

Sunday, May 2, 2010, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz



25th Anniversary Tour

with Special Musical Guests

Tlen-Huicani

“Quetzalli” extends special thanks to the Department of Tourism and Culture, State of Veracruz: Governor Lic. Fidel Herrera Beltrán and Angel Alvaro Peña, Secretary of Tourism and Culture.

Cal Performances’ 2009–2010 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

PROGRAM

Ancient Mexico: *Danzas de Concheros*

Paso de Camino (“Pass in the Road”)

Aguila Blanca (“White Eagle”)

Ozomatli

Xipe

Guerrero

Musical Interlude

Tierra de Revolución (“Land of Revolution”)

El Becerrero (“The Calf”)

La Gallina (“The Hen”)

Musical Interlude Tlen-Huicani

Baja California Norte

La Loba del Mal (“The Bad Wolf”)

Arrieando Vacas (“Rounding Up the Cows”)

Sopa de Pelicanos (“Pelican Soup”)

INTERMISSION

Veracruz: Huasteca (*Indígena*)

Procesión de la Virgen (“Procession of the Virgin”)

Danza de Chules

Fandanguito

Musical Interlude Tlen-Huicani

Veracruz: Sotavento (*Jarocho*)

Musical Interlude

El Jaquetón (“The Braggart”)

El Trompo (“The Spinning Top”)

La Bruja (“The Witch”)

La Bamba (Traditional)

The program is subject to change.

Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz

Ancient Mexico: *Danza de Concheros*

The “*danza de concheros*” or “*danza de conquista*” is one of the most vigorous and faithfully preserved traditions that exist in Mexico today. This dance is only one of numerous ceremonies that make up a great complex ritual. The dancers are descendants of the prehispanic populations that existed in the country, and the dances were employed as a way to spread the Christian religion by the Spanish conquerors. With the shout, “He is God!” the dance would begin, accompanied by guitars made from the shells of armadillos, from which the name of the dance is derived (*concha* means shell). It is believed that this dance originates from the early days of the Spanish conquest. According to legend, when the most ferocious part of the battle between the Spaniards and the indigenous Chichimecas was taking place, a cross appeared in the sky followed by the figure of the apostle James. These dances can still be witnessed today in the sacred places of the indigenous populations, such as the Cathedral in Mexico City (built over an ancient temple) and in front of the pyramids.

Guerrero

The state of Guerrero lies along the West Coast of Mexico and includes the colorful mountain town of Taxco and the tourist capital of the country, Acapulco. These dances come from the region known as *tierra caliente* (“hot land”), which includes the eastern part of the state as well as parts of Michoacan and Morelos. The most popular forms of music in the region are the *sones* and *gustos*. The instrumentation is normally violins, guitars, a drum with a snare or rasp, and sometimes a harp. The dances are always performed by couples and demonstrate the flirtatious relationship between man and woman. The dress is very colorful, as is the region, emphasizing a close relationship to nature as indicated by the names of the dances, such as “the calf,” “the hen,” etc.

Baja California Norte

The *baile del calabaceado* is a very popular manifestation of the cattlemen of this region, the northern part of the Baja peninsula that borders southern California. This dance, also known as the “cowboy dance,” was born in the late 1950s as the *norteña* musical style began to gain popularity. The rhythm allows the dancers to interpret various movements of the cowboys including jumps, turns and kicks all with the intention of creating a cloud of dust underneath their boots.

Veracruz

Huasteco Region (Indigenous)

This region, encompassing several states, is the home of the Huastec culture, which dates back to the early part of the previous millennium. The Christian religion was introduced to the indigenous cultures in the 1500s by the Spanish conquerors, but the ceremonies retain elements of the Native American culture. The procession parades the Virgin of Guadalupe on a platform, or in this case her image on a banner, around the town; she then takes her place on a pedestal to preside over the festivities. The participants render their tribute the “Queen of the Americas” with their contrite but rhythmic passes. These are often celebrated on December 12, the day of the Virgin.

Sotavento: *Fandango Jarcho*

The *jarcho* people, cheerful by nature, make their day-to-day lives a continual fiesta—each street and each home is a likely place to celebrate. In February, the Adoration of the Virgin of the Candelaria; the Fiesta of the Crosses in May; in December, *Las Posadas* or *La Rama*; a birthday, or a wedding—all are celebrated to the rhythm of the *son*. The celebrations are still faithfully preserved in communities such as Tlacotalpan and Boca del

Rio; a young child easily remembers her grandmother dressing her in a new white outfit and sandals urging, “Hurry little one, we’re going to the Fandango, the fiesta is about to start!” The strong influence of the Spanish is evident in the music, the dance steps, and in the dress. The term *jarcho* was used to describe the native *mestizo* population living around the port city of Veracruz and the coastal plain region. The name comes from an Arabic word meaning “filth” or “dirty,” which is how the conquering Spaniards viewed the natives. But over the years, the term has come to be recognized as a source of pride for the people of Sotavento, whose ancestry is a mix of European, African and indigenous peoples. The music is gay and lively and led by the harp, the characteristic instrument of the region. “La Bamba,” also known as *el himno veracruzano* (anthem of Veracruz), is one of the region’s oldest and most recognizable melodies. It dates back at least 300 years and incorporates the bright ribbons that the dancers delicately maneuver into a bow—using only their feet.

FOUNDED IN 1985 by Maestro Hugo Betancourt, **Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz** makes its home in the state capital, Xalapa, Veracruz. They have toured internationally performing traditional folkloric dances as well as their Afro-Caribbean spectacular, *Carnaval Veracruzano*. The company has been the official representatives for Secretary of Tourism and Economic 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. They have performed at the Carnival of Veracruz every year since 1991, as well as taking their famous *comparsa xalapeña* to the Carnival of Havana in Cuba on three different occasions. Other important appearances include the Miss Mexico pageant in Cancún, TV appearances on *Siempre en Domingo* from Mexico City, the Festival Cervantino in Guanajuato and the Festival of Culture in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. They have recently performed in Peru, Spain, Germany, Taiwan and Canada. Currently, the group operates a school and training program for young dancers in Xalapa. “Quetzalli” continues to be one of the great cultural treasures of Veracruz, performing to thousands of people every year. “Quetzalli” hosted the National Association of Grupos Folklóricos (ANGF) for the third time in summer 2003. This year marks the group’s 25th anniversary, which includes a U.S. tour and a gala performance in its home city of Xalapa, at the Teatro del Estado.

Born in the northern region of Veracruz known as La Huasteca, **Hugo Betancourt Morales** 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. Maestro 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 Ballet Folklórico “Tonanzintla.”

In 1985, along with Rosalinda Perez and Manuel Vasquez, he formed “Quetzalli” and began to assemble a repertoire and collect costumes and resources. He has served on the board for the National Association for Grupos Folklóricos (USA) and coordinated their international conference on two occasions in Xalapa. Under the direction of Maestro Betancourt, “Quetzalli” has grown from eight dancers to a company of more than 45 with its own training school. Maestro Betancourt has been recognized by the Veracruz government for his great contribution to the company and to the cultural panorama of Veracruz. He and his wife, Alejandra, are the proud parents of two children, Arantxa and Hugo de Jesus.

Ballet Folklórico “Quetzalli” de Veracruz

Dancers

Citlalli Roldan
 Maria Acitlalli Muñoz
 Jacqueline Dorantes
 Nancy M. Gomez
 Diana Luz Gonzalez
 Amairany Cortes
 Saul Ceballos
 Uriel De J. Martinez
 Carlos A. Soto
 Jose Miguel Montano
 Carlos Gonzalez
 Victor Velasquez

Artistic Director Hugo Betancourt

Musical Directors David Melgarejo,
 Alberto de la Rosa

Assistants Saul Ceballos,
 Carlos A. Soto

Tour Coordination SRO Artists, Inc.

Tour Production Manager George Cruze

Artist Management Steve Heath, At Home
 Artist Management

FOUNDED IN 1973 at the State University of Veracruz in Xalapa, **Tlen-Huicani** has been considered one of the most faithful representatives of the folklore of Veracruz existent today. Under the direction of Maestro Alberto de la Rosa Sánchez, Tlen-Huicani, which means “the singers” in the indigenous Nahuatl language, has performed in more than 50 different countries and has captured and preserved much of the music of the “Jarocho” and “Huasteco” styles in a number of recordings, and radio and television performances. While specializing in the music of their homeland, Grupo Tlen Huicani has also explored many different musical genres in Latin America, especially those which incorporate the folk harp. Most recently, Tlen-Huicani has added concerts with orchestra to their long list of experiences, performing special arrangements of the traditional melodies of Veracruz with symphonies in Mexico and the United States. The arrangements were created especially for the group by Maestro Mateo Oliva, taking advantage of its unique style and sound.

Tlen-Huicani has made numerous recordings, four of which have been released in the United States. Their longstanding contribution to the musical landscape in Mexico resulted in their being named “best folk music group in Mexico” by the Union of Music and Theater Critics of Mexico. In 1998, they were honored for celebrating 25 years of service to the development of the culture of Veracruz, with declarations from the governor of Veracruz, the rector of the state university and many distinguished guests. They have also been invited to represent Mexico on several occasions at various World Harp Conferences, including the 2002 conference in Geneva, Switzerland. In 2005, the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, in coordination with the National Endowment for the Arts, provided funding for two regional tours as part of the Mexican Initiative Program. At the 2007 San Jose Mariachi Festival, Tlen-Huicani performed alongside Linda Ronstadt and Los Lobos.

Among the high artistic values (especially in folkloric music) of Veracruz and Mexico, **Alberto de la Rosa Sánchez** stands out as one of its shining stars. In 1973, he formed Tlen-Huicani, dedicated to the folkloric music of Mexico and Latin America and with whom he has traveled much of the modern world. His travels to South America with the group “Veracruz” had a great impact on the type of musicians who would join the group and, in fact, led to the group becoming specialist in the folklore of South America (as well as that of Mexico). The contacts established on the continent have been very valuable in offering authenticity to their magnificent interpretations. Tlen-Huicani was established with its entire thrust revolving around the harp, and it is a beautiful gift to the mind and spirit to hear them perform.

Besides his duties with Tlen-Huicani, Maestro Alberto is also musical director for the Ballet Folklórico of the Universidad Veracruzana (State University of Veracruz). He has been a soloist at festivals and concert halls around the world and has also been a much sought-after instructor and clinician specializing in the music of the Latin-American harp. He has been influential in establishing the Encuentro de Harpa in his hometown of Xalapa and for bringing internationally recognized harpists from around the world to perform there. Through his success with the group and as a soloist, Maestro Alberto remains in great demand throughout Mexico, the Americas and around the world.

Grupo “Tlen-Huicani”

Alberto de la Rosa *harp, requinto, vocals*
 Raul Monge *percussion, jarana, vocals*
 Ruben Melgarejo *bass, violin, vocals*
 Miguel Lopez Sánchez *guitar, vocals*