

Rafael Palacios: "Dance has given me the courage to be black without the feeling of inferiority"

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January 27,
2020



By Andreu Gomila

Rafael Palacios is a legend of Latin American dance. Twenty-three years ago, he founded Sankofa Danzafró, in Medellín, thanks to which he has managed to dignify the lives of many Afro-descendants in Colombia through the movement. It has also recovered the memory of its legacy and is today one of the most powerful companies on the continent.

What characterizes Afro-Colombian dance?

Their struggles of existence and re-existence, their processes of self-enunciation and search for their own identity that was not detached from their African origins.

Afro-Colombian dance is the reflection of a people who, in the midst of the oppression and misfortune they had to live through in times of slavery, knew how to dance to weave community, to reclaim and demonstrate humanity, and above all to find meaning in life through art and creativity.

"Our way of dancing contradicts the stereotypes and imagery of eroticism and exoticism that modernity has foisted on black bodies"

What space does it have in Colombia? Has it cost you a lot for Colombian cultural institutions to recognize it as their own?

During these twenty-three years we have built a space of dignity where our way of dancing contradicts the stereotypes and imagery of eroticism and exoticism that modernity has foisted on black bodies. We have been interested in unveiling the knowledge that the dancing black body has built and the individual and community healing processes that they forge.

All this has given us social recognition and an intercultural dialogue that positions Sankofa Danzafró as a company that proposes the construction of knowledge of the country and that contributes to social transformation.

It has never been easy, coloniality and the colonial matrix continue to overshadow our structural epistemologies through structural racism, however, we continue to move forward convinced that dancing is one of our most powerful and political expressions to envision the best possible horizons in our country and in the world .



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/snl6S6sNHf0>

What are its sources?

The Sankofa dancers are young people of African descent who have learned and cultivated their respective traditional dances. Regions such as Tumaco, Chocó, Uraba, Guapi, Buenaventura, Puerto Tejada, among others, have nurtured what we do, it is that ancient knowledge that gives us the route to think about a contemporary Afro-Colombian dance, a rooted dance, that allows us not to forget about where we come from and it guides us where to go.

Afro-Colombian teachers, such as Francisco Tenorio, Esperanza Bioho, Madolia De Diego,

Ninoska Salamandra, Delia Zapata Olivella, and many more, were in charge of cultivating the cultural expressions of each region and it is thanks to them that we are still, remain and transcend .

On the other hand, my training in contemporary Afro dance with the teachers Germaine Acogny and Irene Tassembedo were the basis of African education that I could later bring to my country to start a dialogue with Africa and found Sankofa Danzaafro.

I think it was formed in Paris. What did you learn there?

I lived in Paris for almost six years, this allowed me to study western techniques such as classical ballet, jazz, contemporary and modern dance, but it was also the place where I trained with the Burkina Faso teacher Irene Tassembedo. Paris allowed me to discover and learn from Africa, live in the African Quarter and contrast the European world and the African world at the same time.

| "We seek that beyond the movement, the form, the costumes, the public connects with our message, with what we want to say, give away, tell and propose"

What connections do you have with Africa? And with other Latin American countries, such as Brazil or the Antilles, where the presence of black slaves was very large?

I was able to travel to eighteen African countries as a dancer and dance student next to my teacher Tassembedo, I am still in contact with her and we have carried out several projects in both Colombia and Burkina. Last year I worked with Germaine Acogny here in Colombia at a residence for the Young Creators of Chocó, a group with whom I work as a tutor in the Colombian Pacific.

As for Brazil, we have done internships with the Sansacroma group and this year we will host the Liga do Corpo company in March. We all agree that through dance our enslaved ancestors and, we, fight and find inputs and tools to position cognitive and social justice in our environments and thus weaken the social inequality that so suffocates us.

He has said that they dance to be seen, not to be heard. What does it mean?

"We dance, more than to be seen, to be heard!" This is our phrase. We seek that beyond the movement, the form, the costumes, the public connects with our message, with what we want to say, give away, tell and propose.

| "My dancers have the desire to transform the social reality that happens to us"

Where and how do you 'recruit' the dancers?

Most of them have seen us on-line or through networks and are interested in our way of doing things, they look for us and we receive them so that together we explore possibilities for joint work.

What characteristics should a dancer have in your company?

Discipline, perseverance, desire to share their knowledge and learn from others. Illusion to transform the social reality that happens to us.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/KVPEjcRws-4>

What is the situation of the descendants of slaves in Colombia?

It is difficult, we live in the areas with the highest poverty rates, lack of hospitals, educational institutions, sewers, appropriate infrastructure, unemployment. An endless number of deficiencies to which the State turns its back. Furthermore, our territories are stalked by armed and criminal actors who have turned rivers and jungles into corridors for drug trafficking, causing massive displacement, rape and death to our social leaders.

What space has dance played in its positioning towards life?


From the age of five I realized that this was how I wanted to play, then I clung to dance as a place to face the world, I discovered in it a way of creating discourse, hope, weaving community and identity.

Dance has given me the courage to be black without the feeling of inferiority that the colonial matrix has wished to impose on us, through it I have been able to build the meaning of my life alongside others who dance to celebrate life and battle in the face of adversity.

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Sankofa Danzafró. The city of others

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Although art exists with and for the soul or, as the choreographer Rafael Palacios affirms, "it is unthinkable not to tie the social to the scenic", from time to time artists are born whose work is so sincere and authentic that it is even easier perceive their work. The Afro-Colombian dance company Sankofa Danzafró, which Palacios founded in 1997 and directs since then, today is an example that you can dance for something beyond *jouissance*, that you can dance to claim a voice: Sankofa talks about ethnic discrimination and inequality, but also about anyone who feels alien or different in any part of the world.

For the first time we will see this group based in Medellín with the choreography *La ciudad de los otros*, created in 2010 by its director to celebrate 159 years of the abolition of slavery in Colombia.

In the piece, the collective and recognition of the other predominate through movements that decolonize the Afro-descendant body by removing it from the common place of eroticism and eccentricity; the result is a contemporary, urban and cathartic choreography

far from the stigmas and stereotypes reproduced in the imagination. Humans hitting and jumping, sometimes on objects, to break walls, ideological barriers and fears.

In *the city of others* that virtue and the connection of its performers with what they are can be recognized; dancers from vulnerable and unfavorable contexts who found themselves through dance. It is a kind of evidence of what Ohad Naharin also looked for when seeing the personal possibilities of each one with his Gaga language, I'm worth the comparison. And it could not be otherwise, because in the name of the group comes penance: Sankofa means "return to the root." It is thus proclaimed by its creator, who in the nineties was a disciple of one of the key figures in modern African dance Irene Tassembedo and who in 2010 would be recognized by the United Nations Organization for the project Steps on Earth as "Good practice of Afro-descendant social inclusion in Latin America".

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The piece exposes the ethnic discrimination and social disadvantages that black communities face.
Credit: Special

Celebrate Sankofa with the African root

Yanireth Israde

Mexico City (06 August 2019) .-

00:00 hrs

The Colombian company Sankofa - a word that in African means "going back to the roots" - combats racism from the stage by developing a language of the black body distant from eroticization and exoticism that the West usually promotes, while exploring themes that transcend, also, conventions.

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"We are not here for the public to applaud a loincloth or a beautiful, voluptuous black body, with oil on the skin, but to see men and women who are building society," says dancer and choreographer Rafael Palacios, whose group will perform for the first time in Mexico with *La ciudad de los otros* on September 13 and 14 at the Teatro de la Ciudad Esperanza Iris (Donceles 36, Centro Histórico).

The piece exposes the ethnic discrimination and social disadvantages faced by black communities and their demand to convert Medellín - or other cities in Colombia and Latin America - into a city for everyone, rather than a "city of others".



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"We must recover that notion of the body as a sacred home, which is ultimately the only thing we have: the body is what we live with, what we move with, what we think about, what we that we express ourselves, and that is why it is important to reconsider, in this era, the body, and to look at it in a much more fraternal, more loving, more respectful way," he urges.

This principle allows the body to become empowered, both on stage and during the process of artistic creation, indicates who has carried out pedagogical work with young people from black communities in Colombia as part of the "Steps on Earth" project, recognized by UNESCO in 2010 as "Good Practice of Afro-descendant Social Inclusion in Latin America".

"We have to listen to young people and their knowledge, because we always think that we have to teach them, that we have to tell them how to live and how to do things, because there is a society that tells us that they don't know anything, that they are empty containers for which must be filled, but we are here in Colombia with these youths who are reflecting on what is happening to them and the dangers that lie in wait for them, and are looking for multiple ways to build protective environments. "

And he concludes: "In Colombia, we are in a peace process and there is work to think about the body in multiple ways and to do work from art so that this body is sensitized and is a much more dignified place from all points of view" .



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'Dance was our voice when we were denied the word'

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Culture

Rafael Palacios, director of Sankofa Danzafró, exposes the cultural value of dance. The Afro-descendant group will open the Africa in America Festival with the play 'The City of Others'

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- 'Dance was our voice when we were denied the word'



- 'Dance was our voice when we were denied the word'



- 'Dance was our voice when we were denied the word'

To the rhythm of the traditional, but without losing sight of the modern, Sankofa Danzafró proposes a reunion with Afro-descendant origins through theater, singing, contemporary and urban dance and African rhythms.

Sankofa Danzafró, Afro-Colombian Cultural Corporation founded in 1997 as a space dedicated to dance training and creation, will officially start the Africa in America Festival with the presentation of the contemporary piece 'The City of Others', on Monday May 13 at the Athenaeum of the City of Knowledge, at 7:30 pm

'Dance is a voice in favor of equity. It helped us survive in times of slavery. It was our voice when we were denied the word. It became a narrative, a memory and a hope for the future,' says dancer and choreographer Rafael Palacios, director of Sankofa.

Sankofa is a word of African origin, it comes from Ashanti (Ghana). 'Sanko' means that he is behind and 'fa' that takes from him: look at the past to create the future, and not forget.

In other words, 'it means going back to the roots and, as a philosophy, knowing the past, understanding the present and moving forward with firm steps towards the future. Under this word and principles we created our corporation 22 years ago ', describes Palacios.

Through various pedagogical and staging projects, the corporation has wanted to build a bridge between black communities in Colombia, in search of an ancestral substrate to support the creation of works that stem from the roots of Afro dance, but that they develop within the framework of the everyday, the traditional and the contemporary. For this reason they propose a poetics of dance as an option for social bonding and positioning of Afro-Colombian culture.

In its quest to strengthen cultural identity, Sankofa works hand in hand with private and state organizations. 'The Mayor of Medellín took us into account to celebrate the 159th anniversary of the abolition of slavery. For the date, Sankofa invited Afro-descendant dancers to create a staging. We wonder what it means to celebrate these 159 years', details the director of the group.

The dancer and choreographer exposes that in the elaboration of the work the current condition of Afro-descendants in the city of Medellín, Colombia prevailed, but not 'the nostalgic past in which we were enslaved'. 'And thus the City of Others is born, narratives of 20 artists where we talk about opportunities, the doors that are closed to us and the contributions we make to build cities and nations,' Palacios points out.

'The City of Others betrays the lack of opportunities for human beings that for generations have been marked by ethnic discrimination and social inequality. Black communities and other marginalized people, always observed through the same lens, demand a political power that transcends in authentic forms of coexistence, that the City of Others be a city for everyone ', he details.

This work is a choreographic bet based on Afro-Colombian language and urban dance that evokes sensitivity, the enjoyment of movement and music.

"It is a very powerful piece because it tells of stories of struggle and where each dancer interprets himself on stage demanding equity, respect for his culture, but above all worthy intercultural dialogues," says Palacios.

With a wide repertoire of works, Sankofa has obtained various recognitions such as the 2008 National Dance Prize to the master Palacios for the work 'San Pacho... blessed!' and Mention of the United Nations as Good practice of Afro-descendant social inclusion in Latin America 2010 with the Project Steps on Earth, which is carried out with dancers in the Pacific Region in agreement with the Training for Trainers Program of the Ministry of Culture 2008-2013.



(/media/k2/items/cache/6ddb2450462828abf9aabc88d6bfb7fe_XL.jpg)

Monday, February 05 2018

Rafael Palacios, the master of contemporary Afro dance

The city of others has been, until now, the famous work of Rafael Palacios, a dancer from an early age and a master of contemporary Afro dance technique.

By: Vanessa Márquez Mena

viveafro@gmail.com (mailto:Katy17861@gmail.com)

Rafael has a slow, low, somewhat shy tone of voice. Seeing it, one does not imagine that all the wisdom of a dance that comes from Africa is transmitted through its slim body, because precisely **Sankofa** (<http://sankofadanzaafro.com>) means "going back to the roots". He does not appear to be his age either, he mixes himself among the young dancers and he looks like one more than 26 or 27 years old.

The story of 'Rafa' as he is known by close beings, does not start from his birth but from the love story of his parents. Some young people from different ethnic groups and regions who, regardless of the social prejudices of that time, decided to unite their lives. **His father is from Munguindó in the middle of the Selva del Chocó**, to get there, you have to cross a long journey of six hours through the Atrato river and **his mother is from Ituango, Antioquia**. Both arrived in Medellín in search of work and study, and for 'Rafa' that courage of his parents was the base to educate them.

"I say that there is a lot of courage and there is a lot of awareness of seeing the other as a human being and not as racialized bodies ... All that they faced was the basis for raising us, for giving us a type of courage and not settling for the difficulties that we meet in life".



Sankofa is a dance company that was born in 1997, but its founder, Rafael Palacios Callejas started dancing from the age of 5 thanks to his father who was the dance teacher at the institution where he studied. Later, in high school, he continued to dance Colombian traditional dance and by the end of school he already knew that he wanted to be a professional dancer.

He started a new life in Bogotá, there he studied at the National Ballet of Colombia, with Esperanza Biohó at the Colombia Black Cultural Foundation and then, as fate always has his move to put him in the perfect place, he met Germaine Acogny, director of the Mudra school -Afrique and with it the contemporary Afro dance technique.

"I asked him where he could learn the technique (...) he told me that if he wanted to learn it, he had to go to France. I saved money, got my tickets, the Visa and went to France behind it. I also met Irene Tassembodo who was finally the teacher who formed me, with Irene I spent five years studying contemporary Afro dance and also in her company I traveled through 18 countries in Africa with a show of which I was a part".

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Five years have passed since 'Rafa' arrived in Paris, he devoted himself to studying classical ballet, jazz and contemporary Afro. He came to Colombia with all the desire and motivation to teach what he learned, to found his corporation and to debut as a choreographer. He then began to teach a technique and train dancers of a dance that until now was unknown in Colombia "I started the company with five people: Luisa Maturana, Yndira Perea, Yadir, Paola, Erik de Cartagena, who already lives abroad. We did some early work that the public actually accepted very well. "

Since those beginnings, Yndira Perea Cuesta (one of the first dancers) has been hand in hand and with total fidelity to Sankofa, has been in the corporation for 20 years and is now the director of another cultural process: *Wangari Danza afro* . Others, such as Camilo Perlaza and Feliciano Blandón, arrived shortly after and still continue, because for them 'Rafa' is their father.

This is how Sankofa was projected with great success, Rafael wanted to bring the voice of Africa to every corner, to break with the caricature of the erotic and exotic continent, he assumed that challenge with great momentum and with a clear message "not everything is in Europe or in Let's look at Africa, the United States, which has a lot to tell us. "

"We don't dance to be seen but to be heard" Sankofa.

Those types of movements, the aesthetics and philosophy of contemporary Afro dance began to make their appearance not only in Medellín but worldwide. Rafael created the work *San Pacho bendito* with which he was the winner of the 2008 National Dance Prize, later, *The city of others* , which was released in 2010 in the month of Afro-Colombianism.

In October 2017, Sankofa turned 20 years old, and his gift was precisely the recognition by the University of Antioquia and the Ministry of Culture at the National Awards, to that, *The city of others* , which we could call the work cusp of Rafael Palacios.

Sankofa Danza Afro



The city of others was a work created from the experience of the group of dancers in relation to being Afro in Medellín, it is in this way that it deals with topics that not only occur in this city, looking for a house or renting it, getting a job, enter university, ride a bus, hand over a resume, etc. The city became a complaint mechanism, a way of speaking about contemporary racism.

Since that May 21, 2010, the play was premiered at the Pablo Tobón Uribe Theater, which is still in force and has been able to travel to countries such as Brazil, New York, Canada, China, Uruguay, Peru and Paris. "We believe that it is a work that still It has a lot to say, despite all these years that have passed, the public connects in any country we go to, any city in Colombia. Talking about immigration, about oppressed societies, or the so-called minorities, is a current issue, it is a political position that we have to assume in order to continue approaching the body and dance with its knowledge in a political way ".

Rafael is a cultural manager who develops various projects with communities and with different entities. After finishing her professionalization in dance at the University of Antioquia, she continues her studies in Southern Epistemologies with CLACSO and the University of Colima.

Her days are full of work, rehearsals, and lots of reading. Authors like Toni Morrison remind him of his wife, who as a good chocoana has many stories to tell, others like Quijano, Mignolo, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Malcom X, Martin Luther King, Ángela Davis and Manuel Zapata Olivella allow him to reflect on how the body and art can dialogue to transmit forceful messages.

"There are many people who speak about the Afro theme in the world, what we need is more eyes and more discipline to be sharing that knowledge. Believe yourself a very talented dancer who depends only on your body and virtualism, is an empty dancer, is a dancer who at a given moment has nothing to say to the public other than his physical qualities," he concludes.

* Photographs: Fernando Hurtado.

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THE GUEST OF RFI

Rafael Palacios presents the Colombian dance company 'Sankofa' in Paris

By **Jordi Batallé**

Broadcast on 12-04-2017 Modified on 12-04-2017 at 11:49



The choreographer Rafael Palacios at the RFI studios Photo: Jordi Batallé

This Saturday at the *Café de la danse* in Paris and within the framework of the Don Quijote Festival, the show *La ciudad de los otros* was presented by the Colombian company *Sankofa Danza* directed by the dancer and choreographer Rafael Palacios. Combining contemporary dance, urban dance and African rhythms, Sankofa proposes a reencounter with the origins of Colombians of African descent, without losing the train of modernity of dance.

Rafael Palacios was born in Copacabana, Colombia in 1969.

Dancer and choreographer, researcher of expressions of Afro-Colombian dance. His training in African dance and his career as a dancer in Europe and Africa, were the basis for the creation of the Sankofa Company,



which has a wide repertoire of works that have been presented in Colombia, Canada, Jamaica, the United States and different countries in Europe and Africa.

In 2008, he was awarded the National Dance Prize of the Ministry of Culture with the work *San Pacho Bendito*; In 2009, together with his company, he carried out a creative internship in Burkina Faso, Africa. He has served as teacher of the Training Program for Trainers of the Ministry of Culture 2007-2012, in connection with his Project *Steps on Earth*, which in 2010 receives the recognition of the UN as a Good Practice of Afro-descendant Social Inclusion in Latin America, by the work developed with the dance communities of the municipalities of Tumaco, Guapi, Puerto Tejada, Buenaventura, Quibdó, Apartadó, San Andrés and Providencia. Among his recent creations are *The City of Others* (2010), *Expiration Date* (2011), *Bunde for a Black Angel* (2011) and *Dirty in the Eye* (2012).

Review: The Battery Dance Festival Evokes Courtship Rituals Amid Flying Hats

By **Siobhan Burke**

Aug. 19, 2015

The Battery Dance Festival, presented by the Battery Dance Company in Lower Manhattan for 34 years, has become known for its international roster. This year artists from India, Norway and Poland are among those appearing along the Hudson River — routinely backed by stunning, if blinding, sunsets — at Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park in Battery Park City.

Tuesday brought the festival's first-ever South American guests, with the electrifying New York debut of the troupe Sankofa Danzafró from Medellín, Colombia. It shared an evening of Colombian dance with Pajarillo Pinta'o Dance Company, a New York troupe founded in Germany by the Limón Dance Company soloist (and Pina Bausch moonlighter) Daniel Fetecua Soto.

Sankofa means “reach back and get it” in Akan, a Ghanaian language, and it describes what both companies do: carry traditions into the present, whether fully intact or fused with something new. The down-to-earth performers of Pajarillo began with a medley of Colombian folkloric dances, upbeat courtship rituals (for the most part) in which straw hats, handkerchiefs and candles, respectfully bestowed and exchanged, served as tokens of affection or more. (The riverside breeze sent hats flying, a cause for improvisation.)

With their weaving patterns, waving skirts (for the women) and kneading, close-to-the-floor steps, these dances had an inviting formal simplicity that was lost in “Amalgama,” a more contemporary concoction with a live band. (Pablo Mayor, on piano, composed the jazz-folk music.) Still, any chance to watch the statuesque Clement Mensah, an arrestingly silky mover, is welcome; he and Julia Kelly played giddy lovebirds whose separate daily routines (brushing teeth, tying shoes) merged into one.

The evening's revelation was Sankofa's “La Ciudad de los Otros” (“The City of Others”), an episodic work about urban struggle and resilience combining elements of hip-hop and Afro-Colombian dance. Could an indoor stage have contained this company's energy? The seven dancers and four musicians worked seamlessly together, with breakout moments for both singers and dancers. (The music transitioned from live to recorded, building to thumping techno.)

Costumes of collared shirts and ties suggested a workday grind or pressure to conform. That uniformity made departures from it all the more powerful, like violently shuddering solos for the spidery William Camilo Perlaza Micolta and the troupe's leader of sorts, Sandra Catalina Mosquera Moreno. The stage was not the only platform: Chairs, plywood planks and other dancers created multilevel terrain for all to navigate. Ending in a tight formation, they even stuck together for the bow.

The Battery Dance Festival continues through Friday; 212-219-3910, batterydance.org/festival.

A version of this article appears in print on Aug. 20, 2015, Section C, Page 5 of the New York edition with the headline: Enacting Courtship Rituals Amid Flying Hats and Riverside Breezes

Silletera tradition will be Intangible Cultural Heritage

This year the silleteros of the Feria de las Flores will be dressed in local designers.

By: MEDELLÍN | 10:32 pm | July 7, 2015

Photo: Eduardo Sánchez / CEET

During the launch of the Flower Fair on Tuesday, the Mayor of Medellin announced that the Ministry of Culture included the cultural manifestation silletera, referring to the traditional parade of silleteros, in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (PCI) of the Nation.

In this way, the country recognizes the people and customs related to the task of growing flowers in Antioquia.

Added to the symbol of flowers as a prevalent culture in Antioquia, the manifestation of the silleteros speaks of an ancient tradition of carrying a man on his back, a subject that has not been explored enough in relation to the issue of exploitation and the ethnic vision of some customs of the past.

This year the parade will take place on Sunday August 9 and will have the participation of 500 silleteros: pioneers - who have been participating in the parade for longer - children and young people.

This year there will be an important novelty. In the search to take care of the aesthetics of the parade, the Mayor's Office of Medellín will give the silleteros a wardrobe designed by Camilo Álvarez and Miguel Mesa.

To arrive at the final attire, the designers carried out an investigation in which Juan Luis Mejía, rector of the Eafit University, also participated; Lina Moreno de Uribe, exprimera lady and scholar of tradition, and Alicia Mejía, leader in the management of fairs such as Colombiamoda, Colombiatex and Expoartesano.

The artistic direction of the parade will be in charge of the dancers and choreographers Rafael Palacios and Leyla Castillo, directors of the Corporación Cultural Afrocolombiana Sankofa, who designed comparsas and dances for 700 artists, using as a guiding thread the heritage, taking into account the inclusion of the silletera manifestation in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Nation.

Likewise, it is sought that the silleteros reflect the relationship of the city with the countryside. "The village of Santa Elena is right here, very close to Medellín, a city that still has a high percentage of rural territory (70 percent), and the rest is the urban area," said the secretary of Cultura Ciudadana de Medellín, María del Rosario Escobar

During the parade will also be invited 'Al American', the martial band of the University of Purdue, one of the largest in the United States.

It is expected that at the Feria de las Flores, which will take place between July 31 and August 9, there will be 18,200 visitors from other countries (more than 6,500 foreign citizens and the rest Colombians living abroad), as well as 350,000 visitors. transport terminals and 67 percent hotel occupancy.

The fair will feature other artistic spaces and enjoyment for citizens, such as the National Festival of the Trova Ciudad de Medellín (between July 31 and August 1 at Plaza Gardel) and the presentation of artists such as Choquibtown (the 7th August near the Industriales del Metro station) and Yury Buenaventura (Wednesday, August 5).

Magical realism comes to dance



Scene from the play 'The other hundred years', by the Sankofa Corporation, directed by Rafael Palacios.

BY: AGENCIA EFE

April 16, 2014 - 05:04

The performance was presented yesterday at the Bogotá Theater Festival.

The magical realism of Gabriel García Márquez is evoked in the other hundred years, a piece of contemporary dance, directed by Rafael Palacios, presented yesterday at the Ibero-American Festival of Theater of Bogotá (FITB).

This work based on One Hundred Years of Solitude and produced by the Sankofa Corporation debuts at the fourteenth edition of the FITB with an original music by Paul Dury collected in the work Impresiones Sinfónicas, also inspired by the work of the Colombian Nobel Prize winner.

"One hundred years of solitude is a work that we consider national heritage, it is very opportune to talk about the Colombian realities and to inspire ourselves, in a process of looking at yourself and stop looking outside as a source of inspiration", explained Palacios.

According to the director, "it is a great opportunity to interpret and be able to do an exercise in creating such a wonderful book" like that of García Márquez, which generates "positive pressure", which forces the group to be more "creative and disciplined" in what they are doing. "

The mythical world described by García Márquez in Macondo, with its "presences and absences", is the central axis of the other hundred years, a choreographic piece.

At the end of the novel the last descendant of the Buendía is devoured by the ants, a "voracious troop that becomes the symbol that collects the condition of oblivion and the thrust of life and constitutes the choreographic motive for the laying on stage, "explained the National Theater Foundation.



Cali has its first version of the International Dance Biennial

November 03, 2013 - 12:00 am **By:**

Drafting of GACETA.

Between November 4 and 11, the Cali people can enjoy a wide range of national and international dance.

Otros Mundos, Otras Danzas is the slogan with which the First International Dance Biennial of Cali, which begins on November 4, seeks to create a meeting place for dialogue between foreign and national choreographers and dancers, open to different genres and with a contemporary vision of this discipline. The international tour includes companies of relevant importance and genres as varied as folklore and modern dance. Thus, the José Limón Company and the Folkloric Ballet of Mexico will be present along with companies from Cuba, Spain, Canada, Korea, China and Argentina.

The Biennial, which will take place between November 4 and 11, proposes a sample that includes a range of emblematic companies in the history of dance and, without being all of contemporary dance, they have current and innovative proposals. There will also be companies that suggest new languages and new perspectives on contemporary dance in our times, "said Juan Pablo López, artistic director of the Biennial.

In the same way, the Colombian companies that will be present will tour the national territory through their choreographic proposals, going through the "break-dance"? even the traditional dances of the Colombian Pacific. This cultural richness that our dance has will be the driving axis of the national presence in this Biennial. According to López, it was important that this was born with a strong connection with the national production and for that reason the recent works of companies that from different genres have innovative and risky proposals were chosen. the readings of the ancestral traditions and folklore taken to the contemporary scene will also be represented, in this case by the choreographies of Corpuslab of Medellin and Atabaques de Cartagena, who through a previous and rigorous investigation reinterpret the myths and traditions of the Caribbean and the Colombian Amazon.

Within the framework of this project, three creative scholarships were also awarded to three companies and groups relevant to the panorama of current dance in Colombia: Sankofa, from Medellín; the College of the Body, of Cartagena, and the Delirio Foundation of Cali. All of them will premiere their creations with themes that refer to

classical music as is the case of Sankofa and the Colegio del Cuerpo and salsa and popular dances such as Delirio.

The event offers, first of all, the opportunity for the Colombian dance sector, in the medium term, to have a platform that connects the events of national dance with major international dance events; that Colombia is a visible scenario for great artists to visit the country and that it is inscribed in the world dance circuits propitiating dialogue with national and foreign dancers and choreographers, "said López. The curatorial committee of the Biennial has been integrated by Mónica Gontovnik, dancer and choreographer and creator of the group Koré Danza in Barranquilla; Ana Piedad Jaramillo, current director of the Museum of Antioquia and former director of the Jorge Eliécer Gaitán Theater in Bogotá; and Miguel González, art critic.

Another attraction that the Biennial will have will be "In Cali is dancing like this?" opening event arranged between the Bienal de Danza and Corfecali. This activity will gather couples from the 22 communes of the city, who will dance consecutively the most widespread genres and dances performed in Cali. The public will be able to see it on November 4, starting at 4:00 p.m., at the Plazoleta Jairo Varela. Within the simultaneous program of the Biennial will be the following activities: This is how I dance. The Biennial, in association with the Network of Public Community Libraries of Cali and in resonance with the project of the Photographic Archive of Cali, has proposed throughout the year events that connect the community with photography and dance with the interest of nurturing the photographic memory of the city. This is how an exhibition will be presented in the Casa Proartes room, at the Cultural Center of Cali and at different stations of the MIO, it will gather a selection of photos of the more than 1,500 sent by the Caliños within the framework of this project. Territories in motion The program of the Biennial also includes a programming strip thought of as a space for reflection on the relationship of dance with new technologies, the plastic arts, theater and performance. A selection of one-person works by national companies will be presented in venues such as Lugar a Dudas and Teatro la Mascara. Among the works that stand out are "Diary of a Crucifixion"? de L'Explose, which is inspired by the work of Francis Bacon; Innocent X's study, which explores from the dance-theater themes such as repression, pain and hidden feelings of a priest locked in his own glass urn. On the other hand, Sonia Casadiego, from Bucaramanga, will present "Ocean of Shipwrecks", performance that refers to emptiness, silence and absence. Videodance There will also be room for videodance, thought as the dialogue of the camera with the body, which means another look . All the afternoons of the Biennial will be presented samples of international videodanzas in nine spaces of the city.

EL ESPECTADOR

Tangolomango Festival

2 Nov 2012 - 4:44 PM

Music, dance and circus are taken to La Media Torta de Bogotá this Sunday, November 4th.

The **Festival of Cultural Diversity** of Brazilian origin, arrives this Sunday **November 4 in Bogota** with **music, dance and circus performances for the entire public**. The name of the event, **Tangolomango**, inspired by a **popular Brazilian game** where people dance and sing, reflects the spirit of the festival that seeks to articulate and disseminate artistic projects from different regions of Latin America, to promote diversity and culture exchange.

Since its creation in 2002, the event has promoted more than 4,000 artists and 300 groups from Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Venezuela and Peru, who have performed in cities such as Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Fortaleza, Salvador, Buenos Aires; and now, Bogotá.

To make this new version of the event a reality, a select jury qualified the work of dance, music, theater and circus groups from Bogotá and Fortaleza (Brazil), among whom the ten best ones were chosen.

For Colombia there will be the group Tekeyé that uses percussion and its own body as sound instruments and the Capital Group Orchestra, which with its influence of salsa and Cuban timba, will dance to the capital's public. The African rhythms and the Colombian Caribbean will be present the **Sankofa Dance Company** and the Orkéseos Dance Company. The fantasy will be in charge of La Ventana Producciones, which combines music, video, dance and theater.

From Brazil comes Dona Zefinha and Fulô da Aurora that will pay tribute to the ancestral sounds of Brazilian culture; The Coletivo Vata will dance with the tap technique and Juká de Teatro will entertain the little ones with giant puppets. The Garajal Group will end the day with a show of street theater full of singing, music and dance of African origin.

This Sunday, November 4 at 1:00 pm at La Media Torta, Calle 18 No.1-051 pm Free admission.

The Caribbean is reinvented with the Festival of Performing Arts

A musical journey through Afro-Venezuelan culture, with the help of 31 musicians and dancers; the expression of the circus of Curaçao and the dance in wheelchairs of the Colombian company Azoe. All will be in the second version of the Festival of Performing Arts of the Greater Caribbean, a free event that was born with the right foot last year in Cartagena and this time also takes events to Barranquilla.

By: [WRITING TIME](#)

March 21, 2012, 12:00 a.m.

The Festival, organized by the Imaginación Cultural Corporation, takes place from March 28 to 31, in stages as diverse as the Adolfo Mejía Theater, the streets of the Cartagena Walled Center and the squares of the heroic city.

"This year we have more invited groups, 17 from Cuba, Curaçao, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic," said Aracelly Morales, executive director of the Corporation, which seeks, through the Festival, to integrate the Caribbean countries.

The second version aims to show the fusion of the traditional with the contemporary, the street theater with the room and dance and music expressions. But, according to Morales, will also emphasize academic, so the invited artists, directors and managers will give talks to promote dialogue about creative processes and art as a strategy of social recovery of communities. Cimarron and live paintings The opening will be made with a concert by the Colombian group Cimarrón, which has just received four nominations at the 2012 Independent Music Awards. Its director, Carlos Rojas, will speak, together with the anthropologist Gloria Triana, about the influence of Africa on Colombia, from the look of the Llano. The Live Galley Paintings will also be presented, an ephemeral and public acting representation of everyday but also religious affairs, traditional of Sucre. In addition to the Macuba group, from Cuba, and the Madera group, from Venezuela, you can see the renowned Colegio del Cuerpo, from Colombia; the Periferia collective, which mixes hip hop and contemporary dance, and the Sankofa dance group.

Colombia, Jamaica Meet Over Music

Published: Monday | November 7, 2011 | 12:00 AM



Dancers perform the 'Homenaje a San Pacho' during the Colombian dance company SANKOFA's performance at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts on Friday. - Photos by Marcia Rowe

Marcia Rowe, Gleaner Writer

With its high-end performance and strong cultural lesson, the programme was too short.

From start to finish, Jamaicans and Colombians alike were appetisingly entertained. And the credit goes to the Colombian dance company SANKOFA. SANKOFA comes from an African phrase that means to go back to the roots. Fittingly, the dance drama illustrated just that.

Like all occasions of its ilk, the programme began with the singing of the anthems of both Jamaica and Colombia. The anthems were followed by a welcome from Luis Guillermo Martinez, Ambassador of Colombia.

Then it was handed over to the performers to deliver what was described by the Colombian representative as a "musical" San Pacho - Bendito.

In the absence of any form of dialogue - and the emphasis seemed to be on dancing - dance drama would have been a more accurate classification.

San Pacho - Bendito is divided into three acts. According to the programme note, "Sancho is an alibi for a return to the hometown, for a reunion."

The returnees are those who migrated for economic reasons, but on their return they must celebrate in an "unchanged place where the necessities are still unmet".

There is no protagonist in the story. Instead, the emphasis is on the characters reimmersing themselves into life as they knew it.

Intriguingly different

The first act, Cuando Chano Esaba Grabando, authored by Feliciano Ramirez was intriguingly different and served as the perfect preamble.

A lone singer, with a blank expression sets the tone of the production. He beats the rhythm of his song on what appears to be a large silver baking pan. A young woman emerges with a plastic basin and begins to wash. Gradually the stage is taken over by musicians who pick up the tempo with drums and flute. Two young men, who appear to be

playing a game of cards or dominoes (no props were used), joined them. And the last of the eight characters arrives in the form of a girl who obviously has had too much to drink, but still wants to party.

After much dancing with one of the movements looking akin to the Jamaican 'dutty wine', the very creatively and well-danced act ended with a young lady vomiting in a very large bag.

It was evident that author Jose Luis Perea was not interested in hiding the proverbial skeletons in the closet in **Zukunduko**.

And choreographer Rafael Palcios seemed more than ready to oblige. In the most innovative and interesting scenario, the dance was more than engaging.

It begins with the characters wearing bath towels wrapped around them. Each carries a plastic pail. Then the beauty or intensity of the dance drama unfolds. The unchanged place becomes more evident. Through dancing, accompanied by vocal sounds, the versatility of the pail was demonstrated: the pail as a utensil for a bath, as a latrine, for catching water from leaking roofs as well as for drinking. The vocal sounds were supported by the sounds of the drums or flute.

But the most exciting and creative dance movement was one best described as 'mosquito rhythm'. The dance begins with a slow but steady beat, created by the dancers clapping at mosquitoes in the air, while stomping their feet. Then it moves into a faster, beautifully coordinated clapping of hands and stomping of feet.

"Jamaicans would love this one," voiced a female member of the audience, obviously moved by the creativity of using such basic actions to create not only dance movements but also to tell a story.

The final movement or act was written by Hansel Camacho and titled 'Homanenaje a San Pacho'. It was just as gripping as the previous two acts. But its strength was more in the level of endurance showed by the performer who seemed to symbolise San Pacho.

Also in the cultural package were three musicians, Jamaicans: Orville Hammond and Conrad Pinnock, and Colombian Blas Sarmiento Marimon "Michi Sarmiento".

The combination belied the fact that the two groups had only met earlier that day.

They gave stirring performances of Bob Marley's **No Woman No Cry**, **Sly Mongoose**, **Wave** by the Brazilian Jobin, with Hammond on piano and Pinnock and Michi on saxophone.

The trio ended its amazing performance with Minchi's Antonia.

At the end of the programme **The Gleaner** spoke, through interpreter Martha Corbett-Baugh, to a very excited ambassador.

Martinez, who is only in his fourth month in Jamaica, said among other things, the decision to put on such an event was because it was very easy to use the language of music to understand each other.

He referenced the fantastic performance by the trio, Hammond, Pinnock and Michi as an example. He promises more cultural exposure. He hoped to also make a contribution to Jamaica's upcoming 50th anniversary celebrations.

The collaboration between the music of Colombia and Jamaica took place on Friday at the School of Music auditorium located on the campus of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

Dance Award to ?? San Pacho, blessed! ??

ET eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-3077106

September 2,
2008

After his ten-day tour of five cities, the National Dance Prize of the Ministry of Culture was awarded to San Pacho, blessed!, a 45-minute contemporary dance piece by the Compañía Sankofa, from Medellín, which will receive 40 million of pesos.

By: DRAFTING TIME

September 2, 2008, 12:00 am

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According to the jury that visited Barranquilla, Medellín, Pereira, San José del Guaviare and Bogotá, the production by Rafael Palacios Callejas, an Antioqueno of Chocoan descent, manages to create a unique, innovative and very poetic body language, where elements of Afro-Colombianity were conjugated with contemporary dance techniques ??

San Pacho, blessed! It is a tribute to the great religious and pagan celebration of Chocó: the Patron Saint Festival of San Francisco de Asís, known as the San Pacho festivities.

The piece, based on a thesis from the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana de Medellín, had been awarded in 2005 with the National Grant for Dance Creation.

Palacios and his dancers did not seek to reproduce what happens in Chocó during those days, but to highlight the activities of those who participate in the party, the symbols and the spaces where it takes place.

The jury was made up of the English Julie Barnsley and the Colombians Carlos Jaramillo and Gustavo Llano, based in Germany.

He received an honorable mention for the work 48.9 Pasado Meridiano, by Marybel Acevedo, which represented Bogotá: "He conjugated video, dance, dramaturgy and performance, achieving a multimedia invention of high invoice and conceptual intelligence," says the jury.

Parranda Decembrina Paiza, from the folk group of the Technological University of Pereira, received special recognition. "It was a wonderful surprise that a group with such overwhelming strength and energy was among the candidates," the jury concluded.

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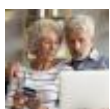
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Sankofa shows today the richness of Afro-Colombian dances

They present in Philosophy and Letters the works «Un alabao» and «Sun no blessing»



The components of the dance company Sankofa -

Ricardo Suárez - **lion**

Ricardo Suárez 11/11/2004

The Colombian dance company Sankofa comes this afternoon, at 20.10 hours, to the hall of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters to present a show composed of the works *Un alabao* and *Sol no Blessing*; two artistic proposals that show the rich folklore of the country in which elements of American and African cultures are mixed. Born with a didactic vocation, the company has transcended the initial idea of artistic creation and interpretation in order to continue its vigorous learning process by sharing and disseminating it in a massive way. For this, it has been constituted as a corporation that develops multiple formative activities that show the Colombian cultural richness. The creation of a center, in which academic, playful and artistic events take place, is another of the proposals of a group, directed by Rafael Mario Palacios, who has presented his choreographies on Colombian, French and Spanish stages. After this presentation to the public, the group will give next week several dance workshops in the classroom of the Choreographic Center, in the facilities of the CHF, with the collaboration of the Secretariat of Cultural Activities of the University and the Leonés Institute of Culture. Under the heading *Uniting ties*, the company proposes an Afro-Colombian dance workshop, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. one of Afro-contemporary dance, from 11 a.m. to 12 a.m. and a third dedicated to ballroom dancing, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. For more information you can call 987 206 572. Time: 20.10. Free entrance.