorists Jose Duran and Victoria Santa Cruz staged an ethnographic re-creation based on a 19th-century watercolor by Pancho Fierro. In the 1980's, Lima's Movimiento Negro Francisco Congo and Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani revived the dance because of its theatricality, and also as a way to begin examining and erasing colonial assumptions: as "a collective exploration of embodied social memory, particularly in relation to questions of ethnicity, violence, and memory in Peru." In 2004, in Lima's carnival, the devils took back the streets, as *comparsas* from all over Lima arrived to dance *Son de los Diablos*.

The choreography of this piece represents the dance as it was seen in Peru's first years of independence (1821-1850). The costumes are based on Pancho Fierro's 1800s watercolor. The wonderfully expressive smaller masks were made in Peru by Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani, and the larger mask was made in the Bay Area by Edmund Badeaux from the Chaskinakuy Andean music group. The traditional *son* music was recovered from fragments of guitar melody, and older performers' memories of rhythms on the *cajita* (wooden collection boxes from churches, turned into percussion

instruments worn around the neck) and the *quijada* (the jawbone of a donkey, horse, or mule, scraped or struck to make the molars rattle in their sockets.) For this piece, the *cajón* (Afro-Peruvian wooden box drum) and guitar lead the piece.

De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association was founded in 1995 as a cultural organization dedicated to preserving and promoting traditions and culture from the coastal region of Peru, where the music, dance, and motifs of European, African, and indigenous peoples intersect.

**Dance Origin:** Coastal Peru • **Genre:** Festejo  
**Title:** *Son De Los Diablos* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Gabriela Shiroma • **Dancers:** Michelle Agüero, Rosa Cabezudo, Yaccaira De La Torre, Mariela Herrera, Rosa Los Santos, Zhayra Palma, Sylvia Pestana, Carmen Roman, Erika Sarmiento, Gabriela Shiroma, Diana Suarez, Joanna Suarez, Carlos Venturo, Carmen Violich  
**Musicians:** Juan Carlos Angulo (2nd cajón), Edmond Badeaux (harp), Ryan Chesire (cajita), Lichi Fuentes (vocals), Omar Gutierrez (quijada), Marina Lavalle (vocals), Erik Molina (cajita), David Pinto (guitar), Pedro Rosales (cajón, vocals), Frances Vidal (cajita, vocals), Federico Zuñiga (bass)



# WAN-CHAO CHANG DANCE

## Indonesia & China

*Keep Her Safe, Please!* is a fusion of Indonesian and Chinese dance, inspired by the heroism of women during the 1998 anti-Chinese riots in Indonesia. Its initial inspiration was from a letter received by Choreographer Wan-Chao Chang's Indonesian-Chinese parents who had immigrated previously to Taiwan. This letter was from friends still living in Indonesia: "I am scared of what is happening here. Please, I am begging you, take my daughter away from Indonesia and keep her safe! If I survive I will serve you my whole life..."

During the racial riots against the ethnic Chinese, many Indonesian-Chinese were massacred, women were raped, and over a hundred Chinese-owned shops were looted in Jakarta. These incidents occurred over ten years ago, but memories of inhumane violence continue to haunt the victims, and many inspiring stories of heroic women have also lived on. During the difficult times, women protected their daughters by sending them out of the country, while they themselves remained behind to help victims. Showing exceptional courage, love, and loyalty, these women kept many families united during and after the tragedy.

To some extent, this piece is a modern dance: it recognizes contemporary women and our common humanity. The choreography, however combines traditional Chinese and Indonesian elements, and the company's traditionally-trained dancers have adjusted to diverse styles of movement. Wan-Chao merged movements from Chinese folkloric and classical dance with subtle and supple Javanese dance expression, lively West Javanese style movements, and Indonesian martial arts. Dancers also integrate the Javanese *sampur*, a scarf that amplifies and emphasizes dance movements, and can symbolize wings, or fire—or even a weapon.

The recorded music is extracted from Mbuh, by Suhendi Afraynto; *Diya*, by Dody Satya Ekagustdiman; *Gedeng Erhu*, by Gamelan Pacifica; and from "Trance Gong." It includes vocals, music by a traditional Javanese Gamelan percussion orchestra, and melodies on a Chinese *erhu*, the traditional two-stringed violin.

Wan-Chao Chang Dance was formed in 2008 by Wan-Chao Chang to embrace diversity, and to reflect the constant cultural exchange that occurs in our modern world. The company debuted with *There* (a piece of Asian fusion inspired from

Persian, Mongolian, Korean, and Chinese dance movements) at WestWave Dance Festival in 2008. Wan-Chao was born in Taiwan and received extensive training in Western and Eastern dance and music. Since arriving in the United States in 1995, she has performed with Ballet Afsaneh, Gamelan Sekar Jaya, Gadung Kasturi Balinese Dance and Music, Harsanari Indonesian Dance Company, Chinese Folk Dance Association, and Westwind International Folk Ensemble, which she directed from 2001-2002.

**Dance Origins:** Indonesia, China • **Genres:** Contemporary Indonesian & Chinese Fusion  
**Title:** *Keep Her Safe, Please!* • **Director/Choreographer/Costumes:** Wan-Chao Chang  
**Dancers:** Renee Araneda, Wan-Chao Chang, Kompiang Metri-Davies, Aliah Najmabadi, Nadia Roan, Hannah Romanowsky, Kristen Sague



# FUA DIA CONGO

WORLD PREMIERE

## Central Africa

In recent decades, Central Africa has been ravaged by genocide, bloodshed, and displacement. *Kongo-Kintouari* links the ancient spelling of Kongo and the word *kintouari*, a Kikongo word meaning “unity.” Fua Dia Congo presents this dance as an artistic call for unification and peace, presenting homage to the beautiful and diverse rhythms and movements from Congolese cultures.

In the 14th century, from the dense equatorial forests of Central Africa rose one of Africa’s great empires—Kongo. The kingdom encompassed what are now northern Angola, parts of Gabon and Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo (RC), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which is itself the ancestral homeland for over 200 ethnic groups. Fua Dia Congo presents dance, music, and theater from this region, with forms deeply rooted in religion and ritual, honoring life-changing and life-sustaining events such as: childbirth; rites-of-passage; courtship; ceremony and honor; healing of sickness; preparation for war; and the transition from life to death.

Today’s choreography highlights the traditions of the BaTeke people of the RC, the DRC, and Gabon, with *Obitan*: a BaTeke dance and drum ritual performed during celebration and pageantry to honor the king and other esteemed individuals. It also honors the BaBembe ethnic group of the RC, the DRC, and Western Tanzania with a variation of *MuPaba*, a BaBembe dance and drum celebration marking a successful hunt.

The dancers wear hand-dyed African fabrics, traditional raffia skirts, beads, and other handmade accessories from the Republic of the Congo. Many costume elements are products of nature: painstakingly woven and braided raffia skirts from a rare Congolese tree and *grellos* that adorn the ankles—serving as both costume and instrument—also come from a Congolese plant.

*Kongo-Kintouari* premieres at the *Festival* and features choreography by Kiazzi Malonga, Muisi-kongo Malonga, and Chrysogone Diangouaya. Kiazzi Malonga is one of the next generation’s most talented and innovative Congolese drum masters. Muisi-kongo Malonga’s unique choreographic works and approach to presentation of a classical art form speaks to the progression of worlds, old and new.

Chrysogone Diangouaya, originally from the Republic of the Congo, is Founder and Director of Paris-based le Ballet-théâtre Monanaa, a company rooted in traditional and contemporary Congolese dance.

Fua Dia Congo (Congolese Heritage) is a professional repertory dance company comprised of skilled musicians and dancers. The company was founded by world-renowned Congolese Master Artist Malonga Casquelourd in 1977 to preserve, promote, and study traditional Central African culture. His children, Musical Director Kiazzi Malonga, and Artistic Director Muisi-kongo Malonga carry on the legacy of their father: continuing its leadership role in the preservation and presentation of the soulful and cultural expressions of Congolese traditions.

**Dance Origin:** Central Africa • **Genre:** Congolese  
**Title:** *Kongo-Kintouari* • **Artistic Director:** Muisi-kongo Malonga • **Choreographers:** Chrysogone Diangouaya, Kiazzi Malonga, Muisi-kongo Malonga • **Dancers:** Kulwa Apará, Lia Bascomb, Angélique Holmes, Brandi Howard, Muisi-kongo Malonga, Rashid Mpugani, Cady Ndounda, Erika Sosoliso Simpson • **Musicians:** Ayodele Ankoanda Kinchen (vocals), Laura Borela (vocals), Henry Burton (percussion), Boueta Malonga (percussion), Kiazzi Malonga (lead percussion), Karma Smart (vocals)



# FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome to the 31st Annual San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival. As President of the Board of Directors of World Arts West, I am proud of the diversity, cultural heritage, and community awareness that we, as an organization, are able to bring forth for your enjoyment.

Since 1978, World Arts West has been presenting the dance and music traditions of the world—creating opportunities for individuals and communities to celebrate, share, and sustain the vitality of ethnic dance.

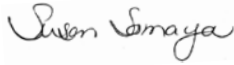
This extraordinary Festival—noted both locally and nationally as one of the most prestigious of its kind—could not happen without the efforts of the tireless dancers based here in the Bay Area. Their passion and commitment to excellence are non-paralleled, affording the seamless performances that you will enjoy.

In these challenging times, we are fortunate to have received funding to make a documentary film. We hope to share the energy and diversity of the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival with a larger audience with the debut of the film in the upcoming year. This could only happen here, in the Bay Area, where we are privileged to have such remarkable artistic and cultural diversity.

I thank all of the dancers who auditioned this year and those who continue on to perform over the four Festival weekends. Congratulations to Mary Jo Murphy-Feeney and to all of the previous winners of the annual Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award, who sustain heritage and share it with others. I thank RJ Muna for capturing dance and beauty in the program photos what can hardly be captured by words.

I thank those who have kept the heart of the Festival beating—Executive Director, Julie Mushet, the World Arts West Staff, the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council, and the many volunteers. I would particularly like to thank Rita Moreno, the Honorary Committee, Cheryl Jennings, and Don Sanchez for their support. Thank you Sherée Chambers and Diane Goldsmith for your special contributions as Gala Chairs.

For those of you attending for the first time, enjoy this magical evening. For those returning, welcome home.



Susan Somaya, President, World Arts West's Board of Directors

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## ABOUT US

Founded in 1978, World Arts West is a non-profit organization working to broaden appreciation of world dance and music forms and help artists sustain their cultural traditions.

This support helped to create the most vibrant and diverse dance community in the world.

Please consider making a donation to the *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival* when buying your tickets. Your contribution helps make the *Festival* possible and is tax-deductible. For information on making a contribution, please call 415-474-3914.

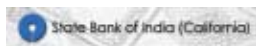
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*People Like Me*, World Arts West's Arts Education Program, completed its 15th season in March and April, presenting an exciting educational performance of world music and dance for children grades K-6. Running for 3-5 weeks each year, this acclaimed performance series has served over 120,000 Bay Area

children, teachers, and parents as well as school communities of the Central Valley and Southern California. *People Like Me* offers youth the opportunity to experience and learn about the immense diversity and cultural connections in world dance and music that is reflected in our region's multicultural population.

Drawing from the *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival* auditions and performances, this hour-long, narrated show is full of knowledge and fun, presenting diverse music and dance traditions in a theatrical and adventuresome format. Addressing a different educational theme each year, *People Like Me* explores and celebrates similarities and differences between people, and the beauty and importance of understanding diverse cultural expressions. The show and its supporting material, including pre- and post-performance activities, an extensive and growing online study guide, and a student activity book, provide curriculum elements that help educators fulfill California Department of Education curriculum frameworks. The generous support of corporate, government, foundation, and individual donors, make it possible to keep our program accessible to schools and families of all income levels.

Brochures for the 2010 season will be available in August 2009. To join our mailing list, and find out more about *People Like Me*, please call 1-888-PLM-0888, email [info@worldartswest.org](mailto:info@worldartswest.org), or visit [www.worldartswest.org/plm](http://www.worldartswest.org/plm).

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