

Saturday, September 23, 2006, 2pm & 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company



Helena Z. Benitez	<i>Founder</i>
Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco	<i>Chairman, Bayanihan Folk Arts Foundation</i>
Dr. Lucrecia R. Kasilag	<i>President</i>
Suzie Moya Benitez	<i>Executive Director</i>
Isabel A. Santos	<i>Artistic and Costume Director</i>
Ferdinand B. Jose	<i>Dance Director, Choreographer</i>
Melito S. Vale Cruz	<i>Music Director</i>
Shakira Maris Villa	<i>Lighting Designer, Technical Director</i>
Helen Legion	<i>Costume Mistress</i>

Management

Columbia Artists Management, Inc.
1790 Broadway, New York, New York 10019
Andrew S. Grossman, *Producer*
W. Seton Ijams, *Associate*

Cal Performances' 2006–2007 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Saturday, September 23, 2006, 2pm & 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company

PROGRAM

Earth Rhythms

The origins of dance from man's early awareness of the dynamic earth: the colors, sounds and rhythms of the wind and the waters, the trees and the animals, and all the elements in nature that cause a quickening of man's rhythmic and musical impulses.

Tribal Tapestry

Woven into a many-colored tapestry are strands of rhythm and color: young girls gracefully simulating birds in flight, maidens preening flirtatiously and a Tiboli-Bagobo mix of rhythmic footwork accentuated by the sound of bells.

Hispanic Past Remembered

Four centuries of Spanish-European influence evoke memories of the *jota*, *mazurka*, *polka* and *valse* danced in the Filipino style and defined by Filipino grace. A bustling trading scene, with Chinese, Spanish, Indian, Mexican and Filipino merchants vending precious gems, ancient jars and silken wares, recreates the multifaceted cultural ambience of times not too long past.

INTERMISSION

Mindanao Splendor

The clamor of gongs, a flash of weaponry as warriors prime for battle, a bevy of girls frolicking with colorful food baskets, maidens demonstrating the varied ways of wearing the tubular garment called *malong*, dusky divers pearling the orient seas and finally the "Voyage for Love and Peace," a royal tale of love lost and regained.

This original Bayanihan dance piece won the Gold Temple Award for overall excellence in dance, music, costumes and production at the 47th International Folklore Festival in Agrigento, Sicily, in February 2002. Three years later, on the 50th Anniversary of the same festival, this piece again won the coveted Gold Temple Award in a competition among all previous Gold Temple awardees.

People Under the Sun

A kaleidoscope in dance of a village *pista*, or fiesta, with all the fun and flurry. It starts with a dance of supplication for a successful fiesta followed by a dance of lights, dawn music from a bamboo band, and a friendly competition of skill dances—intricate rhythms from coconut shells, clashing bamboo poles, a breathtaking dance on benches piled on benches, a fast-stepping chase-and-run number, exuberant laughter and joyous singing—which builds to a rousing festival climax.

Program subject to change without notice.

About the Artists

BAYANIHAN: A NATIONAL TREASURE

The Bayanihan story spans 43 years of performances all over the world. It had its early roots in the Filipiniana Folk Music and Dance Committee of the Philippine Women's University (PWU). But it was not until 1957 that the PWU Bayanihan Folk Arts Center and its performing arm, the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company, were founded by Dr. Helena Z. Benitez to pursue the following objectives: to conduct researches in ethnic rites, tribal folklore and regional folkways; to collect indigenous art forms as expressed in music, dance, literature, arts and crafts; to distill and transform these cultural traditions into theatrical presentations; and to promote international understanding through cultural exchange and performances abroad.

The Company takes its name from the ancient Filipino tradition of Bayanihan, which signifies working together for the common good. It is this spirit of togetherness that bonded parents, teachers, researchers, technicians, dancers and musicians, working as one in a common effort to achieve the objectives of the Company.

As a civic response to a government appeal for a cultural program for the country's participation in the 1958 Brussels World's Fair, Bayanihan mounted a production called *Glimpses of Philippine Culture through Music and Dance*, which proved to be "the sensation of the Fair." It was featured in Ed Sullivan's TV program on the highlights of the Fair and broadcast coast-to-coast in the United States.

A year later, the noted impresario Sol Hurok signed up Bayanihan for his annual International Dance Festival. Opening at the Winter Garden Theater on October 13, 1959, Bayanihan's Broadway debut was accorded unanimous critical acclaim by New York critics—a feat which earned the Company the affectionate title "Cinderella of Dance Theater."

Critics were particularly impressed by the dancers' skill, grace and *joie de vivre*, as well as by the Company's success in the transference of indigenous dance and music traditions

from their ancient origins in the countryside to the confines of the stage without sacrificing authenticity.

Said Walter Terry of *The New York Herald Tribune*, "Bayanihan is one of the newest examples of an ethnic dance culture which has gone beyond simple preservation (important as that is), and into creative growth."

In a second review, he lavished praise on "the genius of Lucrecia Reyes Urtula, the choreographer, who ranks with Russia's Igor Moiseyev, Mexico's Amalia Hernandez and our own Agnes de Mille in the brilliant translating of ethnic dance forms into theatrical terms. While preserving authenticity of step and of regional colors, Mrs. Urtula has devised designs of incredible originality, visual beauty and excitement."

Initial success in Brussels and Broadway paved the way for numerous invitations from top impresarios of the world. From 1958 to date, Bayanihan has mounted 15 international tours and over 100 brief tours to international events and festivals, covering 55 countries on five continents.

The first Filipino group to perform on Broadway, Bayanihan also has the distinction of being the first non-American dance company to take to the stage at New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, as well as the first Philippine cultural group to perform in Russia, the People's Republic of China and throughout South America. As official Philippine representative at the first CIOFF World Folkloriada held in the Netherlands in 1996, Bayanihan was one of the top five performing arts groups chosen from among 70 national groups to give repeat performances at the close of the festival. In 1998, the Company embarked on a centennial tour of Europe, commencing at the Lisboa World Expo, followed by performances in Monaco, Germany, France, Madrid and in 16 cities of the autonomous region of Galicia in Northwestern Spain.

Their most recent international conquest was the 54th Almond in Blossom festival and 44th International Folk Festival in Sicily, February 1–7, 1999. They won first prize in the traditional costumes category and the only Asian country

About the Artists

that made it to the top four winners among 40 participating countries.

Other significant accolades include the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding, which Bayanihan received in 1965; the Theatre des Nations Award (folk dance category), given in Paris in 1960; and the Program for Asian Projects (PAP) grant, awarded twice to Bayanihan (1987, 1989) by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund/Ramon Magsaysay Foundation for the Company's projects "Peace and Unity Among ASEAN Nations through Dance and Music."

Much celebrated nationally and internationally, Bayanihan has awakened a new pride among Filipinos in their cultural heritage, preserved and added a new dimension to the country's dance tradition and built for the country a rich reserve of international goodwill.

Perhaps the most rewarding among its achievements is the fact that Bayanihan's example encouraged the growth of numerous folk dance companies in the country, some of which have been organized by former Bayanihan dancers. Beyond the Philippines, the Company has also inspired other countries to exploit their own folk material for international presentation. Among these is Mexico, whose folkloric ballet group formed after Bayanihan's first performance there now gives the Company lively competition.

In 2000, by Act of the Philippine Congress, Bayanihan was officially designated the National Folk Dance Company of the Philippines. Bayanihan continues to strive for artistic excellence and creative innovation.

The Company's recent activities, following another heralded coast-to-coast American tour in 2001, have included performances in Spain, England and Holland in 2004, performances at the Universal Forum on Culture in Barcelona and a gala engagement at the Hôtel de Paris in Monte-Carlo. In August 2004, the company participated in the Third World Folkloriada in Budapest, Hungary, and was selected by the city of Athens to perform at the Olympic's Cultural Olympiad.

Dr. Helena Z. Benitez (*founder*), one of the most remarkable women of the Philippines, is one of the continuing motivating forces behind the Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company. She originally provided Bayanihan with an institutional base in her Philippine Women's University, the First University in Asia founded by Asians, where Bayanihan started to gain renown while perfecting its craft and repertoire in the 1950s. In the half-century since then, and after Bayanihan gained its own independent footing and identity, she has continued to be its foremost patron and promoter even as she pursued her career as lifelong educator and made her mark in other fields of endeavor. She served in the Philippine legislature as Senator and Member of Parliament for more than a decade. She was elected head of not one but two United Nations bodies, the first Filipino to become chairperson of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, and first and only woman President of the UN Environment Programme. She has served as member of the executive board of the International Association of Universities and chair of the Southeast Asian Council of the International Association of University Presidents. She has also served as Ambassador of the Philippines and headed Philippine delegations to many international conferences, including the UN Habitat Conference in Vancouver. She is the only person to have served on the Board of Trustees of Bayanihan continuously throughout its existence. She currently serves as Chairperson of the Philippine Women's University System and of the Bayanihan.

Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco (*Chairman, Bayanihan Folk Arts Foundation*) is acknowledged primarily as a pillar in the Philippine business community, having propelled the growth of one of the country's largest and most diversified business conglomerates today, the Yuchengco Group of Companies. He has also had a distinguished career in government service and, to this day, is a philanthropist at heart.

Beyond his phenomenal success in many fields of endeavor, he is one of the few who is

About the Artists

a respected patron of the arts. As Chairman of the Bayanihan Folk Arts Foundation, he has inspired many gifted Filipino artists to pursue their love for the arts and develop their talents by giving their best in every performance. In the same way, he hopes to instill among Filipinos a natural love and appreciation for their own culture. Driven by this aspiration, he has made every effort to present the Bayanihan to a wide and appreciative audience here and abroad.

During his term as Ambassador to China, he was instrumental in bringing Bayanihan to perform at the Sheraton Hotel in Beijing, where all the leaders of the People's Republic of China were present. Likewise, when he was the Ambassador to Japan, he brought Bayanihan to perform at the Okura Hotel with no less than Prime Minister Keiko Obuchi and other leading personalities and dignitaries as guests.

As the Permanent Representative to the United Nations, he arranged to have the Bayanihan perform at the UN auditorium in New York. He remains proud of being a part of the Bayanihan Foundation, which his friend and colleague Helena Benitez founded almost 50 years ago.

Renowned for her dual titles as National Artist for Music and the "First Lady of Philippine Music," not to mention her roles as President and Music Director of Bayanihan, **Dr. Lucrecia R. Kasilag** is a pioneer in researching indigenous ethnic music and blending it with Western musical approaches. Her work in uniting the sounds of ancient ethnic instruments with Western music stands in a class of its own. An internationally acclaimed composer, she is also a highly accomplished educator, cultural entrepreneur, researcher, lecturer and writer. Aside from Bayanihan, she is also active in various other organizations, including the Young Artists Foundation, the League of Filipino Composers, the Federation of Asian Cultural Promotion and the Asian Composers League, the latter of which has designated her its honorary chairman.

In 1993, Dr. Kasilag was honored to be elected one among five honorary members of

the UNESCO International Music Council. In 1995, she won the 4th ASEAN Achievement Award granted by Singapore's ASEAN Business Forum for outstanding contributions to the performing arts.

Suzie Moya Benitez (*executive director*) completed her liberal arts major in foreign service from the Assumption College, an exclusive girl's school in Manila. She completed a master's degree in public administration from the University of the Philippines and a master's degree in strategic business economics from the University of Asia and the Pacific. She completed the program for development managers from the Asian Institute of Management under a Rockefeller Brothers grant. She is also a professional lecturer on corporate image, social graces, business etiquette and leadership skills. Ms. Benitez traveled around the world as a Karilagan model from late 1960s until 1977.

Before joining the Bayanihan in 1996, Ms. Benitez has had extensive experience in public relations, sales and marketing, human resource development and administration. She was the first female Vehicle Sales Manager at Toyota's dealership in Manila. She is a professional image consultant for two leading banks in Manila and a government financial corporation. She is also the head of PERFORM (Personality Enrichment and Character Formation) at the Assumption College and Director of Special Events and Special Program at the Philippine Women's University. As Executive Director for Bayanihan, she spearheaded the group's efforts for government recognition. In 1998, the 10th Congress of the Philippines enacted Republic Act 8626, declaring the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company as the Philippine National Folk Dance Company. The President of the Philippines subsequently issued Proclamation 138, declaring May 27 of every year as a National Day to commemorate and propagate the Bayanihan spirit. She is married to businessman (also a former Bayanihan dancer) Noel Benitez, and they are blessed with three children: Marco, Marielle and Martino Anton.

About the Artists

Born in the predominantly Muslim province of Lanao del Sur in the southern Philippines, **Isabel A. Santos** (*artistic and costume director*) has lived and traveled throughout the country and has thus become familiar with a variety of native costumes. As Costume Director for Bayanihan since 1957, she has designed numerous costumes based on her research on ethnic dress across the archipelago. A recipient of the City of Manila Cultural Award for costume design in dance, Ms. Santos recently co-authored the 1996 book entitled *Helena Z. Benitez, Bayanihan and the Filipino: A Trilogy for Culture*. Formerly Costume Director for the Folk Arts Theatre and Cultural Consultant at the Office of the President of the Philippines from 1974 to 1986, she holds a bachelor's degree from the Philippine Women's University (PWU) and a master's degree in English from Fordham University in New York. Her early career was spent as Public Relations and Information Director at PWU and Bayanihan from 1953 to 1959. Recently, Ms. Santos received the Francisca T. Benitez award from PWU, her *alma mater*, "for her significant contribution to the nurturing of the Filipino spirit and identity through her accomplishments in the arts, particularly of theatrical costuming, that captured the intrinsic and enduring beauty of Philippine costume."

Ferdinand Jose (*dance director*) joined the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company in 1976 and has toured the world extensively with the group. Major works he has choreographed and designed include *Tribulink* (1996), *Klasika* (1997) and, more recently, *Kabayanihan Saludo*, Bayanihan's salute to the nation's centennial celebration of its independence. Since 1982, he has played a pivotal role on Bayanihan's research and program development teams, and was made Acting Dance Director and Administrative Director for the company in 1995. Mr. Jose has studied traditional folk dance both locally and internationally, and has taken many courses on improvisation and composition for modern dance. He was honored to be chosen as a recipient of a study grant, under the Rockefeller Brothers

Fund administered by the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation, for development managers at the well known Asian Institute of Management based in Manila.

A lighting designer and director by profession, **Shakira-Maris Villa** (*lighting designer, technical director*) has, since 1987, worked for numerous theatre companies in the Philippines including Dulaang UP, Repertory Philippines and Dulaang Talyer, which took part at the Avignon Theatre Festival held in France in May 2003. As a lighting director, she spent more than a decade lighting for various concerts, stage plays, musicales, corporate events, fashion shows, television specials and dance. She was also part of the Global Dance Festival in Dusseldorf, Germany.

She has designed the lights for foreign artists, such as Michel Legrand, Anggun, Lotus Eaters, Pearl Jam and the Platters to name a few. Shakira's works have been critically praised in the Philippine concert scene and dubbed as "fiercely experimental, bending conventions in lighting" by the Philippine Alternative Music Industry (Jun Diamalanta, PhilMusic 2001). She has also been cited by the Philippine National Commission on Culture and the Arts as "a young and promising talent."

Her recent works include the "Cirque de Lune" P&G Awards at the Ritz Carlton Millennia in Singapore, Miss Asia Pacific in Manila, *Los Indios Bravos* for Airdance, the 18th Philippine Advertising Congress and *Menopause: The Musical* at the Music Museum in Manila.

A graduate in theatre arts (majoring in technical theatre) and fine arts (majoring in sculpture) at the University of the Philippines, Shakira is also an installation artist and has been part of group and solo exhibitions. She is co-owner of BigSkyMind Bar and Gallery, where artists from different genres converge to perform and exhibit their works.