

# Balé Folclórico da Bahia

Thursday and Friday, October 7–8, 2004, 8 pm  
Zellerbach Hall

## ***Brazilian Rhapsody***

Walson Botelho, *general director*

José Carlos Arandiba, *artistic director*

José Ricardo Sousa, *musical director*

Nildinha Fonseca and Reinaldo Pepe, *choreographic assistants*

Robson Nunes, *sound engineer*

Marcos Souza, *lighting design/operator*

Alberto Pitta, *color backdrop in Samba Reggae*

Walson Botelho, Antônio das Graças and Ninho Reis

(*Ginga, Maculelê, Samba de Roda, Capoeira, Afixirê*, and *Samba Reggae*)

and Ricardo Biriba (*Boi-Bumbá, Maracatu Rural*, and *Xaxado*), *costumes and accessories*

Fernando Bergen and Patrícia Souza, *wardrobe supervisors*

Jairo Fonseca and Carlos Matias, *stage technicians*

José Carlos Arandiba (modern dance and ballet),

Nildinha Fonseca (Afro-Brazilian dance), Mestre Zambi (*Capoeira*), *dance instructors*

Tim Fox/Angela Delecke, Columbia Artists Management LLC, *US tour direction*

Harry Rakowski (*tour manager*) and Ron Ford (*production manager*), *US tour staff*

## **Dancers**

Ísis Barbosa, Marcelo Bomfim, Josenildo Braga, Gustavo Caldas, Leticia Cardoso, Nara Couto, Nildinha Fonseca (soloist in *Boi-Bumbá, Maracatu*, and *Afixirê*), Cristiane Jesus, Arismar Junior, Slim Melo, Reinaldo Pepe (soloist in *Boi-Bumbá* and *Afixirê*), Jean Salomão, Edileuza Santos, Gesse Santos, Emerson Silva, Rose Soares (soloist in *Afixirê*), Luciano Souza

## **Musicians**

Alcides Morais, Fábio Santos (*berimbau* solo in *Capoeira*), José Ricardo Sousa, André Souza (congas solo in *Afixirê*), Joel Souza, *percussion*; Ricardo Sibalde, *flute/saxophone*; Jucelino Bezerra, *bass*; Renato Cavalcanti, *trombone*; Val Souza, *trumpet*; Zelito Bezerra, *keyboard/accordion*

## **Singers**

Miralva Couto and Dora Santana (soloist)

*Balé Folclórico da Bahia would like to acknowledge:*

*The Government of the State of Bahia, Secretariat of Culture of the State of Bahia,  
School of Dance of the Cultural Foundation of Bahia, ORTOPED,  
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The Wallace Foundation, and the Zellerbach Family Foundation for their generous support.*

***Brazilian Rhapsody***

*Tonight's performance will be approximately one hour and 30 minutes in length. There will be no intermission.*

***Boi-Bumbá***

Choreography: Amélia Conrado  
Music: Amazonian Folklore

***Xaxado***

Choreography: Amélia Conrado  
Music: José Ricardo Sousa and Northeast Folklore

***Ginga***

Choreography: Rosângela Silvestre  
Music: José Ricardo Sousa

***Maracatu Rural***

Choreography: Amélia Conrado  
Music: Northeast Folklore

***Maculelê***

Choreography: Walson Botelho  
Music: Bahian Folklore

***Samba de Roda***

Choreography: Walson Botelho  
Staging: Walson Botelho and José Carlos Arandiba  
Music: Bahian Folklore

***Capoeira***

Staging: Walson Botelho and José Carlos Arandiba  
Music: Bahian Folklore

***Afixirê***

Choreography: Rosângela Silvestre  
Music: Antônio Portella and Jorge Paim

***Samba Reggae***

Choreography: José Carlos Arandiba and the company  
Music: From the songs of Bahia's *Carnaval*

***Boi-Bumbá***

This work is drawn from the rich cultural background of the north and northeastern regions of Brazil, including Bahia. The plot unfolds in a mythical world filled with magical creatures: inhabitants of the forest, beings that live among miraculous herbs, and those in waters that flow to the edges of the world. Contrasted with these forces are the people from the northeast, with their playful natures, their rhythmic music, and their deep religious feelings. This background depicts the richness of the folklore of the native Brazilian population during the colonization of the country.

Within this magical setting, a simple plot unfolds based on the folk tale of a pregnant woman, Catirina, wife of a herdsman, Pai Francisco, who wants to eat the tongue of his master's ox. When his deed is discovered, the herdsman is imprisoned. In an effort to save him, the powers of the Pajé, a supreme religious authority among the indigenous peoples, are used in an attempt to revive the ox. As the plot unfolds, the story takes on a frenetic pace; this is a world of madness in which one cannot distinguish where fantasy begins and reality ends.

Among these characters, the portrayal of Cuña-Poranga, the most beautiful aboriginal female of the forest, enhances the tale.

***Xaxado***

During the conquests of Bahia's interior lands in the northeast of Brazil, as well as other Brazilian states, there were great confrontations between the established landowners and the poor people in search of a piece of land to cultivate. During leisure time, these poor inhabitants danced on the arid earth typical of the *sertão* (Brazilian desert); the sound of their dancing was called *xaxado*.

Reminiscent of the conquest of the American West, the plot of *Xaxado* includes outlaws who live in the forest, delivering justice in



defense of the oppressed against the rich and powerful masters. Such real-life outlaws included the historic characters Lampião and Maria Bonita.

***Ginga***

This dance is a contemporary vision of all aspects of Bahian popular culture. The influence of African slaves, the Portuguese, and indigenous groups created a rich, mixed culture in which the stroll, the smile, the flirtation, the glance, the face, the voice, the skin, and the color of the Bahian people are unique in the world.

***Maracatu Rural***

A popular re-enactment of the procession for the crowning of the kings in Brazilian lands, this dance casts an ironic eye on the European influence on this particular ceremony as it, seemingly, mocks the pomposity of the 17th-century Portuguese royalty as they disembarked in their colonial realm.

Among the many characters that are portrayed in the *Maracatu*, the most prominent are those of the King and the Queen; the Lady of the Palaca with her Doll Calunga; the Banner Carrier, representing the origins of the parade; and the Caboclos de Lança, the civilized, pure-blooded indigenous Brazilians who play the role of ambassadors and protectors of the royalty and the nobility.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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### *Maculelê*

A dramatic dance that originated in the sugar cane plantations of Bahia during Brazil's colonial period and was performed by the slaves to celebrate a good harvest. *Maculelê*, due to its potential for violence, was also used as a means of defense by slaves against their owners.

### *Samba de Roda*

This is the most popular dance and rhythm in Bahia. The *samba* first appeared in Brazil as an entertainment practiced by slaves during their leisure hours.

### *Capoeira*

*Capoeira* is a martial art that originated in Africa and, during the colonial period, was brought to Brazil by slaves from Angola.

### *Afixirê*

Meaning "Dance of Happiness" in Yorubá, a language of West Africa, this dance has influenced most of the cultural and religious celebrations in Bahia. It is an intoxicating blend of sound, color, and movement that displays the sensuality and spirit of the Bahian people.

### *Samba Reggae*

The most recent form of popular music to appear in Bahia, *Samba Reggae* is a mixture of Afro-Bahian rhythms such as *afoxé*, *ijexá*, and *samba duro* (with Caribbean influences). Paul Simon was the first mainstream artist to introduce this new music to the world when he performed and toured with the Bahian percussion band Olodum.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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**Balé Folclórico da Bahia** was formed in 1988 by Walson Botelho and Ninho Reis in the city of Salvador in the northern Brazilian state of Bahia. The 38-member ensemble is the only professional folk dance company in Brazil. Since its first performances, Balé Folclórico has achieved considerable international success, particularly at France's 1994 and 1996 Lyon Biennale de la Danse and in 1997 at the Sydney Festival and the Spoleto Festival USA.

The company has toured often throughout Brazil, and was named the best dance company in Brazil in 1990, 1993, and 1996 by the Ministry of Culture. Since its 1992 European debut in Berlin, the company has returned several times to Germany, France, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, among other countries. The group's first tour of the United States was in 1996 and included New York, Boston, Washington (DC), Berkeley, Costa Mesa, Minneapolis, Cleveland, and several other major cities. Between 1997 and 2001, the group visited more than 180 cities on their North American tours.

The current tour presents a repertoire of authentic folkloric dances and music. The repertoire exhibits three main cultural influences on the Brazilian people: African, introduced through the slavery of the 16th century;

European, introduced through 16th-century Portuguese colonization; and Indigenous, the culture of the native Brazilians.

This marvelous company, with its astounding dancers, musicians, and singers, represents the culture, traditions, beliefs, history, colors, music, and movements of the people of Bahia.

**Walson Botelho** (*general director and co-founder*) is a choreographer and former performer. Botelho graduated from the Federal University of Bahia with a degree in Cultural Anthropology. He has worked as a dance director at the Cultural Foundation in Bahia, as a production director for the Balé Teatro Castro Alves in Salvador, and as an assistant director, dancer, singer, and musician with the company Viva Bahia.

**José Carlos Arandiba** (*artistic director*) has been artistic director of the company since 1992. A former solo performer with the Contemporary Dance Group at the Federal University of Bahia, he is an internationally recognized teacher and director whose work has been seen on television in France, Germany, and Holland. He has also choreographed for several Europe-based companies.