

# CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL

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The Seventh Annual CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music

**LA TIERRA:  
DESCENDANTS OF THE DAHOMEY**  
May 13-15, 2011  
Dance Mission Theater  
San Francisco

*"Many central african languages have no word that corresponds exactly to "music", not because they don't have music, but because for them music was never a thing apart. Music, then, would be as old as human memory. And in Africa, inhabited by humans longer than anywhere else, music has the longest memory known to man."*

~ Ned Sublette

*Dahomey*, a pre-colonial west african kingdom, once located in what is now southern Benin, reached the apex of its power and prestige during the height of the trans-atlantic slave trade in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The descendants of the *Fon*, the Dahomey people, can now be found throughout the Americas as a result of the slave trade. Fon culture, together with Yoruba and Bantu traditions from Dahomey's neighboring regions, merged with French (Haiti), Portuguese (Brazil), and Spanish (Cuba) culture to produce the religions, dances, and musical styles that we see in the Americas today.

The name *Arará*, given to Fon people who arrived in the Americas as late as the 1860s, is derived from the Dahomean city of Allada, and is related

## Classes

Danys "La Mora" Pérez (New York)

Saturday May 14, 1:00-2:30, Afro-Cuban Folkloric, Intermediate/Advanced, Brasarte World Dance Center

Sunday May 15, 10:30-12:00, Afro-Cuban Folkloric, Intermediate/Advanced, San Francisco Dance Center

Kati Hernandez (Los Angeles)

Saturday May 21 10:30-12:00pm, Rumba, Beginning/Intermediate, Dance Mission Theater

Saturday May 21 2:00-3:30pm, Afro-Cuban Folkloric, Intermediate/Advanced, Brasarte World Dance Center

Victor Alexander Ramirez (Chicago)

Friday May 27 10:00-11:30, Afro- Cuban Modern with Ramón Ramos Alayo, ODC

Saturday May 28, 11:00-12:30, Afro-Cuban Modern, Dance Mission Theater

## The Festival Continues . . .

### Week Two Performances

EL AGUA : Transatlantic Tongues May 20-22,  
Mixed Program, Malonga Casquelourd Theater,  
Oakland

### Week Three Performances

LA ORILLA : Loss & Acceptance May 26-28, Alayo  
Dance Company Premier, Laney College Theater,  
Oakland

### Lectures

Michael Spiro, "Arara Savalu--It's Musical  
Richness and Complexity", Wednesday, May 18,  
6 pm, Museum of African Diaspora

Yosvany Terry, "Arará Music from Cuba and its  
fusion with Jazz: The Concept of Ye-de-gbe &  
Afro-Caribbean Legacy", Wednesday, May 25,  
6 pm, Museum of African Diaspora

to the term Rada found in Haiti and to Arrada on the island of Carriacou in the Grenadines. Arará culture continues to persist in Haiti, Cuba, and Brazil, but is often not as widely practiced as traditions derived from Bantu and especially Yoruba cultures.

Today the traditions of the Dahomey live on both sides of the Atlantic and the memories that have been passed down through music and dance are celebrated tonight. We seek to honor the people and the land that gave birth to these stories and the way in which dance, rhythm, and song can carry them over continents, seas, and generations.

## El Wah Movement Dance Theatre

### *Li Viv (She lives)*

In *Li Viv*, El Wah Movement revisits the recent earthquake in Haiti (*Ayiti*), as seen through the character of *Marizili*, the embodiment of Haiti. Griot Ghedelia, a senegalese guardian spirit to Marizili, begins the story. Incorporating Arará, Lamba, Congolese Nzobi and Doundounba, as well as the Haitian Rada traditions of Mahi and Zepol, the dance recounts the historical calamities that lead to the earthquake's

catastrophic devastation, as well as gives voice to the individuals who suffer through it.

This piece is dedicated to all of the Haitian people, as well as to the ocean of contributors who gave in one way or another to Haiti. May the victims in Haiti actually be allowed to receive all of the contributed funds.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Colette Eloi

Dancers: Bontle Willis, Afia Thompson, Nafi Thompson, Jabris Ruckers, Roqueisha Townsend, Lakeisha Golden

Musicians: Mohammed Kouyate – Balofon

Music Credits: Eric Porter, AKA Afrikan Sciennes, Rara Bizango

Sound Engineer: Kele Nitoto

Vocalist and Spoken Text: Colette Eloi

Costumes: Myesha Eunice Williams, Colette Eloi

**Colette Eloi**, a first generation Haitian-American through both of her parents, teaches the dance of her people along with the songs, which carry the unique culture and history of which she is so proud. Eloi, considered to be a New Traditionalist, uses folkloric dance to comment on contemporary issues of life. Eloi is an artist and student of the diverse dance styles of the african diaspora as well as modern dance. As a dancer and choreographer she has performed extensively, both nationally and internationally.

## About Us

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CubaCaribe was co-founded in 2003 by visual artist/dancer Jamaica Itule and dancer/choreographer Ramón Ramos Alayo in order to tap into and unify the large talent pool represented by the significant community of Cuban and Caribbean artists who live and practice in the Bay Area.

Projects include:

- The Annual CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music 2005-2011
- Resident dance company Alayo Dance Company
- CubaCamp Bay Area and Hawaii 2004-2006
- San Francisco Carnaval Contingents 2006 and 2008

Artistic Director: Ramón Ramos Alayo

Producers: Jamaica Itule and Adriene Harrison

## Acknowledgments

CubaCaribe wishes to thank the dancers, musicians and artists involved in this festival for making this event possible. Their passion and dedication continue to inspire and move us all, in both senses of the word. Thank you to all the technicians, volunteers and donors for your continued support of the CubaCaribe Festival. Special thanks to Elizabeth Gessel at The Museum of African Diaspora, Anne Huang, Chris Dunaway, the Rodriguez family, Delina Patrice Brooks, Enrique Quiroz, Jenny Chu, Ron Hunkiewicz, Austin Forbord, Krissy Keefer, Stacie Powers, Stella Adelman and Dance Brigade for their continued support.

This project has been made possible in part by support from Dance Brigade, the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the San Francisco Arts Commission, Grants for the Arts, California Arts Council and the Zellerbach Family Fund.



She is the artistic director of El Wah Movement, which she formed in 2005. She was commissioned by The Northern California Katherine Dunham Committee to choreograph a tribute piece for Ms. Dunham's memorial called "A Living Birthday Card." She choreographed the West Coast premiere of Elton John's and Tim Rice's, *Aida*, for which she won a Bessie Award.

El Wah Movement Dance Theatre presents a large Haitian folkloric dance repertoire, along with african diaspora dance fusion. Eloi is currently working on the completion of her MFA at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, California, where she is examining cultural dance as an element of oral tradition, with an emphasis on Haitian oral tradition. She received her B.A. in Development Studies from the International and Area Studies Program at the University of California at Berkeley. She traveled to Haiti in 2007 where she taught a seminar at the National School of the Arts called "Development through the Arts" where young Haitian artists expressed themselves on the topic of development in their country, using their own traditional dance, prose, song and rhythm. Eloi recently completed a residency with Counterpulse in San Francisco called the "Politics of Poverty" where she examined the root of poverty among black people.

## Intermission

### Oyu Oro Afro Cuban Experimental Dance Ensemble

#### *Identitidad*

A compilation of traditional dance and musical manifestations inherited from African ancestry in Cuba. The high energy performance will start with the traditional Afro-Cuban repertoire derived from Yoruba, Dahomey, and Congo cultures of Africa that invites the audience to the distinct spiritual and ceremonial world. After the drum dialogue, the stage will transform to the festive and joyful medley of Cuban Popular repertoire to end the evening with celebration.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Danys Pérez

Dancers: Isabel Estrada Jamison, Liethis Hechavarría, Maya Louisa, Melissa Bandes, Momoko Hanyuda, Natalie Pardo, Noibis Licea, Yoko Numata

Musicians: Francisco Mora Catlett, Abraham Rodríguez, Rafael Monteagudo

Vocalists: Danys Pérez, Sandra Harper, Susan Rapalee

Costumes: Danys Pérez

**Danys "La Mora" Pérez**, originally from Santiago de Cuba, is an internationally renowned master of Afro-Cuban folkloric dance. Pérez's expertise as dancer, teacher, dance ethnologist, and choreographer is founded in the unique styles of her native region of Oriente province in Eastern Cuba. Oriente attributes its rich cultural heritage to the infusion of Afro-Haitian influences into an already vibrant Afro-Cuban context. Pérez began her dance training at an early age with Afro-Cuban and Afro-Haitian dance ensembles. At 13, she was invited to join renowned national folkloric ballet company, *Cutumba*, and toured internationally with the company for 18 years. In 1994, she was evaluated and granted the designation of *primera bailarina* and *primera profesora* by the National Dance Commission in Cuba, and has since taught outside of Cuba - in Italy, Spain, France, Canada, and the United States.

For the past four years, she has been teaching weekly Afro-Cuban dance classes at The Alvin Ailey Extension program. She has also participated in several dance programs and workshops outside New York, as a guest instructor and choreographer, including the annual summer intensive dance program at Tulane University in New Orleans. She is the founder and artistic director of Oyu Oro.

## **CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL FIESTA!**

Come join the party on Memorial Day, May 30<sup>th</sup>. Spend the afternoon with us at Kitty's in the East Bay. Live music. \$10 cover.

More details to follow.

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

photo credits: Austin Forbord



**EL  
AGUA**

~  
Trans-  
Atlantic  
Tongues

**MAY  
20-22  
2011**

**Malonga**

**Casquelord**

**Theater**

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## Program

Friday & Saturday

Heritage - The Vision Continues  
Marc Bamuthi Joseph  
Liberation Dance Theater  
Cunamacué

*Intermission*

Aguas da Bahia  
Heritage - The Vision Continues  
Afoutayi Dance Company  
Grupo Experimental Nago

Sunday

Heritage - The Vision Continues  
Marc Bamuthi Joseph  
Liberation Dance Theater  
Muriel Johnson

*Intermission*

Afoutayi Dance Company  
Grupo Experimental Nago  
Congas y Comparsas\*

*\*Please join us on stage for this Cuban Carnival scene*



## Master Classes with Visiting Artists

**Kati Hernandez** (Los Angeles)

Saturday May 21 10:30-12:00pm, Rumba,  
Beginning/Intermediate, Dance Mission  
Theater

Saturday May 21 2:00-3:30pm, Afro-Cuban  
Folkloric, Intermediate/Advanced, Brasarte  
World Dance Center

**Victor Alexander Ramirez** (Chicago)

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Cuban Modern, Dance Mission Theater



## Yosvany Terry

### Arará Music from Cuba and its fusion with Jazz: The Concept of Ye-de-gbe & Afro-Caribbean Legacy

Known around the globe for his musical innovation which melds the traditional sounds of his native Cuba with avant-garde and fiery post-bop, sophisticated harmonies, Terry will present this lecture/demonstration, which explores the Afro-Caribbean Arará musical tradition - a style brought to Cuba by slaves taken from West Africa – in a collection of compositions with African percussion. Wednesday, May 25, 6 pm, Museum of African Diaspora



photo: Michael Mason

## Afoutayi Dance Company

### *Damballah*

Artistic Direction: Djenane Saint Juste

Choreography: Djenane Saint Juste, Florencia Pierre

Dancers: Djenane Saint Juste, Florencia Pierre

Musicians: Jeff. L. Pierre

Costumes: Florencia Pierre

**Afoutayi Dance Company** was founded in 2009 to provide awareness and education about Haitian culture, as well as the sacredness and artfulness of the Vodou religion.

**Djenane Saint-Juste** was born and raised in the traditional Haitian culture as her mother Florencia Pierre, a priestess of the Vodou religion was, and her mother before. Ms. Saint-Juste has an extensive background in Haitian dance and music, and is an accomplished choreographer, dancer, and vocalist specializing in the traditional folkloric dances of Haiti. A former student at Cuba's International Schools for Sports and Physical Education, she served for 15 years, as co-artistic director, first dancer, and instructor at the Jaka Dance Institute in Pétionville, Haiti alongside her mother, Florencia Pierre. She has worked with many renowned Haitian artists, including Azor, Boukman

Eksperyans, Alan and Syto Cave, Paula Clermont Pean, and Fabienne Denis.

## **Aguas Da Bania**

### ***Movendo con Capoeira***

This celebratory piece that brings together two Brazilian traditions, *capoeira* --a martial art, and Afro-Brazilian dance from Bahia, in the northeastern part of Brazil.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Tania Santiago

Dancers: Ricardo David Acosta, Stella Adelman, Leila Anglin, Stephanie Bastos, Graduado Papagayo, Michele Kumi Baer, Lily Liang, Rayna Wiles

Musicians: Gamo da Paz, Graduado Papagayo

Vocalists: Tania Santiago, Stephanie Bastos

Costumes: Tania Santiago, Pilar Olabarria

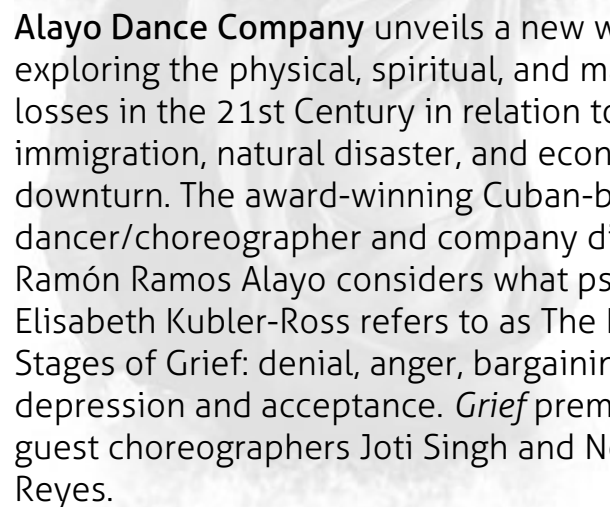
**Tânia Santiago**, born and raised in Salvador, Bahia, grew up in the heart of African influenced Brazil. She has taught, danced, and choreographed for the many of the most prominent companies in Brazil. She holds degrees in dance from the SESC Associação School of the Arts and Fundação do Estado Bahia School of Dance in Salvador, Brazil. While her specialty is folkloric and contemporary Afro-

## **The Festival Continues . . .**

### **LA ORILLA : Loss & Acceptance**

Thursday, May 26 - Saturday, May 28

Alayo Dance Company Premier, Laney College Theater, Oakland



**Alayo Dance Company** unveils a new work, *Grief*, exploring the physical, spiritual, and material losses in the 21st Century in relation to war, immigration, natural disaster, and economic downturn. The award-winning Cuban-born dancer/choreographer and company director Ramón Ramos Alayo considers what psychologist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross refers to as The Five Stages of Grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. *Grief* premieres with guest choreographers Joti Singh and Nelson Reyes.

The company will also re-visit *La Madre*, which they premiered in 2005 as a tribute to Ramos' mother.

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Artistic Director: Ramón Ramos Alayo

Producers: Jamaica Itule and Adriene Harrison

Brazilian dance, Santiago has also studied jazz, ballet, West African, Afro-Cuban and modern dance. She spent 6 years working with Olodum, the world renowned *bloco Afro* (a cultural group rooted in the annual carnival parade).

Since moving to California in 1997 she has been teaching in many San Francisco public schools. In 2001, Santiago received the California Arts Council *Artist in Residency* grant for 3 years to teach youth in the community. She teaches regularly at Rhythm and Motion / ODC Dance Commons in San Francisco. Tania's choreography has been performed by many local groups including, Loco Bloco, Axe Abada, Kuumba, Quimbanda Grupo Carnavalesco. She has also performed with Alayo Dance Company and Deep Waters Dance Company. In 1999 she formed Aguas Da Bahia which has performed at the Mexican Heritage, ODC, Herbst, USF Presentation, Brava, and The Palace of Fine Arts theaters, as well as at the Cow Palace, Stanford University, and on the S.F. and Oakland Carnival stages. In 2003, Aguas Da Bahia produced its own season with 6 shows in 4 cities. The critically acclaimed show *AGUAS*, was performed in front of 1200 people over three days in San Francisco at its sell-out shows at USF Presentation Theatre and Brava Theatre for the Arts. Aguas most recently performed at the Black Choreographers Festival in February, 2011.

## Cunamacué

### *Libera Tu Danza*

*Libera Tu Danza* is a contemporary elaboration of a popular Afro-Peruvian music and dance form, the *Festejo*. The word *Festejo*, comes from the Spanish word *festejar* (to celebrate). True to its name, the music and dance of the Afro-Peruvian genre is joyous and vibrant, but its traditional lyrics usually narrate the hardships of slave life. This particular piece was inspired by the stage in life where one decides to step out of a familiar environment and begin to take flight on one's own. The dancers in the piece represent birds flying in a flock. The theme of learning to fly individually and as a member of a supportive community is expressed through its dance and song.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Carmen Román

Dancers: Vicky Alarcon, Holly Burnett, Aliah Dunn-Salahuddin, Eyla Moore, Carmen Román, Johanna Suarez

Musicians: Braulio Barrera, Javier Cabanillas, Ryan Chesire, Carlos Britto, Gary Bellot, Michelle Agüero

Vocals: Braulio Barrera, Javier Cabanillas, Carlos Britto

Spoken Text: Marina Lavallo, Yaccaira Salvatierra

## Acknowledgments

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dialogue. Identity politics, race relations, gender inequalities, and marginalized communities are the core subjects of LDT's work. Artistic Director Jacinta Vlach draws upon movement from the Latin/African diaspora, contemporary, and urban vernacular to reinvent various rituals, eras, and social movements. While honoring the tradition of the theatre arts, LDT seeks to capture the socio-political climate of our increasingly globalized world with a strong emphasis on the working class perspective. Through collaboration and individual narratives LDT brings personal stories to the stage in an attempt to spread awareness and healing to diverse peoples.

**Jacinta Vlach** began her dance training with Reggie Savage and furthered her studies at North Carolina School of the Arts and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. Jacinta has toured and performed with internationally acclaimed companies including Nathan Trice/ RITUALS, Robert Moses' Kin, and Philadanco. Her choreography has been seen nationwide at E-Moves Harlem Stage, Identity Shifts YBCA, The Living Word Festival, Chicago Center for the Performing Arts, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Philadelphia Dance Projects, CubaCaribe, BDP, Zellerbach Theater, and Velocity Dance Center Seattle. She is an Instituto Sacatar Brazil Fellow, serves as guest faculty at UC Berkeley, and is currently Resident Artist of ODC Theater.

**Carmen Román** is the founder and artistic director of Cunamacué. In 2009, she earned her bachelors degree in dance from San Francisco State University. She was a company member of De Rompe y Raja Cultural Association (1995 – 2009) and performed with the troupe at numerous festivals and universities. Carmen has taught creative movement and Afro-Peruvian dance at schools with organizations such as the Village Dancers and DanceVersity, and local dance studios like the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. She has also traveled to El Salvador with the Colima Project to offer dance workshops for the rural children of the area. Currently she is an instructor with East Bay Center for the Performing Arts and is an Artist in Residence for Leap...Imagination in Learning. Carmen has been accepted into the MFA in Choreography program at Mills College and will begin her studies in the fall of 2011.

**Cunamacué** is an Afro-Peruvian dance group, whose mission is to promote the continuation of Afro-Peruvian culture, representing it not as a point in time, but as a living, vibrant and evolving form whose music and dance can be used as a means of expression. A reflection of its new environment, the San Francisco Bay Area, Cunamacué uses Afro-Peruvian movement vocabulary as well as movements inspired by modern dance aesthetics and dances of the

African diaspora to communicate its themes that are universal to human experiences. Cunamacué is dedicated to sharing Afro-Peruvian dance with the community through performances, school residencies, and youth programs.

## **Grupo Experimental Nago**

### ***Merengue del Cafetal***

*Merengue*, a Haitian influenced dance from the eastern *Oriente* province of Cuba, honors the work that was done on coffee plantations. Also a celebration after a long day of harvesting, the dance begins with movements and rhythms that reflect the work of gathering, shoveling, and blessing of the coffee. As bells, whistles, and horns join in, the dance becomes sensual and celebratory, ending the day with a fiesta.

Artistic Direction & Choreography: Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt

Dancers: Katy Alaniz Rous, Mela Amaiya, Renee Ananda, Holly Burnett, Anya Lapham, Jacquie Ring, Claudia Rosa, Alicia Langlais, Anna Pasternak, Carmen Roman, Aimee Zawitz

Musicians: Joseph Church, Jules Hilson, Brandon Lee, Gary Rubinstein

Vocals: Morgan Simon, Joseph Church, Alison Hammond, Jules Hilson, Tossie Long, Michelle Martinez, Karen A. Smith

Bamuthi's proudest work has been with Youth Speaks where he mentors 13-19 year old writers and curates the Living Word Festival and Left Coast Leaning. He is the co-founder of Life is Living, a national series of one day festivals designed to activate underused parks and affirm peaceful urban life through hip hop arts and focused environmental action.

## **Liberation Dance Theater**

### ***Guerra***

Based on artistic director Jacinta Vlach's time spent in Brazil during 2010, *Guerra* explores the personal versus the political state of war. Utilizing choreography developed in collaboration with Itaparican street dancers known as the '*Gangsters*', and the music of Hypnotic Brass Ensemble, *Guerra* represents the various stages of escape, anger, struggle, and resilience experienced during personal war.

Dancers: Rashidi Omari Byrd, Sheila Coleman, Olivia Eng, Samad Raheem Guerra, Jacinta Vlach  
Music: Hypnotic Brass Ensemble

**Liberation Dance Theater**, founded in 2007, explores contemporary social issues and brings them to life through dance, theater, and

educational workshops on storytelling and literacy at local preschools, Bananas Childcare Resource Center, CA Arts College, and San Francisco State University.

## **Marc Bamuthi Joseph**

### ***Chicago, Sudan***

Through narrative poetry and movement "Chicago, Sudan" connect the dots between a mourning mother at a Midwestern festival for life in and a motherless vocalist learning about environment in Khartoum...

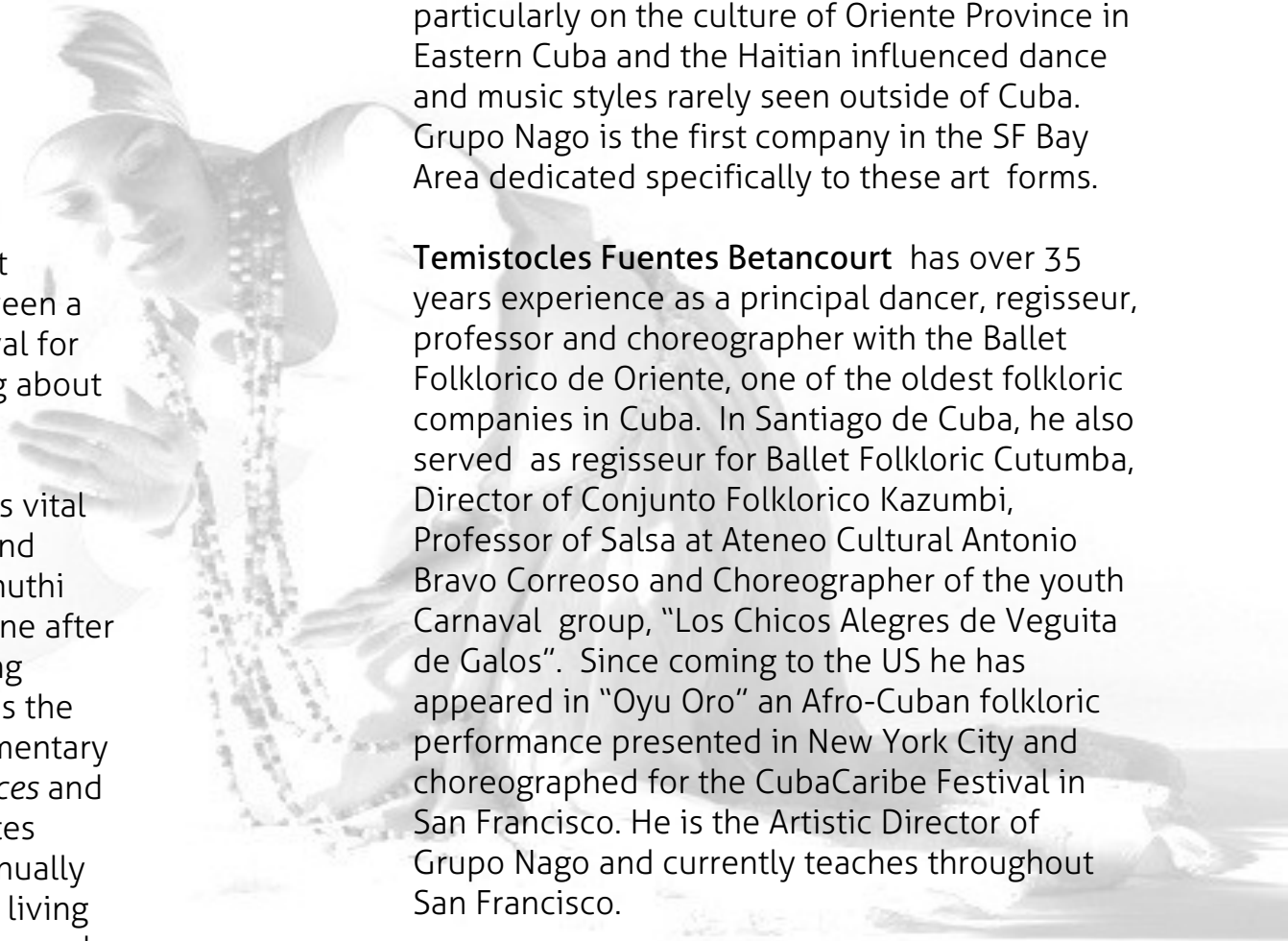
**Marc Bamuthi Joseph** is one of America's vital voices in performance, arts education, and artistic curation. In the Fall of 2007, Bamuthi graced the cover of Smithsonian Magazine after being named one of America's Top Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences. He is the artistic director of the 7-part HBO documentary *Russell Simmons presents Brave New Voices* and an inaugural recipient of the United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship, which annually recognizes 50 of the country's "greatest living artists." In May 2011, Bamuthi was announced as this year's Alpert Award winner in Theater. preservation and development of Afro-Cuban culture through dance and music.

**Grupo Experimental Nago** is dedicated to the preservation and development of Afro-Cuban culture through dance and music. Nago focuses particularly on the culture of Oriente Province in Eastern Cuba and the Haitian influenced dance and music styles rarely seen outside of Cuba. Grupo Nago is the first company in the SF Bay Area dedicated specifically to these art forms.

**Temistocles Fuentes Betancourt** has over 35 years experience as a principal dancer, regisseur, professor and choreographer with the Ballet Folklorico de Oriente, one of the oldest folkloric companies in Cuba. In Santiago de Cuba, he also served as regisseur for Ballet Folklorico Cutumba, Director of Conjunto Folklorico Kazumbi, Professor of Salsa at Ateneo Cultural Antonio Bravo Correoso and Choreographer of the youth Carnival group, "Los Chicos Alegres de Vegueta de Galos". Since coming to the US he has appeared in "Oyu Oro" an Afro-Cuban folkloric performance presented in New York City and choreographed for the CubaCaribe Festival in San Francisco. He is the Artistic Director of Grupo Nago and currently teaches throughout San Francisco.

### **Heritage -The Vision Continues**

**Yagbe Awolowo Onilu** is a master drummer, singer, and teacher of African diaspora musical



culture. First introduced to African drumming and percussion ensemble music in his birthplace of Cayes, Haiti, he began his first drumming apprenticeship at the age of eight. In 1966 he relocated to New York City where he was inspired to broaden his skills and knowledge further. Since then, he has studied with world-renowned drummers and sacred religious personages, including Ladji Camara, Famoudou Konate, Faduba Oulare, CK Ladzekpo, Toumanie Diabate, and Esteban "Chacha" Bacallao. He has studied throughout Africa and the Caribbean, conducting numerous research and study residencies in Senegal, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, and Cuba.

Since moving to California in 1976, he has performed with Dimensions Dance Theatre, The African Music and Dance Ensemble, Fua Dia Congo, Ceedo Senegalese Dance Company, Balle Saba, Nuba Dance Theatre, Beatriz Ross Cultural Ensemble, and Bantaba. He has also continued to conduct workshops and performances with internationally renowned companies such as The Senegal National Dance Company, Conjunto Nacional de Cuba, Noche Cubana, Escola de Arte. Onilu is the artistic director of Hertiage - The Vision Continues, a West-African-Cuban music and dance ensemble dedicated to the study and performance of the rich music and dance heritage of West Africa, Cuba, and the Caribbean.

Musicians: Yagbe Awolowo Onilu, Joseph "Pili" Martinez, Robert La Due

## **Muriel Johnson**

### ***How Goat Got Out of Trouble***

In this folk tale from The West African Republic of Benin (formerly Dahomey), Goat builds himself a beautiful house. He finds that his house attracts lots of praise and some danger too! Goat has to out smart an envious fierce someone to save his life.

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



### **CubaCaribe Festival Fiesta!**

Come join the party on Memorial Day, May 30<sup>th</sup>. Spend the afternoon with us at Kitty's in the East Bay. Dos Four y Los Mios. Sandy Perez and members of Los Muñequitos de Matanzas.

2 – 6 pm \$10 cover.

for more information visit [www.cubacaribe.org](http://www.cubacaribe.org)  
cover photo: Austin Forbord

# La Orilla:



## Loss & Acceptance

Alayo Dance Company  
May 26 – 28, 2011  
Laney College Theater  
Oakland

## *La Madre*

### *Death and Blood*

Dancers: Alayo Dance Company

Music: Pierre Akerdegue

### *I Miss You*

Dancers: Ramón Ramos Alayo, Patricia West Sotelo

Music: Philip Glass

### *For You*

Dancer: Victor Alexander Ramirez

Music: Nocturno, Alex Heffes

### *In The Hospital*

Dancers: Alayo Dance Company

Music: Yo- Yo Ma, Kathryn Stott & Jake Parker

### *The Letter*

Dancer: Patricia West Sotelo

Poem: Ramón Ramos Alayo

Music: Guy Brenner

### *At Peace*

Dancers: Alayo Dance Company

Music: Somei Yoshiro Taiko Ensemble

Choreography: Ramón Ramos Alayo

Alayo Dance Company: Tina Banchemo, Fredrika Keefer,  
Shelly Davis. Aja Randall, Patricia West Sotelo, Lauri



## **CubaCaribe Workshops**

Visiting artist Victor Alexander Ramirez will be teaching workshops this weekend. Ramirez, now based in Chicago, was a principal dancer with the National Contemporary Dance Company of Cuba. Don't miss out on this opportunity to study with one of Cuba's leading artists working in the U.S.

Friday May 27 10:00-11:30, Afro-Cuban  
modern (taught with Ramón Ramos Alayo),  
ODC Dance Commons

Saturday May 28, 11:00-12:30, Afro-Cuban  
modern, Dance Mission Theater

**CubaCaribe** wishes to thank the dancers, musicians and artists involved in this festival for making this seventh year possible. Their passion and dedication continue to inspire and move us all, in both senses of the word. Thank you to all the technicians, volunteers and donors for your continued support of the CubaCaribe Festival. Special thanks to Elizabeth Gessel at The Museum of African Diaspora, Anne Huang, Chris Dunaway, the Rodriguez family, Delina Patrice Brooks, Enrique Quiroz, Jenny Chu, Ron Hunkiewicz, Austin Forbord, Krissy Keefer, Stacie Powers, Stella Adelman and Dance Brigade for their continued support.

This project has been made possible in part by support from Dance Brigade, the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, the San Francisco Arts Commission, Grants for the Arts, California Arts Council, and the Zellerbach Family Fund.



Anderson, Ramon Ramos Alayo, Alain Soto  
Guest Dancer: Victor Alexander Ramirez

Intermission

***Grief***

*Grief & Denial*

Choreography: Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Music: Julie Wolf  
Vocalist: Vicki Randle

*Anger*

Choreography: Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Music: Sheila Chandra

*Bargaining*

Choreography: Joti Singh & Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Music: Jami Sieber

*Depression*

Choreography: Nelson Reyes  
Music: Vicente Amigo, El Pele, Alberto Iglesias, Bobby  
McFerrin, Yo-Yo Ma

*Acceptance*

Choreography: Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Music: Paul Cantelon, John Adams

Costume Design: Ramón Ramos Alayo  
Lighting Design: Lisa J. Pinkham



*I would like to dedicate this work to my mother and father, for all the love they have given me and for being my guides in this life. Thank you to my mother. I am doing this because I want to keep your memory alive. My mother died in 1984. At the time, my sisters, Tania and Alina and I were teenagers. But I have very few memories of my mother because I left home when I was 11 years old to study dance in Santiago. I could only visit home twice a year. My mother put me into art school, but never once was able to see me dance. With this work, I want to dance for her once again. I want to say thank you for this gift she gave me. With this work, I want to demonstrate how important it is to have parents with us in our lives, to be thankful for our parents with all the good, the bad, and even the imperfections.*

*~Ramón Ramos Alayo*

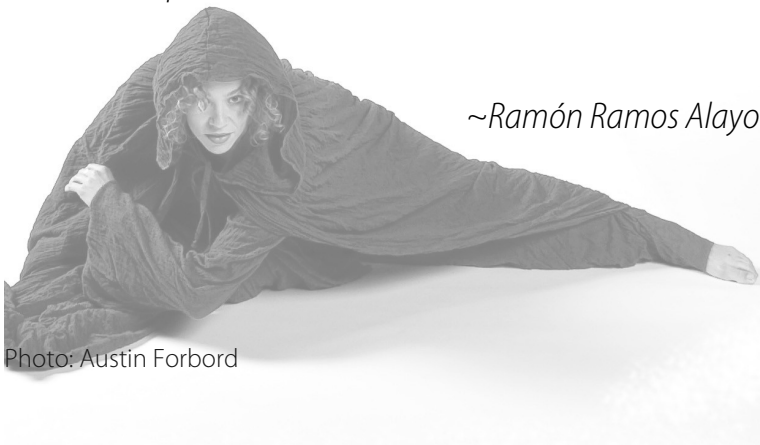


Photo: Austin Forbord

## **Acknowledgments**

This work has been a collaboration between the dancers and the choreographers. Thank you to all of the guest choreographers and teachers, Joti Singh, Nelson Reyes, and Aarin Burch. Special thank you to Tina Banchemero.

Also, thank you to Guy Brenner, Krissy Keefer, Nelson Reyes, Joti Singh, José María Francos, José Navarrete, 'mi hermana' Tania Santiago, Park Day School, Adriene Harrison, Chris Dunaway, mis amores mis hijas, mi amor Jamaica, and Alayo Dance Company.

*~Ramón Ramos Alayo*

Photo: Austin Forbord

## **About Us**

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.

CubaCaribe was co-founded in 2003 by visual artist/dancer Jamaica Itule and dancer/choreographer Ramón Ramos Alayo in order to tap into and unify the large talent pool represented by the significant community of Cuban and Caribbean artists who live and practice in the Bay Area.

Projects include:

- The Annual CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music 2005-2011
- Resident dance company Alayo Dance Company
- CubaCamp Bay Area and Hawaii 2004-2006
- San Francisco Carnival Contingents 2006 and 2008

Artistic Director: Ramón Ramos Alayo

Producers: Jamaica Itule and Adriene Harrison

**Ramón Ramos Alayo** is a dancer, teacher, choreographer and the founder and artistic director of Alayo Dance Company and of CubaCaribe. Selected by the Cuban government to study dance in Santiago de Cuba at age eleven, he went on to earn 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 performed in Cuba, Europe, Canada, Belize and the U.S. Since moving to California in 1997, he has performed with some of the most respected choreographers in the San Francisco Bay Area, including Robert Henry Johnson, Kim Epifano, Sara Shelton Mann, and Joanna Haigood. Ramos currently dances with Robert Moses' Kin and teaches Cuban popular dance, Afro-Cuban modern dance and children's movement at several local dance studios and schools.

In 2001, Ramos founded Ire Ile, an all-woman Cuban popular dance group. In 2002, he founded Alayo Dance Company. As director and choreographer, his work is an innovative fusion of Afro-Cuban modern, folkloric and popular Cuban dance. Ramos has choreographed and produced eight full-length dance performances: *Anorañza*

*deUna 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); *Blood and Sugar* (2008); and *Migrations* (2010).

Alayo Dance Company was featured in "Dance Across America," published in National Geographic Magazine (2006) and Ramos was an Isadora Duncan Dance Award nominee for the ensemble performance of *Los Guedes*, performed at CubaCaribe Festival (2006).

**Victor Alexander Ramirez** is a native of Pinar del Rio, Cuba. He trained at the National Contemporary Dance Company of Cuba for ten years. He has studied with such distinguished teachers as Donald McKayle, Chuck Davis, and Jeffrey Bullock in the U.S. He has toured throughout Europe, the United States, and the Caribbean and has participated in dance festivals such as the American Dance Festival at Duke University, the Holland Dance Festival in Amsterdam, the International Dance Festival in Germany, and was the first prize winner of the Fourth National Union of Writers and Artists Contest in Cuba in 1992. Ramirez has danced with Luna Negra Dance Theater, Concert Dance Inc., the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and as a guest artist with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago in 2008. He has

and he specialized in Folkloric dance. In 1998, Soto became one of the principal dancers of Ban Rarra, the prestigious folkloric dance company. In 2001, he came to the United States on tour with Ban Rarra where they performed in various universities and theaters throughout the country, including ODC Theater. Since moving to California, he has danced with Arenas Dance Company, Patakin, Raices Cubanas, San Francisco Carnival and Timba All Stars. Recently he performed at the opening ceremony of Bay Area National Dance Week. This is his fourth season with Alayo Dance Company.

**Patricia West Sotelo** is an Oakland based dancer, choreographer, and teacher. She received a B.A. in English, Dance, and Education at U.C. Berkeley and an M.A. in Education at San Jose State University. In addition to Alayo Dance Company, she has worked with Bay Area Repertory Dance, Capacitor, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, Robert Moses' Kin, Levy Dance, and Joe Goode's Performance Group. She continues to work with several independent choreographers in the Bay Area and is honored to be spending her eighth year with Alayo Dance Company.

**Fredrika Keefer** grew up dancing in the heart of San Francisco's Mission District. She is a graduate of San Francisco School of the Arts and has trained in ballet, jazz, modern, and hip hop for 14 years, and taiko drumming for 10 years. She teaches hip hop, modern, and taiko for Dance Mission's youth program. She currently dances with Dance Brigade and Mind Over Matter. This is her second season with Alayo Dance Company.

**Aja Randall** began her training at performing arts middle and high schools in her home town of St. Louis, Missouri, and received her Bachelor of Arts in Dance from Stephens College. In 2000, Randall relocated to San Diego and danced with Mojalet Collective Dance Ensemble for two years, while also working on projects with other local dance artists including Sadie Weinberg. After moving to the San Francisco Bay Area in 2004, she worked with several up and coming choreographers before becoming a member of Alayo Dance Company. This is her seventh season with the company.

**Alain Soto** was born in Santiago de Cuba and began his dance education there at the Escuela Vocacional de Arte at age eleven. In 1994 he was accepted into Havana's Escuela Nacional del Arte where he studied Ballet, Cuban popular, modern,

also danced with the Houston Grand Opera and was nominated for an Emmy Award as a dancer (2008) with the Ruth Page Foundation's production of *Billy Sunday*. In 2009 Ramirez toured China with Concert Dance Inc. and taught at the Nanjing Normal University, as well as choreographing a new work for MB-2. Ramirez has danced with Hedwig Dances since relocating to Chicago in 2002.

**Nelson Reyes** was born in Holguin City, Cuba and studied and graduated from the National School of Art in Havana as a modern dancer and teacher. He was a principal dancer and choreographer in Codanza and the National Contemporary Dance Company of Cuba. After moving to the U.S. In 2002, he worked as a principal dancer and choreographer for Asheville Contemporary Dance Theater in North Carolina. He has taught at the University of North Carolina and at Waren Wilson College, and has danced with Hedwig Dance Company in Chicago. He has performed in the International Ballet Festival in Nervi, Italy, the Millenium Move Festival in Germany, The Holland Dance Festival, and the Chicago Lyrical Opera's production of *Aida*.

**Joti Singh** has traveled nationally and internationally, teaching and performing Bhangra,

Bollywood, and West African dance. Currently based in the Bay Area, she is the artistic director of Duniya Dance and Drum Company. Singh is a recipient of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program grant and their Traditional Arts Development grant. With mentor Zenon Barron, Singh received the Margaret Jenkins CHIME award and will collaborate with Zenon's company, Ensembles Ballet Folklorico de San Francisco to create a piece on the Punjabi-Mexican communities of California.

**Lauri Anderson** grew up dancing and drumming in Santa Rosa, California, where she trained and performed under former Jabbawoockeez legend Gary Kendall. She was a member of Interweave Dance Theatre in Boulder, Colorado, and taught at the Boulder Jazz Dance Workshop. While working towards her B.A. and M.A. at Stanford University she choreographed for and co-directed dv8 (a hip hop company), and Urban styles (a jazz company), and also worked briefly with New York-based movement engineer Elizabeth Streb. This is Anderson's second season with Alayo Dance Company.

**Tina Banchemo** holds her BA in Dance from SUNY at Buffalo. Banchemo has performed with Kim Epifano, Sue Li Jui, Jose Navarette, Monique Jenkinson, Rapt

Productions, and most extensively with Krissy Keefer's Dance Brigade. Tina has directed, taught and choreographed for the Dance Mission Theater Youth Program and The Grrrl Brigade. She has also choreographed for Trolley Dances SF, Brava Theater for Women and the Arts, Devious Inc Movies, the Porazone Music Project and for the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. Tina taught for five years with the Alvin Ailey Summer Camps in Oakland and New York City. This is her fifth season with Alayo Dance Company.

**Shelley Davis** has a B.A. in Fine Arts from Spelman College in Atlanta, GA and a M.A. in Architecture from UC Berkeley, where she began studying modern dance with Sue Lie Jue. Davis is a former gymnast and has studied modern, ballet, samba, and capoeira in the Bay Area for the past twelve years. Travels to Brazil and Cuba have further cultivated her movement training. She enjoyed nine seasons with the Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble and is currently in her fourth season with Alayo Dance Company. She recently began Intrepid Works which is a continued exploration to create movement unique to her various styles of dance training and social interests while using her art and architectural design background to integrate art installation and set design into the work.