

The Fifth Annual  
CubaCaribe Festival  
Of Dance and Music

*50 years of performance art since the revolution in Cuba*  
**50 commemorates** the vital performance arts that  
emerged as landmarks in the Cuban cultural landscape since the  
1959 revolution.

April 17, 18, 19, 2009  
Dance Mission Theater, San Francisco  
Artistic Direction: Ramón Ramos Alayo



for more information visit [www.cubacaribe.org](http://www.cubacaribe.org)



### CubaCaribe Mission Statement

CubaCaribe was founded in 2003 with the mission to preserve and promote the vibrant artistic heritage of Cuba, the Caribbean, and the wider African diaspora. Based on the principle that racial, ethnic, religious, gendered, economic, and age-based barriers are breached

organization that leads dance tours to Cuba for American students of Cuban dance. From 2005 to 2007 Bambury was professor of folkloric dance and popular Cuban dance at Danza Contemporanea Narciso Medina in Havana, Cuba. Since 2007 Bambury has been principal instructor and director of Sabor Cubano Dance Productions Alaska and has performed in several dance productions including the Juneau Dance Festival, Juneau Alaska; the Afro Cuban Dance Workshop, New York City, NY; and Out of the Box Dance Series, Anchorage, Alaska.

**Iván "Juan de Dios" Ramos Scull**, whose credits include principal dancer and choreographer of Havana Nights, Las Vegas, is the son of renowned founder of Raíces Profundas "Juan de Dios" Ramos.

### Thanks

Ramón Ramos Alayo gives thanks to all the dancers for making this event possible by giving your time, energy and dedication. Also, thank you to all the musicians, technicians, volunteers and donors for supporting the Alayo Dance Company and the CubaCaribe Festival. To Dance Brigade and Dance Mission Theater for their invaluable expertise, especially Krissy Keefer and the organizers; Stella Adelman, Adriene Harrison, Kristina Ramsey, Jamaica Itule Simmons, and Deborah Valoma.

This project has been made possible in part by a grant from the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, In Partnership with the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the James Irvine Foundation, The San Francisco Arts Commission, CA\$H-Theater Bay Area, and Dance Brigade.

## Credits

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### **Muriel Johnson**

***Nosotras Cantamos Asi (WeSing Like This)***

### **Jeff Chambers and Ramón Ramos Alayo**

***Moving Measure***

Choreography & dance: Ramón Ramos Alayo

Music: Jeff Chambers

### **Las Que Son Son**

***Mambo Chambo***

Artistic direction & choreography: Yismari Ramos Tellez

Dancers: Yismari Ramos Tellez, Ramón Ramos Alayo, Stella

Adelman, Cora Barnes, Adriene Harrison, Jamaica Itule-Simmons,

Lena Koenig, Mary Massella, Kristina Ramsey, Deborah Valoma

Music: Cereza Rosa, Caballo Negro, and Cachito by Perez Prado

(1958) Yo Soy Tu Bandido by Clan 537 (2008)

Costumes: Adriene Harrison

### **Omo Aché**

***La Roye: El Creador de Caminos; Afrekete: La Madre Eterna;***

***Babaluaye: El Milagro; Criumba Congo; Rumba: Una Celebracion***

***a la Vida; Gagá: El Encuentro; La Comparsa***

Artistic direction & choreography: Juan Carlos Blanco Riera

Dancers: Angelica Cardona, Araceli Carrera, Monique Gaffney, Irene

Pulli, Claudia Restrepo, Roxanne Rojas de Blanco, Lorena Santana

Musicians: Tobiah Gaster, Carlos Medrano, Chris "El Flaco" Walker,

Jesse Weber

Singers: Rosa Magdalena Menendez, Sulkary Valverde

### **Cuban Ballet Dancers**

***Los Muñecos***

### **Alayo Dance Company**

***Wrong Way***

In 1998 Blanco founded the Afro-Cuban dance company, Omo Aché, with the mission to preserve traditional dances, songs, music and stories of Cuba. Based in San Diego, the company's repertoire charts the evolution of Cuban culture from its African roots to today's most popular urban dances. Omo Aché performances include representation of Cuba's three most influential African cultures: the Yoruba (from Southwestern Nigeria); the Arará (Dahome, presently known as Benin, Togo, and Ghana); and the Congo (Bantu from the mouth of the Congo River) along with the unique Cuban cultural expressions formed through the mix of African and Spanish influences. Omo Aché translates as Children of Fortune in Lucumi, the Yoruba language preserved in Cuba; Aché represents the positive spiritual energy that opens paths leading to good roads in life. Omo Aché has performed in schools, universities, and multi-cultural venues through out California and the U.S., most recently at Towson University in Baltimore; the Afro-Latino Festival at the Museum of Latin American Art in Los Angeles; and the Nations International Dance Festival in San Diego.

**Silfredo La O** is a professional dancer in the Afro-Cuban and Haitian tradition, popular Latin dances, and modern dance. La O graduated from the National School of the Arts in Havana Cuba in 1994 with a Bachelor of Arts degree as a certified dance professor and professional dancer. In 1993, he performed for one year with the Cuban National Folkloric Company and Danza Contemporánea de Cuba. He was also a soloist for five years with the professional touring company Cutumba: Ballet Folklórico Afro-Cubano, based in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba.

After arriving in San Francisco Bay Area, La O was a guest soloist in the Retrospective of Cuban Dance, performed at La Peña Cultural Center and Mission Cultural Center in 1999. In the same year, he performed with Robert Moses' Kin, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and Theater Artaud, San Francisco. In 2002, he was artistic director and featured performer with Emesè at the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival. Most notably, La O danced with San Francisco's Oberlin Dance Company (ODC) from 1999 to 2002; tours with ODC included Joyce Theater, New York City; Performing Arts Center, Newark NJ; the Getty Museum Concert Series, Los Angeles; Leverkusen, Germany; California State University, Los Angeles; California State University, Monterey Bay; and the Kentucky Center for the Arts; and four seasons

at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. In 2003, La O danced as guest artist for The Blankenship Ballet Company, Riverside, California and performed as principal dancer and guest artist for the Warner Brothers film *The Matrix Reloaded*. He was a lecturer in the Department of Theater of Dance at the University of California, San Diego, and has taught master classes in Afro-Cuban modern dance, Afro-Cuban folkloric dance, Cuban popular dance, and percussion at Palomar College, Portland State University, University of Hawaii, University of Florida, and Santa Clara University. He also has choreographed for Stanford University. Silfredo La O's talents extend to the visual arts; he has exhibited his paintings at the ODC Gallery and Palace of Fine Arts

**Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt** began his studies in his birthplace of Santiago de Cuba. In 1978 he became a member of the Ballet Folklorico de Oriente and continued there, almost without interruption, for the next 30 years. He performed with the company throughout the Caribbean, Mexico, Spain, Italy, Russia, and Africa. Fuentes was honored as "primer bailarín" in 1979. In 2000, he became Assistant Director to the company, becoming choreographer and dance instructor for the company. In addition he has also been Director of the performance group Conjunto Folklorico Kazumbi, Professor of Salsa in the Ateneo Cultural Antonio Bravo Correoso, Choreographer of the youth group Los Chicos Alegres de Veguita de Galo for Carnival, and Manager for the Ballet Folklorico Cutumba.

**Felix Bambury Webbe**, a native of Guantánamo, Cuba, studied dance as a youth in Santiago de Cuba. Bambury has performed as a professional dancer with celebrated dance companies all over Cuba. He began his professional career with 10<sup>th</sup> of October Group of Guantánamo from 1981 to 1983, and went on to perform with the Hawey Pedagogical Institute of Guantánamo in 1985.

From 1994 to 1996, Felix danced with *Espectáculo Ibú Aña* and eventually moved on to the celebrated *Raíces Profundas*, directed by Juan de Dios Ramos, in 2002. From 2002 to 2005, Bambury instructed dance for Franco-Haitian company *Ban Rra Rrá*, directed by Isaias Rojas Ramirez. As a member of *Ban Rra Rrá*, he assisted with several international dance courses organized by Plaza Cuba, a Bay Area

through the arts, CubaCaribe coordinates performances, workshops, and educational programs that bring Caribbean dance and music to San Francisco Bay Area audiences. Our projects include: CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music (2005-2009); Alayo Dance Company, resident dance company of CubaCaribe; Cuba Camp Bay Area (2004, 2005); Cuba Camp Hawaii (2006, 2008); and SF Carnival Contingent (2006, 2008). Our programs foster informed perspectives on complex issues; attempt to dispel stereotypes; aid in the preservation of time-honored, sometimes rarely seen forms; establish greater respect for traditional arts often marginalized by the term "folk"; and support masters of traditional, contemporary, and hybrid genres.

## Programs

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### Program A: Friday & Saturday

Jeff Chambers and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Las Que Son Son  
Omo Aché  
Silfredo La O and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Chanclereros

### Program B: Sunday Matinee

Muriel Johnson  
Jeff Chambers and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Las Que Son Son  
Cuban Ballet Dancers  
Chanclereros

### Program C: Sunday Evening

Jeff Chambers and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Las Que Son Son  
Omo Aché  
Cuban Ballet Dancers  
Silfredo La O and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Chanclereros

taught and been on tour in Italy, Russia, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Ecuador, Canada, and Panama.

Las Que Son Son dancers have been trained by prominent Cuban, Haitian, and Brazilian dance instructors in the San Francisco Bay Area including Cuban masters Ramón Ramos Alayo, Susana Arenas Pedroso, Jose "Cheo" Rojas, Royland Lobato, and Yismari Tellez Ramos. Performances include the *Third & Fourth Annual CubaCaribe Festivals*, Dance Mission Theater (2007, 2008, 2009); *Storm of Roses*, Herbst Theater (2008); the *SF Salsa & Rueda Festival* (2009); and the *San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival*, Palace of Fine Arts (2008, 2009).

**Omo Aché.** Juan Carlos Blanco Riera is a master dancer and percussionist, born and raised in Havana, Cuba. As a youth, he started his dance career with the community based folkloric groups Cumballé and Oba Ilú, both directed by the founder of Conjunto Folklórico Nacional, Oriol Bustamante. Blanco enjoyed an illustrious professional career for fifteen years with several companies. For nine years he danced with one of Cuba's most respected folkloric companies, Raices Profundas, directed by Juan de Dios Ramos, where he rose to the level of lead soloist and toured Latin American and Asia. He also worked as percussionist and instructor of Afro-Cuban dance for several years with the renowned Franco-Haitian company Ban Rra Rrá, directed by Isaias Rojas Ramirez. Blanco was also artistic director of the folkloric ensemble Arawe that toured Peru in 1997 and choreographed several productions in Havana including Afro-Peru, a collaboration with Peruvian singer Argelia Fragoso that premiered at Teatro Mella, and Trilogia, produced with Raices Profundas that premiered at Casa de la Comedia. Since coming to the United States in 1997, Blanco has worked as dancer and choreographer for various Afro-Cuban productions with companies such as Olorun, Alafia, and Taifa. Blanco has taught Afro-Cuban percussion and dance at institutions such as University of California, Los Angeles, University of California, San Diego, Palomar College, Grossmont College, San Diego City College, Cal State San Marcos, and Humboldt State University and has traveled through out the United States teaching master workshops.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Dancers: Ramón Ramos Alayo and Silfredo La O  
Music: Alex Heffes  
Costumes: Deborah Valoma

### **Chancleros**

#### ***Recordando Cuba***

Choreography: Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Guest dancers: Felix Bambury Webbe, Silfredo La O, Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt, Iván "Juan de Dios" Ramos Scull  
Dancers: Ramón Ramos Alayo, Stella Adelman, Kristina Ramsey, Anna Pasternak, Deborah Valoma, Bonnie Awesu, Monica Mc Duffie  
Musicians: Tobiah Gaster, Carlos Medrano, Chris "El Flaco" Walker, Jesse Weber  
Singers: Rosa Magdalena Menendez, Sulkary Valverde  
Costumes: Deborah Valoma

## Biographies

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**Ramón Ramos Alayo**, is a Cuban-born and trained dancer, teacher, and choreographer—well known for his forceful performances and bold choreographic vision. At the age of eleven, Ramos was selected by the Cuban government to study dance in Santiago de Cuba and later earned a masters degree in contemporary and folkloric dance and dance education from Havana's National School of Art. He was the principal dancer with Danza del Caribe and Narciso Medina Contemporary Dance Company. Since leaving Cuba, he has performed with some of the most respected choreographers in the Bay Area, including Robert Henry Johnson, Kim Epifano, and Sara Shelton Mann and was principal dancer with Joanna Haigood's Zaccho Dance Theater and Robert Moses's Kin Dance Company. Ramos has choreographed and produced six full-length dance performances: *Anoranza de Una Epoca*, *Mis Sueños*, *Mis Ideas*, *A Piece of White Cloth*, *La Madre*, *After Rain*, and *Three Threes & Traces*. He has received grants from the San Francisco Arts Commission, CASH, Zellerbach, and LEF Foundations and was awarded the prestigious Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation's "Emerging Choreographer Award." In 2002 Ramos established the **Alayo Dance Company**, which has enjoyed broad critical acclaim and was featured in "Dance Across America," published in *National Geographic Magazine*. In 2003 Ramos co-founded and became artistic director of CubaCaribe. [www.cubacaribe.org](http://www.cubacaribe.org)

**Jeff Chambers**, one of the foremost bassists in the country, is known for his impeccable timing, dynamic rhythms, melodic sensibility, and improvisational dexterity. Chambers began his illustrious career in Milwaukee on the electric bass with renowned pianist and vibraphonist Buddy Montgomery. He has toured all over the United States, Canada, Central and South America, Europe, Russia, Australia, and Japan, playing at venues such as the Montreux Jazz Festival; Concord Jazz Festival; Monterey Jazz Festival; Fujitsu Jazz Festival, and the Newport Jazz Festival. Chambers has worked with many of the world's most prominent jazz musicians including Dizzy Gillespie, Bobby Hutcherson, Eddie Harris, Al Jarreau, Les McCann, Freddie Hubbard, Tommy Flanagan, Joe Henderson, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, Joe Williams, Kenny Burrell, Nat Adderley, Milt Jackson, Larry Coryell,

Abbey Lincoln, Freddie Cole, Jeffrey Osborne, Archie Shepp, Cedar Walton, Houston Person, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Ahmad Jamal, and Marlena Shaw. Chambers has taught bass, improvisation, and combo direction at The Brubeck Institute, SF State University, Jazz Camp West, The Jazz School, and Dominican University of California. [www.jeffchambersjazz.com](http://www.jeffchambersjazz.com)

**Muriel Johnson** is an early childhood educator and professional storyteller. Johnson was born and raised on the East Coast, where her mother and grandmother introduced her to the beauty of language and richness of African-American culture. As an adult, she traveled to the South Pacific and lived in Central America, where she gained an even greater understanding and appreciation for the oral tradition as a method of recording history and as a common bond between all people. Johnson has performed throughout the Bay Area at many public libraries, storytelling festivals, elementary schools, and at the Oakland Zoo, UC Berkeley's Cal Day, and Habitot Children's Discovery Museum. She was featured on the television show Bay Area Backroads. In addition, Johnson conducts educational workshops on storytelling and literacy at local preschools, Bananas Childcare Resource Center, CA Arts College, and San Francisco State University.

**Las Que Son Son** is an all-woman dance company specializing in Cuban folkloric and popular genres. Our mission—to study and perform dance in a collaborative environment—is based on the concept that dance is an essential artistic practice that shapes community and builds solidarity among diverse cultures, ethnicities, and ages.

The artistic director of Las Que Son Son is dancer, choreographer & director Yismari Ramos Tellez. Ramos graduated from the National School of Art in Havana, Cuba in 1992 with a degree in modern and Afro-Cuban folkloric dance. For six years she danced for the Tony Menedez Dance Company in Cuba and later for the Ballet de la Television Cubana in Havana, where she regularly performed on television, in video, and in live shows for the top bands in Cuba. Ramos also performed with Lady Salsa, an internationally renowned group, performing son, mambo, cha-cha-cha, and salsa. She has

## Thank You to our Funders

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## CubaCaribe Special Events

### Dance Parties\*

DJ Juan Data and DJ Alfie  
Saturday April 25, 9:30pm

DJ Waltdigz  
Saturday May 3, 9:30pm

### Master Classes\*\*

Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt and Djenane St. Juste  
Cuban-Haitian and Haitian Vodou  
Sunday May 3, 10:00am - 12:00pm

Yismari Ramos Tellez and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Cuban popular dance  
Sunday May 3, 3:00pm - 5:00pm

### Lectures\*\*\*

Michael Spiro  
The Fundamentals of Afro-Cuban music and its  
essential role in Cuban religious practices.  
Saturday May 2, 5:00pm

\* \$5 - \$10 suggested donation.

\*\* Classes are \$15

\*\*\* Lectures are \$10

All events held at Dance Mission

Check [WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG](http://WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG)

**500**  
years of cultural continuity and  
revitalization in the Americas



A mixed program of dance and music  
April 24 -26, 2009 Dance Mission Theater

## 2009 CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL: 500 years of cultural continuity and revitalization in the Americas

### **CubaCaribe Producers**

Stella Adelman, Ramón Ramos Alayo, Adriene Harrison,  
Jamaica Itule Simmons, Kristina Ramsey & Deborah Valoma

### **Artistic Director** Ramón Ramos Alayo

Lighting Designer Harry Rubeck

Sound Operator Andy Keefer

Graphic Design Jamaica Itule Simmons

### **CubaCaribe Mission Statement**

CubaCaribe was founded in 2003 with the mission to preserve and promote the vibrant artistic heritage of Cuba, the Caribbean, and the wider African diaspora. Based on the principle that racial, ethnic, religious, gendered, economic, and age-based barriers are breeched through the arts, CubaCaribe coordinates performances, workshops, and educational programs that bring Caribbean dance and music to San Francisco Bay Area audiences. Our projects include: CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music (2005-2009); Alayo Dance Company, resident dance company of CubaCaribe; Cuba Camp Bay Area (2004, 2005); Cuba Camp Hawaii (2006, 2008); and SF Carnival Contingent (2006, 2008). Our programs foster informed perspectives on complex issues; attempt to dispel stereotypes; aid in the preservation of time-honored, sometimes rarely seen forms; establish greater respect for traditional arts often marginalized by the term “folk”; and support masters of traditional, contemporary, and hybrid genres.

### **Thank You**

Thank You from CubaCaribe to all the dancers, musicians, technicians and choreographers for supporting the CubaCaribe Festival and making this program possible. To Dance Mission Theater and Krissi Keefer or their faith and invaluable expertise, To Ramon’s sister, Tania Santiago and all the volunteers for lending their support.

### **Program Notes**

**500 YEARS OF TRADITION** commemorates the multiplicity and interconnectivity of time-honored and experimental performance arts in the Americas. Expanding on previous festivals, the second week of the Fifth Annual CubaCaribe Festival of Dance & Music spotlights the hybrid aesthetic practices that proliferate along cultural pathways crisscrossing the Americas—including Native American, Mexican, Peruvian, Cuban, Brazilian, and African-American traditions. We commemorate the acts of creative tenacity, devotion, adaptation, and transgression that fuel cultural continuity and revitalization in the five hundred years since colonization.

While the traditions presented in 500 stem from multiple continents, speak through different languages, and conceptualize the world in wildly divergent ways, there is significant cultural slippage between them. African, European, and Indigenous lineages intersect in the Americas, producing admixed populations and a cultural territory characterized by convergence and indeterminacy. Despite the bone crushing hardships of colonization and slavery, ingenious strategies of survival and adaptation flourished in the liminal cultural spaces.

As participants in contemporary society, now and then we long nostalgically for “authentic” experience—slow, pure, and unsullied by modernity. Mayan women in the highland villages of Guatemala favor traditional huipils embroidered fashionably with brightly colored threads, beads, and sequins. Tourists on the other hand—in search of the “genuine” and timeworn—purchase these very same huipils dipped in tea by weavers to simulate the aging process and the soft tones of natural dyes.

CubaCaribe does not tea-dip its productions. We resist the antiquated notion of tradition as static and pure. We propose an alternative definition of tradition as utterly contemporary—messy with modern interference, contaminated by cultural cross-pollination, gasping mouthfuls of congested urban air—and yet bursting with age-old meaning. Traditionalists do not preserve by holding rigid. They hold fast; they embrace the fast paced and the new fangled in service of the time honored.

500 presents a series of performances defined simultaneously as both traditional and contemporary. Genres that might at first glance seem most traditional are only decades old, while those that appear most contemporary are carriers of centuries-old cultural lineages. For instance, Native American artist Eddie Madril performs dance styles rooted in the old ways, but developed only in the twentieth century; African American jazz musician Jeff Chambers manifests African rhythmic patterns passed down over centuries, but plays on a European string instrument; and Aquarela’s Rio-style samba costumes are worn during carnival in the urban centers of Brazil, but are reminiscent of the feathered ceremonial wear of Indigenous peoples of the Amazon Basin. Each is a jumble of crisscrossing cultural references, historical citations, and experimental interventions. Innovation becomes tradition, and tradition innovates.

Deborah Valoma  
Associate Professor, California College of the Arts  
Member, Advisory Council, CubaCaribe



## Profiles

**Alafia Dance Ensemble** was founded in 1995 by Valerie Watson to showcase the beauty of African-Haitian dance. Watson received her B.A. in Dance from San Francisco State University and her M.F.A in Dance from the University of California at Los Angeles. Professor Watson has taught at the celebrated Dance Department of the City College of San Francisco for the past twenty-eight years and the majority of the performers in Alafia Dance Ensemble are students or former students of that program. As a dance educator and choreographer, Watson's goal is to provide a strong foundation in the discipline of dance while instilling the importance and responsibility of building good character. Recent performances include the 30th Ethnic Dance Festival, World's Culture Concert of SF State University, Haitian Flag Day Celebration at Ashkenaz Music and Dance Community Center, La Peña Cultural Center, The Great American Music Hall, Laguna Honda Hospital, Presidio's Golden Gate Club, and City College Dance Concert.

**Aquarela Dance Group** was founded in 1986 with the goal of promoting Brazilian culture and carnival traditions throughout the San Francisco Bay Area through the presentation of music, dance, and costume. Under the artistic direction of Maria Amabilis de Souza for the last twenty years, Aquarela has developed a reputation as one of the most sought after Brazilian dance companies in the Bay Area. As genuine interpreters of authentic Brazilian music and dance, the group focuses not only on the glamorous, costumed Rio de Janeiro style of Samba, but also performs a diversity of popular Brazilian dances including Afoxé, Samba Reggae, Xaxado, Forró, Pagode, Gafieira, and Axé dance genres. Aquarela has been recognized for its creative and sometimes daring costumes, yet never diverges from its goal of accurately and respectfully promoting Brazilian music and dance.

**Pasión Habanera** is a San Francisco Bay Area based musical ensemble comprised of Cuban musicians Erick Barberia (vocals & percussion), Iván Camblor (guitar), Evelio Roque (clarinet), and Antonio Cortada (bass). The band references legendary themes from traditional Cuban music, including trova, the boleros from the 1950s and traditional rustic son typically heard in the setting of the colonial Havana courtyard.

**Jeff Chambers**, one of the foremost bassists in the country, is known for his impeccable timing, dynamic rhythms, melodic sensibility, and improvisational dexterity. Chambers began his illustrious career in Milwaukee on the electric bass with renowned pianist and vibraphonist Buddy Montgomery. He has toured all over the United States, Canada, Central and South America, Europe, Russia, Australia, and Japan, playing at venues such as the Montreux Jazz Festival; Concord Jazz Festival; Monterey Jazz Festival; Fujitsu Jazz Festival, and the Newport Jazz Festival. Chambers has worked with many of the world's most prominent jazz musicians including Dizzy Gillespie, Bobby Hutcherson, Eddie Harris, Al Jarreau, Les McCann, Freddie Hubbard, Tommy Flanagan, Joe Henderson, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, Joe Williams, Kenny Burrell, Nat Adderley, Milt Jackson, Larry Coryell, Abbey Lincoln, Freddie Cole, Jeffrey Osborne, Archie Shepp, Cedar Walton, Houston Person, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Ahmad Jamal, and Marlena Shaw. Chambers has taught bass, improvisation, and combo direction at The Brubeck Institute, SF State University, Jazz Camp West, The Jazz School, and Dominican University of California. [www.jeffchambersjazz.com](http://www.jeffchambersjazz.com)

**De Rompe y Raja** De Rompe y Raja was founded in 1995 as a cultural organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the culture from the coastal region of Peru, where the artistic traditions of European, African, and Indigenous peoples intersect. The mission of De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association is to demonstrate the importance of African legacy in the development of Peruvian traditions and culture throughout the Americas. The troupe has performed at numerous theaters, universi-

## Program

### Program A: Friday & Sunday Evening

Nsamina Kongo  
Alafia Dance Ensemble  
Rica Salsa Dance Company  
Aquarela Dance Group  
INTERMISSION  
Jaranón y Bochinche Performance Company  
Mind Over Matter  
Pasión Habanera

### Program B: Saturday Evening

Four Winds Native Dance  
Urban Jazz Dance  
De Rompe y Raja  
Rica Salsa Dance Company  
INTERMISSION  
Paul Flores  
Jeff Chambers and Kenny Washington  
Los Lupeños de San José

### Program C: Sunday Matinee

Four Winds Native Dance  
Urban Jazz Dance  
De Rompe y Raja  
IINTERMISSION  
Paul Flores  
Jeff Chambers and Kenny Washington  
Los Lupeños de San José

## Credits

### Nsamina Kongo

Nkanda Nvoula  
A ritual dance to hold back the rain  
Choreography: Herve Makaya Kayos  
Dancers: Herve Makaya Kayos, LaKiesha Golden, Sade Adona  
Musicians: Jean-Armel Mampouya, Massengo Constant,  
Mampous Mampouya, Vivien Bassouamina

### Alafia Dance Ensemble

Libetè  
A commemoration of Haitian Flag Day and dedicated to Alicia Pierce who has helped keep the Afro-Haitian legacy alive in San Francisco for over 15 years.  
Choreography: Mariella Morales

Dancers: Jennifer Baron, Brigitte Knight, Sharon Lau, Mariella Morales, Charlotte Nehm, Rita Pantaleon, Sarazeta Ragazzi, Orly Ramirez, Vanessa Sanchez, Juan de Dios Soto, Dana Thomas, Aimee Zawitz  
Music by Kombite: Zeke Nealy, Jan Jaap, Gabriel Bata, Takuya, Hunter Peres, Afshin

#### **Aquarela Dance Group**

Colors of Brazil

Choreography: Silvana da Silva Sousa

Dancers: Silvana da Silva Sousa, Micaela Mazzine, Akiva Anders, Genevieve Paz, Zoila Amort, Tala Khanmalek, Molly Shannon, Paulo Silva, Alberto Brigadeiro

Musicians: Fabricio da Silva, Steve Lau, Andrew Scott, Rob Kelman

#### **Rica Salsa**

Artistic Director/Choreographer: Ricardo Tellez and Tianne Frias

Dancers: Tianne Frias, Jacqueline Bequette, Vera Shapirshteyn, Vivian Lee, Laura Serghio, Tara Lih, Ana Miladinova, Ricardo Tellez, James Cabigon, Edilson Araujo, Servando Pineda, Aaron Timko, Jorge Rojas, Darrin Johnson, Bartholomew Forpahl, Donald Webb

Music: Rumbambola by Larry Harlow

#### **Jaranón y Bochinche Performance Company**

Expression Negra: Recordando nuestra historia

A collection of dances depicting a typical day in the life of 17th century Afro-Peruvian laborers, and the celebration upon the end of the workday.

Artistic direction & choreography: Juan de Dios Soto

Dancers: Yian Cielos, Samad Guerra, Rashida Hutchins, Daniela Lazy, Amani Manning, Tafara Manning, Aliyah Salahuddin, Japera Smith, Juan de Dios Soto, Lydia Soto

Musicians: Yian Cielos, Yanina Cornejo, Jose Monteverde, Juan de Dios Soto, Rocio Soto, Julio Vermudes

#### **Mind Over Matter**

Untamable

The beginnings of dance: a journey of seduction, intensity and ferocity.

Choreography: Allan Frias

Dancers: Allan Frias, Jason Ashbaugh, Charles Lea, Courtney Wong, Decoryan Warner, Devry White, Djaris Yates, Florence Dabokemp, Fredricka Keefer, Kelly Eng, Lena Canyon, Mayu Yamamura, Rudolph "Trey" Russell, Sarah Pasates, Sarita Trujillo, Tabrela Wilson, Yyana Jones, Sanae Tomita

Music: M.I.A., Michael Jackson, Aaliyah, Jay Karan

#### **Pasión Habanera**

A fusion arrangement of a classic Cuban repertoire, meant to reflect a nostalgic longing for the picturesque culture and daily life of Cuba.

Musicians: Erick Barbería (vocals & percussion), Iván Cambor (guitar), Evelio Roque (clarinet), and Antonio Cortada (bass)

#### **Four Winds Native Dance**

Fancy Dance and Hoop Dance

The Fancy Dance or Feather Dance is the brightest and fastest of Plains Indian men's dance styles. Combining the popular bustles of traditional dancers and making them larger, brighter, and more exciting, this dance style was originated 100 years ago. The Hoop Dance tells the story of the Creator giving a dying man a single hoop made of wood. For each living thing he creates with the hoop, another hoop is added. As he adds hoops, he becomes stronger and creates the forms of all living things.

Choreography: Eddie Madril

#### **Urban Jazz Dance**

Finest Freedom

The freedom of being, the search of one's own soul, the belief in the self.

Choreography: Antoine Hunter

Dancers: Anne Beam, Bridget Murano, Caryn Lucido, Kimberly Martin, Loran Clay, Nikita Jew, Antoine Hunter

Music: South Africa's Finest (Freedom Mix) by Afro Melt

#### **De Rompe y Raja**

Homenaje A Mis Maestros

A Tribute to the Masters, celebrating the drumming and subtle footwork of Afro-Peruvian Masters of zapateo criollo, Zapateo literally means shoe tapping and zapateo criollo is sometimes called "Peruvian tap dance." Dancers and musicians engage in an animated call and response—playing syncopated hard shoe footwork off the rhythms of guitar, cajón, and vocals.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Gabriella Shiroma

Musical Direction: Pedro Rosales

Performers: Gabriela Shiroma, Carmen Roman, Sylvia Pestana, Diana Suarez, Rosa Cabezudo, Joana Suarez, Mariela Herrera, Michelle Aguero, Pedro Rosales, Rosa Los Santos

#### **Paul Flores**

Representa!(excerpt)

Bilingual theatre for the Hip-Hop Generation. REPRESENTA! chronicles what happens when spoken word poet Paul Flores meets Cuban rapper Julio Cardenas at the Havana Hip-Hop Festival.

#### **Jeff Chambers & Kenny Washington**

Scat Cats

An improvisational interplay between vocalist and bassist.

#### **Los Lupeños de San José**

Jarana Yucateca

Jaranas, dances from the Caribbean influenced Yucatan peninsula and derived from the Spanish Jota, are performed in great symmetry, sprinkled with complimentary (and sometimes derogatory) verses call Bombas. The dances include Angaripola, Aires Yucatecos, Mi Lindo Motul, América Linda, and Las Mujeres que se Pintan

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Tony Ferrigno

Performers: Alex Ocampo, Andrea Santillán, Eduardo Torres, Angela Szymusiak, Juan Carlos Miranda, Jaimee Skyberg, Larry Estrada, Malena Vega, Marco Chávez, Marta García, Nicholas Dareau, Verónica Ramírez

ties, and festivals in the United States, including appearances at the Encuentro del Canto Popular, the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, People Like Me, and La Peña Cultural Center. Since 2001 De Rompe y Raja has produced numerous musical programs including Recu-Tecu performed at ODC (2001); Xto Moreno performed at ODC Theater (2002) and Julia Morgan Center For The Arts (2004); Cajon: The Afro-Peruvian Pulse performed at ODC Theater (2006); Zamacueca! (2006) and Diaspora Negra (2007) performed at Mexican Heritage Plaza, San Jose, CA.

**Paul S. Flores** is a poet, playwright, novelist, and nationally prominent spoken word artist from San Francisco who specializes in bilingual and hip-hop performance. His novel *Along the Border Lies* won the 2003 PEN Oakland/Josephine Miles Literary Award. His most recent plays *Fear of a Brown Planet* (2005) and *REPRESENTA!* (2007) were both National Performance Network Creation Fund Commissions. Flores was featured on *Russell Simmons Present: Def Poetry* on HBO and was recently awarded a Center for Cultural Innovation grant to tour Latin America. He is the co-founder of *Youth Speaks* and currently teaches *Hip-Hop Theater* and *Spoken Word* at the University of San Francisco.

**Allan Frias**, a leading force of the Bay Area hip-hop scene, is known as a charismatic teacher, riveting performer, and talented choreographer. Believing in the notion that anything is attainable if you put your mind into it, in 1993 Frias founded San Francisco Bay Area's elite hip-hop dance ensemble, *Mind Over Matter* (M.O.M.). Under Frias's artistic direction, the company has gained critical and popular acclaim for its clean execution and soulful style. M.O.M.'s unique choreography and polished stage presence merges styles from ghetto, to sultry, to sophisticated—reflecting its cultural roots in the life and art of the Mission District in San Francisco, particularly the Latin and Afro-centric vibes felt on the streets. M.O.M. has performed in countless benefits, showcases, and clubs throughout California, most notably as honorees at *Battlefest* (2005) in San Jose; *Bust A Groove* (2006), San Diego; and the 8th Annual Hip-Hop Dance Fest, SF (2006) that elicited rave reviews in numerous publications. Frias also choreographs for Junior Jam youth performance program at the Golden State Warriors and appeared on Fox TV's *So You Think You Can Dance*.

**Antoine-Devinci Hunter**, a native of Oakland. Is a member of both the African-American and deaf/hard of hearing communities. He started his career as a jazz dancer, but his repertoire has expanded to include ballet, tap, African, Latin and hip-hop dance. Hunter has performed with leading companies in the Bay Area, including *Savage Jazz Dance Company*, *Nuba Dance Theater*, *The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre*, *Alayo Dance Company*, and *Robert Moses' Kin Dance Company*. Hunter attended the California Institute of the Arts, and is studying toward a B.A. in dance through St. Mary's College of California's LEAP Program. He has taught at the East Bay Center of the Performing Arts, Youth In Arts, Dance-A-Vision Entertainment, Malonga Casquelaud Center for the Arts, Ross Dance Company, ODC Dance Commons, Shawl Anderson Modern Dance Center, and is co-director and teacher of *Iron Triangle Urban Ballet*. In 2007, Hunter founded *Urban JAZZ Dance Company*. His choreography uses the poetic languages of the urban landscape, including ballet, jazz, African dance, hip-hop, and American sign language synthesized into a gritty, unexpected, street-smart style.

**Jaranón y Bochinche Performance Company**, an Afro-Peruvian dance and musical performance company, developed in 1995 out of the *Tradiccion Peruana Cultural Center*. The company's founding director, Juan de Dios and choreographer, Lydia Soto have built an extensive and diverse repertoire of dance and music from the Afro-Peruvian culture and coastal region of Peru. *Jaranon y Bochinche* has performed at a variety of venues including *El Encuentro Canto Popular*, *Raices Negras*, *La Peña Cultural Center*, *Theartert Artaud*, and *San Francisco State University*. The company also conducts educational performances in schools and community centers throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Los Lupeños de San José**, a celebrated and long standing study-performance group of Mexican dance and culture, was co-founded in 1969 in San José, CA, by Dr. Susan Cashion and Ramón Morones with the mission to promote awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the rich traditions of Mexico through music and dance. In the early 1980s Los Lupeños created the *Escuela de Danza y Cultura* (School of Dance and Culture) as an adjunct to the performance company. In an effort to reach out to local schools and facilitate new bilingual and bicultural curriculum, Los Lupeños created a third subdivision of teachers and consultants. Located at the Mexican Heritage Plaza in San José, CA, Los Lupeños dancers rehearse and perform in the heart of the community.

**Eddie Madril**, soloist of *Four Winds Native American Dance Company* has been performing for over twenty years, specializing in the dance and culture of the United States Plains Indian tribes from Southern Canada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. Commonly performed at inter-tribal gatherings—powwows—throughout the United States, *Four Winds* has brought tribal and inter-tribal dance forms to the general public and critical audiences throughout the western United States, most notably at the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and the 1984 Olympic Games. Eddie Madril, founder and soloist of *Four Winds*, is a member of the *Pascua Yaqui Tribe* of California. He is an artist-in-resident throughout Bay Area schools, where he teaches cultural understanding through American Indian dance, music, cultural history, art, and American Indian sign language. Madril taught American Indian music at SF State University and was a three-year recipient of the CA Arts Council Artist-in-Residence grant.

**Nsamina Kongo** (*Light of the Congo*) is an ensemble of noted choreographers, dancers, and drummers founded in 2008 by co-directors François Makaya Kayos and Vivien Bassouamina. Originally from the Republic of the Congo-Brazzaville in Central Africa, both Kayos and Bassouamina are seasoned masters of traditional and contemporary forms of Congolese dance and music. After touring Europe with professional dance companies from the Congo, they first performed in the United States in 2007 at the San Francisco International Arts Festival (2008) and since have performed at several festivals in the Bay Area including *Congolese Dance and Drum Festival* (2008) and *CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music* (2008). François Makaya Kayos is a choreographer, musician, and dancer—ritually trained and initiated in the art of traditional and Congolese dance and music. He has performed internationally and has earned numerous honors and accolades for his artistic excellence.

**Rica Salsa Dance Company** was founded by Ricardo Téllez in 1999. The goal was to create a dance company to express the beauty and diversity of Latin music. In this company's eight year history, over 100 salsa dancers have performed with the company and been influenced by the *RicaSalsa* style of dance. Recently, *RicaSalsa* won the 2005 and just won the 2008 Bay Area Team Competition at *Roccapulco*. *RicaSensacion* won the 2007 and 2008 Amateur Team Competition. In 2007, Ricardo partnered up with San Francisco native Tianne Frias, who has performed, taught, and choreographed in the Modern, Ballet, Ballroom, Argentine Tango and Salsa genres of dance for over 17 years. Together, Ricardo and Tianne placed 2nd at the LA Salsa Competition, 3rd at *Alberto's Nightclub*, 2nd at *Hot Salsa Fridays Competition*, and they placed 5th at the *ESPN World Salsa Championships* in Orlando, Florida. *RicaSalsa* is recognized as a unique dance company, mixing club style dancing with formal dance techniques.

**Kenny Washington** is a jazz vocalist virtuoso, known for his playful approach, astonishing four-octave range, precise intonation, and rapid-fire scat. A native of New Orleans, Washington grew up singing gospel, and studied traditional and contemporary jazz, classical, rhythm and blues, and pop musical genres at Xavier University. He joined the honorary U.S. Navy Band in 1986 and toured nationally and internationally throughout Asia, Russia, and Australia. Washington appeared in Roy Nathanson's off-Broadway production *Fire* at *Keaton's Bar and Grill*, with Elvis Costello and Deborah Harry in both London and New York. He was also the featured vocalist for eight years at the San Francisco's world famous *Mark Hopkins Intercontinental Hotel's Top Of The Mark*.



## CubaCaribe Special Events

### CubaCaribe Honoree\*

Roberto Borrell  
Saturday evening May 02

This year CubaCaribe pays tribute to the cultural contributions of Roberto Borrell -- master of percussion, song and dance; distinguished bandleader; and inspired educator. As a traditional artist living outside of his native Cuba, Borrell is devoted --through his artistic and teaching practice -- to the preservation of Cuban music and dance for future generations.

### Dance Parties\*

DJ WaltDigz playing Timba & Reggaeton  
Saturday May 02, 9:30pm

### Master Classes\*\*

Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt  
Afro Cuban/Haitian Dance:Gagá & Vodú Live drumming  
Sunday May 3, 10:00am - 11:30pm

Yismari Ramos Tellez and Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Cuban popular dance  
Sunday May 3, 3:00pm - 5:00pm

### Lectures\*\*\*

Michael Spiro  
The Fundamentals of Afro-Cuban music and its  
essential role in Cuban religious practices.  
Saturday May 2, 5:00pm

\* free to public

\*\* Classes are \$15 All levels welcome

\*\*\* Lectures are \$10

All events held at Dance Mission

Check [WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG](http://WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG)

**5** Years of CubaCaribe Festivals  
supporting the arts in the Bay Area

**May 1 - 3 2009**  
**Dance Mission Theater**



## 2009 CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL:

5 Years of CubaCaribe Festivals supporting the arts in the Bay Area.

### **CubaCaribe Producers**

Stella Adelman, Ramón Ramos Alayo, Adriene Harrison, Jamaica Itule Simmons, Kristina Ramsey & Deborah Valoma

**Artistic Director** Ramón Ramos Alayo

**Lighting Designer** Harry Rubeck

**Sound Operator** Andy Keefer

**Graphic Design** Jamaica Itule Simmons



### **CubaCaribe Mission Statement**

CubaCaribe was founded in 2003 with the mission to preserve and promote the vibrant artistic heritage of Cuba, the Caribbean, and the wider African diaspora. Based on the principle that racial, ethnic, religious, gendered, economic, and age-based barriers are breached through the arts, CubaCaribe coordinates performances, workshops, and educational programs that bring Caribbean dance and music to San Francisco Bay Area audiences. Our projects include: CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music (2005-2009); Alayo Dance Company, resident dance company of CubaCaribe; Cuba Camp Bay Area (2004, 2005); Cuba Camp Hawaii (2006, 2008); and SF Carnival Contingent (2006, 2008). Our programs foster informed perspectives on complex issues; attempt to dispel stereotypes; aid in the preservation of time-honored, sometimes rarely seen forms; establish greater respect for traditional arts often marginalized by the term "folk"; and support masters of traditional, contemporary, and hybrid genres.

### **Our Funders**

This project has been made possible in part by a grant from The Alliance for California Traditional Arts, In Partnership with the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the James Irvine Foundation, The San Francisco Arts Commission, The Zellerbach Family Foundation, CA\$H-Theater Bay Area, and Dance Brigade.

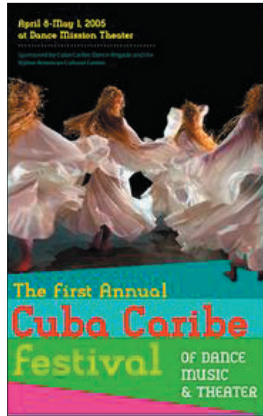
### **Thank You**

Thank You from CubaCaribe to all the dancers, musicians, technicians and choreographers for supporting the CubaCaribe Festival and making this program possible. To Dance Mission Theater and Krissi Keefer for their faith and invaluable expertise, To Ramon's sister, Tania Santiago and all the volunteers for lending their support. To the funders for their support.

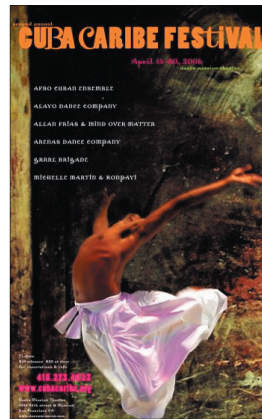
## 5 YEARS OF FESTIVALS

## 5 PROGRAM

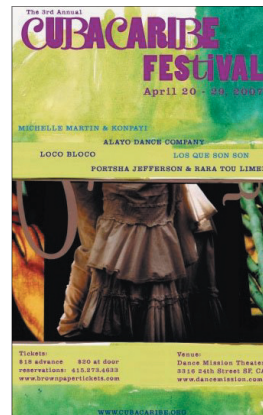
2005



2006



2007



2008



2009



### Three Leaders, One Idea

Alayo Dance Company

Preview of Alayo's new home season investigates the shift in racial politics from the 1960's until today.

### In the Hands of Spirit

Afrikete (Emesè: MOTAD)

Grandma's Hands (El Wah Movement)

Eggun (Emesè: MOTAD)

King of the White Cloth (Emesè: MOTAD)

Musical Interlude (Emesè: MOTAD)

Kaleidoscope (El Wah Movement)

### INTERMISSION

### Embracing the Fire

Drapo (El Wah Movement)

Shango (Emesè: MOTAD)

Guede (El Wah Movement)

Musical Interlude

Gaga (Emesè: MOTAD)

Rabody/Rara (El Wah Movement)

Finale

## CREDITS

### **Alayo Dance Company**

Choreography: Ramón Ramos Alayo

**Dancers:** Tina Banchemo, Shelley Davis, Megan Janssen, Anna Pasternak, Aja Randall, Ramón Ramos Alayo, Alain Soto

**Music:** Sweet Honey in the Rock, Ajayi Lumumba Jackson

Recordings: Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Barack Obama

### **El Wah Movement**

Choreography: Colette Eloi

**Dancers:** Aliyah Dunn-Salahuddin, Colette Eloi, LaKiesha Golden, Akua Jackson, Portsha Jefferson, Aishling Rashida Livey, Antoinette Long, Shawn Merriman-Roberts, Lavinia Mitchell, Kat Porras, Jabris Rucker, Phylicia Stroud, Tammy Webb-Ryan

**Musicians:** Daniel Brevil, Guy de Chalus, Ajayi Lumumba Jackson, Taji Maalik Hill

**Music:** Grandma's Hands by Bill Withers

### **Emesè: Messengers of the African Diaspora**

Choreography: Bianca Coleman, Asatu Musunama Hall, Tammy Webb-Ryan

**Dancers:** Tanicia Bell, Bianca Coleman, Colette Eloi, Akua Jackson, Portsha Jefferson, Laila Jenkins-Perez, Adéirawo Origùnwá, Jabris Rucker, Tammy Webb-Ryan, Tyese Wortham

**Musicians:** Rick Ananda, James Colman, Taji Maalik Hill

**Singers:** Ahsabi Buris (Akpon), Tyrone Collins (Soloist/Coro), Michelle Royce Hamilton (Soloist/Coro), Takeo Wong (Coro)

Afro-Cuban Yoruba, Abakuá (Calabar), Rumba, Arará (Dahomey), and Palo (Congo).

In 1970 Borrell founded and directed Roberto Borrell y su Kubatá, an award winning folkloric dance company that represented Cuba in the World Youth Festival of Havana in 1978. When he moved to the United States in 1980, Borrell re-formed the group in Washington D.C., New York, and later in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1980 and 1981 he received National Endowment for the Arts grants, and in the subsequent decade Kubatá performed in major venues including the Smithsonian Institution, Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall. Borrell was also a sought-after percussionist on the Latin jazz club scene in New York City, and performed and recorded with celebrated performers and groups including Tito Puente, Machito, Tipica 73, Machete Ensemble, Chocolate Armenteros, "Cachao" Lopez, and Richard Egües.

Shortly after moving to the San Francisco Bay Area, Borrell was awarded California Arts Council Artist-in-Residencies in 1992 and 1993. In the Bay Area, Borrell discovered a unique set of circumstances: a growing community of musicians and dancers, captivated by vintage Cuban sounds newly released on CD, were eager to learn how to play and dance to the classic tunes. In 1997 Borrell co-founded and became musical director of Orquesta La Moderna Tradición, which played classic Cuban dance music: son, guaracha, cha cha cha, and especially the lilting melodies of the danzón. With his unique mastery of both the musical and dance forms of danzón and its offshoots, Borrell had an ambitious mission—to bring the timeless power, beauty, and romance of traditional Cuban music and dance to the world. Roberto Borrell has amassed a body of work over four decades that is not only an individual triumph, but also a significant cultural legacy.

## ROBERTO BORRELL

Educator—Dancer—Choreographer—Percussionist—Bandleader  
CubaCaribe Honoree, 2009

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music, we wish to honor a distinguished artist who has made a significant, life-long contribution to the preservation and advancement of the vibrant artistic heritage of Cuba.

CubaCaribe pays tribute to the cultural contributions of Roberto Borrell—master of percussion, song, and dance; distinguished bandleader; and inspired educator. As a traditional artist living outside of his native Cuba, Borrell is devoted—through his artistic and teaching practice—to the preservation of Cuban music and dance for future generations.

For over thirty-five years Borrell has brought his extensive knowledge and a deep passion for classical Cuban genres to students and audiences throughout the world. Based on his mastery of both dance and percussion, Borrell has developed a unique curriculum focused on the interrelated complexities of technique, rhythm, song, and musical structure. He has taught in many university settings including the University of Portland, Washington State University, Mills College, and the University of Massachusetts; at cultural institutions such as Boys Harbor, Citicentre Dance Theater, La Peña Cultural Center, SOMARTS, and Mission Cultural Center; and at numerous international venues.

Raised in Habana Vieja, Borrell grew up immersed in the fertile Cuban music scene of the fifties and sixties. In those decades, neighborhood sociedades (social clubs) maintained elegant dance halls filled with a dedicated, dressed-to-kill, dancing public, who moved with ease from elegant danzones to funky son montunos, lively cha-cha-chas, or romantic boleros. Borrell became an accomplished popular dancer, and when Fidel Castro's revolutionary government closed the sociedades, he joined Cuba's newly formed Conjunto Folklórico Nacional de Cuba. As a member of the company from 1966 to 1968, he trained and performed with masters of the Afro-Cuban tradition, becoming a respected dancer and percussionist of

## PROGRAM NOTES

On the occasion of CubaCaribe's Fifth Annual Festival of Dance & Music we pause to reflect on our own history. We have organized five festivals, produced seventeen shows, and presented over thirty ensembles with hundreds of dancers and musicians in performances that imaginatively explore the lively boundaries between cultural preservation and innovation.

We are proud of onstage performances that pack a creative whallup, and occasionally achieve stomach-rolling poignancy and breath-stopping beauty. In a sense, however, we find ourselves most profoundly moved by the untidy, raucous, unscripted offstage performances. At the risk of conjuring up a Coca Cola-esque image of multicultural romanticism, we cannot help but take pleasure in the kinetic vision of dancers and musicians in Congolese, Peruvian, Cuban, Brazilian, Mexican, and Native American costumes scattered chaotically across the backstage landscape—chatting, tapping rhythms, stretching stiff muscles, and hurriedly marking choreography.

Right before the house opens the commotion quiets, the absurdly mismatched cast forms a circle, fingers intertwine, faces brighten with expectation, and blessings are offered respectfully to each other. Through the evening, performers tumble back into the dressing room, their bodies polished with sweat, and their faces sometimes elated and sometimes frowning. The debris of the performance—the crumpled costumes, smeared makeup, breathless exhaustion, and unbridled humor at the inevitable mishaps—are evidence of our core values.

Unexpectedly, while tasked with the mission to preserve tradition, we have created tradition—an improbable, yet deliciously multidimensional, multicolored, multigenerational, multitalented, multilingual, multidisciplinary community. I used to say "I wish I lived in a community where people roll up rugs, pick up instruments, and dance." I am grateful that I do.

Deborah Valoma  
Director of Fine Arts, California College of the Arts  
Board Member, CubaCaribe



## PROFILES

**Alayo Dance Company** was founded in 2002 by Ramón Ramos Alayo, a Cuban-born and trained dancer, teacher, and choreographer, well known in the Bay Area for his forceful performances and dramatic choreography. In 1990 Ramos earned a masters degree in contemporary and folkloric dance and dance education from Havana's National School of Art. He was the principal dancer with Danza del Caribe, Narciso Medina Contemporary Dance Company, and since moving to California in 1997, he has performed with some of the most respected choreographers in the SF Bay Area, including Robert Henry Johnson, Kim Epifano, Sara Shelton Mann, Joanna Haigood, and Robert Moses' Kin. Ramos has choreographed and produced seven full-length dance performances: *Anoraña de Una Epoca* (1999); *Mis Sueños, Mis Ideas* (2003, 2004); *A Piece of White Cloth* (2004, 2005); *La Madre* (2005); *After Rain* (2006); *Three Threes & Traces* (2007); and *Blood + Sugar* (2008). Ramos received the prestigious Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation's "Emerging Choreographer Award." As artistic director and choreographer of the Alayo Dance Company, Ramón Ramos Alayo fuses Afro-Cuban modern, traditional folkloric, and popular Cuban dance styles into a contemporary hybrid genre. Ramos eloquently articulates his aesthetic vision through a synthesis of these dance styles, citing from each tradition specific movements, narratives, and concepts indicative of Cuban culture. Alayo Dance Company is the resident company of CubaCaribe and has enjoyed broad critical acclaim for its innovative and bold choreographic vision. Alayo Dance Company was featured in "Dance Across America," published in *National Geographic*, 2006.

**El Wah Movement**—Movement of the Soul—specializes in traditional Haitian folkloric dance but also performs fusion choreography that cites traditional African based movements but addresses contemporary life. El Wah Movement was founded as a professional dance company in 2005 when the company received a commission to choreograph *A Living Birthday Card: 98 Yanvalou Dancers* (2005) to commemorate the international icon of black dance, Katherine Dunham. The work culminated with 98

students of the Dunham technique from around the country dancing Yanvalou. The company traveled to Haiti where they continued their studies in Haitian folkloric dance and, in collaboration with local Haitian artists, performed at ENARTS to standing ovations. El Wah has performed numerous works choreographed and directed by Colette Eloi, including *Prayers for Ayiti* performed at the Black Choreographers Festival (2008) and *Here and Now* performed at ODC's Festival, *Local Heroes: The New Traditionalist* (2008). El Wah is performing at the 14th annual *Collage des Cultures Africaines Festival* (2009).

**Emesè: Messengers of the African Diaspora** is a dynamic collective of drummers, dancers, singers, and scholars, founded in 1998 with the mission to present and promote the rich cultural traditions of the African Diaspora and to forge new trails through old traditions. Emesè is comprised of artists with extensive training and study in African and African derived song, dance, and drum culture from Cuba, Brazil, Guinea, Congo, Senegal, Liberia, Haiti, and the United States. Working closely with the master dancers and drummers from Cuba—Carlos Aldama, José Francisco Barroso, and Silfredo La O—the group participated in the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival for three years. Other performance venues include *Collage de Cultures Africaines*, San Francisco Carnival, Oakland Carijama, Oshun's Garden, Art and Soul Festival, MOJUBA presented by La Peña Cultural Center at Yerba Buena Center for Arts, Emesè's own production of *Selected Heads: One Nation Under the Drum* (2006), *Black Choreographers Festival* (2007), and *Youth in Arts* (2009). Members of Emesè have participated in educational programs in schools and local organizations, presented at the Orisha World Congress in Havana, Cuba, lectured in the California State University system, and are practitioners of Orisha traditions. As practitioners, instructors, and professionals, all Emesè members are dedicated to the ongoing study of tradition, maintaining the core of the collective, and forging new trails through old traditions.

# CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL

YEARS OF TRADITION

Alafia

Alayo Dance Company

Jeff Chambers

Juan Carlos Blanco & Omo Ache

Roberto Borrrell

Chancleritos

De Rompe y Raja

Dos Four y Los Mios

Eddie Madril of Four Winds

El Wah Movement

Emese

Paul Flores

Temiscocles Fuentes

Jaranón y Bochinche

Rogelio Kindelán

Silfredo La O

Las Que Son Son

Los Lupeños de San Jose

Mind Over Matter

Napoles Ballet Theater

Yismari Ramos

Rica Salsa

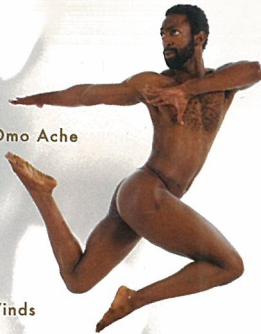
Tania Santiago

Michael Spiro

Urban Jazz Dance

For more information on ticket prices,  
performers & special events please visit

[WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG](http://WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG)



# CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL

YEARS OF TRADITION

5th Annual CubaCaribe Festival

friday april 17 to sunday may 03 2009

dance mission theater

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