

Sunday, March 6, 2011, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall

Balé Folclórico da Bahia

Sacred Heritage

PROGRAM

Sacred Heritage

Choreography Walson Botelho and José Carlos Arandiba
Music Songs from Candomblé rituals

In the 300 years following the colonization of Brazil by the Portuguese, more than ten million African slaves were brought to the New World. In order to maintain their own African identity and culture, many practiced the Yorubá religion Candomblé. Created for Balé Folclórico da Bahia's 20th anniversary and performed for the first time in the United States, "Sacred Heritage" celebrates this rich Afro-Brazilian religious tradition through a series of dances honoring the most important African deities, or Orixás, in the pantheon.

Exú: This dance pays homage to the Orixá sent by Olorum, the Supreme God, to create the Universe. This beloved trickster, god of the crossroads, is always honored at the beginning of any Candomblé ceremony.

Yaô's Initiation: This segment celebrates the first public introduction of an initiate to the religion. Following a three-month period of seclusion, the Yaô is welcomed by the deities as they inhabit the celebrants' bodies.

Xirê: This sequence of dances dedicated to the African Gods dramatizes a central aspect of Candomblé ritual: celebrants falling into trance, allowing the Orixás to assume human form and exhibit through their spontaneous movements the various aspects of their personalities, creating a temporary bridge between the human and the divine. The order of these deities is as follows:

Ogum God of iron and war
Oxum Goddess of rivers, lakes and waterfalls
Omolú God of skin diseases, plague and death
Iansã Goddess of winds and storms
Oxosi God of forests and hunters
Oxalá Supreme God of the pantheon

Puxada de Rede (Fishermen's Dance)

Choreography Walson Botelho
Music Bahian folklore

A popular demonstration still seen on the beaches of Bahia in which Iemanjá, the Goddess of the Sea, is invoked by the fishermen and their wives who through their dances and songs ask for an abundant catch.

Berimbau

Choreography José Carlos Arandiba
Music Bahian folklore

Based on an African legend, this dance tells the story of a young couple from warring tribes whose love is forbidden by their people. Taking pity on the lovers, a witch transforms them into a bird called Luna. The sound of this bird inspired the creation of the *berimbau*, the musical instrument whose beautiful rhythms are played as accompaniment to the Afro-Brazilian martial art known as *capoeira*.

Samba de Roda

Choreography Walson Botelho
Staging Walson Botelho and José Carlos Arandiba
Music Bahian folklore

The most popular dance and rhythm in Bahia, the samba first appeared in Brazil as an entertainment practiced by the slaves during their leisure hours. This vibrant depiction evokes the flirtatious, sensual energy of this beloved tradition.

Capoeira

Staging Walson Botelho and José Carlos Arandiba
Music Bahian folklore

A form of martial art which originated in Africa and was brought to Brazil during the colonial period by slaves from Angola, *capoeira* remains one of the most popular expressions of Afro-Brazilian culture.

Afixirê

Choreography Rosângela Silvestre
Music Antônio Portella and Jorge Paim

Meaning "Dance of Happiness" in the Yorubá language of West Africa, this dance pays homage to all African countries which influenced and helped form Brazilian culture. A feast of rhythms, sounds, colors and movements, this exuberant dance celebrates and defines the sensuality and spirit of the Bahian people.

Samba Reggae

Choreography José Carlos Arandiba and the company
Music Songs of Bahian carnival

The most recent form of Bahian *carnaval* rhythm and an ever popular finale to Balé Folclórico's program, Samba Reggae mixes such Afro-Bahian rhythms as *afoxé*, *ijexá* and *samba duro* with Caribbean influences and reggae.

This program will be performed without intermission.

Cal Performances' 2010–2011 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Balé Folclórico da Bahia



CAST

Dancers

Estevam Alves, Alan Dias, Diogo França, Nildinha Fonseca (soloist in “Fishermen’s Dance” and “Afixirê”), Rafael Leal, Glauber Lima, Joice Nogueira, Reinaldo Pepe (soloist in “Afixirê”), Valfredo Pereira, Luana Pessanha, Jair Santana, Edileuza Santos, Darlan Silva, Rose Soares (soloist in “Afixirê”), Agatha Souza, Priscila Vaz

Musicians

Alcides Morais, José Ricardo Sousa, Fábio Santos (berimbau and conga soloist in “Afixirê”), Mário Sérgio Santos, Joel Souza

Singers

João Gonzaga, Dora Santana & Miralva Couto

General Director Walson Botelho

Artistic Director José Carlos Arandiba

Music Director José Ricardo Sousa

Choreographic Assistant Nildinha Fonseca

Production Manager Gregory Davis

Sound Engineer Caíque Vidal

Lighting Designer/Operator Marcos Souza

Color Backdrop in “Samba Reggae” Alberto Pitta

Costumes and Accessories Walson Botelho, Antônio das Graças and Ninho Reis

Wardrobe Supervisors Fernando Bergen and Patrícia Souza

Stage Technicians Jairo Fonseca and Carlos Matias

Dance Instructors José Carlos Arandiba (modern and classical ballet techniques) and Nildinha Fonseca (Afro-Brazilian dance)

Management Jason Mainland, Lila Artists Management, LLC



THE ONLY PROFESSIONAL folk dance company in Brazil, **Balé Folclórico da Bahia** was formed in 1988 by Walson Botelho and Ninho Reis in the city of Salvador in the northeastern state of Bahia. Since its first performances the following year, the troupe has achieved considerable international success, in particular, at France’s Biennale de la Danse in Lyon in 1994 and 1996, the Sydney Festival and Spoleto Festival USA in 1997 and 2000, and many of the most important concert halls on its frequent tours worldwide.

The company has toured throughout Brazil, and in 1990, 1993, 1996 and 2000 was awarded the title “Best Dance Company in Brazil” by the Ministry of Culture. Since its 1992 European debut in Berlin, the company has returned several times to Germany, France, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and other countries. Its first tour in the United States and Canada in early 1996 included performances in New York, Boston, Washington DC, Berkeley, Miami, Los Angeles, Seattle, Toronto, Montreal and several other important cities. From 1996 to 2004, the troupe visited more than 80 cities on its North America tours.

The current tour, *Sacred Heritage*, presents a repertory of authentic folkloric dances and music based on the three different influences that formed the Brazilian people: African, from the introduction of slavery in the late 16th century;

Indígena, the Brazilian natives; and European, through Portuguese colonization.

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

Walson Botelho, General Director and co-founder of the company, is a choreographer and former performer who graduated from the Federal University of Bahia with a degree in cultural anthropology. He has worked as dance director of the Cultural Foundation of Bahia, production director for the Balé Teatro Castro Alves in Salvador, and as assistant director, dancer, singer and musician with the company Viva Bahia. Aside from his work with Balé Folclórico da Bahia, he is also serves as artistic director for two of the most famous Bahian pop stars: Carlinhos Brown and Daniela Mercury.

Artistic Director **José Carlos Arandiba** has worked with the company in this capacity 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 European-based dance companies.