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**BALLET FOLKLORICO “QUETZALLI” DE VERACRUZ BRINGS THE
MUSIC AND DANCE TRADITIONS OF MEXICO
TO ZELLERBACH HALL SUNDAY, MAY 2 AT 3:00 P.M.**

**SchoolTime: One-hour Performances for Bay Area Students Will Be Given
Monday, May 3 at 11:00 a.m.**

BERKELEY, March 24, 2010 – Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz bursts into Zellerbach Hall with a kaleidoscope of rhythms and colors in celebration of their 25th anniversary **Sunday, May 2 at 3:00 p.m.** Taking the name *quetzalli* from a multi-colored bird found only in Central America and Mexico, the troupe is known for its festive energy and vibrant costumes. Under the direction of founder and veteran dancer **Hugo Betancourt**, the ensemble is one of the largest folkloric dance companies to tour outside of Mexico. The group of young artists and musicians expresses its heartfelt passion for the traditions of Mexico through the music, songs and dances of a variety of ethnic groups. “Ballet Folklórico de Veracruz is a company with heart and skill” (*Albuquerque Journal*).

A one-hour *SchoolTime* performance for Bay Area K-12 students will feature select dances by Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz on **Monday, May 3 at 11:00 a.m.** at **Zellerbach Hall**. Tickets are \$4.00 and must be arranged in advance; for further information, call 510.642.9988.

Quetzalli’s silver anniversary performance in Berkeley includes “Ancient Mexico,” also known as *Danza de Concheros*, one of the most vigorous and faithfully preserved traditions that exist in Mexico today; “Guerrero,” a group of dances that are always performed by couples to illustrate the flirtatious relationship between a man and woman; “Baja California Norte,” an interpretation of various cowboy movements such as jumps, turns and kicks; and two dances from Veracruz “La Huasteca,” played with traditional instruments such as *jarana* (a kind of ukulele), guitar and violin and “Sotavento,” a 300-plus year-old tradition where dancers delicately maneuver colorful ribbons into a bow, using only their feet. Lending vocal and

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instrumental accompaniment to the twelve dancers onstage will be **Alberto de la Rosa** (harp), **Raul Monge** (percussion & *jarana*), **Ruben Melgarejo** (bass & violin) and **Miguel Lopez Sanchez**, members of the celebrated Veracruz musical group **Tlen-Huicani**, one of the premier interpreters of the folk music of Mexico and Latin America.

BALLET FOLKLORICO “QUETZALLI” DE VERACRUZ

Founded in 1985 by Betancourt, Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz makes its home in Xalapa, the state capital Veracruz. Known for its traditional folkloric dances, as well as its Afro-Caribbean spectacular, *Carnaval Veracruzano*, the group of 45 dancers and 10 musicians has toured internationally. The company has served as the official representative for the Secretary of Tourism and Economic Development for the State of Veracruz since 1986 and has given hundreds of performances across Mexico and the United States, South America, Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean. In addition to the troupe, Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz also operates its own school and training program for young dancers in Xalapa.

Born in the northern region of Veracruz, founder, director 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 folklorico 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.”

Betancourt has served on the board for National Association for Grupos Folkloricos in the United States and coordinated their international conference on two occasions in Xalapa. Betancourt and his wife, Alejandra, are the proud parents of daughter Arantxa, born December, 2002.

TLEN-HUICANI

Founded in 1973 at the State University of Veracruz in Jalapa, **Tlen-Huicani** is considered one of the most faithful representatives of the folklore of Veracruz today. Under the

direction of harp virtuoso Alberto de la Rosa, Tlen-Huicani, which means “the singers” in the indigenous Nahuatl language, has performed in more than 50 different countries and captured and preserved much of the traditional music of the “Jarocho” and “Huasteco” styles in a number of recordings and numerous live and broadcast performances. In addition to vocals, each of the four members plays one or more different string instruments traditional to the regional musical culture. For their long-standing contribution to the musical landscape of Mexico, the Union of Music and Theater Critics of Mexico named Tlen-Huicani “best folk music group in Mexico.” Among numerous awards and honors, the ensemble has been recognized by the governor of Veracruz for its years of service to the development of the cultural life of the state.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz** on **Sunday, May 2 at 3:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$24.00, \$30.00 and \$38.00**, with special half-price tickets for children 16 and under. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced three hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10 for UCB students; \$15 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available on Cal Performances’ Facebook page and at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, three hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Sunday, May 2 at 3:00 p.m. [FF]

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

World Stage

Ballet Folklorico "Quetzalli" de Veracruz

Hugo Betancourt, director

Tlen-Huicani

Alberto de la Rosa, director

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: \$24.00, \$30.00 and \$38.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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Monday, May 3 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

Hugo Betancourt, director

Tlen-Huicani

Alberto de la Rosa, director

Program: Ballet Folklorico "Quetzalli" de Veracruz presents a special one-hour performance for schoolchildren.

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 kindergarten through grade 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 or by phone at (510) 642-0212.

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