
Welcome to our Tenth Anniversary and Awards Banquet

PROGRAM

Cocktails Mariachi Los Palmeros

Master of Ceremonies Peter Nuno
Producer & Host of Charlando
WGN-TV Channel 9

Invocation Bishop Placido Rodriguez, CMF

Dinner Cuerdas Clasicas

Escenas De Un Ballet

The Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago

Comments Henry A. Roa
Executive Director
Jose Luis Ovalle
President

Awards Peter Nuno
Jose Luis Ovalle
Matie Medrano-Ovalle
Henry A. Roa
Juanita Roa

Dancing Grupo Zeus
Phil Murillo, DJ

*The Company extends a sincere thank you to
THE MEXICAN FINE ARTS CENTER MUSEUM
For co-sponsoring this beautiful event*

President and Vice President's Message

Ten years have passed since the founding members, of the company, first got together to prepare a program that would combine the anthropological value of our Mexican Dance Heritage with the quality expected in a professional dance troupe.

Since 1982 the goals of conveying the cultural message involved in this activity, through the God given talents of our youngsters, as well as placing the centuries old Mexican tradition in a more altruistic perspective, have prevailed and yet even excelled with the passage of time.

Throughout this past decade each of the dancers, that joined the company, has provided more than an important material contribution...a fine source of inspiration that has become the very core of our development as choreographers and the authentic reason of the continued success of our organization.

All past and present members have shared their artistic and social uniqueness; the results of good families, good education, and properly absorbed schooling. In other words the requisites for positive motivation and high self esteem.

Tonight, as you join the company's cheering parents and friends during the awards ceremony, you will also be meeting the youngsters who use their natural born ability of dance to showcase the excellence of our historic reality and thus they demonstrate the virtues of the positive side of Chicago's large Mexican community.

Jose L. Ovalle
President

Matiana M. Ovalle
Vice President

Jose L. Ovalle
Matiana M. Ovalle



Executive Director's Message

The Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago has had a successful ten years because the best people were able to come together and work to express their mutual love of Mexico's dance and musical heritage.

In 1978 I first "discovered" the dance heritage, of Mexico, when I was asked to present something "Mexican" for the Western Electric Hawthorne Heritage and Culture Club. I searched for a teacher and was directed to Mrs. Francis Casas and Ms. Alicia Chavarria. They taught me, and my daughter Nicole, some simple dances and we presented them at the plant. In 1979, my son Edward asked us to perform for the L.I.F.E. Club at Illinois Institute of Technology. I felt that a group would be more appropriate and that is when I met Ms. Ofelia Solano.

She brought her dance group to IIT and they impressed me so much that I knew Nicole must become a part of it and she did. I observed that the group, which became known as "Nuevo Ideal", was not being compensated properly for their excellent work. I therefore began to obtain bookings that paid a fair remuneration for the group's above average presentations. Then I met Mr. Jose Luis Ovalle.

Jose directed an adult group, Alma De Mexico, that included Ofelia and Serafin Vargas. I was highly impressed when I saw both groups perform together. I thought to myself that this would make a great company if they banded together. Later, in February of 1982, they did.

I was happy that they merged to form the Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago which consisted of Ofelia directing the grammar school dancers; Serafin, the junior high dancers; and Jose, the adult, college, and high school dancers, as well as being company choreographer. Then they honored me by asking me to handle the business end of the company. Now I felt that the company was on the threshold of a great future.

The company incorporated on March 28, 1983 and a year later began receiving grants from the Illinois Arts Council and the Chicago Office of Fine Arts. Since then the company has grown steadily, adding to its repertoire with many costumes and dancers and acquiring the reputation as the best Mexican dance troupe of the area. The next decade will bring even greater growth and stature in as much as the company will have 501 (C) (3) status.

Initially the company rehearsed at the Gads Hill Center, 1919 W. Cullerton but as it grew, it needed larger rooms and, in April 1984, expanded to Malcolm X College, 1900 W. Van Buren.

At the end of 1987 Ofelia and Serafin, regretfully, left the company to devote more time to their family and to continuing their education. Matiana Medrano-Ovalle became director of the first group and Juanita Roa took the position of secretary/treasurer.

Naming everyone that has contributed to the company's success is difficult because so many have helped in some measure. However I must recognize Irene Toscano; Dolores Reyes; and Mary Roa; for their help before 1982. Also Brockie Dilworth, of Gads Hill Center; Jose M. Vega; Irene Flores, who initiated the company's expansion to Malcolm X College; also Carlos Tortolero; Helen Valdez; and the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum which came into being at the same time as the dance company. Contributing financially as well as promoting, are Shirley and Dr. Arturo Velasquez and Mr. Eusebio Arce. These have contributed behind the scenes.

Contributing, in front of the scenes, are the dancers that are pictured within this book and those that have gone.

In the thirteen years that I have been associated with the dancers I have, as I stated earlier, discovered my Mexican heritage. Too many of us do not know how beautiful our Mexican culture is. It is important to be an American in the U.S.A. but it is equally important to retain the traditional history of our ancestral country because it helps to understand the values of other cultures of the world. People should share their ethnicity so as to better associate in the multi-cultural society that we live in; and the only way to effectively share one's heritage is to, first, know it.

The company strives to promote the Mexican culture through dance and music that reflects Mexican history. The arts agencies mentioned above recognize this and have honored the dance company with several first place awards as the best example of how to perpetuate one's heritage.

The company members "experience" their heritage through dance and music. They learn through an enjoyable activity that brings them in contact with other peoples and places. As examples: They were honored to have performed for President Reagan's 1985 visit to Chicago Heights; for the 1987 Pan American Games, at a V.I.P. Banquet that was attended by Vice President Bush; for the 1988 tribute to Katherine Dunham at the New Regal Theater; and for Governor Thomson and his wife at Orchestra Hall. In 1987 they were an opening act for Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme at the Chicago Theater. They also met Mayor Washington.

One of the most enjoyable company experiences was the successful 1988 Tour of Mexico. It was an experience that we will never forget. The most recent experience was performing at the Chicago Stadium during halftime of the Chicago Bulls and Miami Heat Basketball Game, on March 6, 1992.

We have occasional parties and dinners and we have an annual picnic out of state. We have had Christmas parties; Mother's Day parties and barbecues. We go to the State Fair not only to perform but to have a good time. Many of our performances require a bus for transportation and everyone enjoys these trips. As you may have wondered; five couples met in the company and married.

Since 1979 it has been a joy to have observed these fine dancers grow from children to fine young adults. My wife, Juanita, shares this joy with me.

I thank my wife for the tremendous assistance that she has given me. I also thank my daughter Nicole for all the help that she has given me and her mother.

To all the members of the company, dancers and assistants, you are the ones that made the company what it is today; we have the best instructors and business people; but without you, the best dancers, we would not be here this night celebrating our tenth anniversary. Thank you for being who you are; Mrs. Roa and I are very proud of you.

We are proud of everyone in the company. We feel that we are a big family and enjoy each other's company. This has contributed to the growth of the young members and they come to appreciate their heritage and will perpetuate it as they prepare for their place in society.

Thank you for celebrating with us tonight. Your presence is one more testimonial to the success of the Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago.

HENRY A. ROA

Henry A. Roa

Executive Director



THE MEXICAN FOLKLORIC DANCE COMPANY OF CHICAGO, INC.

(La Compañía De Danza Folklorica Mexicana de Chicago, Inc.)

Jose Luis Ovalle President

Matiana Medrano-Ovalle Vice President

Juanita Roa Secretary/Treasurer

Henry A. Roa Executive Director

WARDROBE: Raquel Vargas, Ana Maria Valenzuela, Helena Hernandez, Adela Juarez, Rosa Maria De La Torre, Francisca Casas, Laura Tapia and Martha Leang.

SEAMSTRESS: Amparo G. Ovalle

SOUND: Pedro Juarez

VIDEO: Mark A. Espinosa

DANCERS:

GROUP 3

Jose Luis Ovalle
Nicole M.D. Roa
Rosie De La Torre
Hector Saul Casas
Victor M. Vargas
Patty Hernandez
Juan Carlos Medrano
Blanca Rabiela
Maribel Cervantes
Ricardo Lemus

Matiana Medrano-Ovalle
Lourdes Ramirez
David Moreno
Patricia Marlene Casas
Laura Valenzuela
Adrian Moreno
Maria Elizabeth Juarez
Ileana Landeros
Blanca Rosa Sida
Reynaldo Rodriguez

Jose M. Vega
Eric Baeza
Diana M. Valenzuela
Jennifer Ann Vargas
Daniel Miranda
Yuvanka Glafira Juarez
Fernando "Ferry" Rabiela
Susana Medina
Elizabeth Niño
Sandra Lerma

GROUP 2

Sergio Rabiela
Joel Leang
David Miranda
Gerardo Landeros

Jesus Cervantes
Emily Tapia
Eduardo Aguayo

Mario Medina
Cristina Aguayo
Michele Nieto

GROUP 1

Melissa Tapia
Jose Zapata
Isuara Zapata

Alejandro Aguayo
Luis Alberto Ovalle
Lorena Aguayo

Mayra Zapata
Cinthia Miranda

The Dance Company is in residency at Malcolm X College, 1900 W. Van Buren St., and at the Gads Hill Center, 1900 W. Cullerton Ave.

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FOR INFORMATION CALL (312) 247-1522