



THE 14th ANNUAL

CUBA CARIBE
FESTIVAL OF DANCE & MUSIC

JUNE 15 - 28, 2018



Movements of Migrations

WWW.CUBACARIBE.ORG

CUBACARIBE FESTIVAL

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Ramón Ramos Alayo

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Jamaica Itule Simmons

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT Maude Wilson of Ascend Events

GRAPHIC DESIGN Jamaica Itule Simmons and Aria Shen

LIGHTING DESIGN Daniel Weiermann

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:

“As an artist you possess a unique quality. People listen to you. Art is a powerful thing.” I heard this quote from Harry Belafonte last night when he was speaking to hip-hop artist T.I. and it resonated deeply. One of the main reasons I do this work is because I strongly believe this is true. Dancers and musicians have the power to unify people and cultures, to cross borders and move through walls, to express in a universal language and change our consciousness.

It is hard to believe that 2018 marks our 14th year producing the CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music. Unified by the theme, The Movements of Migration, this year festival artists will perform works examining migration throughout the Caribbean diaspora. The history of humanity is one of movement, of migrations in search of necessities like food, refuge, safety, a better climate and survival. Today we see the migrations of people complicated with differing ideologies of borders, nationhood and belonging. In the Caribbean diaspora, migrations were in response to slavery and gave birth to new cultures, customs and artistic expressions — including some of the greatest master works the world has known. This hybrid, mixed and syncretized sensibility is at the heart of Caribbean culture.

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 as an elective. 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, Aida Salazar, Sonia D. Pina, Maude Wilson, Tom Ehrlich, Elizabeth Gessel, Anne Huang, Stacie Powers Cuellar, Cintia Ramaciotti, Aria Shen, Johnny Lopez, Krissy Keefer, Andy Mogg, Rosa and Sydney Williams 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

14th Annual CubaCaribe Festival of Dance and Music *The Movements of Migrations*

WEEKEND ONE

CubaCaribe presents Alayo Dance Company

Two World Premieres: Calle and Manos de Mujeres Cubanas

WHERE:

Odell Johnson Performing Arts Center, Laney College
900 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94133

WHEN:

Friday, June 15 at 7 pm
Saturday, June 16 at 7 pm
Sunday, June 17 at 4 pm

WEEKEND TWO

CubaCaribe Mixed Program

Featuring: Aguas, The Cali Dance, EL WAH Movement Dance Theater, Nicaragua Danza/Hijos de Maiz, Alafia Dance Ensemble, Dimensions Dance Theater and Dandha da Hora & Yabás Dance Co., Cheza Nami Foundation, Musicians-SambaDá

WHERE:

Brava Theater
2781 24th Street, San Francisco

WHEN:

Friday, June 22 at 8 pm
Saturday, June 23 at 8 pm

BOX OFFICE:

415-340-2340 or cubacaribefestival2018.eventbrite.com

TICKETS:

\$25 Advance and \$30 at the door
\$12 Youth under 12 and under



WEEKEND ONE

Fri June 15 at 7pm | Sat June 16 at 7 pm | Sun June 17 at 4 pm
Odell Johnson Performing Arts Center at Laney College in Oakland

Calle

World Premiere

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Jamaica Itule Simmons

CHOREOGRAPHY: Denmis Bain Savigne, Ramón Ramos Alayo, Zimmy, Phil of the Future, and Intricate.

COSTUME DESIGN: Jamaica Itule Simmons

LIVE MUSIC: Angel Mulen, David Pedroso Rivero, Joseph Churchill, Luis Gustavo Ramos, Anne Huang, Allison Hammond Castro.

RECORDED MUSIC: E-40, 1- OAK, Digital Underground, Yomil y El Dany, and more.

DJ'S: DJ Leydis and DJ NiQ

DANCERS: Zimmy, Phil of the Future, Intricate, Denmis Bain Savigne, Ramón Ramos Alayo, Maikel Castellanos Pérez and George "Wukong" Cheng.

PROGRAM NOTES:

Many years ago, Ramos Alayo and Jamaica Itule Simmons were struck by the way Hip-Hop dancers were celebrated as a cultural treasure and yet overlooked, as the art was learned in the street (calle) as opposed to formal school, and often dismissed as being ‘too urban’ or ‘too black’ — much like Rumba, the national dance of Cuba, started by marginalized Afro-Cubans. Itule Simmons secured funding from The Kenneth Rainin Foundation and collaborated with Johnny5, the founder of TURFinc. Calle was inspired by the similarities between the two genres.

Hip-Hop and Rumba share similarities; both were inspired by complex rhythms and the down-to-earth, polyrhythmic movement style of African dancing. Both highlight how dancers isolate particular parts of their body and move them to different parts of the rhythm. Both are rooted from predominately male black working-class communities in times of struggle, both dances were and are an outlet of joy and expression, they tell real stories, they are informal, both are communal-based instead of audience-based, and are performed on the street, not on a stage or enclosed space, and the form around them is circular. Both styles are in constant evolution, passed on through imitation, improvisational, competitive, very athletic, and dancers use their bodies as poetry and tools of self-empowerment.

TURFing stands for Taking Up Room on the Floor and was born in Oakland in the early ‘90s. It wasn’t until a 2009 YouTube video called “Dancing in the Rain,” produced by YAK Films, that turf dancing started receiving national attention. Turf dancing arose surrounded by gangs, violence, and poverty and it serves as an outlet and expression.

The origins of Rumba are similar, they are traced back to black urban slums and ports in Havana and Matanzas. It grew within the context of struggle and hardship and a need to express joy and form community. Columbia is the fastest form of Rumba. It is strong, masculine, aggressive, an interaction between a solo dancer and the Quinto drum.

The piece will take place outside the Odell Johnson Performing Arts Center at Laney College, this is of interest because of its geographic location, purpose and history. The space is centrally surrounded by downtown, Lake Merritt, The Oakland Museum, Kaiser Auditorium and the Bart Station. Laney College is a diverse community college that started as a trade school and sits on an area that was once a Housing Project that housed hundreds of World War II Kaiser Shipyard workers.

Calle is an innovative collaboration between dancers from Cuba and the Bay Area, one that I want to expand upon in the future that will unite distinct, but connected communities.

Manos y Vida Cotidiana de Una Mujer Cubana

CHOREOGRAPHY: Ramón Ramos Alayo and dancers

MUSIC: Ibeyi, Los Muñequitos de Matanzas, Marta Gómez, Max Richter

COSTUME DESIGN: Ramon Ramos Alayo

DANCERS: Adonis Martin Quiñones, Fredrika Keefer, Zoe Klein, Margot Hodenfield, Julianna Cressman, Delvis Savigne Friñon, Jillian Claire Miller, Emanuel Alejandro Colombo

What is happening here?

CHOREOGRAPHY: Ramón Ramos Alayo

MUSIC: DJ Jigue

COSTUME DESIGN: Ramón Ramos Alayo

DANCERS: Adonis Martin Quiñones, Delvis Savigne Friñon, Emanuel Alejandro Colombo, Edisnel Gonzalez Rodriguez, Marshall J. Amey



Quality of movement

CHOREOGRAPHY: Ramón Ramos Alayo

MUSIC: Christopher Young, Marco Beltrami, Pete Anthony & Belinda Broughton

COSTUME DESIGN: Ramón Ramos Alayo

DANCERS: Fredrika Keefer, Margot Hodenfield, Jillian Claire Miller, Zoe Klein, Adonis Martin Quiñones, Delvis Savigne Friñon, Edisnel Gonzalez Rodriguez

Intermission

Goodbye

CHOREOGRAPHY: Ramón Ramos Alayo

LIVE MUSIC: Eileen Torrez, Amy Levine, Eli Torrez, Sean Norris

COMPOSERS: Antonio Pinto & Shakira, Hans Zimmer, Urban Legend

COSTUME DESIGN: Ramón Ramos Alayo

DANCERS: Alayo dance Company

ALAYO DANCERS:

Adonis Martin Quiñones, Delvis Savigne Friñon, Marshall J. Amey, Margot Hodenfield, Zoe Klein, Fredrika Keefer, Emanuel Alejandro Colombo, Edisnel Gonzalez Rodriguez , Jillian Claire Miller, Julianna Cressman

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, RAMÓN RAMOS ALAYO:

I want to send a special thank you to all the dancers and musicians for their beautiful work and collaboration, without them this work wouldn't happen. Thank you to Amy Suzarra, to my kids and friends and to CubaCaribe donors and community.

Mi trabajo artístico coreografico está basada en mi vida personal. Con estas coreografías quiero transmitir lo que esta pasando en mi vida cotidiana. Le doy gracias a estos hermosos bailarines por dejarme expresar lo que siento y transmitirlo con en sus cuerpos y movimientos y llevarlo más allá del estudio, nuevamente gracias bailarines



WEEKEND TWO

Fri June 22 at 8 pm | Sat June 23 at 8 pm
The Brava Theater in San Francisco

Supplication

Alafia Dance Ensemble, World Premiere

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Mariella Morales & Valerie Watson

CHOREOGRAPHY: Laure Fleurentin

COSTUME DESIGN: Laure Fleurentin

MUSICIANS: Baba Duru (Lead Musician), Mark Machina (Percussion,
Joaquin Ramos (Percussion), Shaker Joe (Chekere), Regina Romano
(Bell)

VOCALISTS: Laure Fleurentin and guests

DANCERS: Javon Brandon, Gabriella Brito, Tia Covington, Laure
Fleurentin, Brigitte Knight, Mariella Morales, Rita Pantaleon , Tahjane
Singleton, Sarath Sok, Tiombe Valone

PROGRAM NOTES:

This choreography is a form of request, humble pleading for blessings, forgiveness, health, prosperity, power, because everyone needs power to fight life every day. Request for help from Deities especially Dambalah Wèdo who is the Protective Creator, Source of life and Wisdom.

Nicaragua Multiétnica: Cultura Garífunas

Nicaragua Danza, Hijos del Maíz

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Luis León

CHOREOGRAPHY: Cleopatra Morales Montiel

COSTUME DESIGN: Cleopatra Morales Montiel

MUSICIANS: Roberto Borrell and Garry Johnson, both playing Tumbadoras.

DANCERS: William Alvarez, Levent Asyali, Tia Covington, Flor Díaz, Jenny Espinoza, Moises Estrada, Dara Fonseca, Luis León, Josette Muños, Andrea Pérez, Rebecca Pérez, Carmella Rocha, Sarath Sok, Grace Torres

PROGRAM NOTES:

Garífuna Culture an Approach to Our Cultural Identity, located in the Autonomous Region of the South Atlantic of Nicaragua (RAAS) in 1998, the first staging was held, winner of the Alma Mate Prize, CNIC Interuniversity Art Festival- CNU was almost unknown to the rest of the country, you can be sure that it was unknown at the level of the popular sectors, media and upper classes, except within the intelligentsia, which for reasons of knowledge of our Nicaraguanity have conducted research studies on the cultural diversity that makes up our Nicaraguan identity.

Dance of the Slaves or Conga

Born in solidarity with black slaves, it expresses the confusion and desolation of the black in American lands, it represents the forced labor and the resilience of the whip in the backs. The characteristic movements of the dancers are twisting the thorax, moving the head forward, back and sides with great force. The intention of struggle and freedom is felt when joining their work tools, in this case, the espeques.

Chumba

Dance of strong sexual charge performed by Garífuna women when their men are absent from home. Represent the exercise of domestic work and the field through these activities, women vent all their sexual energies in order to be faithful to their partner. The movements that express the work of washing, cleaning the comal, pulling water, blowing the stove, etc. later join to perform the same activity in unison, symbolizing that household chores are common, as well as the need to deliberate energies, strong expression of hips, thorax, arms and head.

Punta

It is the most popular dance among the Garífunas, originally it was danced in the candle of the dead, but now it is done in popular celebrations as: patron festivals, election of queen, ethnic meetings and others of massive character.

Its main characteristic is the dragging of the feet, without taking off the heels of the ground. In our country the Garífunas raise their feet very lightly; another characteristic is the strong pelvic movement and dancing as a couple. The woman invites the man to dance. Its ritual origins are based on the fact that one Garifuna dies, another is procreating itself to continue subsisting as an ethnic group.

Maafa - Revealing the Story

EL WAH Movement Dance Theatre

This is the premiere of the Maafa in the East Bay with the Project Community partnership of Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble (KKDE)

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Colette Eloi

CHOREOGRAPHY: Colette Eloi and Stephany Yamoah

COSTUME DESIGN: Colette Eloi

LIVE MUSIC: Mohammed Kouyate on balafon

RECORDED MUSIC: Untitled, Ben Juodvalkis

DANCERS: Senoli Bolton, Xander Brown, Shawn Hawkins, Antoine Hunter, Valencia James, Kendra Kimbrough, Yeni Lucero, Patricia Ong, Aja Randall, Natalya Shoaf, Linda Steele II

PROGRAM NOTES:

EL WAH Movement African Diaspora ballet performs an excerpt from Alkebulan's Awakening, a collaboration between the National Theater of Ghana, entitled *Maafa - Revealing the Story*, created in acknowledgement of the United Nations, proclaiming 2015-2024 the decade of people of African Descent. The excerpt tells the story of the ethnic cleansing, forced migration of people from Africa in the Middle Passage, AKA Maafa, the Black Holocaust, African Holocaust or Holocaust of Enslavement. Choreographers express a story that is trying to be erased, and give commentary through dance. The important part of the piece specifically is to reveal the fact that God, our ancestors, spiritual guides imbued us with something powerful, that would allow us to not only preserve, but to thrive in the face of evil and avarice.

Fiesta Cubana

The Cali Dance Company, World Premiere

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Yismari Ramos Tellez

COSTUME DESIGN: Yismari Ramos Tellez

RECORDED MUSIC: Quiéreme by El Tmba, Yo represento by Los 4.

DANCERS: Yismari Ramos Tellez, Katy Yong, Denmis Bain Savigne, Yeni Lucero, Enmanuel Colombo, Chloe Cambell, Jany Cruzado

PROGRAM NOTES:

Step into the Havana of today through Fiesta Cubana! This piece will take you from the clave cubana (the foundations of salsa) through Reggaeton to show how its evolution led to create Cuba's newest musical genre, Cubaton.

Intermission

Our Roots

Dandha da Hora & Yabás Dance Company World Premiere

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Dandha da Hora

CHOREOGRAPHY: Dandha da Hora & Co.

COSTUME DESIGN: Dandha da Hora & Marise Oliveira

MUSICIANS: Gamo Da Paz, Valerie Joi Fiddmont, Catherine Ndungu-Case, Adama Dide, Anne Stafford, Renato Annicchiarico, Joseph Mailloux

DANCERS: Mandjou Kone, Adama Dide, Stella Situma, Brenda Kruller, Dandha Da Hora

PROGRAM NOTES:

The piece opens with moments of my childhood with my mother and my siblings, at home in our living room, where my mom taught us traditional songs from Candomblé. This scene happens in dream time, a moment in my memory where my mom is with us. Then, all of a sudden she is not there, but we keep singing and dancing, and we stay connected to our ancestors through our song.

I brought to this piece one of the most important moments in my life. As a child, I traveled a lot to perform; before I left the house each time, I would receive a Blessing from my mom. And every time, my mom would

take me to the airport; she would make sure we were all dressed up in white, in high heels. We were both dressed up, even though she wasn't the one travelling –and then she would bless me and say goodbye.

Every day when my siblings and I went to school, my mom would look from the window of the second floor of our house to watch us walk. In the neighborhood where I grew up, the houses were all over the steep hills, crowded together. We walked the little paths in between the houses and my mom would watch us disappear and then reappear until we went out of sight. We would look back behind us and see her waving.

This company has people from different cultures and countries and each one of us brings memories from our childhood and the culture we grew up in. As the diagonal lines appear in the choreography, we see our stories intersect; as we form circles, we see the similarities in our lives.

This piece is about our legacy and roots. Geographically we were born in different places but the roots are the same.





Ain't No Turning Back

Dimensions Dance Theater

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Deborah Vaughan

CHOREOGRAPHY: Andrea Vonny Lee

COSTUME DESIGN: Dorcas Mba

RECORDED MUSIC: Harry Mandel; Ghasem Bamuntu; Black Motion;
Milford Graves w/ Don Pullen, Jimmi Hendrix

SOUND MIX: DJ Rage

VOICE OF HARRIET TUBMAN: Saundra Dunsen

VOICE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS: DJ Rage

SPOKEN TEXT: Original letter from Frederick Douglass to Harriet Tubman;
Hats: A Tribute to Harriet Tubman

MUSICIANS: Benjamin Ofori, traditional Ghanaian percussion

PERFORMERS: Denice Simpson Braga, Erik Lee, Bridgett Lott, Lavinia Mitchell, Dorcas Mba, Valrie Sanders, Justin Sharlman, Phylicia Stroud, Latanya d. Tigne

Yansa

Águas Dance Company with Filhas das Águas, World Premiere

ARTISTIC DIRECTION: Tania Santiago

COSTUME DESIGN: Givanildo Nery dos Santos

RECORDED MUSIC: Song for Yansa, Deiza Gira Girar

MUSICIANS: Music Director - Vinicius Oliveira, Instruments – Surdo, Congas, Zeques

VOCALISTS: Isaura Oliveira, Aimee Amparo, Zahava Cherques

DANCERS: **Águas:** Dustin Di Giulio, Erwin Columbus, James Sarria, Michael Leavell, R. Jefferson Joseph, Ricardo Acosta **Filhas das Águas:** Aimee Amparo, Ann Birenbaum, Hannah Siegel, Katarina Pasinsky, Lucy Harris, Patricia Flores, Rona Fernandez, Zahava Cherques

PROGRAM NOTES:

The feminine and masculine energies of two orishas unite in this offering by Brazilian choreographer, Tania Santiago. Xango, king of justice and Yansa, the goddess of the wind, as his buffalo, use their power to walk together as they seek to help everyone.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The special events throughout the festival, round out the programming with not-to-miss discussions, practice and intellectual opportunities to explore the Diaspora further. These special events include:

Flows: A series of short films by YAKfilms illustrating the beauty and art of “street” hip-hop dance.

Wed June 20 at 7pm; \$12-15

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

Discussion to follow with YAKfilms Co-Founder Yoram Savion and Johnny5.

Yoram Savion is a filmmaker and co-founder of YAKfilms, a multimedia company dedicated to filming movement-based art. For over 10 years, YAKfilms has traveled the world to reveal unique dance talent in diverse urban landscapes. They promote innovative filming techniques using the latest gear that will fit in a backpack yet deliver the highest image quality possible.



Films to be screened include:

LIQUID FLOW by YAK, The Oakland Museum of California and PROJECTOR featuring Turf Feinz crew members Gary “No Noize” Morgan, Leon “Mann” Williams, Byron “T7” Sanders and Darrell “D-Real” Armstead; EXQUISITE ZOMBIES by YAK x ADOBE Project 1324 featuring Les Twins, DA, Ibuki, Wisko, Blueprint, Zoo, Zamounda, and Buck; Mike Song in Manila, Philippines 2014 by YAK FILMS and Mr. CARMACK and more.

Current Conditions for Cultural Exchanges Between Cuba and U.S. with Bill Martinez

Wed June 27 at 7pm; \$12-15

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

Bill Martinez is an immigration attorney who has also produced and managed cultural events in the San Francisco Bay Area since 1973. A native San Franciscan, he is a graduate of the University of San Francisco and Hastings College of the Law. He has worked in the Community Law Collective ('74-'79), New College of California School of Law ('79-'83) and the Volunteer Legal Services Program of the Bar Association of San Francisco ('84-'93). In 1981, he co-founded the Encuentro del Canto Popular, a San Francisco-based Latin American music festival. His work with the Encuentro led him to become one of the nation's leading experts in U.S.-Cuba cultural exchanges and artists' visas. He co-founded the Latino Entertainment Partners which produced historically significant concerts of Cuban artists.

“We Have Iré”

Thurs June 28 at 7pm; \$12-15

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

Artist talk and excerpts of the work in progress by Written by Paul S. Flores, Directed by Rosalba Rolon, We Have Iré – an exploration of Cuban artists, immigration and Afro-Cuban religious themes -- featuring DJ Leydis, Ramón Ramos Alayo, recorded music by Yosvani Terry and video by Eli Jacobs-Fantauzzi.

Flores is a published poet, performance artist, playwright, and well known spoken word artist. His plays have been produced at Brava Theater, GALA Hispanic Theatre, New Jersey Performing Arts Center,



Pregones Theatre, Abrons Art Center, Taller Puertorriquena, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, InterAct Theater, DiverseWorks, Su Teatro, South Coast Rep, and many more. He is a Doris Duke Artist, a MAP Fund awardee, a Gerbode-Hewlett Theater commission recipient, a NALAC Fund for Arts recipient, and 2011 SF Weekly Best Politically Active Hip-hop Performer. He is co-founder of Youth Speaks, and currently an adjunct professor of Theater at the University of San Francisco. His last play “On The Hill: I am Alex Nieto” (2016) dramatizes the life and death of Alex Nieto who was killed by San Francisco Police Department. His play PLACAS (2012) was based on testimonies of members of MS-13 in California barrios. We Have Iré is commissioned by Yerba Buena Center for The Arts and follows Afro-Cuban immigrant artists and their connection to Lucumí religious traditions.

Bios:

WEEKEND ONE

Alayo Dance Company

Alayo Dance Company was founded was formed in 2001 by Ramos and is currently the resident company of CubaCaribe. As director and choreographer, his work is an innovative fusion of Afro-Cuban modern, folkloric and popular Cuban dance. He eloquently articulates his aesthetic vision through a synthesis of these dance styles, citing from each traditions, movements, narratives and concepts indicative of Cuban culture. It is far more diverse than most of the modern dance circuit. In Cuba, at the National School of Arts, all dance students are taught modern and traditional styles of dance and music and the forms are not considered as disassociated as they are in the United States. Combining elements of both to produce Afro-Cuban contemporary dance allows the artist to tell a rich story from a broad palette of movement styles that is indicative of Cuban culture, but the combination of which is rarely seen in the Bay Area. Alayo Dance Company was featured in "Dance Across America," published in National Geographic Magazine (2006). The Company has performed throughout the San Francisco Bay Area at venues such as Theater Artaud, ODC Theater, Dance Mission Theater, Herbst Theater, Laney Theater, Sonoma Country Wine Theater, and La Peña Cultural Center, and have presented work in the Black Choreographer's Festival, The CubaCaribe Festival, and Intersection's Culture and Flow. Alayo was one of the first American companies to perform at the 2010 Festival del Caribe at Teatro Martí and partnered with Dance Brigade in July 2011 to perform in Havana's Teatro Mella in Cuba. Alayo has choreographed more than ten evening length works for his company, which fuse modern, Cuban folkloric, and popular dance - a fusion that is intrinsic to Cuban culture but rarely seen in the Bay Area - and that center around social themes such as health and racism from an Afro-Cuban perspective. Hailed by dance critic Rita Felciano as "the best Afro-Cuban dancer whose choreography stands well beyond traditional modes", Other recent highlights include, recognition as "Best Dance Dynamo" in the SF Bay Guardian's "Best of the Bay" (2009), receiving the SF Bay Guardian 2010 Goldie Award and his work 'Goodbye' was named one of five 'Best Premieres of the Year,' published in Dance Europe (2016).

Adonis Damian Martin Quiñones

Adonis Damian Martin Quiñones was born in Contramaestre, a province of Santiago de Cuba. He holds a degree from Jose Maria Heredia Dance Academy of Santiago de Cuba in Modern & Contemporary Dance. Adonis joined Danza Teatro del Caribe in 2008 under the Direction of Eduardo Rivero Walker and became a soloist in 2010. In Santiago de Cuba, he also performed with Locomotion, an audiovisual and interactive dance company. In the Bay Area since 2013, he has danced for Joanna Haigood's Zaccho Dance Theater (an aerial arts dance company), Dance Brigade, KAMBARA+DANCERS, SoulSkin, Tandy Beal & Company, Alayo Dance Company, Kim Epifano, Raisa Simpson, and Dance Theater of San Francisco (DTSF). He was nominated for an IZZIE (Isadora Duncan Dance Award), for Outstanding Achievement in Performance-Ensemble in Defection-Deflection-Devotion, featured in Dance Brigade's 40th anniversary concert at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

Emanuel Colombo

Emanuel Colombo comes to us from Argentina via Peru where he danced on stage and television. He trained at renowned institutes such as the IUNA Institute in Buenos Aires and Dactilares in Lima, Peru. He currently lives in Oakland and is delighted to be performing in the Bay Area.

Edisnel Gonzalez Rodriguez

Edisnel Gonzalez Rodriguez was born in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba where he began training at the age of twelve, graduating from the Escuela Vocacional de Arte (Vocational School of Arts) in 2008. He began his professional career dancing in Danza del Caribe in Santiago, and traveled to dance among dancers from recognized companies as National Dance Company of Jamaica (NDTC) and National Dance Company of Belize. In the U.S. he has performed with acclaimed companies and directors: Ramon Ramos Alayo; Krissy Keiffer; Gregory Dawson; Adrianna Thompson; Enrico Labayen; Dexandro Montalvo; Tandy Beal; Petaluma Ballet School; and Yayoi Kambara. Edisnel joined AXIS in 2018.

Julianna Cressman

Julianna Cressman is an SF native who has returned to the Bay since graduating from UC Irvine's dance program in 2017, under the mentorship of Dr. S. Ama Wray. While based in Southern California, Cressman performed with JazzXChange, The Hubbard Collective, and

founded Awaken Arts, an organization that produces interdisciplinary events including Dance Drum and Decolonization, which brought Afro-Cuban, Afro-Brazilian and African American vernacular dance to the fore at UCI. Cressman currently teaches ballet and pointe at San Francisco Youth Ballet, exploring the pedagogy from a non-hierarchical perspective. Julianna is grateful to Alayo and company for welcoming her this year.

Marshall Jarreau

Marshall Jarreau is new to the bay area and has been a professional dancer and aerialist since 2003. Since then he has had the privilege of performing with Cirque Du Soleil in Las Vegas, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, Topsy Turvy Queer Circus in San Francisco, Aerial Horizon Circus in San Antonio, and MOTH Poetic Circus in Denver. He received his dance training in Boulder at the University of Colorado and completed the New England Center for Circus Arts Professional Track Program in 2011.

Fredrika Keefer

Fredrika Keefer was born and raised in San Francisco. She graduated from Ruth Asawa's School of the Arts High School in 2009 and is a former member Dance Brigade, Adelante Dance Company, Alayo Dance Company and has worked with various choreographers in the bay area. This is Fredrika's 9th year as a member of Alayo Dance Company and as always very honored to be a part of the Cuba Caribe community.

Zoë Klein

Zoë Klein is an acrobatic dancer, adopted from Colombia, raised in Brooklyn, NY. Zoë toured 28 countries over 6 continents co-directing Paradizo Dance, was seen on So You Think You Can Dance, and top Finalist on America's Got Talent 2009. Zoë directs Zoë Klein Productions, and dances for Amara Tabor Smith, Kim Epifano, Rosy Simas and this 4th year with Alayo.

Jillian Claire Miller

In the last decade Jillian Claire Miller has dipped her toes professionally dancing in the Bay Area, New York, Cuba, Israel and has loved the fulfillment and growth it has brought her. She merges her dance career into her teaching life as a Pilates and Yoga teacher.

Margot Lena

Margot Lena is a classically trained ballerina who has branched out to other dance disciplines and media. She grew up in Connecticut and trained under the direction of Nanette Vallas and former American Ballet Theater soloist Christina Fagundes. She graduated from the the University of Hartford's Hartt School in 2014 with a BFA in Dance Performance with a Pedagogy emphasis. Directly following her graduation, she moved cross-country to San Francisco where she has danced with Sarah Bush Dance Project, Tandy Beal, and Soulskin Dance Company. In addition to dancing and teaching dance in the East Bay, Margot has done magazine modeling and acted in several independent short films.

Delvis Savigne Friñon

Delvis Savigne Friñon is a talented Cuban dancer, with a successful career as a performer and instructor in modern, contemporary and folklore genres. His talent and passion for dancing has allowed him to travel and perform internationally in countries like Spain, Jamaica, Canada and United States. Currently residing in San Francisco California, he continues to perform and share his artistic talent with different local companies such as Krissy Keefer Dance Brigade, Joanna Haigood Zaccho Dance, Robert Moses Kin Company, Cuba Caribe, Alayo Dance Company and many others.

CALLE GUEST DANCERS:

George "Wukong" Cheng

"George "WuKong" began his dance career in Taipei, Taiwan. In addition to his work at UC Berkeley where he received a Bachelor's of Art focused on Art and Social Change, he has traveled to countries including Cambodia, Burma, and Brazil to work with non-profit performance art organizations and dancers from around the world. As a current member of world renowned Hip Hop collective, Circle of fire, as well as Bay Area based Hip-Hop Theater company, Embodiment Project, he has judged, taught, performed, and battled internationally. Wukong's dance background includes Breakin' (b-boying), Capoeira, House, and Hip Hop. He is currently an arts educator as well as a professional performance artist and believes that the Arts and Culture are essential in bringing about positive social change."

Phil of the Future

Phillip Mays aka Phil of the future is 20 years old and from Oakland, California. He does a dance style called Turf Dancing which originated in Oakland around the late 80's early 90's. He started dancing by seeing people around him doing the dance at parties and watching it on YouTube. Dance has taken him to Los Angeles, Napa and more. He has performed with YG, Kamaiyah, Dj snake, Djj carnage, on the Golden State Warriors halftime commercials, and much more.

Intricate

Hector Ascencio aka Intricate is a Professional dancer. He learned to dance in general through Oakland's based dance style called Turf Dancing which came from the "Hyphy Movement". Gaining his experience through battles and performances also opened a lot of doors for him to do big things such as dance for Kendrick Lamar, G-Eazy, Troyboi, Mud Water Theater and much more. The teams he represents are TUTGODZ, Academy Of Villains, 1Up, And No Mercy.

Zimmy

Asim Smith aka Zimmy is from Oakland California. Born and raised from the urban neighborhoods, he at a very young age developed a talent and passion for dancing. Like most youth who seek to find an escape from peer pressure and the harsh realities of poverty and violence, Zimmy found dancing as a way not only to individualize himself but to also bring smiles upon others. He graduated from Oakland High School in 2016 and was an active participant in African American Male Achievement (AAMA). He has performed at local hospitals, schools and non-profits such as Youth Uprising. He has performed for city officials former mayor Quan and OUSD's chief deputy, Christopher Chatmon. He has won a host of Turf battles and is associated with groups like TURFinc, Turf Feinz, Architectz, BA Dancers and the Maniacs. He has collaborated with E-40, Too \$hort, Keek da Sneek, Mistah Fab, DJ Snake, Omar Kadir and others. Through all his continued efforts, accomplishments and spotlights - Zimmy keeps his faith with God as he fights to do what he loves. Diagnosed with Nephrotic Syndrome as a toddler, Zimmy uses dance to battle more than just his opponents. Zimmy has plans to attend the historical Merritt College to further his education.

Denmis Bain Savigne

Denmis Bain is from Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. He attended Regino Eladio Voti en Guantanamo, Escuela Nacional de Arte in Havana and was a part of Conjunto Folklórico Nacional de Cuba. He has expertise in Afro-Cuban dance, folklore, ballet, jazz, modern dance, contemporary ballet, tap dance, hip hop, choreography and singing. Denmis 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” and 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”. Dennis is currently the owner of Cuban Rhythm and Rumba Dance Studio located in Vallejo, California. His goal is to show everyone how to feel and appreciate dance.

Maikel Castellanos Pérez

Born in Santiago de Cuba, Mr. Castellano started to dance at the age of 8 with Danys “La Mora” Perez in her children’s dance company called Adiro Omode. With this company, he performed in many events, festivals and community celebrations such as La Fiesta del Fuego and Carnaval Santiaguero Infantil. He serves as a guest artist on the international education program with Cutumba and Folklórico de Oriente. He is a principal dancer and musician with Oyu Oro, which is based in Santiago de Cuba and New York City. He has performed at Queens Museum of Art, July 2012; World Dance Performance, Ailey Citigroup Theater, June 2012; “Destellos Africanos Cubanos,” Dance Africa at BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, Brooklyn, May 2012; “El Iyawo,” 2014 Premiere at Baruch Performing Arts Center, New York; “El Iyawo,” at Teatro Latea, New York, March 2015; International Dance Festival, Danzas Callejeras Habana Vieja, Havana-Cuba, April 2015; Kulumele’s 30th Year anniversary at Painted Bride in Philadelphia; and “Fragmentos” Festival del Caribe (ICAI) Collaboration Cuba-USA, 2016.

Ramón Ramos Alayo

Ramos Alayo was selected by the Cuban government to study dance in Santiago de Cuba at age eleven. In 1990 he earned a masters degree in contemporary and folkloric dance and dance education from the Havana’s National School of Art. a graduate of Havana’s National School of Art, specializing in folkloric and contemporary dance. He was a principal dancer with several prominent Cuban dance companies, including

Danza del Caribe, Narcisco Medina Contemporary Dance Company, touring throughout Europe, Belize, and Canada. His success continued after relocating to the U.S. in 1997; he has performed as a dancer with numerous outstanding companies, including Robert Henry Johnson, Kim Epifano, Sara Shelton Mann, Zaccho Dance Theatre and Robert Moses' Kin. Ramon currently teaches Cuban popular dance, Afro-Cuban modern dance and children's movement at several local dance studios and schools. He is respected throughout the Bay Area as a dancer, teacher, choreographer and the founder and artistic director and choreographer of Alayo Dance Company (2002) and CubaCaribe (2003). As director and choreographer, his work is an innovative fusion of Afro-Cuban modern, folkloric and popular Cuban Dance. He eloquently articulates his aesthetic vision through a synthesis of these dance styles, citing from each traditions, movements, narratives and concepts indicative of Cuban culture. Ramos has choreographed and produced twelve full-length dance performances. He was featured in the article "Dance Across America" in National Geographic Magazine in 2006, and received the prestigious Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation's "Emerging Choreographer's Award" (2005) to develop his piece, Blood + Sugar. Ramos was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award nominee for the ensemble performance of Los Guedes(2006). He was recognized as "Best Dance Dynamo" in the SF Bay Guardian's "Best of the Bay" (2009), and was the recipient of a SF Bay Guardian 2010 Goldie Award, 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.

DJ Leydis

DJ Leydis was born and raised in Cuba, pioneering Cuban hip-hop in her native land and working to realize her vision of cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. Involved in the Cuban hip-hop movement from its inception, DJ Leydis helped organize some of the most highly respected and widely attended events and community programs. In 2005, she co-founded Omegas Kilay. A hip-hop theater collective in Havana, Omegas Kilay focused on presenting the poetry, music, experiences, and perspectives of artists such as DJ Yari, Danay Suarez, Las Krudas, and other voices. DJ Leydis created the first all-female DJ mix-tape in Cuba. Alongside DJ Yari, introducing a special blend of new sound, flavor, and spirit to the international community. In addition, she performed across Cuba as the official Spoken Word Artist and DJ. DJ Leydis has also been a featured subject of critically acclaimed and groundbreaking documentaries including *Inventos: Hip Hop Cubano*,

and Jovenes Rebeldes y Mi Revolucion. She will be featured as well in the forthcoming documentary Hip Hop esta vivo en Cuba. In Cuba and abroad, she continues to be a spokesperson for Cuban hip-hop culture. In 2006, DJ Leydis emigrated to the United States to expand her work as a DJ. Based in the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area, she has opened sets for Erykah Badu, Quest Love of the Roots, Mos Def, and other iconic US artists. She was the official DJ for the Grammy-nominated group Los Rakas. She remains very active, working on numerous projects not only in the Bay Area, but also throughout the US and internationally. On October 12, 2016, she had the honor and privilege of representing Cuba at the Hispanic Heritage Month reception, an event hosted by President Barack Obama. She currently hosts La Rumba Q'Tumba, one of the Bay Area's most vibrant Cuban music party scenes.

MUSICIANS

Sean Michael Norris

Norris is an Oakland native and saxophonist/reed player with strong roots in the East Bay. He is a product of the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) music program and went on to study/perform music on a collegiate level under the tutelage and direction of Dave Eshelman, Timothy Smith, and Dann Zinn at California State University East Bay (formerly CSU Hayward). Since then, he has served as a very versatile player in the east bay music scene, performing and recording with numerous groups, in numerous styles, and at various venues around the bay area, recently opening for the likes of legendary world music groups such as Hiroshima and Third World.

Amy Nicole Levine

Amy Nicole Levine, pianist, teacher and songwriter, was born in San Francisco and started playing piano by ear by the time she was 3 years old. At age seven she started Classical training with pianist Marion Winkler, then in high school later joined the Jazz Band and experimented with R&B and Funk in other bands in the community. She attended SFSU and earned her Bachelor of Arts studying Music and Sociology. Upon graduating, she performed at various clubs in the Bay Area and later she joined the Bay Area original Hip Hop band "75 Degrees", sharing the same bill with "The Roots", "Digital Underground," "The Pharcyde", and "Common". Amy found her niche teaching piano and loves helping others reach their music goals. She teaches private piano lessons to both adults and children at her studio in Oakland and at Bananas at Large, in San Rafael. <http://amynix.com/>

Eileen Torrez

Born and raised in Corrales, New Mexico, Eileen Torrez has made the Bay Area her home since 2013. She is a classically trained vocalist and guitarist, and has made her debut as a songwriter in recent years as well. With her proficiency in multiple genres of music, Eileen has a knack for creating luscious melodies, her music often drawing comparisons to Joni Mitchell, India.Arie and Stevie Nicks. Eileen is also a poet and essayist whose work builds on themes of resilience, community, anti-capitalism and women's empowerment. You can listen to her music and watch videos of her poetry at www.eileentorrez.com.

Eli Torrez

Eli is pursuing a degree in music at the California Jazz Conservatory in Berkeley. He has traveled extensively through the United States and to other countries. He plays in a band called Zamico with Sean Norris and is forming a new group with his sister Eileen Torrez.

WEEKEND TWO BIOS:

Alafia Dance Ensemble (ADE)

Alafia Dance Ensemble (ADE) was founded in 1995 by Valerie Watson in order to showcase the beauty of African Haitian dance. The majority of ADE dancers are students or former students of City College of San Francisco. Some recent performances include: 30th Ethnic Dance Festival, World's Culture Concert of San Francisco State University, Haitian Flay Day Celebration at Ashkenaz, La Pena Cultural Center, Great American Music Hall, Laguna Honda Hospital, Presidio's Golden Gate Club, and City College Dance Concert.

The Cali Dance Company

The Cali Dance Company is a company of professional dancers established in California performing and representing of all kind of popular Cuban dances. Also featuring some students as guests. The Artistic Director is Yismari Ramos Tellez who graduated from the National School of Art in Havana, Cuba with a degree in modern and Afro-Cuban folkloric dance in 1992. She danced with the Tony Menendez Dance Company in Cuba, and later for the Ballet de la Televisión Cubana in Havana and Lady Salsa. She has 25 years of experience as a teacher and teaches classes all over the San Francisco Bay Area. She was the artistic director and choreographer of Las Que Son Son and currently is of Las Puras and The Cali Dance Company.

EL WAH Movement Dance Theatre

EL WAH Movement Dance Theatre is a pick-up company which presents folkloric and fusion pieces rooted in an African aesthetics. Colette's artistic work is in her blood, being first generation Haitian on both sides, Eloi has spent decades studying African Diaspora Cultural dance traditions, through travel and as a professional African diaspora dancer locally, nationally, and internationally. Eloi has traveled to Africa and her diaspora to research and exchange culture dance with master artists and in cultural communities that retain their indigenous dance traditions. Also, she has danced professionally in groups such as Dimensions Dance Theater, Nuba Dance and in the UC Berkeley dance department where Colette's modern dance knowledge was cultivated. As a member since 1989, of the unique and rich cultural center, the Malonga, in Oakland, Ms. Colette, as she is fondly known by her Haitian dance students, has spent her formative years as a dancer immersed in a broad range of classes rooted in African culture. Ms. Eloi feels forever blessed that this rich and broad cultural mecca in the Bay Area, ultimately lead her back to her roots. This awakening of self inspired her to pursue her Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of Integral Studies, in Creative Inquiry, focusing on oral traditions of Africa. Colette considers herself a folklorist in that she sings, drums and and dances the traditions of the cultures she has sought out. Ms. Eloi's combined, experience, formal education, and her own unique creativity and love of The epic, combined allows her to craft one of a kind dance performances. Performances like: the opening inaugural ceremony of the Black Woman is God 2016, and her latest 2017 international collaboration with the National Theatre of Ghana entitled Alkebulan's Awakening, which Colette created in collaboration with Stephany Ursula Yamoah, Deputy Director of the National Theater of Ghana, Dance Company. Colette has been dubbed a "New Traditionalist", and audience members have called her work "metropolitan", "fierce", "real", and "unexpected", leaving the watcher with a visceral feeling.

Nicaragua Danza, Hijos del Maíz

Nicaragua Danza, Hijos del Maíz was founded on April 6, 2011, with the objective to promote and disseminate our Nicaraguan identity through traditional dances. Most of our dancers, both children and young adults are of Nicaraguan origin who seek to learn more of their roots. Under the direction of Luis León, Nicaragua Danza, Hijos del Maíz annually hosts the 1st Annual Nicaraguan Folkloric Festival, in which a variety of dances and music from all regions of Nicaragua is presented, now going on their 7th year. We are proud to have been the first Nicaraguan dance

group to audition and perform at the Ethnic Dance Festival in 2016 and were recipients of the Mythili Kumar Emerging artist award in 2017.

Dimensions Dance Theater

Dimensions Dance Theater has been under the continuing artistic leadership of co-founder Deborah Brooks Vaughan for the past 45 years. DDT is a dance company and school whose mission is to create, perform, and teach dance that reflects the lives and historical experience of the African Diaspora. We fulfill this mission through the presentation of traditional African dances and contemporary choreography drawn from African, jazz, and modern dance idioms. DDT has garnered national and international acclaim for its performances. The company has traveled to Nigeria, Jordan, Germany, Zimbabwe, and Cuba, and has danced throughout the United States. DDT has advanced African American dance as an art form through a series of interdisciplinary collaborations with composers, musicians and singers working in a wide variety of African and African American traditions: Hugh Masekela, the Edwin Hawkins Singers (gospel), Street Sounds (a capella spirituals and blues), Cab Calloway (jazz), Chanticleer (a capella spirituals), Omar Sosa (Cuban jazz pianist), and Anthony Brown and Fifth Stream Music.

Águas

Águas (formerly known as Aguas Da Bahia) is lead by Tania Santiago who grew up in the heart of African Brazil. She has taught, danced and choreographed for many well-known companies including Olodum, an arts group famous for its Carnival performances. She has resided in California since 1997, and teaches classes. Her choreography has been performed by Loco Bloco, Axe Abadu, Kuumba, Quimbada Carnavalesco and Abada Capoeira.

Yabas Dance Company

Yabas Dance Company honors the female Orixás and celebrates the power and beauty of women through Afro Brazilian dance. The dance company is based in Santa Cruz, CA and has performed at festivals around the state, such as Sierra Nevada World Music Festival, International Dance Week Santa Cruz and Harmony Music Festival. Dandha Da Hora, Director & Choreographer was born and raised in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, she was a dancer with Ilê Aiyê, one of Brazil's most important cultural organizations, since she was 6 years old. Dandha has performed and taught dance all over the world. Her current projects include the Santa Cruz-based band SambaDá (lead vocals, percussion, dance).

Cheza Nami Foundation

“Cheza Nami” is Swahili for “Come play with me”. It is a California-based non-profit organization, founded to share African cultures and the importance of diversity through performance, education and play-based experiential learning.

SPECIAL EVENT BIOS:

Paul S. Flores

Flores is a published poet, performance artist, playwright, and well known spoken word artist. He was raised in Chula Vista, CA and spent much of his youth in Tijuana, Mexico. After playing professional baseball for the Chicago Cubs, Paul received his degree from University of California, San Diego and then moved to San Francisco in 1995 to complete the MFA Creative Writing Program at SF State University. In 1996, he co-founded the Latino poetry performance group Los Delicados with Norman Zelaya and Darren de Leon and recorded a CD titled WORD DESCARGA (Calaca Press, 2000). Flores’ performance projects have taken him from HBO’s Def Poetry to Cuba, Mexico and El Salvador. His play “On The Hill: I am Alex Nieto” (2016) dramatizes the life and death of Alex Nieto who was killed by San Francisco Police Department, using music, dance and theater as a powerful tool for communities divided by issues of police violence, racism, gentrification and economic disparity to discover opportunities for solutions, healing and unification. Flores previous play PLACAS (2012) was based on testimonies of members of MS-13 in California barrios. One of his newest plays, We Have Iré, is commissioned by Yerba Buena Center for The Arts and follows Afro-Cuban immigrant artists and their connection to Lucumí religious traditions. Flores plays have been produced at Brava Theater, GALA Hispanic Theatre, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Pregones Theatre, Abrons Art Center, Taller Puertorriquena, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, InterAct Theater, DiverseWorks, Su Teatro, South Coast Rep, and many more. Flores is a Doris Duke Artist, a MAP Fund awardee, a Gerbode-Hewlett Theater commission recipient, a NALAC Fund for Arts recipient, and 2011 SF Weekly Best Politically Active Hip-hop Performer. He is co-founder of Youth Speaks, and currently an adjunct professor of Theater at the University of San Francisco.

Bill Martinez

Martinez is an immigration attorney who has also produced and managed cultural events in the San Francisco Bay Area since 1973. A native San Franciscan, he is a graduate of the University of San Francisco and Hastings College of the Law. He has worked in the Community Law Collective ('74-'79), New College of California School of Law ('79-'83) and the Volunteer Legal Services Program of the Bar Association of San Francisco ('84-'93). In 1981, he co-founded the Encuentro del Canto Popular, a San Francisco-based Latin American music festival. His work with the Encuentro led him to become one of the nation's leading experts in U.S.-Cuba cultural exchanges and artists' visas. He co-founded the Latino Entertainment Partners which produced historically significant concerts of Cuban artists.

Yoram Savion

Savion is co-founder of YAK Films, a multimedia company dedicated to filming movement-based art. For over 10 years, we have traveled the world to reveal unique dance talent in diverse urban landscapes. We promote innovative filming techniques using the latest gear that will fit in our backpack yet deliver the highest image quality possible.

Johnny5

Anthony Lopez aka Johnny5 was born in Oakland, California in 1989. He is a Mexican / Latino professional Turf Dancer and the founder of TURFinc - a local Oakland/ Bay Area based company that hopes to instill positive changes in the community through dance. He learned to dance merengue, salsa and Mexican dance styles when he was growing up going to family Quinceñeras & weddings. When he was 12yrs old he encountered Turf Dancing for the first time at the Oakland side shows. Ever since then he practices on his own every day. In 2005 he joined a dance crew by the name of TURFFEINZ. In 2012 he started working as a nurse full time and started his own dance company TURFinc, whose mission is to spread the original dance culture of TURF that was established in Oakland, California and to utilize it as a positive platform for dancers, the youth, and the overall community. Johnny5 also gives back to the community by teaching dance classes in East Oakland and produces events such as Turf battle tournaments.

Support

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

California Arts Council

San Francisco Grants for the Arts

San Francisco Arts Commission

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The Zellerbach Family Foundation

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City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program

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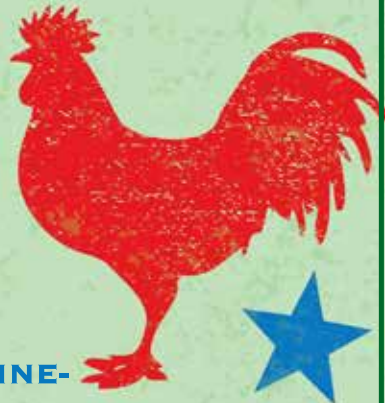
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