

**SAN FRANCISCO
ETHNIC
DANCE
FESTIVAL**

**37TH ANNUAL SAN FRANCISCO ETHNIC DANCE FESTIVAL CELEBRATES THE
HISTORY AND FUTURE OF WORLD DANCE AND MUSIC IN CALIFORNIA**

**JUNE PERFORMANCES RETURN TO BELOVED PALACE OF FINE ARTS
THEATRE**

**FESTIVAL CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL OF 1915 PANAMA-PACIFIC
INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION—THE WEST COAST’S FIRST MAJOR
WORLD’S FAIR
June 5 – 27, 2015**

www.sfethnicdancefestival.org

April 27, 2015 – San Francisco, CA: The San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival continues its year-long celebration of the centennial of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition with a series of world dance and music performances throughout the month of June. The annual, month-long June Festival serves as the celebration’s centerpiece, and will be set in the only grand structure remaining from the historic 1915 World’s Fair, the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre. Details and artists of the 2015 Festival may be found below. For more information and tickets visit www.sfethnicdancefestival.org.

The June performances will launch under the rotunda of San Francisco City Hall at noon on June 5 with dance and music from two Bay Area Hawaiian dance groups: Hālau ‘o Keikiali‘i and Hālau ‘o Ku‘ulei. The Festival then returns to the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre from June 6-27, for performances featuring dance and musical traditions from China, Europe, Guinea, Hawai‘i, India, Indonesia, Korea, Liberia, Mexico, the Middle East, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal, Spain, South Africa, the continental US, and Uzbekistan. Each weekend’s program includes nine or ten dance performances in a two-hour show, with numerous cross-cultural, collaborative, and transitional pieces. On June 21, the Festival moves to the Forum and Grand Lobby of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts for the Consulate General of India’s International Day of Yoga, which will honor Bay Area dancers who have helped influence the development of yoga in America.

“The Panama-Pacific International Exposition was the first major World's Fair on the West Coast of the United States,” said San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival Executive Director Julie Mushet, noting that more than 18 million people attended the fair, which featured over 80,000 exhibits from 42 foreign countries. “It left a lasting imprint on the San Francisco Bay Area, especially in regards to world dance and music. A vast breadth of world cultures could be experienced as never before, but often, they were not presented respectfully. Today, 100 years later, our Festival strives to shine a spotlight on that legacy, but with a commitment to the respect that all cultures deserve.”

One of the most memorable attractions reported from the Exposition was at the Hawaiian Pavilion, where a show featuring hula dancers included one of the first continental US ‘ukulele performances. These Hawaiian shows had the highest attendance at the entire fair and launched a Hawaiian cultural craze that influenced everything from American music, to movies, to fashion. As more people heard Hawaiian music, there were hundreds of Hawaiian-inspired songs written in all the popular styles of the day, including ragtime, blues, jazz, foxtrot and waltz tempos. One immediate result was the enormous impact on US musical recordings, with more Hawaiian music records sold in the US in 1916 than any other type of music.

The 2015 Festival Season will also include the showing of excerpts of a new documentary film about the Festival. Board President Māhealani Uchiyama says, “This Festival is iconic to the Bay Area’s cultural landscape and serves as the hub of the greatest world dance community in the nation. This film will bring the importance, history, and excitement about the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival to dance and music enthusiasts well beyond San Francisco, and affirm our role as national leaders as one of the first and most extensive festivals of world music and dance.”

2015 Festival Timeline and Artists

June 5: The June Festival opens at San Francisco City Hall with a special Rotunda Dance Series performance by Hālau ‘o Keikiali‘i and Hālau ‘o Ku‘ulei. This noontime performance is free, and is presented with Dancers’ Group, in partnership with San Francisco Grants for the Arts and San Francisco City Hall.

June 6-7, June 13-14, and June 27: The Festival returns to the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre for three weekends. The first two weekends will be classic Festival performances, featuring a different group of performers on the stage each weekend. As always, audiences will experience an inspiring lineup of Bay Area artists and musicians collectively sustaining important cultural heritage from around the world, including China, Europe, Guinea, Hawai‘i, India, Indonesia, Korea, Liberia, Mexico, the Middle East, Peru, Senegal, Spain, the Philippines, South Africa, the continental US, and Uzbekistan. Each weekend’s program includes nine or ten dance performances in a two-hour show, with numerous cross-cultural, collaborative, and transitional pieces. The final evening at the Palace of Fine Arts, June 27, will feature a showing of excerpts of the Festival’s documentary film along with special dance and music performances.

June 21: The Festival takes part in the Consulate General of India's International Day of Yoga Celebration at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, honoring Bay Area dancers who have been influential to the development of yoga in America. Visit www.sfethnicedancefestival.org for updated information.

San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival artists performing at the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre:

- Abhinaya Dance Company – Indian Bharatanatyam
- *Academy of Danse Libre – Ragtime Era Social Dance
- Academy of Hawaiian Arts – Hawaiian Hula
- Ballet Folklórico Mexicano Fuego Nuevo – Mexican Folkloric (Campeche)
- Chinese Performing Arts of America – Chinese Folkloric and Martial Arts
- Diamano Coura West African Dance Company – West African Traditional
- Dunsmuir Scottish Dancers – Scottish Victorian Ballroom
- El Tunante – Peruvian Marinera
- Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco – Mexican Folkloric (Oaxaca)
- *Gurus of Dance – Indian Bollywood
- Harsanari – Indonesian Sundanese (Silat and Jaipongan)
- Hiyas Philippine Folk Dance Company – Filipino Folkloric
- *Jikelele Dance Theater – South African Zulu and Xhosa Traditional
- LIKHA – Pilipino Folk Ensemble – Filipino Folkloric
- *Hilit Maniv – Spanish Flamenco and Jewish Ladino
- Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu – Hawaiian Hula
- OngDance Company – Korean
- Shabnam Shirvani – Middle Eastern and US Belly Dance
- *Starchild Dance – Harlem Jazz, Lindy, and Hip-Hop
- Tara Catherine Pandeya and Abbos Kosimov Ensemble – Uzbek Traditional

*Artists who are new to the Festival

Tickets to the June San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival performances are \$28 - \$48 and are available online at www.sfethnicedancefestival.org, or by calling (415) 392-4400. Matinees on Saturday afternoons offer 50% discounts to children age 12 and under, and group discounts are also available. The full Festival performance schedule is available at www.sfethnicedancefestival.org.

High resolution photos and broadcast quality video are available by request by contacting Scott Horton at (510) 735-9200, or scott@worldartswest.org. Images can be downloaded at <http://www.sfethnicedancefestival.org/about/press/photos.html>.