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**THE MUSIC AND DANCE TRADITIONS OF MEXICO TAKE CENTER STAGE  
WHEN BALLET FOLKLORICO “QUETZALLI” DE VERACRUZ PERFORMS  
SUNDAY, APRIL 30 AT 3:00 P.M. AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

**SCHOOLTIME: THE COMPANY WILL PERFORM EXCERPTS FROM THEIR REPERTORY  
FOR BAY AREA STUDENTS MONDAY, MAY 1 AT 11:00 A.M.**

**BERKELEY, March 30, 2006 – Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz** bursts into Berkeley with a kaleidoscope of rhythms and colors **Sunday, April 30 at 3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. Taking the name *quetzalli* from a multi-colored bird found only in Central America and Mexico, the troupe of 45 dancers and 10 musicians is known for its festive energy and vibrant costumes. Under the direction of founder and veteran dancer **Hugo Betancourt**, the 20 year-old ensemble is one of the largest folkloric dance companies to tour outside of Mexico. The group of young artists expresses its heartfelt passion for the traditions of Mexico through the music, songs and dances of a variety of ethnic groups. The repertory includes “Tabasco,” also know as *danzas de tamborileros* (drummers’ dances), celebrating harvest time; “Baja California Norte,” an interpretation of various cowboy movements such as jumps, turns and kicks; and “Veracruz, La Huasteca,” played with traditional instruments such as *jarana* (a kind of ukulele), guitar and violin. Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz’s appearance is part of **Celebración de las Culturas de Iberoamérica**, Cal Performances’ programming initiative to bring the performing arts of Latin America, Spain, Portugal, and the Caribbean to Bay Area audiences.

Additionally, Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz will give a one-hour *SchoolTime* performance for Bay Area students in Zellerbach Hall on **Monday, May 1 at 11:00 a.m.**; tickets are available in advance only.

Founded in 1985 by Betancourt, Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz makes its home in the state capital, Xalapa, Veracruz. Known for their traditional folkloric dances, as well as their Afro-Caribbean spectacular, *Carnaval Veracruzano*, the group has toured internationally. The company served as the official representative for the Secretary of Tourism and Economic

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Development for the State of Veracruz since 1986 having given hundreds of performances across Mexico and the United States, South America, Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean.

Other important appearances includes the Miss Mexico pageant in Cancun, TV appearances on “Siempre en Domingo” from Mexico City, the Festival Cervantino in Guanajuato, and at the Festival of Culture in Koala Lumpur, Malaysia. The company has recently performed in Peru, Spain, Germany, Taiwan, and Canada. In addition to more than 50 artists, Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz also operates its own school and training program for young dancers in Xalapa. “Ballet Folklórico de Veracruz is a company with heart and skill” (*Albuquerque Journal*).

### **HUGO BETANCOURT**

Born in the northern region of Veracruz know as *La Huasteca*, group leader and dancer **Hugo Betancourt** was exposed to folk music and dance at an early age. His uncle, Humberto Betancourt was a well-known musician and composer, and he shared his great passion for the art and culture of his homeland with his nephew. Betancourt studied folklórico dance under Maestro Alejandro Gomez Solis in the Ballet Folklórico “Veracruz” sponsored by the department of popular education. He toured the United States on several occasions with that group and with the Ballet Folklórico *Tonanzintla*.

Maestro Betancourt has served on the board for National Association for Groups Folklóricos and coordinated their international conference on two occasions in Xalapa. In the summer of 2000, “Quetzalli” celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with several gala performances in which Betancourt was recognized for his great contribution to the company and to the cultural panorama of Veracruz. Betancourt and his wife, Alejandra, are the proud parents of one daughter, Arantxa, born December, 2002.

### TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz** on **Sunday, April 30** at **3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$22.00, \$30.00** and **\$40.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu).

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Cal Performances’ 2005/2006 Centennial Season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

The *Contra Costa Times* and Classical 102.1 KDFC are season media sponsors of the 2005/06 performing arts season.

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**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Sunday, April 30 at 3:00 p.m.**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Stage*

**Ballet Folklorico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz**

**Program:** Comprised of more than 45 dancers and 10 musicians, Ballet Folklorico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz brings a kaleidoscope of rhythms and colors along with the music, songs and dances of Mexico to Zellerbach Hall.

**Tickets:** \$22.00, \$30.00 and \$40.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door.

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**Monday, May 1 at 11:00 a.m.**

**SCHOOLTIME PERFORMANCE**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Stage*

**Ballet Folklorico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz**

**Program:** Ballet Folklorico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz performs excerpts from their repertory for Bay Area school children.

**Tickets:** \$4.00 per student or adult chaperone, available in advance only through Cal Performances at (510) 642-1082. *SchoolTime* performances are open to students in grades 2 through 12 in Bay Area public and private schools. Supplemental study guides for the classroom are provided. For more information about the *SchoolTime* program, contact the *SchoolTime* coordinator at Cal Performances by email at [eduprograms@calperfs.berkeley.edu](mailto:eduprograms@calperfs.berkeley.edu) or by phone at (510) 642-0212.

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