

THE 15TH ANNUAL



CUBA CARIBE FESTIVAL

APRIL 10-14, 2019

WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG



CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Ramón Ramos Alayo

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Jamaica Itule Simmons

GRAPHIC DESIGN Jamaica Itule Simmons & Aria Shen

MISSION

CubaCaribe's mission is to preserve, promote and present the vibrant cultural and artistic traditions of the Caribbean and its Diaspora. Founded on the principle that dance, music, and visual art have the power to unite people of diverse perspectives, CubaCaribe fosters greater understanding and appreciation of Caribbean arts and culture.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

CubaCaribe was co-founded in 2003 by visual artist/dancer Jamaica Itule and dancer/choreographer Ramón Ramos Alayo in order to tap into the large talent pool represented by the significant community of Cuban and Caribbean artists who live and practice in the Bay Area. Since its inception, the organization has become widely known for the diversity and quality of its programming, and its deep roots in the Diasporic community under Artistic Director Ramos' leadership.

VISION

Our vision for CubaCaribe is to become a long-lasting Bay Area arts institution, expanding the number and variety of programs, forging partnerships with arts and other local organizations and reaching more communities. We will continue to meet the changing needs of the Bay Area's Cuban and Caribbean Diaspora arts community.

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

It is hard to believe that 2019 marks our 15th year producing the CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music. This year the Festival entitled Tradiciones Cubanas, will look beyond the well-known Afro and Timba forms to the lesser known Cuban social dances and their evolution over the years such as Danzón, Mambo, Chachachá, Son, Rumba and Conga. The 15th Annual CubaCaribe Festival featured performers and their traditions are: Danzón and Conga by Ramón Ramos Alayo; Son and ChaChaChá by Arenas Dance Company; Mambo by Los Lupeños de San José; Rumba/Spanish Flamenco by Ará Irawó and Theater Flamenco of San Francisco. Shows will feature live music performed live by Vission Latina Quartet.

I want to thank our amazing CubaCaribe community- especially the powerful artists who are culture bearers and innovators in a society where art is often undervalued, underfunded, and dismissed. I want to thank our audiences, volunteers, technicians, individual donors, board members and funders who make this festival both a dream and a reality.

A special thank you to Amy Draizen, Elizabeth Gessel, Anne Huang, Stacie Powers Cuellar, and to mis niñas- Joana, Azucena and Amalea for having patience with me while I am feverishly swimming in work.

Con amor,

Jamaica Itule Simmons

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

15th Annual CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music

Tradiciones Cubanas

Reception and Artist Talk: *Ajiaco En Lienzo*

with Visual Artist Pablo Soto Campoamor and Writer Jesus Francisco Sierra

WHERE:

Museum of the African Diaspora, 685 Mission Street, San Francisco

WHEN:

Wednesday April 10, 2019 at 6-8:30pm

BOX OFFICE:

415-340-2340 or WWW.BROWNPAPERTICKETS.COM

\$15 Advance and \$18 at the door

PERFORMANCES:

Featuring: Featuring Ramón Ramos Alayo - Danzón and Conga, Arenas Dance Company - Son, Salsa and ChaChaChá, Denmis Bain - Danzón and Rumba, Los Lupeños de San José- Mambo, Angel Yoel Mulen-Robert - Rumba, Theater Flamenco of San Francisco/Carola Zertuche - Spanish Flamenco, Live music by Vission Latina Quartet, featuring Marco Diaz (piano), Saul Sierra (bass), Carlos Caro and Julio Perez (percussion).

WHERE:

Brava Theater, 2781 24th Street, San Francisco

WHEN:

Saturday April 13 at 8 pm

Sunday April 14 at 3 pm

BOX OFFICE:

415-340-2340 or WWW.BROWNPAPERTICKETS.COM

\$25 Advance and \$30 at the door

\$12 Youth under 12 and under

Special Event

Ajiaco En Lienzo: RECEPTION/ARTIST TALK

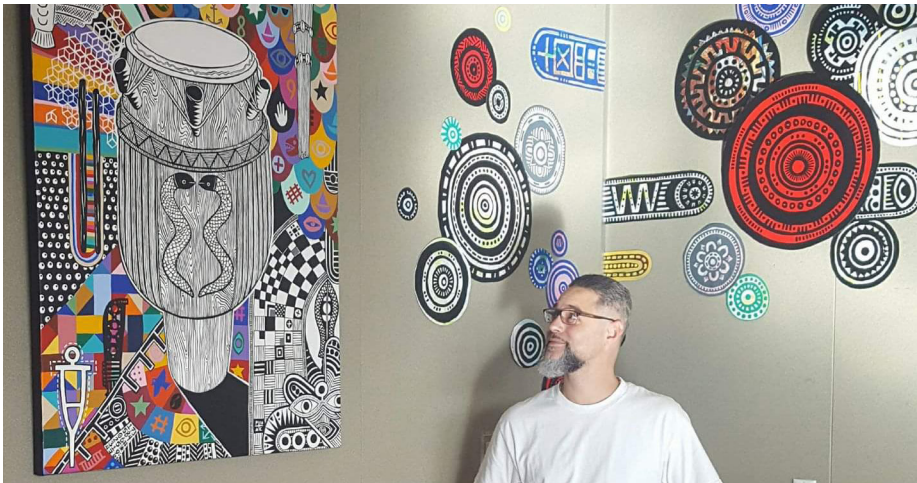
with Visual Artist Pablo Soto Campoamor & short reading with Writer Jesus Francisco Sierra

Wednesday April 10 at 6pm

Museum of the African Diaspora, 685 Mission Street, San Francisco

The son of Cuban immigrants, **Pablo Soto Campoamor** was raised in the cultural crossroad of working-class Miami. “My paintings feature themes of Cuban and pan-Caribbean identities and experiences in the United States,” Campoamor explains. “I am inspired by the hybridity of ‘creole’ cultures, and strive in my work to convey the beauty and contradiction of these evolving cultural realities.” Also a musician and instrument maker, Campoamor has lived in the Bay Area for the last nineteen years.

Cuban writer **Jesus Francisco Sierra** emigrated from Cuba in 1969 to San Francisco. His short stories appeared in Marathon Literary Review The Acentos Review and Gulf Stream Literary Journal. He is completing a collection of short stories set in Havana during the first ten years of the Revolution, and in San Francisco. He holds an MFA from Antioch University Los Angeles and is a licensed structural engineer. Sierra serves on the Advisory Council of The Grotto in San Francisco.



Baila mi Son

Arenas Dance Company, 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Susana Arenas Pedroso

CHOREOGRAPHY: Susana Arenas Pedroso

COSTUME DESIGN: Deborah Valoma

LIVE MUSIC: Vission Latina Quartet-Marco Diaz on piano, Saul Sierra bass, Carlos Caro on percussion and Julio Perez on percussion

DANCERS: Joshua Barbosa, Michael Gonzalez, Luz Mena, Deborah Valoma, Tola Williams, Lei Zhang

PROGRAM NOTES:

Cuban Son originated in the rural areas of eastern Cuba in the 1800's. It incorporates elements of Spanish and African influence. A sensual partner dance, it begins with a formal closed embrace, and is danced contratiempo, or off the beat. The constant rhythm of the clave marks the time. Son is the precursor to what we commonly known as Salsa dance today.



Image by RJ Muna

Las Alturas de Simpson

Tradiciones, 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Ramón Ramos Alayo

CHOREOGRAPHY: Ramón Ramos Alayo and Julianna Cressman

COSTUME DESIGN: Ramón Ramos Alayo

LIVE MUSIC: Vission Latina Quartet -Marco Diaz on piano, Saul Sierra bass, Carlos Caro on percussion and Julio Perez on percussion

DANCERS: Azucena Itule Ramos, Julianna Cressman, Stella Adelman, Ilana Andujar, Dennis Bain Savigne, Dwayne Worthington, Rogelio Hernandez, Daniel Santiago Madrigal, & Ramón Ramos Alayo.

PROGRAM NOTES:

Danzón is a ballroom dance descendant of Spanish Danza of the 1800's and the French Contradance, brought to Cuba by the French immigrants fleeing the Haitian revolution. Played by the Cuban charangas with distinctive instrumentation and musicality, the Danzón is a highly stylized dance of complex patterns, elegance, and grace that in many ways evokes a bygone era.

Qué Rico ChaChaChá

Arenas Dance Company, 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Susana Arenas Pedroso

CHOREOGRAPHY: Susana Arenas Pedroso

COSTUME DESIGN: Deborah Valoma

LIVE MUSIC: Vission Latina Quartet-Marco Diaz on piano, Saul Sierra bass, Carlos Caro on percussion and Julio Perez on percussion.

DANCERS: Stella Adelman, Diana Arbuto, Veronica Hernandez, Tiffani Jarnigan, Juliana Romano, Daktari Shari Hicks

PROGRAM NOTES:

ChaChaChá, a rhythm born of Danzón and Mambo, emerged in the early 50's as a popular social dance. The syncopated footwork likely was inspired by Afro-Cuban dances as well. It was not long before the Chachachá dance craze flooded Havana's nightclubs and made its way to international audiences.

Salón México

Los Lupeños de San José, 2009

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Samuel Cortez

CHOREOGRAPHY: Susan Cashion

RECORDED MUSIC: generic collection (danzon), Carmen Rivero (cumbia), Perez Prado (mambo) generic collection (danzon), Carmen Rivero (cumbia), Perez Prado (mambo)

DANCERS: Arvizu Szymusiak, Angela Avalos, Mario Ehuan, Rachel Gastelum, Steven Gil, Christina Herrera, Michael Meraz Cerna, Usiel Meraz Garcia, Carolina Nieblas, Jaime Ocampo, Alejandro Ortiz, Crystal Robles, Diana Romero, José Santiago, Laura Torres, Eduardo

PROGRAM NOTES:

Salón México is a slice of 1952 México City nightlife at a dance hall. At that time, musical tastes and styles are changing from the sublime danzón to the upbeat mambo.

The Mambo was spawned by Danzón. Mambo is fun and upbeat and full of attitude, the Mambo became popular in the casinos of the 1940's, spearheaded by the great mambo king, Benny Moré. Salón México is a slice of 1952 México City nightlife at a dance hall. At that time, musical tastes and styles are changing from the sublime danzón to the upbeat mambo.

Image by RJ Muna



Ahora Que La Habana Es Mia

Arenas Dance Company, 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Susana Arenas Pedroso

CHOREOGRAPHY: Susana Arenas Pedroso

COSTUME DESIGN: Deborah Valoma

LIVE MUSIC: Vission Latina Quartet-Marco Diaz on piano, Saul Sierra bass, Carlos Caro on percussion and Julio Perez on percussion.

DANCERS: Stella Adelman, Jessica Decker, Veronica Hernandez, Tiffani Jarnigan, Luz Mena, Juliana Romano, Tola Williams

PROGRAM NOTES:

Cuban Salsa evolved from the iconic Cuban *són* that originated in eastern Cuba around Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo in the 1920's. A blend of Latin and Afro-Cuban influences, Cuban salsa includes complex African percussion based around the *clave* rhythm, and was influenced by American jazz as well. Salsa has swept the world with its infectious rhythms and alluring dance moves, and remains one of the most popular dance and music phenomena today.

Del Flamenco A La Rumba

Ará Irawó and Theatre Flamenco of San Francisco 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Carola Zertuche and Ramón Ramos Alayo

COSTUME DESIGN: Carola Zertuche and Ramón Ramos Alayo

LIVE MUSIC: Joseph Churchill- percussion, Robert Woods-LaDue- percussion, Jorge Liceaga- Flamenco Guitar, Marlon Aldana- percussionist, Clara Rodriguez- vocalist, Angel Yoel Mulen-Robert- vocalist

CHOREOGRAPHY: Carola Zertuche and Denmis Bain Savigne

DANCERS: Cinthia Sanchez, Denmis Bain Savigne, Jamaica Itule Simmons, Carola Zertuche

PROGRAM NOTES:

The Rumba has its origins in both African and Spanish dance roots. The word *rumba* or *rumbón* means a community party. Rumba is traditionally learned in the streets and is displayed in public and at

social gatherings. It is comprised of three distinct forms, each with its own rhythm: the Yambu, the slowest and most lyrical, typically danced by women; the Guaguanco, a flirtatious game danced between a man and a woman; and the Columbia, the fastest and most traditionally masculine form of the dance. Always entertaining, playful, sensual, and lively, rumba embodies the indomitable Cuban spirit. Also featured is the Spanish Flamenco. Hailing from southern Spain's outcast population, Flamenco also draws influences from many cultures, including the Greeks, the Moors and the Jews. Both dances use personal improvisation to tell a story of a struggle and oppression; employ a dramatic marriage of the music and the dancers; and are celebratory dances that grew in informal settings, that express the result of centuries of bringing together traditions.

Conga Santiaguera

CubaCaribe Carnival Contingent, 2019

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Ramón Ramos Alayo

CHOREOGRAPHY: Ramón Ramos Alayo and Susana Arenas Pedroso

RECORDED MUSIC: Folkloyuma, Timbalive, Sur Caribe

COSTUME DESIGN: Alison Lee

DANCERS: Alison Lee, Ana Perillo, Florence Chamberlin, Leidy Mariam Alvarez, Lisa Barratt, Maria Zocca, Nancy Fraser, Ilana Andujar, Kris Novek, Juliet Mason, Azucena Itule Ramos, Ila Deiss, Jazmine Meluu

PROGRAM NOTES:

During festivals throughout the island, the infectious sounds of the Conga are everywhere. Large ensembles of musicians and dancers called *comparsas* dress in colorful costumes and perform in the streets. The Conga is Afro-Cuban in origin and has ceremonial and ritualistic origins. It is also a celebration and everyone is invited to join the Conga line!



Bios

Ramón Ramos Alayo

Ramón Ramos Alayo was a principal dancer with several prominent Cuban dance companies, including Danza del Caribe and Narcisco Medina Contemporary Dance Company, touring throughout Europe, Belize, and Canada. Since relocating to the U.S. in 1997 he has performed with Robert Henry Johnson, Kim Epifano, Sara Shelton Mann, Zaccho Dance Theatre and Robert Moses' Kin. He founded Alayo Dance Company in 2002 and CubaCaribe in 2003. His work is an innovative fusion of Afro-Cuban modern, folkloric and popular Cuban Dance, having choreographed and produced twelve full length dance performances. He has been featured in National Geographic Magazine, received the prestigious Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation Emerging Choreographer's Award, was recognized as "Best Dance Dynamo" by the SF Bay Guardian, was the recipient of a SF Bay Guardian Goldie Award, and has been hailed by dance critic Rita Felciano as "the best Afro-Cuban dancer whose choreography stands well beyond traditional modes." His piece Goodbye was named one of the best premier's in 2016 in Dance Europe Magazine.

Susana Arenas Pedroso

Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, Susana Arenas Pedroso danced professionally for seventeen years in Cuba with popular, folkloric and theatrical performing groups, including Tierra Virgen, Alafia Ire, Oche Olorun, Oriki, Clave y Guaguancó, Oba Wemilere, Rumberos de Cuba, and Raíces Profundas. Since 1998, she has performed and choreographed throughout the United States, Austria, Mexico, Morocco, Martinique, Cuba and Hong Kong with companies such as Omo Ache, Omo Oddara, Ban Rarra, Ire Ile, Alayo Dance Company, Las Que Son Son and Obini Ashe. In 1999 Ms Pedroso founded her own dance companies, Saudunga Cubana, specializing in Cuban popular dance, and Olorun, specializing in Cuban folkloric dance. In 2004 Ms Pedroso joined the two troupes into one, establishing Arenas Dance Company, an all-female ensemble that has developed an expertise in folkloric and popular Cuban rhythms and traditions.

Arenas Dance Company

The all-female ensemble of dancers and percussionists directed by Susana Arenas Pedroso, Arenas Dance Company, has performed

throughout the Bay Area, and is best known for their celebrated works *Yo Soy Cuba* (I am Cuba), *Dos Aguas* and *A Night in Havana*. Arenas Dance Company has been featured as part of numerous festivals, including Black Choreographers Festival, CubaCaribe Festival, Salsa Rueda Festival, Yemanjá Festival, Stanford Jazz Festival and San José Jazz Festival. Arenas Dance Company's mission is to promote the rich and diverse Cuban folkloric and popular dance traditions from the percussive Arara, to the sensual Rumba, to the energetic Palo making it accessible to wide audiences via performances and classes. Born from a commitment to educate and enrich the communities in which Ms. Pedroso lives, Arenas Dance Company inspires the hearts and minds of its audiences in the way it brings the history of Cuban dance and music culture to life.

Dennis Bain Savigne

Dennis Bain from Santiago de Cuba, Cuba was a member of Conjunto Folklórico Nacional de Cuba. He has choreographed for such people as, Kenny Ortega, Siegfried & Roy, Emilio Estefan, Manuel Mendive, Havana Nights Dance Company and the Latin Grammys. He has performed on *Don Francisco Presenta*, *Cosa Nostra* and with groups such as Orichas, Calle 13, Los Van Van, Bamboleo, Pacho Alonso and Issac Delgado. With the Havana Nights Dance Company he toured and performed in more than 16 different countries and was a lead dancer in about 450 performances of *Havana Nightclub - The Show*. Bain is the owner of Cuban Rhythm and Rumba Dance Studio in Vallejo, California.

Los Lupeños de San José

Founded in 1969 by visionaries Susan Cashion and Ramón Morones, Los Lupeños de San José is recognized as one of the earliest Mexican folk dance companies in California, known for its artistry, history, traditions, innovation, and endurance. Los Lupeños artists are passionate about learning and executing their art form, representing their culture, and being a positive force within the California dance community. As a program of the Cashion Cultural Legacy since 2014, Los Lupeños is re-establishing itself at the forefront of the folklórico dance genre under the artistic direction of choreographer Samuel Cortez. Originally from Celaya, Guanajuato, México, Cortez has been teaching folklórico dance all over the United States for the last 17 years. Since 2015 he has led Grupo Folklórico Los Lupeños de San José, based in the School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza in San José.

Angel Yoel Mulen-Robert

Originally from Guantanamo, Cuba Angel Yoel Mulen-Robert is a respected lead vocalist and percussionist of Afro-Cuban Yoruba, Abakua (Calabar), Rumba, Arará (Dahony), and Palo (Congo). He is also a lead vocalist for traditional dance music: Boleros, Son and Changui. Before coming to the United States in 2013, he performed and taught throughout Europe and worked with Donza Libre of Guantanamo, Cuba, Habana Sonlar Dance Company and Seven Potencias Dance Company in Havana, Cuba.

Ará Irawó

Ará Irawó is SF Bay Area based music group led by musical director Angel Yoel Mulen-Robert. It formed in 2018 with members including Joseph Churchill, Robert Woods-LaDue and more. It specializes in Afro-Cuban and Rumba genres.

Vission Latina Quartet

Together for almost 20 years, members of Vission Latina Quartet originate from different parts of the Americas Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Guatemala but share a common musical idea. VL Quartet performs original compositions as well as classic hits from Cuba and Puerto Rico at different venues around the Bay Area. Strong melodies, big solos and personalized choruses are Vission Latina Quartet's trademark sound - Latin Big Band in a quartet formation. The quartet's instrumentation consists of Marco Diaz on piano, Saul Sierra bass, Carlos Caro on percussion and Julio Perez on percussion.

Carole Zertuche

Carole Zertuche is Artistic Director of Theatre Flamenco, one of the oldest dance companies in California founded in 1966 and the first American dance company to stage full productions of Spanish dance in the U.S. Born in Torreon, Mexico, Zertuche has collaborated with international and local artists in productions paying homage to traditional styles of flamenco since assuming the artistic directorship of the company in 2008. She has toured Mexico, USA, South America, Canada, and the Middle East, dancing with various flamenco companies, and performed in New York's Joyce Theater and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Massachusetts. She has collaborated on projects with flamenco dancers Andres Marin, Carmen Ledesma, Pastora Galvan, Adela Campallo, Alfonso Losa, Jesus Carmona, Nino de los Reyes

among others. In 2017, she made her San Francisco Opera debut as choreographer for *La Traviata*.

Theater Flamenco of San Francisco

Founded in 1966, Theatre Flamenco of San Francisco is one of the longest, continually running flamenco performance groups outside of Spain. Theatre Flamenco of San Francisco exists to support the cultural enrichment of the Bay Area through the presentation and promotion of flamenco, an art form that sprang from an international and rich mix of cultural and ethnic influences that converged in southern Spain.

For 52 years Theatre Flamenco has been producing richly imaginative and thematic shows in collaboration with local and international artists, offering classes with world famous flamenco artists to students of all ages and abilities, and maintaining strong ties to flamenco around the world.

Located in the vibrant Mission district of San Francisco, the company hosts monthly shows in its/studio performance space featuring world class local and international guest artists, and it also produces one annual home season in San Francisco.

Image by Andy Mogg



Support

This project has been made possible in part by support from:

California Arts Council, San Francisco Grants for the Arts, The Zellerbach Family Foundation, The Walter and Elise Haas Foundation



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As a member of Friends, join us in preserving and promoting Caribbean dance, music, visual art and culture in the San Francisco Bay Area.

We gratefully welcome any and all donations, large or small. All donations are fully tax-deductible under our 501(c)3. For more information please contact us at jamaica@cubacaribe.org

We thank you in advance for your kind support and generosity.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Halifu Osumare, Ph.D.



NEW PAPERBACK EDITION DANCING IN BLACKNESS, A MEMOIR

The book explores black woman dancer's personal journey over four decades across three continents and 23 countries, including different parts of the U.S. I situate myself in the 60s Black Arts Movement in my S.F. Bay Area home, in Europe in the late 60s, and dancing professionally in New York City in the early 1970s. I explore dancing in Ghana, West Africa in 1976 that inspired me to return to Oakland and help create the city's black dance scene, for which it is noted today as the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts.

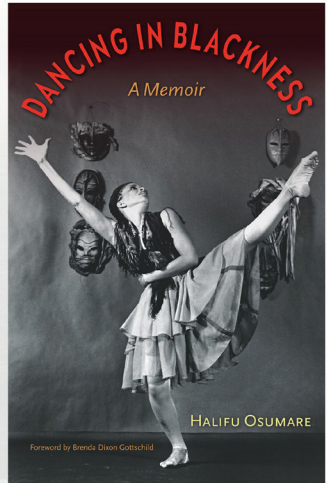
I WRITE AND DANCE FOR MY ANCESTORS. FOR I HAVE EMPOWERED MYSELF TO BE THEIR WILDEST DREAM!

Dance & Black Popular Culture Scholar

Dr. Osumare has been in dance and black popular culture internationally for forty years as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, administrator and scholar, and is Professor Emerita of African American & African Studies at UC Davis. As a dancer she was a soloist with the Rod Rodgers Dance Company in NY City in the 1970s, and became the Founder of Oakland's first multi-ethnic dance institution, Everybody's Creative Arts Center (now Oakland's Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts). As her mentor, the famed dancer, anthropologist, scholar Katherine Dunham, she combines scholarship, the arts, and community activism as her mission in life.

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Ramon Ramos-Alayo

Founder, Artistic Director, and
Choreographer of Alayo Dance
Company and Cuba Caribe Dance
Group

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Questions

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