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SAN FRANCISCO ETHNIC DANCE FESTIVAL RETURNS TO THE WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE FOR 40th ANNIVERSARY IN JULY

NEW ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP INCLUDES PATRICK MAKUAKÄNE, LATANYA D. TIGNER AND MÄHEALANI UCHIYAMA, WHO JOIN ARTISTIC DIRECTORS EMERITUS CK LADZEKPO AND CARLOS CARVAJAL

San Francisco, CA, March 15, 2018 –The San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival will return for a second year at the War Memorial Opera House in July to celebrate its 40th anniversary as the largest, longest-running, and most comprehensive world dance and music event of its kind in the US. The Festival’s 2017 debut at the Opera House brought sold-out performances with artists and audiences spilling from the theater onto the Opera House steps in a jubilant outpouring of enthusiasm for the Bay Area’s world-class array of ethnic dance and music. The Festival’s 2018 40th anniversary lineup will feature Bay Area-based groups at the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House and City Hall presenting dance and music from Alaska, Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Cuba, India, Korea, Liberia, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines, Spain, Tahiti, the continental US, and Zimbabwe. Four groups will make their Festival debuts and the season will feature eight world premieres created specifically for the 40th anniversary. The Festival opens with a free public celebration with performances in San Francisco City Hall’s rotunda on Friday, July 6, at Noon. Two different programs will be presented at the Opera House July 14 & 15 and July 21 & 22, and a complete list of dates and artists may be found below. Tickets are priced $25-$45 and go on sale beginning April 24 at sfethnicdancefestival.org.
“We are thrilled to be returning to the Opera House for our 40th anniversary season. This is a magnificent setting to celebrate the awe-inspiring Bay Area artists who are sustaining the world’s cultural traditions, shining as a powerful beacon for the power and beauty of diverse cultural inclusion. We are all honored to be part of this premiere US summer dance Festival featuring local artists with a global perspective,” said Festival Executive Director Julie Mushet. “It’s deeply gratifying to celebrate four decades of presenting these inspiring artists to ever-growing audiences, from the Festival’s modest beginnings in community centers to the grandest stage in San Francisco.”

One of the highlights of this year’s Festival is the performance by Chuna McIntyre and the Nunamta Yup’ik Eskimo Singers and Dancers, who will present a dance that will be seen for the first time in over 200 years, in regalia that has taken nearly four decades to create.

In addition to 40th Anniversary performance details, the Festival has announced a trio of new Co-Artistic Directors: Patrick Makuakāne, Latanya d. Tigner, and Māhealani Uchiyama, as Carlos Carvajal and CK Ladzekpo become Artistic Directors Emeritus after 12 seasons as Co-Artistic Directors. Makuakāne is founder, Artistic Director, and Kumu Hula of San Francisco’s renowned Nā Lei Hulu i ka Wēkiu Hawaiian dance company; Tigner is a dancer and choreographer at Oakland’s venerated Dimensions Dance Theater, directs Dimensions’ youth company, and serves on the dance faculty of UC Berkeley; Uchiyama is founder and Artistic Director of the Center for International Dance in Berkeley, Kumu Hula of Hālau Ka Ua Tuahine, and is an award-winning choreographer and composer. New Co-Artistic Director bios may be found here: [http://worldartswest.org/main/artdirectors.asp](http://worldartswest.org/main/artdirectors.asp).

Much as Festival artists pass their cultural traditions on to the next generation, Carvajal and Ladzekpo are sharing their knowledge as longtime leaders of the Festival artistic team with the new team of highly accomplished Artistic Directors. Each is an extraordinary artist in their own right, and together, they have decades of professional dance experience filled with groundbreaking accomplishment.

**Opera House Artists for 2018:**

**AERODANCE** ‡ – Indian Folkloric (Gujarat)

**AguaClara Flamencos** – Spanish Flamenco

**Ananya Tirumala** * – South Indian Kuchipudi

**Antara Asthaayi Dance** * – North Indian Kathak

**Arenas Dance Company** – Afro-Cuban

**Bolivia Corazón de América** – Bolivian Folkloric (Tarabuco and Potosí)

**Caminos Flamencos** – Spanish Flamenco

**Charya Burt Cambodian Dance** – Cambodian Classical

**Chitresh Das Youth Company** – North Indian Kathak

**De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association** – Afro-Peruvian

**Ensambles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco** – Mexican Folkloric (Tabasqueño)

**Kim Shuck** ‡ – Poet Laureate of San Francisco
Leung’s White Crane Lion & Dragon Dance Association – Chinese Dragon Dance
Los Danzantes de Aztlán, Fresno State – Mexican Folkloric (Huapangos)
Mussel Rock Cloggers ‡ – Appalachian Clogging
Namely Pan African Dance Company – Liberian Folkloric
Nunamta Yup’ik Eskimo Singers and Dancers – Alaskan Yup’ik Eskimo
OngDance Company – Korean Traditional and Contemporary
Parangal Dance Company – Philippine Folkloric (Meranao)
Te Pura O Te Rahura’a * – Tahitian ‘Ôte’a and ‘Aparima
Ye Feng * – Chinese Contemporary

*Artists who are new to the Festival
‡Artists performing at the Festival Opening Event at City Hall

Preshow musical performances by:

Chinyakare Ensemble - Zimbabwean Traditional
Hermanos Herrera - Mexican Folkloric
Te Pura O Te Rahura’a - Tahitian ‘Aparima
Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto) - Mexican Folkloric

There will be world premiere performances of new works by Ananya Tirumala (Indian Kuchipudi), Antara Asthaayi Dance (Indian Kathak), Charya Burt Cambodian Dance (Cambodian Classical), Chitresh Das Youth Company (Indian Kathak), De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association (Afro-Peruvian), OngDance Company (Korean Traditional and Contemporary), Parangal Dance Company (Philippine Folkloric), and Ye Feng (Chinese Contemporary).

The Festival’s Malonga Casquelourd Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in ethnic dance and music will be presented to four artists who have had extraordinary impact on the field:

- Lily Cai, Founder and Artistic Director of Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company
- Patty-Ann Farrell, the Festival’s Lighting Designer and Auditions Stage Manager, who has been a part of the Festival team since it launched in 1978
- Chuna McIntyre, Founder and Artistic Director of Nunamta Yup’ik Eskimo Singers and Dancers
- Jamila Salimpour (In Memoriam), Founder of Bal Anat, and a major influence on belly dance in the United States for more than 50 years.

2018 SAN FRANCISCO ETHNIC DANCE FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

Festival Opening Event
San Francisco City Hall
Friday, July 6 at Noon
FREE
Rotunda Dance Series performance by AERODANCE (Indian Folkloric – Gujarat), Mussel Rock Cloggers (Appalachian Clogging), and Kim Shuck, Poet Laureate of San Francisco.

Opera House Weekend One
Saturday, July 14 at 8pm
Sunday, July 15 at 2pm
TICKETS: $25-$45, ON SALE TUESDAY, APRIL 24, at sfethnicdancefestival.org, or by calling City Box Office: 415.392.4400

Performances by 11 Bay Area dance and music ensembles showcasing traditions from around the world.

Preshow musical performance outside the Opera House by Te Pura O Te Rahura’a (Tahitian ‘Aparima) and in the lobby by Vinic-Kay (La Gente y El Canto) (Mexican Folkloric)

Performances by: AguaClara Flamenco (Spanish Flamenco), Arenas Dance Company (Afro-Cuban), Bolivia Corazón de América (Bolivian Folkloric–Tarabuco and Potosí), Chitresh Das Youth Company (North Indian Kathak), Ensambles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco (Mexican Folkloric – Tabasqueño), Leung’s White Crane Lion & Dragon Dance Association (Chinese Dragon Dance), Nunamta Yup’ik Eskimo Singers and Dancers (Alaskan Yup’ik Eskimo), Parangal Dance Company (Philippine Folkloric – Meranao), Te Pura O Te Rahura’a (Tahitian Ōte’a and ‘Aparima), and Ye Feng (Chinese Contemporary).

Opera House Weekend Two
Saturday, July 21 at 8pm
Sunday, July 22 at 2pm
TICKETS: $25-$45, ON SALE TUESDAY, APRIL 24, at sfethnicdancefestival.org, or by calling City Box Office: 415.392.4400

Performances by 10 Bay Area dance and music ensembles showcasing traditions from around the world.

Preshow musical performance outside the Opera House by Chinyakare Ensemble (Zimbabwean Traditional) and in the lobby by Hermanos Herrera (Mexican Folkloric)

Performances by: Ananya Tirumala (South Indian Kuchipudi), Antara Asthaayi Dance (North Indian Kathak), Caminos Flamencos (Spanish Flamenco), Charya Burt Cambodian Dance (Cambodian Classical), De Rompe y Raja Cultural
**Association** (Afro-Peruvian), **Los Danzantes de Aztlán de Fresno State** (Mexican Folkloric – Huapangos), **Nimely Pan African Dance Company** (Liberian Folkloric), and **OngDance Company** (Korean Traditional and Contemporary).

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High-resolution photos are available by request by contacting Scott Horton at (510) 735-9200. Images can also be downloaded at http://worldartswest.org/about/press/photos.html