

Nunamta Yup'ik Eskimo Singers and Dancers – Alaska • Chitresh Das Youth Company – India • AguaClara Flamenco – Spain • Ye Feng – China • Arenas Dance Company – Cuba • Parangal Dance Company – Philippines • Bolivia Corazón de América – Bolivia • Ensamble Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco – Mexico • Te Pura O Te Faturata – Tahiti • OngDance Company – Korea • Ananya Trumala – India • Caminos Flamencos – Spain • Nimely Pan African Dance Company – Liberia • Antara Asthrayl Dance – India • Los Danzantes de Aztlan de Fresno State – Mexico • Charya Burt Cambodian Dance – Cambodia • De Rompey Raja Cultural Association – Peru • Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto) – Mexico • Chinyakate Ensemble – Zimbabwe • Hermanos Herrera – Mexico • Leung's White Crane Lion and Dragon Dance Association – China

# 40 SAN FRANCISCO ETHNIC DANCE FESTIVAL

# UNITING



# THROUGH DANCE

**SAN FRANCISCO OPERA HOUSE  
SAN FRANCISCO CITY HALL  
JULY 6-22, 2018**

# Welcome

Gathering together  
to celebrate

2018 marks the 40th Anniversary of the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, and there is so much to celebrate!

Forty years ago, local dancers and musicians from throughout San Francisco came together to share their cultural heritage with each other and hundreds of people from the Bay Area's diverse communities.

Those first performances took place at neighborhood cultural centers and today, we are proud to present the 40th Anniversary Festival on the stage of the War Memorial Opera House.

The diverse cultural heritage being presented has been passed down from one generation to the next for many years, and in some cases, centuries or millennia. Imagine that! The songs and dances embody spiritual and cultural knowledge that is valued by their culture-bearers much more than any material possessions.

These cultural treasures have the power to unite people, to bring healing, to communicate with one's ancestors, spread joy, and create transformation. Collectively, their enactment on this Festival stage, one after another, often brings forth a very powerful sense of awe, and sometimes even transcendence.

The Festival's Opera House debut in 2017 was described by Leah Garchik in the San Francisco Chronicle as experiencing "the city at its best," and our hope is that your Festival experience will bring you appreciation for the sense of well-being that comes from being in community with others.

We wish that you could also experience how magical it is to be backstage with the artists, but at least you can join the fun by dancing with the artists in the lobby after the performances.

We invite you to learn more about the work of the Festival which continues year-round, and to support the nearly 500 local dance groups sustaining the dance and music from more than 100 world cultures. There are many ways to become involved and everyone is encouraged to contribute.

The decades of the hard work and dedication creating and sustaining this magnificent Festival have built a legacy where this Festival is now appreciated as one of the most extraordinary annual cultural events in the nation. It provides a broad view of the world and is a testament to the incredible strength of diversity and what is possible when everyone works together towards a higher purpose.

Thank you for your participation and here's to 40 more years!



Julie Mushet, Executive Director



Te Pura O Te Rahura'a

# 2018 Festival Lineup

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## 40th Anniversary Festival Opening

July 6, 2018, San Francisco City Hall

AERODANCE, Mussel Rock Cloggers, Kim Shuck / pg. 17

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## OPERA HOUSE WEEKEND 1 / July 14 & 15, 2018

Festival Welcome Artists / pg 18

Nunamta Yup'ik Eskimo Singers and Dancers / pg 20

Chitresh Das Youth Company / pg 22

Festival Legacy Tributes: performances by Sandor Diabankouezi  
and the Toronto Tabla Ensemble / pg 24

AguaClara Flamenco / pg 26

Tribute to Ann Woo: Leung's White Crane Lion & Dragon Dance Association / pg 28

Ye Feng / pg 30

Arenas Dance Company / pg 32

Parangal Dance Company / pg 34

Bolivia Corazón de América / pg 36

Ensamble Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco / pg 38

Te Pura O Te Rahurāa / pg 40

## OPERA HOUSE WEEKEND 2 / July 21 & 22, 2018

OngDance Company / pg 42

Ananya Tirumala / pg 44

Caminos Flamencos / pg 46

Nimely Pan African Dance Company / pg 48

Antara Asthaayi Dance / pg 50

Los Danzantes de Aztlán de Fresno State / pg 52

Charya Burt Cambodian Dance / pg 54

De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association / pg 56



We dedicate this year's Festival to longtime World Arts West Board member Herb Rosenthal, and to Ann Woo, Artistic Director of Chinese Performing Arts of America. Read more about the tribute to Ann Woo on page 28.





# Dance and Music Origins

Over 500 Northern California artists presenting dance and music from more than 17 world cultures spanning 5 continents

**Map & Page # | Group Name / Location**

July 6	17	AERODANCE / Gujarat, India
	17	Mussel Rock Cloggers / Appalachia, US
July 14-15	19	Chinyakare Ensemble / Zimbabwe
	19	Hermanos Herrera / Mexico
	18	Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto) / Tabasco, Mexico
	20	Nunamta Yup'ik Eskimo Singers & Dancers / Alaska
	22	Chitresh Das Youth Company, with the Toronto Tabla Ensemble / Northern India
	24	Sandor Diabankouezi / Brazzaville, Republic of Congo
	26	AquaClara Flamenco / Sevilla, Spain
	28	Leung's White Crane Lion & Dragon Dance Association / Canton, China
	30	Ye Feng / China
	32	Arenas Dance Company / Havana, Cuba
34	Parangal Dance Company / Mindanao, Philippines	
36	Bolivia Corazón de América / Potosí, Bolivia	
38	Ensamblés Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco / Tabasco, Mexico	
40	Te Pura O Te Rahuràa / Tahiti	

**Map & Page # | Group Name / Location**

July 21-22	42	OngDance Company / South Korea
	44	Ananya Tirumala / Andhra Pradesh, Southern India
	46	Caminos Flamencos / Cadiz, Spain
	48	Nimely Pan African Dance Company / Liberia
	50	Antara Asthaayi Dance / Northern India
	52	Los Danzantes de Aztlán de Fresno State / Hidalgo, Mexico
	54	Charya Burt Cambodian Dance / Cambodia
	56	De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association / Peru

# Welcome from the Festival Artistic Directors



**Māhealani Uchiyama, Patrick Makuakāne, and Latanya d. Tigner**

We are delighted and humbled to serve as the new Co-Artistic Directors for the 40th Anniversary San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival. Together, we bring a collective experience as participants in the Festival that spans forty years. In essence, we grew up here in a place where people are admired and championed for their diversity.

As children growing up influenced by the Civil Rights Movement, we view this Festival as a place where all cultures and all religious and spiritual practices are welcome and have value and a place in the world. Given what is going on in the world today, the significance of this Festival cannot be understated.

This Festival is a celebration of who we are as a community and a reminder of what is possible when we offer the best of ourselves to the world.

As stewards of this global community in dance, we celebrate what makes each culture unique while recognizing that we are all more alike than different. We genuinely enjoy the artistry, and the opportunity to work with so many different cultural communities. This unique experience has given us the opportunity to observe how the practice of dance builds bonds within the community while instilling self-discipline, respect for tradition, and a desire for excellence.

For decades, we've witnessed a profusion of artists from many ethnicities digging deep in their cultural treasure box, sharing their heritage through dance, music, and song with authenticity and technical veracity. We are inspired by how the artists come together to witness the similarities within their traditions, and how the "ah ha" moments of these realizations spark deep conversations around cultural practices.

We especially love the multigenerational offerings, and how younger dancers are performing at such a high level of understanding and artistic caliber. This clearly demonstrates a passing down of tradition and culture which includes history, ritual practice, and cultural context beyond the technical dance training. These young dancers give us hope and excitement for the future of their dance forms and cultural traditions.

It has been an honor to be mentored by the Artistic Directors Emeritus, Carlos Carvajal and CK Ladzekpo, who have graciously shared their experience and expertise with us. We'd like to thank the entire Festival team- the staff, Auditions panelists, production crew, Board of Directors, and hundreds of volunteers- for all of the hard work to make the magic happen. From the launch of the November Auditions to the hundreds of hours of planning and rehearsals, we deeply appreciate how much work goes into creating this cultural treasure.

This Festival will inspire you. It will surprise and arouse you. The breadth of vision and talent being presented is remarkable – an undeniable affirmation that traditional artists have raised the bar for excellence in crafting dynamic and poignant work deserving a world class stage like the magnificent Opera House!

With love and gratitude,

Māhealani, Patrick, and Latanya

**PATRICK MAKUAKĀNE**, Founder and Director of the Hawaiian dance company Nā Lei Hulu i ka Wēkiu, is a creative force in the hula world and is well-known for his vibrant and innovative choreography. While grounded in the traditions and fundamentals of hula, his artistry brings this dynamic dance form to a new level and creates exciting new dimensions for the audience to enjoy. In recognition of his cultural and artistic impact, Mr. Makuakāne has won many honors and awards. These include numerous Isadora Duncan Dance Awards, with the most recent being a Sustained Achievement Award in 2016. He has also been honored with the Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award presented at the 2006 San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and a Choreographer Commissioning Award from the Hewlett and Gerbode Foundations in 2012. In 2014, he was awarded the Native Arts & Cultures Foundation Artist Fellowship. In passing down the specific customs of the hula lineage from which he descends, Mr. Makuakāne continues to play a fundamental role in preserving a vibrant cultural heritage, even as he looks forward to creating new traditions which reflect an ever-evolving multicultural world.

**LATANYA D. TIGNER** has performed professionally with Dimensions Dance Theater since 1986, and has studied and toured nationally and internationally, performing multidisciplinary works rooted in African diasporic dance forms. Latanya holds a B.A. in Physical Education/Dance, a Master's Degree in Arts Administration, directs Dimensions' youth company, teaches dance at Contra Costa College and is a lecturer at UC Berkeley. She has worked with numerous choreographers and dance companies, including Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble, Art of Ballet, Robert Henry Johnson, El Wah Movement, Housin' Authority, RaRa Tou Limen, Fua Dia Congo, Urban Bush Women (SLI), Kiandanda Dance Theater, Soul Nubian's Global Street Dance, and many more. Latanya has created commissioned works for Dimensions Dance Theater, Black Choreographers Festival, Robert Moses' Kin, and has presented work in the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, Cuba Caribe, and Mabina Dance Festival (Congo-Brazzaille). Tigner's contribution to Dimensions' The Town on Notice and her recent untitled work-in-progress address gentrification and the perceptions of homelessness. She has also set choreography for Cal Shakes' production of *black odyssey*, SF Shakespeare's production of *A Winter's Tale*, Ubuntu Theater's production of *Dance of the Holy Ghost*, Delina Brooks' *An Open Love Letter to Black Fathers*, Contra

Costa College's productions of *In the Blood*, *For Colored Girls*, and *Godspell*, and Li Smith's production of *Purlie Victorious*. Tigner's current research and study include New Orleans Second Line parading traditions and traditional dances from the Kongo Kingdom.

**MĀHEALANI UCHIYAMA** is an award-winning dancer, musician, composer, choreographer, recording artist, author and teacher. An advocate for cultural understanding, she is the founder and Artistic Director of the Māhealani Uchiyama Center for International Dance in Berkeley and is Kumu Hula of Hālau Ka Ua Tuahine. Ms. Uchiyama is also the creator and director of the annual Kāpili Polynesian Dance and Music Workshops. She holds a BA in Dance Ethnology and an MA in Pacific Island Studies from the University of Hawai'i. In addition to her hula and Tahitian dance training, she has performed professionally in the genres of Caribbean and North African dance. As Kumu Hula, she has led numerous performance tours to Tahiti, New Zealand and the islands of Hawai'i, and has taught workshops throughout the United States, Mexico and Canada. She has been an instructor of Hawaiian Language at Stanford University, contributed a chapter on the hula for the publication *Dancing on the Earth* and authored the *Haumāna Hula Handbook for Students of Hawaiian Dance* (published by North Atlantic Books / Penguin Random House.) Her CD *A Walk by the Sea* was awarded the 2007 Hawai'i Music Award for Best World Music Album. She is the 2009 recipient of the Aloha Spirit Award and has been presented the 2015 Ke Kanaka Po'okela (The Person of Distinction) Award by the Berkeley Hawaiian Music Festival. She has also served on the panel of dance experts for the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and the Tahiti Fete of San Jose and Hilo. Ms. Uchiyama is the former President of the Board of Directors of World Arts West, the producers of the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival.

**VISIT**  
[SFEthnicDanceFestival.org](http://SFEthnicDanceFestival.org)  
to learn more about our work,  
to view past program books,  
and to read about the artists  
who make up our extraordinary  
dance community.



# Festival History and Legacy



**Festival Emeritus Artistic Directors  
Carlos Carvajal and CK Ladzekpo**

The annual San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival is at the center of a network of 20,000 artists who are the heart and soul of the Bay Area's multicultural fabric. It has been our great pleasure to work with so many of these artists over the years.

Since the beginning of our Festival, the degree of excellence in choreography and performance have remained impressive, due in part to the many outstanding dance teachers in our region. Little did the 1978 Festival performers know that they would be laying the foundation for the dedicated artists that you will see on stage today.

The following pages outline some of the Festival's history and trajectory over the years, but it will take volumes to tell the many incredible Festival stories yet to be told. We hope to secure future investment to help document those important stories for future generations.

It is our dream that the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival will continue far into the future, expanding our presentation to East Bay and South Bay venues, showing as many dances as possible from the 100 world dance forms that are being sustained here in the Bay Area. How magnificent that would be!

May you always cherish your Festival memories.

Viva la danse,

**CARLOS CARVAJAL**, a native San Franciscan, is a distinguished dancer/choreographer of more than two hundred works for dance, opera, and musical theater companies, as well as television productions. Beginning as a folk dancer, he went on to the San Francisco Ballet, then the Ballet of the Marquis de Cuevas, Opera of Bremen, Opera of Bordeaux and Ballet Nacional of Venezuela as soloist, principal dancer and choreographer. He created more than twenty works for the San Francisco Ballet as its ballet master and associate choreographer. He founded San Francisco Dance Spectrum, creating over fifty works during its ten year tenure. He has also choreographed for the San Francisco Opera, Oakland Ballet, and Dance Theater of Harlem, among others. His full length ballets include Cinderella's Crystal Slipper, Totentanz, Wintermas, Carmina Burana and The Nutcracker. Honors/grants/awards include five from the National Endowment for the Arts, the San Francisco Arts Commission, the Critics' Circle and an Isadora Duncan Lifetime Achievement Award. He holds a BA in Theater and MA in Creative Arts from San Francisco State University. He served as Co-Artistic Director of our Festival for 12 seasons.

**CK LADZEKPO**, PhD, is the director of the African Music Program at the University of California, Berkeley. His is a distinguished career as a performer, choreographer, composer, teacher, and published scholar in the African performing arts. He is a member of a renowned family of African musicians and dancers who traditionally serve as lead drummers and composers among the Anlo-Ewe people of southeastern Ghana in West Africa. He has been a lead drummer and instructor with the Ghana National Dance Ensemble, the University of Ghana's Institute of African Studies and the Arts Council of Ghana. He joined the music faculty of the University of California, Berkeley, in 1973 and continues to be an influential catalyst of the African perspective in the performing arts. Awards include two choreographers' fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Irvine Choreographer's Fellowship and the Ruth Beckford Extraordinary People in Dance Award. He has been a member of the faculty council of the East Bay Center for Performing Arts since 1974. He served as Co-Artistic Director of our Festival for 12 seasons.

The San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival was the first city-sponsored multicultural dance festival in the United States. Started in 1978 by the Hotel Tax Fund, a municipal agency now called Grants for the Arts, the goal was to "preserve the cultural heritage of the city and enhance San Francisco's reputation as a center for the arts." The Festival founders felt that rather than give many ethnic dance groups in the city a small grant, it could be more effective if those funds were combined and allocated towards providing the much-needed service of presenting the dancers and musicians on stage, hiring the production crew, and doing all of the labor-intensive marketing and front-of-house work.

Auditions were held and thirty dance groups were selected for the first Festival. There were excellent performances in three neighborhood centers with full audiences, surpassing all expectations. The Festival received enthusiastic critical acclaim, including a review in the San Francisco Chronicle, written by Heuwell Tircuit, who reported that "The opening of San Francisco's first Ethnic Dance Festival was a triumph," highlighting the talent and skill of the artists in the new "celebration of cultural diversity," and noting how audience members "experienced an unusual unity" simply by being in attendance.

It was clear that the Ethnic Dance Festival idea had proven to be both a successful way to support local artists who were not yet receiving any city support, while at the same time building bridges between the ever-diversifying communities of the Bay Area.

Given the success of that first year, the city invested additional funds for the following two years to expand the Festival.

In 1980, Mayor Dianne Feinstein declared the entire Festival month as "Ethnic Heritage Month" and the reviews remained exuberantly positive. Marilyn Tucker wrote in the San Francisco Chronicle that the beloved Ethnic Dance Festival had become the city's "liveliest, smooth-running festival yet," and the artists loved the Festival, with many reminiscing that their Festival participation was a peak artistic experience of their careers. The Festival was off to an amazing start.

What happened next was a terrible step backwards: The 1981 Festival was cancelled. City arts funding had been cut as a result of the passage of Proposition 13 and city staff were unable to secure the needed \$50,000 for the Festival to continue. In addition, organizing the Festival had proven to be harder than imagined, and the staff was exhausted. Hearing news of the cancellation, the dance community was devastated, and in June 1981,

Festival artist Lenny Sloan wrote an eloquent editorial in the City Arts Monthly explaining that "there has never been a shortage of ethnic choreographers in the Bay Area; they are not in a minority...there is, however, a shortage of situations where their works can be appreciated."

The outcry that followed led the Hotel Tax Fund/Grants for the Arts staff to secure the funding for a 1982 Festival with the provision that a nonprofit organization would be contracted to produce the Festival in partnership with the city. The nonprofit partner selected was City Celebrations, which later expanded its vision and services to become World Arts West in the 1990's. A 50/50 partnership model was established that continued for many years. This partnership has remained core to the Festival's success from 1982 through today, although city funding support diminished over the years to less than 20% of the funds needed to produce the Festival.

In the mid-1980's, the Festival moved from community centers to the 928-seat Herbst Theater to accommodate the Festival's growing audience. However, the 32-foot wide stage proved too small to support the needs of the many mid-size and larger dance groups. Since many of the dance traditions originate from large community rituals and celebrations, it is common for these traditions to be performed by large dance groups. Luckily, in 1988, the Festival found its home at the Palace of Fine Arts Theater, which has an excellent 70-foot wide dance stage.

The Palace of Fine Arts performances were very successful, selling out quickly with growing audience demand. To meet that increasing demand, the decision was made to open the Festival Auditions to the general public, creating an entirely new multi-day event. The San Francisco Foundation provided funding to support the new public auditions with \$15,000 in annual support, which made it possible for the Auditions to be essentially free, with a \$5 entry fee for adults and no entry fee for children to attend. The Auditions were standing room only for decades, with the price of admission increasing over the years to only \$10 per day for adults, while remaining free for children.

In 1988, the Festival was honored to be hosted at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and released a documentary film about the Festival titled *And Still We Dance*, which was seen by millions of people on PBS television stations across the nation.

The Festival has always served a key educational role towards increasing cultural literacy. There was early and sustained investment in this work. The pinnacle of

# Festival History and Legacy

## *continued*

these efforts is the Festival program book, which contains many historical and cultural details about the dance forms, choreography, and dancers. Currently, vast amounts of information from decades of Festival program books have been assembled on our website, forming a virtual encyclopedia of world dance and music that is used by artists, educators, and enthusiasts worldwide.

For fifteen years, the Festival's educational programs for children, school field trips called People Like Me, served hundreds of thousands of Bay Area children, and there have been workshops and dance programs over the years coordinated under the umbrella of a program called Kids United Through Dance.

The first national review came in 2009, when Alastair Macaulay wrote a review for the New York Times titled "In San Francisco, Thinking Globally, Dancing Locally," which included: "What other city in the world has anything like the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival? ...What surely nobody could miss—the transcendent element—was the joy in performance and the intricate professional skill."

The New York Times returned in 2010, calling the Festival "a glorious achievement," continuing with "here is one of the finest of all American dreams: a setting where cultures can celebrate their own traditions while honoring and applauding others." And a third New York Times review followed with: "I know of no regular event that more effectively, more movingly, recommends this country's diverse inclusiveness than the annual San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival."

After 27 years at the Palace of Fine Arts, we lost our home venue with the start of Caltrans' Presidio Parkway reconstruction project in the Marina District. This venue instability from 2011 to 2016 caused years of damage to our ability to present the Festival. Finally, in 2017, the Festival was given access to the magnificent War Memorial Opera House, which has proven to be an excellent fit for both the Festival artists and audiences. The stage is large enough for the dancers and musicians to thrive, and the 3,000-seat audience capacity allows for the Festival's large audiences to return. Allan Ulrich reported in the San Francisco Chronicle: "Even in its 39th year, the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival is still uncovering examples of

the Bay Area's inexhaustible cultural bounty and displaying them with uncommon flair." Over the last 40 years, the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival has featured more than 450 dance groups, 20,000 local artists, and 100 cultures. The Festival grew from three weeks in community centers to six weeks of performances: two weeks of open public auditions performances and four weeks of summer Festival performances.

In addition to the Festival, the dedicated staff work year-round to present local dancers and musicians at many civic events, such as Mayoral inaugurations, the Stern Grove Festival, international conferences and gatherings, and annual events such as the SF Travel Luncheon at the Moscone Center. Staff members also provide many services to Festival artists throughout the year, including fiscal sponsorship, technical assistance, and production consulting. As a result of this support, there have been many successes. One outstanding example is our fiscal sponsorship support for the development of SFJAZZ.

The greatest legacy of four decades of this work is the impact that the Festival has had on the lives of the participating artists. (Please see pages 62-63 for a list of groups that have performed on the Festival stage over the years.) The Festival has provided unprecedented opportunities for local dancers to be presented in large scale, highly professional settings, supported by a seasoned production and marketing team. By participating in the Festival, the artists have a rare opportunity to create complex, multi-layered, high caliber artistic work that cannot be presented on smaller stages. The Festival also provides opportunities for artists to connect with other artists outside their own cultures, which has led to many innovative collaborations.

As we celebrate our 40th Anniversary, it is a time of reflection and celebration. Looking at how far we've come in the last 40 years, it is also a time to imagine what is possible for the next 40 years. We are excited about supporting the next generation of artists and culture bearers to honor our heritage, forging new artistic territories, and creating a lasting legacy for the future.

## GRANTS FOR THE ARTS STAFF

The San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival is presented in partnership with Grants for the Arts

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*Associate Director / Renee Hayes*

*Senior Program Manager / Khan Wong*

*Senior Finance and Operations Manager / Valerie Tookes*

*Operations and Program Associate / Kara Owens*

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**Special thanks to John Boatwright, Rob Levin, Jamye Divila, and the entire War Memorial Performing Arts Center team**

La Tania



# Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Awards



Photo by Brian Lanker

## Lily Cai

We are proud to present one of this year's Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Awards for Excellence in World Dance and Music to Lily Cai, Founder and Artistic Director of the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company. She blends Chinese traditional, folk, and classical dance with Western ballet and modern dance to create compelling, contemporary choreography.

A native of Shanghai and a former principal dancer with the Shanghai Opera House,

Lily arrived in the United States in 1983 and founded her company in 1988 with the dream of creating her own style of dance. Drawing from both her Chinese heritage and Western movement, she has since choreographed dozens of works for her company performances, often working in collaboration with artists from music, film, and the visual arts. Today, Lily is recognized for her visually stunning productions and her masterful teaching of her dance technique.

An Irvine Fellow in Dance, Lily has received the Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Outstanding Achievement in Choreography and the Choreographer's Fellowships from National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. Her dance company has received accolades from theater and festival audiences throughout the country, from Hawaii and the West Coast to New York, the Virgin Islands, and the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., and has twice received Isadora Duncan Dance Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Company Performance.

Lily trains dancers in her own technique drawn from the Chinese philosophy of Yin-Yang, the energy-flow concept of Qi and a lifetime of research.



This Rotunda Series performance by the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company received the Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Outstanding Achievement in Performance in 2017.

Photo by Will Lee

## Chuna McIntyre

It is our honor to present one of this year's Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Awards for Excellence in World Dance and Music to Chuna McIntyre, the Founder and Director of Nunamta Yup'ik Eskimo Dancers.

Chuna was born and raised in the village of Eek, Alaska, located on Kuskokwim Bay. He was raised by his grandmother, who taught him the dances, songs, and stories of their Yup'ik culture as passed down from the elders over many generations.

Singing and dancing was an integral part of Chuna's life growing up and he learned to make the traditional regalia that he wears. He often wears Yup'ik masks, which help humans see through the eyes of the animals who dwell with us as our earthly allies. Their dances ask for well-being and gifts from nature—understanding that everything in the environment—even a speck of dust—has awareness.

Chuna attended the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and Sonoma State University, where he received a BA in Studio Art and Native American Studies. He has traveled the world sharing his cultural heritage, from the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., to France, England, Russia, New Zealand, Australia, South Korea, and Siberia.

Chuna is also as well-known as a graphic artist and craftsman as he is a musician and dancer. He works in many types of media and has been exhibited throughout Alaska and across the continent.

He assists the Smithsonian Institution with their Yup'ik Eskimo collection, and he curated the Inuit-Eskimo permanent exhibit at the de Young Museum in San Francisco.





# Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Awards *continued*



## Jamila Salimpour

We are proud to present one of this year's Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Awards to Jamila Salimpour (1926-2017), one of the most influential and innovative teachers of belly dance in the 20th century. Her methodology and systematic approach to teaching belly dance has left an indelible mark on the dance form. She is best known for creating the Jamila Salimpour format, a comprehensive collection of steps and movements used by dancers throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

She was born and raised in New York City and moved to Los Angeles when she was 19. Los Angeles was a center for immigrants from around the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean in the 1950s, and Jamila immersed herself in Egyptian culture, being influenced especially by Egyptian films of the day featuring legendary dancers Samia Gamal, Tahia Carioca, and Naima Akef.

In the 1960s, Jamila moved to San Francisco and found herself in the heart of hippie counterculture, befriending Country Joe McDonald, Janis Joplin, and Jimi Hendrix. She became the first woman to own a Middle

Eastern nightclub in the United States when she opened the Bagdad Cabaret. In the mid to late 1960s, she taught popular belly dance classes, as San Francisco "flower children" sought new ways to express themselves through movement. In 1968, she created a full-length belly dance stage presentation for the Renaissance Pleasure Faire called Bal Anat, or "Dance of the Mother Goddess," which celebrates its 50th Anniversary in August.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Jamila was an editor and writer for Habibi magazine, a periodical dedicated to belly dance news and history, as well as producing some of the first belly dance festivals in the United States. For her many accomplishments, Jamila was awarded the Isadora Duncan Award for Sustained Achievement in 2013, and her legacy is celebrated by the thousands of dancers who have benefited from her teaching over the years. Her legacy is continued by her daughter, Suhaila Salimpour, a master dancer and choreographer credited for establishing belly dance as a professional dance form worldwide, and her granddaughter, Isabella, who hopes to carry the family legacy to future generations of dancers.

**Join us the evening of August 4, 2018 in El Cerrito for the 50th Anniversary of Bal Anat. For tickets and more information visit: [salimpourschool.com](http://salimpourschool.com). Festival Co-Artistic Director Māhea Uchiyama will present a Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of Jamila Salimpour.**



**Three generations: Suhaila, Jamila, and Isabella Salimpour / Photo by Eye Spy Photography**



**Photo by Kilian Farrell-Alvarado**

## Patty Ann Farrell

It is our honor to present one of this year's Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Awards for Excellence in World Dance and Music to Patty Ann Farrell, who has been the Lighting Designer of the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival for 39 years.

Patty Ann has deeply impacted San Francisco's performing arts field for over four decades, serving as both a stage manager and lighting designer for many dance, theatrical works, and special events throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, New York City, Washington D.C., Tokyo, Hawaii, and up and down the West Coast of the United States.

Her work has taken her into artistic collaborations with many wonderful artists over the years. She has created lighting designs for literally thousands of events, including hundreds of San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival performances, as well as performances by the Oakland Ballet, Alonzo King's LINES Ballet, the Black Choreographers' Festival, Nā Lei Hulu i ka Wēkiu's annual Hula Show, Ballet Afsaneh, and many, many more.

Patty Ann has received many awards for her work, including four prestigious Isadora Duncan Dance Awards and a Bay Area Critic's Circle Award for her outstanding lighting designs.

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Photo by Robert Werner**

## Roberto Hernandez

We are thrilled to present our inaugural Community Leadership Award to Roberto Hernandez, the Artistic Director and Executive Producer of Carnaval San Francisco. It is no exaggeration to say that there would be no Carnaval in San Francisco without him! He raises the money, curates the exhibits,

oversees the team creating the annual parade, selects artists for the stage performances, and so much more.

He is also a musician and visual artist trained at Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, Galería de la Raza, Casa de La Cultura in Cozumel, Mexico, and El Sitio Centro de Cultura in Antigua Guatemala. He has designed and painted many murals and served as an Artist-in-Residence for the de Young Museum, as well as curating the de Young Museum's Carnaval exhibit.

He has worked extensively teaching children both mask making and mural painting, and has led art projects to create altars for Día De los Muertos with students through the San Francisco Unified Schools District and at Mission Cultural Center.

Roberto is the Founder and President of the San Francisco Lowrider Council and a lifetime volunteer for the United Farm Workers Association.

**Please visit our awards gallery on the second floor of the Opera House to see tribute plaques for all of the Festival's honorees.**



# Festival Opening Event at San Francisco City Hall

For video highlights of the performances by our Festival Opening Event artists, please visit our YouTube channel: [bit.ly/edf\\_youtube](http://bit.ly/edf_youtube)

## AERODANCE

AERODANCE presented a form of folk dance from Gujarat, India, called Dandiya Raas, which represents the power of the Goddess Durga. This high-energy dance depicted joyous moments between Lord Krishna and his consort Radha. This Raas is the featured dance of the annual nine-day Hindu Navratri festival, which celebrates the divine feminine.

AERODANCE is a premier dance company based in Newark which teaches Indian cultural heritage to students ages 3 and up. All students undergo rigorous training in Indian classical, folk, semi-classical, and Bollywood styles of dance. The company's aim is to empower students through dance, and it is a member of UNESCO's International Dance Council and the National Dance Education Organization. **Website: [aerodanceonline.com](http://aerodanceonline.com)**

## Mussel Rock Cloggers

Mussel Rock Cloggers performed three pieces at our Festival opening event: *Pitkin County Turnaround*, *Make You Mine* (both choreographed by Artistic Director Ian Michael Enriquez), and *Fire on the Mountain* (choreographed by Sarah Dwight-Gilroy). Originally based on movements from the Appalachian Mountains, modern clogging has been infused with circle and square dances, African-American rhythms, Canadian step dancing, and Peruvian dance since its beginnings.

Mussel Rock is a co-ed clogging company sponsored by the Barbary Coast Cloggers, who have performed in our Festival many times. The group started in performance workshop classes through Rhythm & Motion in 2008, and through its work, relates early stories of San Francisco, as well as modern tales of immigration and industry through a mix of many clogging techniques. **Website: [barbarycoast.org](http://barbarycoast.org)**

## Kim Shuck

San Francisco Poet Laureate Kim Shuck performed poems about dance with an eye to the way that traditional Cherokee Stomp Dance is used to rebalance the world. As a Tsalagi (Cherokee)/Euro-American poet, author, weaver, and beadwork artist, she has drawn from Southeastern Native American culture and tradition as well as contemporary urban Indian life.

Kim Shuck is a native San Franciscan and the city's seventh Poet Laureate. She is widely published in journals, anthologies, and solo books. She enjoys volunteering in SFUSD elementary school classrooms to share her loves of origami, poetry, and basket making. She also works with students at the California College of Art in the Diversity Department. **Website: [kimshuck.com](http://kimshuck.com)**

Our Rotunda Dance Series brings many of the Bay Area's most celebrated dance companies to San Francisco City Hall for free monthly noontime performances. We present this dance series in partnership with Dancers' Group, Grants for the Arts, and San Francisco City Hall. For more information, please visit: [bit.ly/rotundasf](http://bit.ly/rotundasf)



# Festival Welcome Artists

## Weekend 1

### **Te Pura O Te Rahura'a / Tahiti**

Weekend One offers an outdoor performance of songs from the islands of Tahiti, from the musicians of Te Pura O Te Rahura'a. You'll hear traditional Tahitian songs, and also some original songs composed by Te Pura, including *Aupuru*, which reminds young people to take care of the earth, and *Rohotu*, which gives thanks for the many blessings we all have in our lives. Musicians include Raymond Bambao, Marilou Ubaldo Lafon, Randy Lagon, Kaluna Paller, Kevin Yee, and Armando Visperas. You'll be seeing the entire ensemble of musicians and dancers from Te Pura O Te Rahura'a on stage today; please see page 38.

### **Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto) / Mexico**

The music you're enjoying in the Opera House

lobby today is by Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto). Founded in the 1980s by Musical Director José Roberto Hernández, Vinic-Kay's mission is to bring to life the diverse roots of Latin America using each culture's traditional instruments, preserving the rich musical traditions that exist throughout Latin America. Born in Tabasco, Mexico, José Roberto has dedicated his life to building a vast repertoire of folkloric music by learning directly from the masters of each region. The group is made up of diverse musicians from different parts of Latin America who each bring to the group the musical traditions of their particular countries. Vinic-Kay performs a mix of traditional pieces and original compositions that keep true to the rich legacy of Latin American music. The lobby performance artists are Fernanda Bustamante, José Roberto Hernández, Silvestre Martínez, and Lali Mejía. You'll also see them on stage today accompanying Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco; please see page 36 to read more.

We welcome you to the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival—and to the Opera House—with preshow musical performances!

## Weekend 2

### **Chinyakare Ensemble / Zimbabwe**

Weekend Two begins with a musical performance by the Chinyakare Ensemble. Based in Oakland, the Chinyakare Ensemble is a family of musicians, dancers, and teachers committed to preserving and sharing traditional Zimbabwean culture, and promoting community building and education through music and dance. The music—played today on marimba, ngoma drums, and hosho gourds—tells colorful stories that show scenes from everyday life, while teaching important life lessons, such as goal-setting, perseverance, and thankfulness. Chinyakare provides audiences with a glimpse of the beauty, excitement, and spirit of traditional African dance and song. Today's artists are Kanukai Chigamba, Ronnie Daliyo, Moeketsi Gibe, Russ Landers, and DeLisa Nealy.

### **Hermanos Herrera / Mexico**

Hermanos Herrera have performed together since childhood, exploring music that draws deeply from the lively, string-driven son jarocho and son huasteca traditions of Mexican music. These siblings—who inherited their enthusiasm and talent from previous generations of family members—have immersed themselves in a quarter century of mentorship by pillar performers of these favorite forms of Mexico's rich musical heritage. Their most recent album, *Sones Jarochos y Huastecos y Más*, was released earlier this year. Today's artists are Jorge Andres Herrera, Luis Alberto Herrera, and Miguel Antonio Herrera. They'll also be accompanying Los Danzantes de Aztlán de Fresno State during today's performance on stage; please see page 50.



# Nunamta Yup'ik Eskimo Singers & Dancers

## Alaska

*The dance is about light, and every element will tell you that. We are dancing to the sun and the moon and the stars.*

A North American indigenous ensemble presents *The Shimmering Moon*. Chuna McIntyre, Yup'ik dancer and choreographer, speaks about his dance:

"In the Yup'ik world of the longest nights, the full moon is really noticed. In mid-winter, all of a sudden, she lights the world. There is nothing like the arctic moonlight. Everything in the world shimmers. It's like a glimpse of heaven. So I thought to do a medley honoring the

moon and her light. This dance is about Yup'ik heaven on the stage. There's the audience, and we also have another audience: all our relatives who have gone to that light—we never forget them for one moment. The connection we have is the light, in the otherwise dark universe. We begin the dance in darkness. Drums keep time and the dancers sing an opening song. Some of the songs are over 500 years old."

Chuna and his dancers have worked on the regalia for over a decade, garments with modern sparkling beads, white feathers, necklaces, and dance fans. It's an ancient design for temperatures 60 degrees below zero, a regalia

of light. He says, "The elders say when you dance, dress up for the ancestors! As an emissary of the moon, your regalia will reflect the moon. When light is cast from the moon it ties us to the whole sense of 'out there,' almost like a conduit. Traditionally, dancers wear an elaborate outer parka, intermediate parka, and inner parka. They remove their outer parkas to show finery underneath, to say, 'there is often light underneath, not always only what you actually see: it's time to be unafraid to come into the light of Heaven.' Heaven is where the ancestors live as celestial allies. We need their help. We wear white for light, snow, and our ancestral destination; black for the Night Spirit place and things we don't understand; red for blood we share; and blue beads for the fleeting summer sky."

The headpiece (worn by Yup'ik Ursuline Sister Josephine Aloralrea) shows rings of the universe, consciousness, and nighttime stars. The moon shines solemnly through her face, looking through her consciousness. A cruciform represents all animals, our earthly allies. Four tassles are for cardinal directions; three for Yup'ik understanding of the Trinity. An ancient Yup'ik saying is: And they shall know us who we are by our shimmering garments. And part of today's song is:

*Nighttime has come to me, darkness has come to me, but the moon came to me and made me happy. My people, my ancestors who look back to me, everyone is in the moon and they are truly happy.*

This is a dance that has not been presented publicly for over 200 years and we are honored to have this work shared with us.

Chuna McIntyre, Yup'ik from Alaska, lives in the San Francisco Bay Area; the other dancers are from Alaska. The group has danced together for thirty years in many places around the world, including Siberia, England, New Zealand, South Korea, Australia, the Kennedy Center, and Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.

**Dance Origin:** Alaska • **Genre:** Yup'ik Eskimo • **Title:** *The Shimmering Moon* • **Artistic Director:** Chuna McIntyre • **Dancers:** Josephine Aloralrea, Tatiana Andrew, Agnes McIntyre, Chuna McIntyre • **Musicians:** Vernon Chimegalrea (drum), John McIntyre (drum)





## WORLD PREMIERE

# Chitresh Das Youth Company

## India

*Sare Nau*, meaning *Nine and a Half*, is a thrilling, innovative collaboration between choreographer Charlotte Moraga, disciple of the late Pandit Chitresh Das, and musician/composer Ritesh Das, brother to Pandit Das. It's one of two pieces in this year's Festival honoring the legendary kathak master who left us in 2015 (see page 49 to read about the other piece).

The performance focuses entirely on percussion, presenting fast-paced rhythmic exercises called *kaidas*, variations played in *tabla*, but not usually danced. The unique *taal*—rhythmic cycle—is a difficult nine and half beats, and the choreography takes these dedicated, skilled young artists deep into their art form, with virtuosic *jati* footwork and lightning-fast *chakkara* spins.

The overall theme is playful, as in the play between Radha and Krishna: between devotee and the Divine. Geometric patterns play with time and space. Dancers exchange expressive hand positions and engage in joyful rhythmic conversations with musicians.

Kathak is a classical dance form from Northern India. Its spiritual and narrative components evolved from early kathaka storytellers who traveled between villages telling ancient Hindu stories in dance, mime, song, and poetry. Later, in India's Moghul courts, musicians introduced the *tabla* drum, played today with Ritesh Das' rhythmic virtuosity. We also see Pandit Chitresh Das' philosophy/practice of "innovation within tradition" carried forward in *Sare Nau*: traditional *tabla* practice transforms to choreographed performance; a traditional *tabla* ensemble adds western drum kit and South Indian drum. The dancers' traditional *anarkali*-style costumes are also tailored in a contemporary style: with no *duputta* head scarf, simplified *kundan*-style jewelry, and a raw-silk circle skirt cut light and sleek to highlight the virtuosic elements of the dance.

The Chitresh Das Youth Company (CDYC) was founded in 2002 by Pandit Chitresh Das to provide youth opportunity to study directly

under this kathak master. Director Charlotte Moraga, CDYC Director under Pandit Das, provides students with intensive training in technique and theory, history, philosophy, mathematics, and spirituality, as foundations of kathak and the philosophy of Pandit Das. The group performs in prestigious venues and festivals in the US and India, such as Davies Symphony Hall, Zellerbach Hall, YBCA, Palace of Fine Arts, NCPA Theatre Mumbai, Toronto Harbourfront Theater.

Ritesh Das, musician and composer, born in Kolkata, studied vocals with T.L. Rana, sitar with M.D. Mullick, *tabla* with Pandit Shankar Ghosh and Ustad Zakir Hussain, and currently, with guru Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri. He is Director of The Toronto *Tabla* Ensemble, the Ensemble's School of *Tabla*, and its Youth Ensemble. He has toured Canada, Australia, India, and Europe and his virtuoso playing is featured at festivals, performances, presentations on CBC television, and six CD's including *Firedance*, nominated for the Juno Award. He received the 2016 R.T. Hall Award from the Toronto Arts Foundation.

**Websites:** [chitreshdasinstitute.org](http://chitreshdasinstitute.org) and [torontotabla.com](http://torontotabla.com)

**Dance Origin:** North India • **Genre:** Kathak • **Title:** *Sare Nau* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Charlotte Moraga • **Music Composer:** Ritesh Das, Founder and Artistic Director of the Toronto *Tabla* Ensemble • **Dancers:** Ishani Basak, Gauri Bhatnagar, Ishani Chakraborty, Ishaani Dayal, Amidala Geetaumesh, Anusha Kothari, Shruti Pai, Meera Pala, Anushka Rao, Ruchira Rao, Atmika Sarukkai, Kritika Sharma, Aranya Shukla, Grishma Shukla, Saavani Vaidya **Musicians:** The Toronto *Tabla* Ensemble: Nilan Chaudhuri (*kit* drum), Razak Pirani (*tabla*), Shamir Panchal (*tabla*), Sekhar Sarukkai (*mridangam*)

*A world premiere kathak collaboration  
in a rare 9½ beat rhythmic cycle*



## Festival Legacy Tribute: Malonga Casquelourd



Malonga Casquelourd, Photo by Bonnie Kamin

### Malonga Casquelourd

Malonga Casquelourd was a beloved dancer and teacher and Founder and Artistic Director of Fua Dia Congo, dedicated to the preservation, presentation, and study of Central African culture. His work was rooted in the traditions of the Kongo Kingdom, which includes modern day Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, and parts of bordering Gabon and Central African Republic.

He was born in Douala, Cameroon, in 1948 and grew up in the Congo Republic, spending many years learning Congolese cultural traditions at community fetes and indigenous cultural centers near Brazzaville.

He developed a following at an early age as a dancer and drummer and by 1965, he was a principal dancer with the National Congolese Dance Company, touring Africa, Europe, and the United States. He later moved to Europe as a choreographer and principal dancer with Le Ballet Diaboua, a Congolese repertory company in Paris.

In 1972, he moved to New York, where he was a Co-Founder of Tanawa, the first Central African dance company in the United States. He taught at several New York schools before moving to Oakland in the mid-1970's to teach Congolese dance and drum classes a Citicentre Dance Theatre based at what was then called the Alice Arts Center. He also taught at Stanford and San Francisco State University for 26 years, and established the Congolese Dance and Drum Camp and Ballet Kizingu, a thriving youth division of Fua Dia Congo.

Malonga was killed by a drunk driver in 2003, the night before he was to perform at the 25th Anniversary San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival. His sudden passing left the dance community stricken. As Malonga and his dance company were an integral part of the vibrancy of the Alice Arts Center in Oakland since it had opened in 1987, the center was renamed the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts in his honor. This Festival also established the annual Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in World Dance and Music as an ongoing tribute to his legacy.

### Sandor Diabankouezi

We are thrilled to present Sandor Diabankouezi performing traditional song and percussion from his homeland, the Peoples Republic of Congo. Sandor is Malonga Casquelourd's cousin, and, like Malonga, he is from Brazzaville.

He began formal training in traditional Congolese dance at the age of nine and was choreographer and lead dancer for over ten years with the National Congolese Dance Company (National Ballet Du Congo). He has traveled extensively around the world teaching master classes and performing.

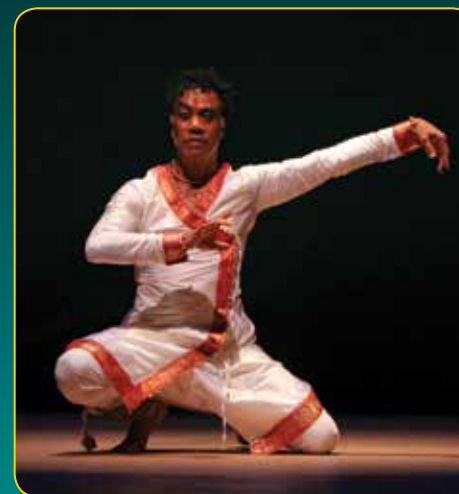
Sandor is a mentor for Malonga's daughter Muisi-Kongo Malonga, who continues Malonga's Fua Dia Congo legacy. He choreographs and performs with Fua Dia Congo as well as for his own group, Ballet Bantu.

Since his arrival in the Bay Area in 1986, Sandor has been a beloved teacher and Congolese culture bearer. He is renowned for engaging students in the culture and spirituality of the Congo with warmth and humor, tapping into inner energy that brings healing.



Sandor Diabankouezi, Photo by Lars Howlett,  
Half Moon Bay Review

## Festival Legacy Tribute: Chitresh Das



Chitresh Das, Photo by Edward Casati

### Chitresh Das

Pandit Chitresh Das was first and foremost a master and virtuosic performer of the classical kathak tradition. Based on his concept of "innovation within tradition," Pandit Das explored the boundaries of kathak technique and performance, creating compelling, new works and techniques that are inventive, yet deeply rooted in the kathak tradition.

He was a child prodigy trained from the age of nine by his guru, Pandit Ram Narayan Mishra. In 1970, he came to the United States to teach kathak at the University of Maryland and, in 1971, he established a dance program at the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael.

In 1980, he founded the Chitresh Das Dance Company & Chhandam School of Kathak. He taught and performed around the world—and on the Festival stage many times—and in 2009, he was honored with the highest award bestowed to a traditional artist by the US government: designation as a National Heritage Fellow. In 2013, he was honored by the Governor of West Bengal for his artistic commitment to kathak and Indian classical arts in India and around the world.

Pandit Das passed away unexpectedly in 2015, but his commitment to training and empowering the next generation has left a legacy of hundreds of students who have

See page 22 to read about the Chitresh Das Youth company performance

trained directly under him, and many more who are continuing to learn from his disciples. An uncompromising and tireless advocate for the art of kathak, Das' integrity, seva (service), and a wicked sense of humor made him a profound Guru whose gift lives on in those he touched.

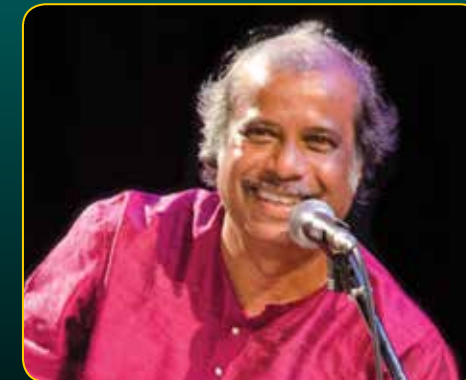
### Ritesh Das

We are honored to welcome Chitresh's brother, Ritesh Das, from Toronto, Canada. Ritesh is a composer, tabla player, and the Founder and Artistic Director of the Toronto Tabla Ensemble, which is performing with the Chitresh Das Youth Company. He composed the music you'll hear in this performance.

Ritesh, like Chitresh, was born in Kolkata, India, and began studying tabla with Pandit Shankar Ghosh in 1972. When he was 22 years old, he moved to Los Angeles to be a part of the AMAN Folk Ensemble. While in California, he apprenticed with Zakir Hussain and then began studying tabla with his current guru, Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri, at the Ali Akbar College of Music.

In 1987, Ritesh moved to Toronto where he began teaching tabla on a full-time basis. In 1991, he formed the Toronto Tabla Ensemble. The group has toured extensively, performing at numerous festivals, and has released six CDs. In 2000, their album *Firedance* received a nomination for the Juno Award for Best Global Album.

Ritesh is the Director of the Toronto Tabla Ensemble School of Tabla, with three teaching locations in the greater Toronto area. In 2014, he founded the Indian Diaspora Festival, an annual event which features artists of Indian music and dance trained in the West.



Ritesh Das, Photo by Dipanka Sarma



## Sublime flamenco romeras and cantiñas from Sevilla



## AguaClara Flamenco

### Spain

As if on a warm Sevilla afternoon, the breeze blowing in from Rio Guadalquivir, AguaClara Flamenco presents *Aire del Romero*, a performance of joyful romeras and cantiñas. With flying abanico fans and swirling mantón shawls, choreographer Clara Rodríguez turns our focus on the playful rhythm of flamenco's light, airy styles.

*Ay! Maestranza de Sevilla, la del amarillo albero. La que huele a manzanilla y a capote de torero.*

*Ay! Maestranza de Sevilla (Seville's Plaza de Toros), the one of yellowed sand, smelling of manzanilla sherry and the cape of the bullfighter.*

In flamenco, music and dance are one art, a conversation in time between melody, song, gesture, range, dynamics, harmony, fan, sweep of fabric, and of course, rhythm. The music for *Aire del Romero* is performed by guitarist David McLean and José Cortés and Felix de Lola, two flamenco singers from Spain. Palmas handclapping keeps a contratiempo beat, and the dancers' feet turn the stage into an instrument, performing sharp marcajes—marking steps—and percussive llamadas and remates—openings and closings—to embellish the musicians' phrasing. This piece highlights both ensemble work and solos with flamenco's flashy, lovely, femininity. Clara says, "I have always loved the cantes of cantiñas and romeras for their light-hearted character and flair. I wanted this piece to exude femininity: it's highlighted in the sections with fan work."

The origins of flamenco lie in southern Spain's multicultural middle ages, in old songs of Spanish Gitano/Roma people; Persian-Arab forms; classical Islamic-Andalusian orchestras; Jewish synagogue chants; Arab forms; and Andalusian folk songs. It was then reformed in the 19th century, among artists and choreographers in Seville's sophisticated café cantantes. A flamenco style is called a palo and a song is a cante: *Aire del Romero* is a romeras, a flamenco palo in the family of the festive and light cante cantiñas, attributed to 19th century

singer Romero el Tito. It is as cheerful as flamenco gets, in major key. The 12-count rhythm, fast paced and playful, ends with a sped-up rhythm called bulerías and a final dramatic cierre or close.

*Aire del Romero* was created and choreographed by Clara Rodríguez. The dancers' costumes were designed by Clara in partnership with Pamela Martínez. The asymmetrical design with white accent colors notes each dancer's individuality and personality.

AguaClara Flamenco, led by artistic director Clara Rodríguez, was formed in 2011 in Oakland. Featuring local and international flamenco artists, the company has presented full-length works: *Somos Tierra* and *Diálogos* at Cowell Theatre, produced by Azahar Dance Foundation; performed at the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and the San Francisco International Arts Festival, and has been featured in the ongoing performance cycle at *The Sound Room* in Oakland since 2012. Educational outreach includes year-round dance classes, workshops, and workshops featuring guest flamenco artists from the US and abroad.

**Website:** [aguaclarafamenco.com](http://aguaclarafamenco.com)

**Dance Origin:** Andalucía, Spain • **Genre:** Flamenco • **Title:** *Aire del Romero* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Clara Rodríguez • **Costume Design:** Pamela Martínez • **Dancers:** Claudia Barros, Melina Berkov-Rojas, Anna Ciacchella, Sandra Durand, Alice Glasner, Antara Medina, Clara Rodríguez, Paloma Shutes • **Musicians:** José Cortez (vocals), Felix de Lola (vocals), David McLean (guitar)

# Leung's White Crane Tribute to Ann Woo

This performance is a tribute to Ann Woo, who passed away in 2017. She was a longtime Festival artist and was the Founder and Artistic Director of the Chinese Performing Arts of America. Ann was devoted to bringing Chinese arts and culture to the American public as a dancer, choreographer, playwright, and producer, and was the recipient of our Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008. Ann's passing is a great loss for the Bay Area's arts community.

The tribute by Leung's White Crane begins with a magical Chinese lion and progresses to a performance by an even more magical Chinese dragon. Ann Woo created the dragon choreography in 2012 in honor of the Chinese Year of the Dragon. The excerpt on stage today is from Chinese Performing Arts of America's *Celestial Dragon*, a rhythmic, fast-paced tribute to the Chinese Dragon King.

This dance is meant to be both frightening and benevolent – dragons are fierce, but they also bring good luck. In Chinese literature, the Dragon King is the supreme ruler of all waters. He manipulates the weather, bringing rainfall, and by evoking the fluidity of water, can shape shift into human form. The Dragon King possibly originated from Hindu and Buddhist religions, and this dance style was performed in Han Dynasty China as villagers danced to bring rain and prevent sickness, with up to 50 dancers moving the dragon puppet in undulating, watery patterns.

Ann Woo was inspired to create *Celestial Dragon* by the approaching turn of this millennium: the year 2000 was also the Chinese Year of the Dragon. Woo traveled to Dailan in Northern China to learn and document traditional techniques and brought back from China a fantastic 160-foot-long handcrafted dragon, which was painstakingly modified for

black light technology, repainting each scale to make a glittering rainbow. Traditional dragon dance music is slow and flowing, but Woo asked composer Phil Young to complement *Celestial Dragon* with up-tempo electronic music, which you will hear today.

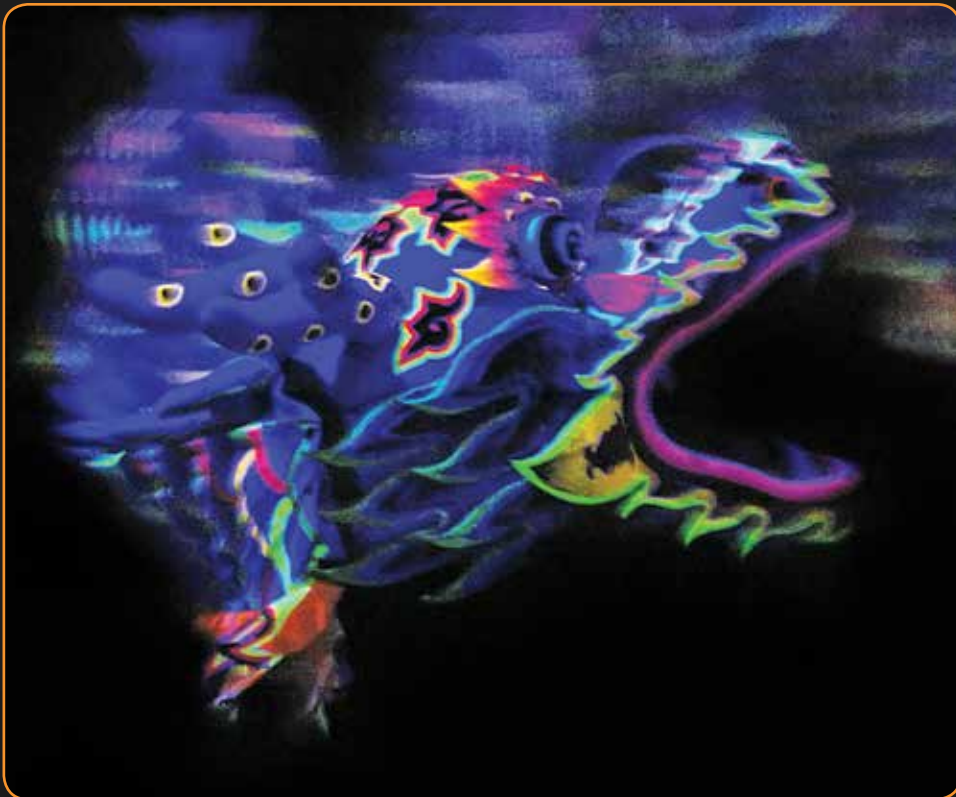
China's lion dance originated over 1500 years ago. The lion is not native to China, but was introduced by travelers along the Silk Road, when a performing lion and a trainer were given as a tribute to Emperor Shun (126-145 BCE). Travelers from India and Nepal carried in Buddhist images of the lion, a 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.

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., 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. 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.

**Website:** [sfwhitecrane.com](http://sfwhitecrane.com)

**ARTISTS:** Raymond Ching, Candy Choi, Lisa Hi, Willson Hoang, Sam Hu, Elison Huang, Kerry Huynh, Jimmy Khuc, Michael Kong, Tai Lau, Daniel Leung, Daniel Li, Jacky Li, Justin Li, Calvin Liu, Brandon Lok, David Luong, Grace Ma, Simon Nie, Peter Ruan, Lina Tam, Kathy Tan, Raymend Tang, On Wong, Jenny Yang, Lili Yee, Carmen Yu, Calvin Zhen



Ann Woo's black light dragon





WORLD PREMIERE

# Ye Feng

## China

*The Chinese Soul* is a showcase of Chinese dance and culture, an invitation to open a window and look inside. Ye Feng is soloist and choreographer.

From its origins in folk forms and religious practices, Chinese dance has focused on heaven, the divine, and the universe, and has long been performed in support of beauty, the human spirit, moral character, and willpower. Classical Chinese dance was codified in the 1950s by Beijing Dance Academy artists. It integrates dance postures from ancient texts and sculptures, elements from folk forms, Russian and French ballet, and many components of traditional Chinese Opera, including martial arts.

This new choreography is a contemporary montage/collage of references and fragments of Chinese culture. Ye Feng writes, "I am interested in many aspects of Chinese culture, ranging from the classic works by Confucius to essential cultural techniques of ancient scholars and nobles, expressing the spirit and soul of the Chinese nation passed down from generation to generation for more than 5,000 years."

As *The Chinese Soul* merges traditions, it carries:

- from Confucianism, an emphasis on ceremony and etiquette, a respect for heaven and earth;
- from tai chi practice, the dancer's centered breath and rhythmic continuity that "expresses the Chinese Soul;"
- from American modern dance, an expression of inner emotional states;
- from ancient Daoist philosophy, the concept of yin and yang, the understanding of contrasting/complimentary halves creating a whole, as in: Earth/Heaven represented by square/circle; the balancing of slow/fast, strength/grace; and a female dancer performing passages of masculine dance.

The costume—designed by Ye Feng—is made of treasured, ancient Chinese textiles, decorated with imperial waves, the auspicious color red, and auspicious dragon and phoenix patterns to reference yin and yang.

The melody is traditional, *Gaoshan Liushui—High Mountains and Flowing Water*—created by musician Bo Ya around 400 B.C. as a gift for his good friend Zhong Ziqi. It is played by Feixue Yuan on a traditional Chinese musical instrument called the pipa, and it's composed in a modern way, to help the dancer express the theme of the piece.

Feng Ye Dance Company was established in 2017 by Ye Feng, former President and Artistic Director of the Dance Company of China National Song and Dance Troupe. She has received numerous professional awards for performances and choreography, including Chinese Ministry of Culture's "National First-Class Dancer," and performed in Athens and Beijing for the 2004 and 2008 Olympic Games and 2014 World Youth Olympic Games. The company is committed to producing new dance work based on Chinese aesthetics and traditional culture, and inviting a variety of ideas in different forms of art, including experimental dance concepts.

**Website:** [fengyedance.com](http://fengyedance.com)

**Dance Origin:** China • **Genre:** Contemporary  
**Title:** *The Chinese Soul* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer/Soloist:** Ye Feng

*A contemporary expression of  
the spirit and soul of ancient  
Chinese culture*



An Afro-Cuban celebration  
rooted in Yoruba traditions



## Arenas Dance Company

### Cuba

In *Manos de Mujeres a la Obra*—Women's Hands at Work—an all-female Afro-Cuban ensemble honors the spiritual resilience, strength of character, and vibrant sensuality of Afro-Cuban women, and celebrates the sacred nature of their work. The women are sensual and playful. They are clever and wise. They call out their womanhood one by one in the languages of their motherlines. They are mothers, daughters, grandmothers. And above all, they are strong women, holding life in their hands.

The opening invocation draws from Santería, the Cuban religion based on Yoruba traditions carried west by enslaved West Africans generations ago. A call and response between lead singer and dancers dressed in sacred white invites in the ancestors, the egun. Three orishas—deities—descend, manifestations of spiritual strengths of women. Ochún, orisha of sweet waters, wears yellow. She bestows radiance and pleasure in the body at play and of the hands at work. Yemanyá, orisha of blue oceans, embodies the fierceness of motherlove. Oyá, the rainbow-hued warrior of winds and cemeteries, proclaims fortitude in times of transition.

The women reappear dancing yambú, the oldest known rumba, a slow and sensual display of mature, knowing women. Dancers wear styles from 1950s Havana tenements; their retro Hawaiian prints are a nod to problematic colonial narratives of exoticism and Hollywood visions of undifferentiated island otherness: (Think Elvis singing a calypso in *Blue Hawaii*). The dance accelerates to guaguancó, the rapid-fire rumba typically danced between couples. The dancers wash and clean, creating polyrhythmic patterns with brooms. They invest their mundane housework with joy and, citing signature orisha movements, celebrate work as spiritual practice.

Rumba, danced to the secular conga and clave rhythms, was born in late-1800s Havana and Matanzas from Bantú, Abakuá, and Spanish musical strains. The art form was added to UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2016, and it is the improvisational expression

of Cubans, especially Afro-Cubans. Director Susana Arenas Pedroso calls it "the attitude of the people." In contrast, the batá drum trio and rezos (prayers) are descendants of Yoruba traditions. Batá drums salute the egun and recount sacred narratives, evoking the spiritual presence of orishas. Although a growing number of women have crossed gender boundaries since the 1980s, it is still unusual to see women playing batá drums and rumba.

Susana Arenas Pedroso founded Arenas Dance Company in 2004 to preserve and promote culturally-rooted, ever-evolving Cuban folkloric and popular dance traditions while embracing creative innovation and hybridity. The company has performed at the Great American Music Hall, Palace of Fine Arts, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Herbst Theater, Chico State University, Laney College, Stanford University, ODC, La Peña, Ashkenaz, Black Choreographers Festival, CubaCaribe, SF Salsa/Rueda, Yemanjá, Stanford Jazz Festival, and in the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival.

**Website:** [arenasdancecompany.com](http://arenasdancecompany.com)

**Dance Origin:** Cuba • **Genre:** Afro-Cuban • **Title:** *Manos de Mujeres a la Obra (Women's Hands at Work)* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Susana Arenas Pedroso • **Egun and rumba costume design:** Deborah Valoma • **Ochún costume design:** Ileana Godínez • **Yemanyá costume design:** Regina Tolbert • **Dancers:** Diana Aburto, Stella Adelman, Antinette Jackson, Tiffani Jarnigan, Luz Mena, Susana Arenas Pedroso, Jessica María Recinos, Juliana Romano, Tammy Ryan, Regina Tolbert, Mitzi Ulloa, Deborah Valoma, Heidi Weiskel, Lyndsey Williams, Tola Williams • **Drummers:** Carolyn Brandy, Michaelle Goerlitz, Jules Hilsen, Mena Ramos, Elizabeth Sayre • **Vocalists:** Christelle Durandy, Karen Smith, Regina Wells, Natasha Wild



WORLD PREMIERE

# Parangal Dance Company

## Philippines

This world premiere choreography—*Kiyaprawa a ko Arkat Lawanen (The Abduction of Princess Lawanen)*—tells an ancient legend from the Meranao people of Mindanao, Philippines.

*Princess Lawanen of Bambaran, beauty without compare, is engaged to brave and true Prince Mabaning Ndaw Rogong, of Gandongan. Emperor Dimasangkay of Kadaraan yearns for Lawanen, so when she is exploring along the shore, he abducts her. Chaos ensues. Prince Mabaning and his warriors sail off: they will fight to retrieve her. When Bae a labi—the Queen—demands peace, Princess Lawanen returns, and her kingdom celebrates.*

Four dramatic scenes are:

*Welcoming at the Palace.* While women

dance in malong tubular skirts, the Onor plays welcoming melodies on kulintang; she chants in the classical language, pananaroon. *Abduction and Prince Mabaning's Journey.* The men dance katubaw in tubaw kerchiefs, preparing for war. The Prince arrives in his boat. A kapangentonong ritual asks for strength, courage, and forgiveness for taking lives.

*Battle, Unity, and Peace.* The Meranao war dance is called Sagayan. The queen sings: *Bayok: Pamomolan sa ranao so dikang giginawai: Stop the battle, you are brothers.*

*Celebration—Lawanen returns.* Women dance kapagapir with fans and elegant kini-kini steps; and singkil with bamboo poles.

The Meranao—People of the Lake—live on Bukidnon-Lanao plateau, 2,200 feet high, on

Mindanao, the Philippines' southernmost island. Their farming communities circle the large, deep Lake Lanao farming rice and other crops. They are also known for elaborate symbolic wood carvings; architecture; ornate awang dugout boats; and patterned textiles.

*The Abduction of Princess Lawanen* is from the Meranao's epic poem, *Darangen*, an oral history of 72,000 lines. Now part of UNESCO's Intangible World Heritage, this major epic originated in ancient Sanskrit traditions with Islamic influences from the 14th century. It celebrates ancestry, mythical heroes, codes of life, death, courtship, politics, behavior, and beauty—with elegant language, symbol, irony, and satire. It has long been a treatise on what it means to be Meranao.

Parangal Dance Company is a Philippine dance company that aspires to inspire. It creates awareness and advocates for Philippine indigenous people's culture, traditions, and stories through attire, music, and dance. Eric Solano is Artistic Director and Choreographer, and Major Julian is Music Director. *Kiyaprawa* was created with the help of Meranao Culture Bearers Salika Samad and Abdul Jabar D. Dimalna. The finale is inspired by traditional Singkil and Philippine National Artist Lucrecia Reyes-Urtula.

Website: [parangal.org](http://parangal.org)

**Dance Origin:** Philippines • **Genre:** Folkloric (Meranao) • **Title:** *Kiyaprawa a ko Arkat Lawanen (The Abduction of Princess Lawanen)* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Eric Solano • **Dancers:** Don Aguillo, Helen Serafino Agar, Amado Rey Arcilla, June Arellano, Brian Anthony Batugo, Jeremy Buhain, Noelle Campos, Karl Catalan, Alyssa Cortez, Marissa Cruz, Phol Degalicia, Jerico DeGuzman, Eric Dong, Matthew Dumanig, Karina Fantillo, Christine Joy Amagan Ferrer, Darren Garza, Ritche Gazo, Emelita Hernandez-Bravo, Kristian Ilustre, Gilbert Laylay, Michael Macayan, Jonathan Mercado, Mia Merced, Lydia Neff, Devina Ojascastro, Katherine Pantangco, Rachel Perey, Nathan Perucho, Joseph Racca, Kimberly Requesto, Ophelia Nombrado Sampang, Janna San Felipe, Paul Silverio, Jet Tagle, Renalyn Tan, Dio-Ann Valmores, Denise Wong, Vincent Zabala • **Musicians:** Amado Rey Arcilla (dabakan), Marlon Dumlaog (agung), Major Julian (kulintang), Lydia Neff (kulintang), Paul Silverio (agung), Eric Solano (dabakan)(odaiko), Carlo Chung (fue), Rie Daijo (kane), Bill Warner (odaiko)



## Honoring Pachamama with indigenous dances from Bolivia



## Bolivia Corazón de América

### Bolivia

From indigenous Tarabucoño and Potosí communities in the Bolivian Andes, this is *Pachamama*, three dances to honor Mother Earth. Choreographer Isidro Fajardo tells us “Mother Earth—called Pachamama—is indigenous earth and encompasses all life. She is us and we are her, in what we wear, flowers and leaves; and in mountains, she is living. We request permission to do anything with her, to her, around her. She is the reason we dance.”

The set includes:

*Pujllay*, a Yamaparárez warrior dance from Tarabuco, Sucre, Bolivia. Male dancers follow endless patterns along a path paved by elders and the wise. They wear thick fabric shields, and, to frighten their foes, ojotas en zancos platform shoes and tall hats. Women dance to cleanse the Earth and respectfully enter the space. They assemble food, a quilt, flowers, and ferns, making an offering they will dance around for three days. These are traditional festivities, marking the Combate de Jumbate of 1816, when the Yamaparárez defended their land against Spanish invasion, using mostly sticks and stones.

*Zapateo Potosíno*, a lesser-known Potosí style, danced in deep connection to Pachamama. Their rhythmic stomping grounds the dancers, and acknowledges we are always stepping on her, always connected.

*Kalampeo* or *Potosílos*, a style based on farming work, from the small Potosí communities of Limes and Pochuatas. Festive, fast-paced turns and stomping continue to praise, consecrate, and thank Mother Earth.

In their gratitude, the dancers wear the Pachamama’s gifts. Warriors wear silver thread and dangling silver utensils, in homage to the mines of Potosí and Sucre. Wool and feather headdresses are tributes to Earth’s delicate natural beauty; regional fabrics with symbolic embroideries honor Pujllay plants; a bright layer on women’s old-style skirts turn the dancers into flowers.

Bolivia Corazón De América was formed in 2000 by Susana Salinas to connect Bolivian-American children to their heritage and showcase Bolivia’s rich, varied culture through innovative, high-quality, professional performances. The company often recreates Bolivian dances with innovative approaches to ancient and rare forms. Now including young dancers from other Latin American countries and the US, the company performs at charitable events around California, such as La Peña Internacional de Las Damas and Coaniquem, and the Beijing Touring Festival.

**Website:** [bcadance.com](http://bcadance.com)

**Dance Origin:** Bolivia • **Genre:** Folkloric (Tarabuco and Potosí) • **Title:** *Pachamama* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Isidro Fajardo • **Dancers:** Denisse Aguilar, Felisa Amaya, Maria Jose Amaya, Diana Avila, Miguel Barranco, Yaret Bello, Paola Claros, Flor Diaz, Saúl Diaz, Vianney Enriquez, Isidro Fajardo, Alondra Godinez, Yaretzi Hernandez, Maria Alicia Lemus, Matthew Lockmer, Rachael Lockmer, Brenda Martinez, Rebeca Perez, David Ruiz, Rubi Sarmiento, Sarah Sok, Grace Torres • **Musicians:** Leonardo Arauco (guitar), Miles Bainbridge (khena, zampoña), Fernando de Sanjines (Andean percussion), Eddie Navia (charango), Enrique Veizaga (khena, zampoña)



WORLD PREMIERE

# Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco

## Mexico

On Mexico's southeastern coast, the state of Tabasco is a lush region of wetlands and rivers, beaches, mangroves, and farms. This is the Olmec heartland, a land of ancient Mayan ceremonial centers, and communities that speak Nahuatl, a variant of the Mayan language spoken four thousand years ago. Today, Artistic Director Zenón Barrón presents Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco—and Bay Area Tabascan José Roberto Hernandez presents his musical group Vinic-Kay—in a world premiere suite from the region: *Tambores de la Chontalpa—Drums of the Chontales*. The Chontales are a mestizo-indigenous community that has been deeply impacted by the oil industry's environmental degradation of their water, land, and way of life. These dances present the cultural

bounty in need of support during these challenging times.

The four danzas begin with *Fiesta del Acabo—The End of the Season*—a harvesting dance with harvesting movements, and *La Abejita—The Little Bee*—a fast and lively beginning for the fiesta after harvest. The celebration continues with *El Rojo y el Azul—The Red and Blue*—danced for Tabasco's blue rivers and red flowers, and *La Chontalpa—Dance of the Chontal*.

The form of this performance is Tabasco's unique zapateo tabasqueño, a style with roots in the three original cultures of the mestizo population of today's Mexico: Olmec Indian, Spanish, and African. It's unmatched for its velocity, agility, precision, and skill. It's also

one of the grandest dance manifestations in Mexican folklore, its repertoire narrating ancient battles between deities, life events, and histories of Spanish Conquista. The movements evolved in part from Tabasco's colonial Spanish era: from Spain's fandango and fast zapateados footwork. It has origins in the Olmec period and indigenous influences from Maya, Mexicas, and Nahuatls.

The music has origins in the Olmec period and indigenous influences from Maya, Mexicas, and Nahuatls. The ceramic flute/whistle is an instrument known among ancient Mayas-Chontal. The reed flute is the Spanish carrizo. The tortoiseshell drum—along with hollow tree trunk drums—were inventions from colonial African communities who carried their strong traditions of dance and drumming to the region.

Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco was founded in 1992 to preserve the tradition of Mexican folk dance, and a mission to promote it with quality and authenticity. Their work showcases how Mexican folklore is a continually evolving dance form based on tradition and ritual that touches performers' and audiences' souls. Tours abroad include various states in Mexico and China. In 1999, Ensembles began bringing its own productions and original

pieces to the stage with extraordinary success and artistry.

**Websites:** [ensembles-sf.com](http://ensembles-sf.com); [joserobertomusic.com](http://joserobertomusic.com)

**Dance Origin:** Tabasco, México • **Genre:** Folkloric (Tabasqueño) • **Title:** *Tambores de la Chontalpa—Drums of the Chontales* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Zenón Barrón • **Associate Director:** Linda Gamino • **Executive Director:** Amanda Almonte • **Musical Director:** José Roberto Hernández • **Dancers:** Lupe Aguilera, María Anaya, Ariana Barraza, Maricela Benavides, José Castañeda, Marco Castellanos, Mayra Cuevas, Arturo Flores, Hugo Flores, Linda Gamino, Fiona Gray, Juan Gil, Arturo Gómez, Jesús Gómez, Natalie Hernández, Pablo Jiménez, Alejandro Ledesma, Priscilla López, Claudia Martínez, Christian Ortega, Jeannette Quintana, Raúl Ramos, Viviana Ruiz, Karla Toledo, Karina Vásquez • **Musicians:** Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto): Fernanda Bustamante (tambor requinto), José Roberto Hernández (flauta de carrizo, tambor requinto), Jesús Martínez (tambor bajo), Silvestre Martínez (tambor bajo), Lali Mejía (tambor requinto)



# Te Pura O Te Rahura'a

## Tahiti

To the steady heartbeat of Tahitian drums, 56 dancers present *O Mo'emo'e—Curiosity*. Traditional and contemporary dance forms—synchronized 'ōte'a hip-shaking, and graceful 'aparima hand-pantomime—merge with a sad and sorrowful song, telling a contemporary legend:

*On an island, a sorcerer created a group of women. Outraged by the hubris, Oro, the primary Tahitian deity and god of war, curses the women to live as birds by day and to never touch a true human. A young man, Onoono, and his friends arrive. They watch birds transform into women, and Onoono falls in love with Maruao. She touches him and Oro's curse manifests. All the bird-women become hideous beasts; Maruao lunges at Onoono and the legend ends. Some say a banyan tree holds the lovers in eternal embrace. Sailors say they hear the women singing—*

*Mai Te o'ere hoi matou / E oraraa fau faa ore / Aore e aroha aore e here...  
Our life has no meaning / No love, no love / Oro e, Oro e / Consider us to be human / Open the doors of life!*

The male dancers—tane—wear village attire of natural fibers: moré hibiscus bark, ti leaves, and shells. When in their human form, the women—vahine—wear black pareos to represent night sky and ti leaves: red for passion and green for the sorcerer's envy. As exotic birds they wear feathers the color of sunrise, green and orange seeds, and red kukui. As many-eyed beasts, they wear cats-eye shells, dark moré skirts, headpieces of moré and dried mushrooms, coconut bark, and grass horns.

Original music is by Marilou and Randy Lafon, and Raymond Bambao. The music merges contemporary sounds and xylophone with

Tahitian drums—to'ere, tairi parau, fa'akete, ihara and pahu tupai. The group's Tahiti mentors include Moena Maiotui, Terau Piritua, Tuarii Tracqui, and Hirohiti Tematahotoa.

Te Pura O Te Rahura'a Polynesian dance group was founded in 2006, and is directed by Marilou Ubaldo Lafon and Randy Lafon. Performing songs and dances from Hawaii and Tahiti, the group perpetuates Polynesian culture, developing dancers' talents and abilities, instilling self-esteem and appreciation for Polynesian culture, dance, and music. Awards include Best Overall Hura Tau Group, 2017, Tahiti Fete, San Jose; performance, Te Moana Nui, at 2014 Merrie Monarch Ho'ike; 1st place, Mehura category, Ori Tahiti Nui Competition 2014; World Champion Vahine Dancer Shanna Pineda, Ori Tahiti Nui Competition 2017.

**Website:** [socstudio.com](http://socstudio.com)

**Dance Origin:** Tahiti, French Polynesia • **Genre:** 'Ōte'a and 'Aparima • **Title:** *O Mo'emo'e (Curiosity)* • **Artistic Director:** Marilou Ubaldo Lafon • **Choreographers:** Adrian DeCastro, Marilou Ubaldo Lafon, Shanna Pineda • **Costume Design:** Imogene O'Neill, Aaron Sencil • **Lead**

**Musician:** Randy Lafon • **Dancers:** Jessica Acosta, Maria Isabella Arrobbio, Marlon Ayala, Abby Ayong, Mylene Canosa, Tanya Cansanas, Kayla Carnecer, Nicole Castillo, Katie Cheung, Amy Chiu, Megan Chiu, Maka Criste, Adrian DeCastro, Lallaine Delos Santos, Kamiah Diccion, Mikka Dizon, Joanne Gallagher, Kayla Golub, Laney Goo, Danielle Hammond, Jeneiah Ignacio, Desiree Lagandaon, Sydnie Lau, Ashley Lauti, Nathalie Le Guay, Rayna Lew, Sydney Lew, Lily Lim, Kelly Lum, Marvin Luna, Christine Maog, Sabrina Martinez, Jackie Melgar, Miki Mercado, Julie Mallari, Regina Olay, Fiona O'Neill, Von Parsario, Shanna Pineda, Chickie Polanco, Jonah Resurreccion, Nicole Resurreccion, Samantha Resurreccion, Rebecca Rodriguez, Miles Seegmiller, Sharon Seegmiller, Maya Smith, Nicholas Soriano-Smith, Rhiannon Soriano-Smith, Gillian Taganas, Camille Valdez, Myrtle Ventura, Arielle Visperas, Jacob Visperas, Jaeden Young, Crystal Zapata • **Musicians:** Alexa Almira (fa akete, bamboo, ihara), Sam Almira (pahu tupai), Curtis Alumno (toere), Raymond Bambao ('ukulele, vivo, xylophone, vocals), Marilou Ubaldo Lafon (vocals), Randy Lafon (toere, tairi parau), Haunah Lee (tairi parau), Kaluna Pallar (guitar, vocals), Ricky Viray (toere), Armando Visperas (toere, Tahitian banjo), Kevin Yee (guitar)





WORLD PREMIERE



# OngDance Company

## South Korea

*Salt Doll* is named for a classical Korean character who leads others to their destination in the heat, knowing it will melt. OngDance Company presents it in homage to teachers, and especially to Korean master teachers of the past who sacrificed to lead others on their journey of dance. We will see two parts: *Dance of Flowers* and *Dance of Life*.

*Dance of Flowers* is a duet choreographed by Artistic Director Kyoungil Ong, based on the *Buchaechum*, or *Korean Fan Dance*. The music is *Changbu Taryeong*, a folk song of Korea's central Gyeonggi Province, originally a shaman song of the Han River—

...A mythical bird is flying alone, crying for its mate. I am desperately waiting for my sweetheart. In this long autumn night I cannot fall asleep. The cloud is rising in a beautiful shape; the forest is dense with tall trees, a gentle breeze is blowing flower petals...

The performance honors Master Baek-bong Kim, creator of *Buchaechum*, born in South Pyongan in 1927. As dancer/choreographer for the conservatory of renowned Korean Dance Master Seung-hee Choi, Baek-bong Kim brought Korean dance to various Asian countries. After the Korean War, she established her own conservatory. She presented *Buchaechum* in 1954, using the Korean fan to express the beauty of falling leaves, blooming blossoms, and drifting clouds. Kyoungil Ong studied with Kim, and her *Dance of Flowers* builds on Kim's legacy, expanding the theme of beautiful nature. She dances here with Chinese dancer Jiang Bian, who performs a Chinese-based choreography for a bird. Kyoungil's costume is an elegant Dangui garment as worn in the courts of the Joseon Dynasty, with a queen's embroidery of a gold dragon. The white fabric suggests the Salt Doll.

The second piece, the harmonious and vibrant *Dance of Life*, presents Korea's bak wooden-clapper dance; bangwool bell dance; and buchae fan dance. Drumbeats sound—from the Korean jang-gu and buk, Japanese taiko, and

Chinese gu—expressing the close relationship between nations and cultures; sounding the force of human life, beating of hearts, and rhythmic energy of Earth.

OngDance Company was founded in 2004 by master artist Kyoungil Ong, who achieved national acclaim as the principal dancer for the National Dance Company of Korea and the winner of the Korean National Dance competition. This company has been at the frontier of promoting Korean traditional and contemporary dance and drum in the world, performing in forty countries. It has produced over 30 works through collaborations with various artists throughout the world. OngDance has been honored by the Isadora Duncan Awards, supported by the San Francisco Arts Commission and the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, and has been acclaimed on ABC7, NBC, and in the New York Times.

Website: [ongdance.com](http://ongdance.com)

**Dance Origin:** South Korea • **Genre:** Traditional and Contemporary • **Title:** *Salt Doll* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer/Soloist:** Kyoungil Ong • **Composers:** Jean Ah, Tekn Kim n • **Associate Music Directors:** Jason Jong, Kyoungil Ong, Galen Rogers • **Costume Design:** Hojun Lee • **Dancers:** Jiang Bian, Hee Jung Choi, Tamara Chu, Seojeong Lauren Jang, Jiwoo Ellie Kim, Haiou Wang, Jesse Wiener, Aiping Xiong, Ayana Yoneska, Ryeonhwa Yeo • **Musicians:** Leslie Chu (Japanese taiko), Audreyanne Covarrubias (Korean jang-gu, kkwaeng-gwali), Phillip Ginn (Chinese gu), Sandy Ito (Chinese gu), Jason Jong (Chinese gu), Vivian Pham (Japanese taiko), Kyle Tan (Japanese taiko), August Toman-Yih (Japanese shime daiko) Kristi Tsukida (Japanese taiko)

*This performance piece is supported by the San Francisco Arts Commission*

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## WORLD PREMIERE

# Ananya Tirumala

## South India

Ananya Tirumala is our ten-year-old kuchipudi soloist, performing *Ananda Narthana Ganapathim*. Her elegant elephant poses depict beloved Lord Ganesha, the Hindu elephant-headed god of knowledge, intellect, and wisdom. Ganesha dances with Gandharvas, celestial beings, in paramandanam, supreme bliss.

Ananya says, "I am trying to portray Ganesha, how he looks, how he likes to dance a lot. He has an elephant head, a trunk, a lot of brothers. He also sits a lot, he's chubby. He's competing in dance with celestial beings, performing for the drum—it's a prayer. Between the instrument players are celestial beings. I nod my head and put my arms over my head; the drummer says go ahead, do that. I make a circle with one finger for the end of his trunk and show how he takes water and feeds himself: he's eating a modak (coconut dumpling, Ganesha's favorite). The end pose is Ganesha holding out his trunk."

Ananya's costume is traditional, modeled after ancient temple sculptures and bridal attire, with a center pleat, gold borders, flowers, traditional and trendy jewelry, and elaborate makeup. While dancing, she silently sings sacred Hindi verses:

*I meditate upon the joyously dancing Ganapati, Spirit incarnate, origin and the foundation... the greatest; hidden in the mind of Shiva Shankara; dwelling as after-song when celestial musicians endowed with lute and rhythm strike a note... His feet are like the lotus. He resembles an emerald. He has a face of an elephant. He is the sound of Om. He is the supreme. He wears golden clothes. He has one tusk...*

Kuchipudi originated around 200 BCE in Andhra Pradesh. It stems from the ancient Sanskrit text Natya Shastra, in which the stated goal of dance is to bring us to a parallel reality of wonder, reflection, and spiritual consciousness. Like Indian classical bharatanatyam, it tells story through nritya

(pantomime), natyam (theater), and nritta (pure dance), but it's more exaggerated. In the 14th-century Siddhyendra Yogi added Yakshagana folk dance influences, stylized footwork, and Carnatic music; and in the 20th century, women's solo presentation emerged. Ananya's performance today is a living thread to ancient worlds, linking generations of masters and students; and a reminder of the Bay Area's true wealth—our dedicated culture bearers.

Choreographer Jyothi Lakkaraju, Artistic Director of Natyalaya School of Dance and Music, learned the dance from Dr. Uma Rama Rao in Hyderabad, India and created this inspired choreography. The wonderfully rhythmic song is set to raga Nattai, an auspicious South Indian melodic/rhythmic cycle that opens many concerts.

Soloist Ananya Tirumala began her dance journey at age four, learning kuchipudi in 2015. She loves dance and currently studies Vaganova classical ballet at Bayer Ballet. She's given multiple stage performances, winning awards at regional and national competitions, including 3rd place in the 2018 YAGP Ballet competition. Ananya also likes math, coding and reading. Cupertino's Natyalaya School of Dance and Music was established by renowned artist and instructor Jyothi Lakkaraju in 2000 to honor and promote Indian classical kuchipudi dance, and foster its stylistic evolution in the US.

**Dance Origin:** South India • **Genre:** Kuchipudi  
**Title:** *Ananda Narthana Ganapathim* •  
**Choreographer:** Jyothi Lakkaraju • **Composer:**  
 Sri Oothukaadu Venkata Subbaiyer • **Soloist:**  
 Ananya Tirumala

*Dancing for Lord Ganesha,  
 a beloved Hindu deity*





# Caminos Flamencos

## Spain

*En medio de la Calle Nueva  
ay Manuel de Angustias cantaba  
ay la cantiñas de Pinini aquel gitano de utrera  
la Simoncita la Simoncita la Simoncita ya se casa*

Caminos Flamencos presents *Cantiñas del Pinini/Romeras*, a vibrant performance of flamenco's centuries-old alliance of dance and music. The choreography is joyous and strong in its speed and phrasing, and it transports us to a Spanish seaport town. Europe's oldest city, Cádiz, is a city of fishermen, beaches, life on the water, romantic and beautiful nature; and its light-hearted cantiñas/romeras offers a celebration of love, life, and the beauty of la mar,

the ocean—as well as a tribute to the strong feminine beauty of flamencas.

The lyrics tell us: *In the middle of the new street / Manuel de Angustias was singing / cantiñas by gitano singer El Pinini from Utrera / about Simocita who is already married; And what they are really saying is: It's a wonderful day! There's joyful music in the streets! The lyrics refer to flamenco singer Manuel de Angustias, a well-known recording artist; and El Pinini—Fernando Peña Soto—a gitano slaughterhouse worker born in 1863, head of one of the biggest, most important flamenco families, an artist mythologized for*

his astonishing voice and styles of alegrías and cantiñas.

The cantiñas and romeras styles are part of the family of alegrías, musical forms that hail from Cadiz. They are sung in major mode, with upbeat lively lyrics and a 12-count beat like this: 1 2 [3] 4 5 [6] 7 [8] 9 [10] 11 [12]. Related to the Alegrías de Cádiz, the dance follows a structure: salida, the entrance; paseo, the walkaround; a slow-paced silencio; the castellana, an upbeat section; and it finishes with zapateado footwork, and tapped rhythmic phrases called bulerías.

Yaelisa is the choreographer, and she's also a dancer in today's ensemble. Flamenco is a musical art form, presented solely by guitarist and/or singer, or in performances where dancer, singer, and guitarist are communicating and unified. Virtuoso guitarist Jason McGuire “El Rubio,” and cantaor from Spain Felix de Lola create and lead the rhythm and flavor of *Cantiñas del Pinini/Romeras*, showing their considerable skills. Here, the three branches of flamenco compose, construct, and interpret with equal voice.

San Francisco-based Caminos Flamencos, founded in 2001 by Emmy Award-winning dancer and choreographer Yaelisa, creates and presents contemporary, traditional, and

theatrical dance programs showcasing artists from Spain and the US. Programs reflect the changing face of flamenco and preserve and share Spain's rich artistic heritage. Caminos is a flourishing dance company, with a dance and music school offering a comprehensive program. Performances including those with San Francisco Opera, Pacific Symphony at Segerstrom Concert Hall, and as guest artist at Adelaide Guitar Festival, Australia. With three Isadora Duncan Dance Award nominations, Yaelisa has also received an Emmy for Choreography and NEA Fellowships. She was Artistic Director for New World Flamenco Festival in Southern California for 12 years.

**Website:** [caminosflamencos.com](http://caminosflamencos.com)

**Dance Origin:** Andalucia, Spain • **Genre:** Flamenco • **Title:** *Cantiñas del Pinini/Romeras* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Yaelisa • **Dancers:** Claudia Bermudez, Ligia Giese, La Kiki, La Perla, Devon LaRussa, Bianca Rodriguez, Katiana Vilà, Yaelisa • **Musicians:** Felix de Lola (vocals), Jason McGuire (guitar)



# Nimely Pan African Dance Company

## Liberia

*Dai Zoe Bush—The Breaking of the Poro & Sande Bush*—presents ceremonial dance rhythms of Vai and Gola people from Liberia's remote Grand Cape Mount County. In a theatrical representation of ceremony, elaborate full-body masks embody divine spirits, appearing in community to guide the opening of the bush school.

Vai and Gola communities belong to West African societies that initiate and care for their members—Poro for males, and Sande for female. Their bush schools provide direction, teaching appropriate conduct, the value of hard work, community relations, and reverence

for ancestors. Masks appear in ceremonies and important social occasions: they are vehicles for bush spirits to make themselves known. Finely-carved wooden helmets, fiber symbolizing forest, and cloth symbolizing civilized society completely hide the dancer's body, mediating between two worlds. Each mask has a personality and role: some to inform ritual and ceremony; some to play jokes or make trouble; some to act as graceful, gentle intermediaries between children in the bush school and their mothers. Priests called zoes decide when and where they appear, and tend the relationship with the spiritual forces that inhabit them.

The origin of the dance-theater *Dai Zoe Bush* is unknown, as the secret societies have no written history. This representation evokes the traditional, mystical appearances of the Yan, Glagbah, and Gbatu helmet masks. There is a special appearance by the finely-carved Zoebah mask, one of the few female masks, from the Sande Bush: the spirit of self-confidence, poise, beauty, fertility, and womanhood. Representing these masks requires special permission and is considered a sacred privilege.

The kingi log-drum communicates directly with the dancers, calling the masks with special rhythms, signaling movement, and emphasizing gestures. The kingi language must be learned in bush school. The drummers also play the djembe hand drum made from a hollowed tree trunk; and the saa saa, or seeded gourd.

Nimely Pan African Dance Company (NPADC) was established in Minnesota in 1994, by Artistic Director/Choreographer Nimely Napla, from Liberia. The company is now based in Oakland. NPADC is a nonprofit community-based company focusing on the positive attributes of youth through discipline, study of cultural heritage, performing arts, song, dance, drumming, and building self-esteem; celebrating the life, youth, craft, and wisdom of Africa. The

programs of NPADC provide young men and women with a strong foundation of support and guidance to realize their truest potential and achieve their goals in life.

**Website:** [nimelypanafricandancecompany.weebly.com](http://nimelypanafricandancecompany.weebly.com)

**Dance Origin:** Liberian • **Genre:** Folkloric • **Title:** *Dai Zoe Bush (The Breaking of the Poro & Sande Bush)* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Nimely Napla • **Assistant Artistic Director:** Darian La Foucade • **Associate Artistic Director:** Alseny Soumah • **Business Manager:** Dedeh La Foucade • **Dancers:** Daje Brown, Fatu Zoe Browne, Myown Farmer, Sanjanette Fowler, Darian La Foucade, Dedeh La Foucade, Brianna Hamilton, Tamika Harris, Kimberly Harvey-Scott, Nanfoe Heybrun, Kyani Ison, Nimely Napla, Sekou Ndiaye, Yonis Pratt Alseny Soumah, Fadima Traore, Shaniya Wright • **Musicians:** Mohamed Lamine Bangoura (djembe), Orion Drake (djun djun), Kenneth Kirkwood (djembe), Mohamed Kouyate (balafon), Benjamin Roberts (djembe), Richmond Wiggins (djembe)





*A dynamic world premiere with Hindu and Islamic influences*



## Antara Asthaayi Dance

### Northern India

This exciting performance of Indian classical dance—*Hindol Tarana, 12½ Matra*—reveals the extraordinary rhythmic abilities of ten kathak dancers. A *Tarana* is a Hindustani vocal form with meaningless words which function as percussive sounds, and *matra* refers to the rhythm: note that difficult extra half-beat. The classical dance form of kathak was originally an intimate, solo, improvised form: Antara Bhardwaj's world-premiere choreography holds its ancient spirit within a dynamic, contemporary ensemble.

The original creator of *Hindol Tarana* is the late, beloved kathak master Pandit Chitresh Das; these dancers are his former students, and this is one of two pieces honoring him in our Festival this year (see page 20 to read about the other one). Pandit Das performed the piece for the 1984 Olympics in 16 even beats to showcase kathak's embodied aspects: *tayari* techniques of dynamic footwork and rapid spins; *layakari* (play with rhythm); *khoobsurti* (beauty); and *nazakat* (delicacy). In 2010, he recreated *Tarana* in the 12½ taal (rhythm) with senior disciple Antara as vocal accompanist. She says, "I was the only one who performed it (vocals) with him on stage the one time he performed this tarana. When a Guru teaches a dance to you, it is then yours - a forever treasured connection between you and your guru lineage. It makes me proud that I can pass this on to future generations."

The music is raga *Hindol*, Hindustani cycle of melody/rhythm for a springtime morning. *Tarana's* syllables, created by poet and musician Amir Khusro (1253-1325), are based on Persian and Arabic phonemes and Sufi poetry. They begin: *Dere na ta, dere na ta, dere na...*

Kathak evolved from ancient kathakas telling spiritual stories, history, and culture through music, dance, and mime. During the Bhakti movement it became a temple dance of Krishna, and in India's Mogul courts it was shaped into sensual erotic entertainment, danced to Persian

tabla drum, with poetic ghazals, songs of longing, Sufi spins, and veils. The colonial British prohibited kathak, calling it unrespectable, but the form was preserved in two family schools, called *gharanas*. Pandit Chitresh Das, schooled in both *gharanas*, leaves a unique artistic legacy: a style with embodied, graceful, sensual elements of the Lucknow *Gharana* and the dynamic power of the Jaipur *Gharana*.

The dancers wear traditional Islamic *thaat* attire, with silk pants, midriff-baring blouse, organza coat, *topi* hat, and *jhoomar* jewelry. *Red alta* (dye traditionally made from betel leaves) adorns fingers and toes to accentuate their subtle movements.

Antara Asthaayi Dance was formed by Antara Bhardwaj in 2015. As a senior disciple of the late Pandit Chitresh Das, she studied in the traditional *Guru-Shishya* (disciple) tradition since age 9, and believes strongly in the power of teaching and mentorship. AAD mentors young dancers who have completed at least seven years of kathak study and are seeking to advance their art form and develop as professionals.

**Website:** [antarabhardwaj.com](http://antarabhardwaj.com)

**Dance Origin:** Northern India • **Genre:** Kathak  
**Title:** *Hindol Tarana, 12 1/2 Matra* • **Artistic Director:** Antara Bhardwaj • **Music:** Pandit Chitresh Das • **Dancers:** Antara Bhardwaj, Riya Bhatia, Suhani Chaudhary, Ojaswee Chaudhary, Riya Chopra, Sana Indap, Shreeya Indap, Anya Khatri, Riya Mittal, Sakshi Prabhu • **Musicians:** Subha Chaki (vocals), Nilan Chaudhuri (tabla), Ben Kunin (sarod), Raginder Singh Momi (violin), Surtaal Singh (vocals)

## WORLD PREMIERE

# Los Danzantes de Aztlán de Fresno State

## Mexico

*Boda Hidalguense-Estilo Huasteca* is a lively fiesta, a *Hidalgo Wedding-Huasteca Style*. The music and dance comes from the Huasteca, a Nahuatl-speaking cultural group living in the tropical, forested mountain region of Huejutla, in the Mexican state of Hidalgo.

*El Rebozo* showcases the beautiful and useful rebozo shawl, worn by many indigenous and mestizo women throughout Mexico: across the shoulder to carry firewood or babies; crossed in front during a revolution; or twisted into a cushion to carry water on the head or to block the sun. Here, the wedding couple is formally united, and the song is from the groom: *Beautiful Morena, I need you to know that I love you because you are exquisite and beautiful/I would like to know if you love me passionately/ Tell me, sweetheart, if you'll correspond my love/I'll be blessed when you, Prieta of my soul, cover me with your rebozo.*

Then *Corre Caballo—Run Horse*—honors the animal indispensable to farming and ranching. The band sings of horses running beautifully, leaping over Don Silvero's fence, as male dancers transform to horses and the women corral them. The third song is *La Levita*, a popular huapango about love between soldiers and women in Mexico's Revolution.

The form is son huasteca, a robust, vigorous music/dance fusion from indigenous Nahuatl culture and Mexico's Andalusian and African heritage. The musicians are the sibling group Hermanos Herrera, with a new album on Smithsonian Folkways; they specialize in this form. They play violin, jarana guitar, and deep-bodied huapanguera. The singer's high falsetto creates the unique son huasteca sound, both melancholic and jubilant. The dance huapango huasteca includes lifted legs, bouncing off toes, energetic footwork combinations sounding percussion, and a 3-count step—zapateado de tres—where feet graze the ground.

The Huasteca wear everyday poplin or muslin clothing for dance. Women wear blouses with floral embroidery; skirts with ribbon and lace; and fiesta-wear of jacquard/brocade. The men wear a long-sleeve shirt with embroidery and a handkerchief; or formal drill pants, embroidered shirt, and palm leaf hat.

Los Danzantes de Aztlán de Fresno State University was founded in 1970 in the Department of Chicano and Latin American Studies by Professor Ernesto Martinez and is currently directed by Dr. Victor Torres. The vibrant Danzantes offer a spectacular and colorful expression of Mexican regional dances, and consistently earns top awards in national and international folkloric dance competitions. As a result of their energetic, professional presentations, the group has performed in the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival in 2014 and 2016, and are recognized as Official Ambassadors of the University.

**Website:** [danzantesdeaztlan.org](http://danzantesdeaztlan.org)

**Dance Origin:** Hidalgo, Mexico • **Genre:** Folkloric (Huapangos) • **Title:** *Boda Hidalguense-Estilo Huasteca* • **Artistic Director:** Dr. Victor Torres • **Choreographer:** Professor Alfredo Luna • **Assistants:** Mayra Aceves, Graciela Soto (costumes), Sylvia Torres (makeup) • **Dancers:** Ernesto Aguirre, Kimberly Alvarado, Mitchell N. Castro, Karen Hernandez, Stephanie Martinez, Vanessa Nañez, Tony Quesada, Gil Ramirez, Lupita Romo Ramirez, Diana Rocha, Auston Romo, Jasmine Stephens, Benny Thongsoane, Chabeli Torres, Emilio Torres, Lauren Valencia, Mario Vasquez, Pader Vue • **Musicians:** Hermanos Herrera: Jorge Andres Herrera (violin, lead vocals), Luis Albino Herrera (huapanguera, vocals), Miguel Antonio Herrera (jarana, vocals)

*A spirited wedding celebration  
from the Mexican state  
of Hidalgo*





WORLD PREMIERE

# Charya Burt Cambodian Dance

## Cambodia

*With this elaborate offering we call to ancestral spirits of the dance  
From near and far may you all descend to join us  
Please accept these sacred items we have prepared for you  
As we begin to dance these beautiful gestures  
Filled with delight and grace and great respect  
Know that you are our inner strength and spirituality  
Forever blessing and protecting us*

*Of Spirits Intertwined* is a performance of classical Cambodian dance. It explores the sacred connections between the dancer and her past dance masters, an unbroken string across generations. Offering fruit, flowers, precise movements, and respectful gestures, the dancers express their gratitude and ask ancestral spirits of dance for their continued blessing and guidance.

Ritual and devotion touches all aspects of Cambodian classical dance. There is the spiritual being of dance itself, given life by each dancer's devotion; and the individual spiritual paths each dancer follows. There is also the sacred nature of transmission: as these dancers lift a hand and foot to recreate ancient gestural movements, they form a living connection to their teachers and to the 1000-year-old sculptures, inscriptions, and court rituals of Cambodia's Khmer Angkorian people.

The Cambodian spirit has remained embodied in its dance tradition, passed down through the centuries by dance masters, and recently carried forward from teachers who survived the Pol Pot regime to create a contemporary egalitarian art form. Charya Burt choreographed this piece in 2009, adding an innovative section of spoken word in honor of the Festival's 40th Anniversary. This new presentation is performed with five accomplished Cambodian classical dancers wearing elaborate silk and sequined costumes reflecting Khmer royal attire including a golden headdress called a mokot.

The dancers are accompanied by a Cambodian pin peat orchestra made up of musicians from Cambodia, the East Coast, and Long Beach. Pin peat is the oldest, most revered Cambodian ensemble: it accompanies court dance, shadow theatre, male dance-dramas, and temple ceremonies. The musicians and dancers are telling a story, with each movement of the dancers referring to a specific thought or idea. It is a gestural language, understood by Cambodian audiences but appreciated for its sheer beauty by any audience.

Dedicated to the preservation and advancement of Cambodian dance through instruction, workshops, and performance, Charya Burt Cambodian Dance was founded in 1993. The company has since expanded its focus to create new and innovative works deeply rooted in tradition. Dancers who perform with the company are classically trained and former students of Charya. Performing in venues and festivals in Northern California and beyond, Charya and her dancers are the only professional touring company of Cambodian dance in the Western United States.

**Website:** [charyaburt.com](http://charyaburt.com)

**Dance Origin:** Cambodia • **Genre:** Classical • **Title:** *Of Spirits Intertwined* • **Artistic Director/Choreographer:** Charya Burt • **Dancers:** Charya Burt, Reaksmei Lath, Khannia Ok, Dawnsavann Phom, Victoria Ung • **Musicians:** Navy Bee Chhim (kong thom gong), Song Heng (roneat ek xylophone), Heng Bun Ung (sralai oboe), Andrew Yinn (sompbor, skor thom drums)



## WORLD PREMIERE

# De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association

## Peru

*De Cajón* is a 40-cajón tribute to the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, performed by members of the Bay Area Peruvian community. Multiple traditional Afro-Peruvian rhythms merge in this contemporary presentation:

*Lamento* is a musical genre from the time of slavery in Peru, pointing to the cajón as transmitter of the Afro-Peruvian experience throughout its history—

...*Madera curtida, graves profundos, Agudos hirientes. Tu voz renace la historia de nuestra pueblo, de nuestra vida!*

...*cured wood, deep bass, piercing high tones. Your voice that gives new birth to the history of our people, our lives!*

*Zamacueca*—Mother Dance of the Americas, with its folkloric children: Peruvian marinera, Argentine zamba, Chilean and Bolivian cuecas, Mexican chilena, and dances of the California Gold Rush. This traditional celebration of romance and independence—with three-step turns, saludo bows, paseo steps, sensual seduction—is danced with a modern, urban flair.

*Landó*—with its soulful rhythm and multicultural "true Peruvian" sound, evolved during the 20th century Afro-Peruvian Renaissance, from foundational musicians such as Chabuca Granda, Victoria Santa Cruz, Ronaldo Campos, and Caitro Soto.

*Vals Criollo, Peruvian Waltz*—an old adaptation of the European waltz expressing the personality,

conflicts, and values of Lima's 1920s-30s urban working class.

*El Son de los Diablos, Song of the Devils*—originally conceived by Spanish conquistadores to convert Peruvians to Catholicism, and later assimilated by enslaved Africans. Banned by the Church in the early 19th century, the tradition lived until the late 1950s in Carnival celebrations.

*Festejo*, a festive couple's dance from Lima and Ica, one of Peru's oldest African-rooted dances, with strong pelvic movements.

The purple costumes honor Peru's saint, El Señor de los Milagros (miracles); traditional elements are *pañuelos* (scarves) and Diabolo mask. Musicians play guitar, with percussion marked by footwork, *cajita* clapping box, *quijada* donkey-jaw scraper, and 40 (!) *cajón* box drums.

De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association, founded in 1995, dedicated to preserving, promoting, and making visible Afro-Peruvian traditions and culture from coastal Peru. Gabriela Shiroma formed this pioneering company focusing on Afro-Peruvian music and dance—the intersection of indigenous Peruvian, European, and African influences—a genre then virtually unknown outside of Peru. De Rompe y Raja is a cultural

bridge, as a home to visiting master teachers and as an umbrella organization for related projects.

**Dance Origin:** Peru • **Genre:** Afro-Peruvian •  
**Title:** *De Cajón: A Tribute to EDF's 40 Years*  
**Artistic Director:** Gabriela Shiroma •  
**Choreographers:** Peta Robles, Gabriela Shiroma •  
**Solo dancers:** Braulio Barrera, Javier Gordillo Barrera, Peta Robles • **Dancers:** Jannett Alberg, Leo Alejandría, Mateo Alejandría, Jacqueline Alyousfi, Fernanda Bustamante, Francesca Ferreira Caruana, Lucía Castañeda, Jorge Colaizzo, Magnolia Díaz, Barbara Diestra, Gabriela Guimarey Ferreira, Adriana Rodríguez García, Graciela Giraldo, Victoria Giraldo, Carlo Gutierrez, Doris Gutierrez, Jonathan Hernández, Marina Hernández, Matthias Horn, María Judson, Pina López, Erika Luna, Jesús Martínez, Lali Mejía, John Miluso, Sandra Miluso, Elisa Montemayor, Zhayra Palma, Liliana Rosas, Gabriela Shiroma, Daniela Tenorio, Arleen Dangoy Thomas, Hegel Torres, Italo Valle, Demond Ware, Tyese Wortham, Diego Zamalloa-Chion, Marilyn Zúñiga • **Musicians:** Braulio Barrera (percussion), Javier Gordillo Barrera (percussion), José Roberto Hernández (guitar, vocals), Silvestre Martínez (percussion), Luis Ramos (guitar, vocals)





## The Mission of World Arts West:

The mission of World Arts West is to support local artists sustaining diverse world dance and music traditions by providing needed services and performance opportunities, while deepening the public's support of and engagement with these inspiring culture bearers.



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**ALL PHOTOS BY RJ MUNA EXCEPT WHERE NOTED**

## Auditions Panelists

Nearly 70 dance companies and soloists performed at the Palace of Fine Arts in November 2017 before the Festival Artistic Directors, a panel of dance experts, and people like you who cheered them on. The Artistic Directors created the Festival lineup after consulting with these panelists, who are noted for their dance backgrounds, cultural expertise, and reputations in the field.

**MARIA CHENG's** dance/theatre works, informed by western technique and Chinese classical and minority forms, have been presented to critical acclaim across five continents (Beijing Dance Association, Jacob's Pillow, Nordrhein-Westfalen Tanzfestival, Green River of Australia, Guatemala National Culture Center, among others) and garnered awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller, Jerome, Bush, and McKnight Foundations. She was the White Demon Skeleton in the first US production of the classic Chinese opera *The Monkey King*. She was the resident choreographer for the Guthrie Theater under mentor and artistic director Liviu Ciulei. She developed the University of Minnesota's Dance Program to national prominence, and has been an advisor for many arts councils and organizations including Affiliate Artists of New York and the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, where she served as a Co-Artistic Director for a season. In 2013, Maria founded the Asian-American theatre company Theatre Esprit Asia (TEA), which has won numerous awards. In 2017, TEA became the first ethnic theatre from any state to be presented at the National Festival of the American Association of Community Theatre. Maria was named a 2017 Asian American Hero of Colorado.

**ERIK NOEL DÍAZ** was born in Zacatecas, Mexico, where he began his training in Mexican folk dance at an early age with a local group, El Ballet Folklórico de Zacatecas, and later went on to train with the prestigious folklórico dance groups Compañía Estatal de Danza Folclórica Zacatecas and Ballet Folclórico Nacional de México Aztlán. In 2001, he finished his arts degree at Instituto Superior de Danza Folklórica Mexicana in Zacatecas. He later moved to California, where he began to work as an instructor and choreographer for several companies, including Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet Company, Ballet Folklórico las Estrellas, Ballet Folklórico Anahuac, Ballet Folklórico Nube de Oro, Ballet Folklórico IMBA, and Los Laureles. He has choreographed several dance pieces that have appeared on the stage of the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, most recently in 2016. He continues to spread the knowledge and art of folklórico as a dance instructor at UC Davis, and is currently the Artistic Director for Ballet Folklórico Nube de Oro.

**ABIGAIL KEYES** is Assistant Director of the Salimpour School Repertoire Ensemble and Suhaila Dance Company, and is a current company member of Bal Anat, the longest running Middle Eastern dance company in the world. She holds the highest level in both of the Salimpour School's educational programs, and is only one of four dancers in the world to hold this distinction. She holds a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University, and has studied the Arabic language at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. In 2016, she earned her M.A. in Dance Studies from Mills College in Oakland. She is also a respected dance writer, and is currently working on a historical biography of early modern dancers in the United States. (Weekend Two)

**ANURADHA NAG** is the founder and Artistic Director of Tarangini School of Kathak Dance in San Jose, and works with well over two hundred students each year. Her students have performed at the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, the International Kathak Festivals in San Francisco and Chicago, and in other prestigious events. She received her initial training from Nataraj Parimal Krishna and later from the legendary Padmavibushan Pandit Birju Maharaj and his foremost disciple, Pandit Vijai Shankar, and advanced her training in abhinaya from Padmabhusan Smt. Kalanidhi Narayanan. She has taught kathak at all levels at the Padatik Dance Center in Kolkata, and has performed extensively in India and throughout the world. Before making the US her home, she was a recommended artist for the Sangeet Natak Akademi as well as the Indian Council of Cultural Relations to perform and hold workshops at the Kuopio Music and Dance Festival, and in many cities throughout the world. Anuradha has been a guest speaker in Cultural Anthropology at UC Santa Cruz for the past four years, and in the Department of Religious Studies at UC Davis.

**SUHAILA SALIMPOUR** is a highly-acclaimed belly dance performer, teacher, and choreographer. As a teenager, she began integrating the Middle Eastern dance passed on to her from her mother, Jamila Salimpour, with her own extensive training in ballet, jazz, tap, and American street styles. She also studied flamenco with Rosa Montoya, kathak with the late Chitresh Das, and tap with Tony Award-winner Hinton Battle. After working as a professional belly dance performer in the Middle East for over 10 years, she established her school and certification program in the United States in the late 1990s. She has choreographed hundreds of dances, from the classic to the avant-garde, and was nominated for an Isadora Duncan award for solo performance in 2005. Her methods and approach to teaching belly dance are considered an artistic breakthrough elevating belly dance practice and performance. Her technique and methods are now used by dancers in all stylizations, and the Salimpour School is one of the most respected and influential schools of belly dance in the world. (Weekend One)

**DEBORAH VAUGHAN** is the Artistic Director, Principal Choreographer, and Co-Founder of Dimensions Dance Theater, a contemporary dance company that was founded in Oakland in 1972 to promote public awareness of the central role that African-Americans have played in defining American art, culture, and social change. Throughout her career, Ms. Vaughan has been committed to producing, creating, performing, and teaching dance that reflects the historical experience, struggles, and contemporary lives of African-Americans. Under her artistic leadership, Dimensions Dance Theater has become widely recognized for its presentation of traditional African dances as well as original contemporary choreography drawn from African, jazz, and modern dance idioms. She received her M.A. in dance from Mills College, and has traveled and studied traditional dance in West Africa, Zimbabwe, the Congo, and throughout the Caribbean. It is important to her to keep her company with one foot in each sphere – Africa and America, traditional and contemporary, past and present.

# Individual Donors (6/5/2017 – 6/5/2018)

This year's Festival would not have been possible without the contributions of the many individuals listed below. We urge you to consider making a tax-deductible contribution to allow us to present the 41st Annual San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival in July 2019. For details, please stop at one of the donation tables in the lobby today, or visit [worldartswest.org](http://worldartswest.org).

## LUMINARIES

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