

Corazón Folklórico Dance Company
presents:

2022 Showcase

 *Portraits of Frida*





Portraits of Frida



Inspired by Frida Kahlo's vivid perseverance and lasting artistic achievements despite facing lifelong bouts of illness, Corazón Folklorico Dance Company brings to life a tribute to her strength, legendary feminism, and stoic self portraits that we cherish of her today. Nearly two years after a pause from the pandemic, the company is delighted to re-emerge and re-energize the Washington DC community with a token of hope and imagination.

In the earlier part of her life, Frida experienced childhood polio that caused her leg to be limp and stunted, a tragic bus accident at 18 years old that fractured her torso, and the struggle to overcome financial instability at home, all of which influenced the incubation of this unique, almost mythical legend of an artist. Although she was bedridden throughout her life, Frida emerged as an extremely illustrious artist who painted her real-life experiences. This performance brings cultural awareness through a creative interpretation of Frida Kahlo as a symbol of strength and bravery.

Act I opening with the Huapango de Moncayo, is an introduction to Frida Kahlo and the vivid color palette in her paintings, exotic animals that lived in her home, "la casa azul," pre-Hispanic figures, Eurocentric fabrics, and traditional Mexican attire that come together on stage to form a vibrant mosaic. Judy Yannini, a muse character follows with soprano vocals to share a culturally significant Mexican waltz, La Sandunga, that is emblematic of Oaxaca, the state in Mexico from where Frida's mother originated. Through the Oaxacan folkloric dances being presented, we see elements of birds flying, an important symbol of freedom that Frida immensely revered and in many ways longed to experience. These images emerge, both literally and figuratively, throughout her paintings and self-portraits.

Act II builds on this recurring theme of freedom that Frida exuded in her paintings. Various facets of Frida's persona continue to appear on stage by various dancers. From her enduring self-portraits to her passionate love life, it is more than evident that Frida was a complex individual who was unapologetically unique. Frida Kahlo resisted gender roles, challenged cultural expectations of women, and redefined relationships. Frida emerges as a stoic independent woman dressed in all black, confident in her grace, beauty, and power while paying respect to the strife that shapes who she has become.



The Program



Huapango de Moncayo	Orquesta de la Sociedad Filarmónica de Conciertos
La Zandunga	Elizabeth Mondragón
Flor de Piña	Banda Filarmónica Renacimiento A.C.
Cumbia del Mole	Lila Downs
Jarabe Ejuteco	Banda Filarmónica Renacimiento A.C.
Jarabe Mixteco	Banda Filarmónica Renacimiento A.C.
No Volveré	Elizabeth Mondragón Jorge Anaya, Elfego Félix, and Benito San Miguel Whitemane Studios - Graphic artist
El Balajú	Orquesta de la Sociedad Filarmónica de Conciertos
La Manta	Conjunto Jarocho Medellín de Lino Chávez
El Tilingo Lingo	Conjunto Jarocho Medellín de Lino Chávez
La Boda del Huiflacoche	Carin León
Aguas del Río Nonoava	Los Villalobos
Quizás, Quizás, Quizás	Elizabeth Mondragón Jorge Anaya, Elfego Félix, and Benito San Miguel
Paloma Negra	Elizabeth Mondragón Jorge Anaya, Elfego Félix, and Benito San Miguel
El Tequilero	Mariachi Agave
El Cihualteco	Mariachi Agave
El Gavilán	Mariachi Agave
El Son de La Negra	Mariachi Agave



I am Frida | Yo soy Frida

Quotes from Frida Kahlo

I am my own muse, I am the subject I know best. The subject I want to know better.

I drank because I wanted to drown my sorrows, but now the damned things have learned to swim.

Feet, what do I need you for when I have wings to fly?

I used to think I was the strangest person in the world but then I thought there are so many people in the world, there must be someone just like me who feels bizarre and flawed in the same ways I do. I would imagine her, and imagine that she must be out there thinking of me, too. Well, I hope that if you are out there and read this and know that, yes, it's true I'm here, and I'm just as strange as you.

They thought I was a Surrealist, but I wasn't. I never painted dreams. I painted my own reality.

It is terrifying to see the rich having parties day and night while thousands and thousands of people are...

This upper class is disgusting and I'm furious at all these rich people here, having seen thousands of people in...

Nothing is absolute. Everything changes, everything moves, everything revolves, everything flies and goes away.

Passion is the bridge that takes you from pain to change.

There is nothing more precious than laughter.

It is strength to laugh and to abandon oneself, to be light.

I, who fell in love with your wings, will never want to cut them off.

The most powerful art in life is to transform pain into a healing talisman. A butterfly is reborn, blossomed into a colorful party!

Citas de Frida Kahlo

Pinto autorretratos porque estoy mucho tiempo sola. Me pinto a mí misma porque soy a quien mejor conozco.

Intenté ahogar mis penas en alcohol, pero las condenadas aprendieron a nadar.

Pies, para qué los quiero si tengo alas para volar?

Solía creer que era la persona más extraña del mundo, pero luego pensé que entre tanta gente en el mundo debe haber alguien que se sienta como yo, estafalaria y defectuosa. Me imagino que ella está ahí fuera pensando también en mí. Bueno, espero que si lees esto sepas que sí, que es verdad, estoy aquí y soy tan extraña como tú.

Creían que yo era surrealista pero no lo era. Nunca pinté mis sueños. Pinté mi propia realidad.

Nunca pinto sueños o pesadillas. Pinto mi propia realidad

La alta sociedad de aquí me da asco y siento un poco de rabia contra todos estos ricos de aquí, ya que he visto a miles de personas en la...

Quién les dio la verdad absoluta? Nada hay absoluto, todo cambia, todo se mueve, todo revoluciona, todo vuela y va.

La pasión es el puente que te lleva del dolor al cambio.

No hay nada más hermoso que la risa.

Se requiere de fuerza para reír y abandonarse a uno, para ser ligera. La tragedia es lo más ridículo.

Yo, que me enamoré de tus alas, jamás te las voy a querer cortar.

El arte más poderoso de la vida es hacer del dolor un talismán que cura, una mariposa que renace florecida en fiesta de colores.



The Artists



Alejandro Góngora - Producing Artistic Director

Alejandro teaches and choreographs ballet folklórico as a tool to create community con corazón in DC. Alejandro is the founder and Producing Artistic Director of Corazón Folklórico DC INC. His mission is to create art with people and showcase Mexico's rich cultural diversity and history. His creativity comes from his upbringing in a Mexican immigrant household in San Diego, California with musicians, artists, and bakers as family members. Alejandro believes dance and culture should be equally accessible to all and is proud to offer free classes to the community. In each presentation, Alejandro leaves a little piece of Mexico for the audience to enjoy.

Alejandro is a grant recipient of the DC Commission on Arts & Humanities Arts and Humanities (DCCAH) Project, Events, and Festivals (PEF) program (2019, 2022) and the Fellowship Program (AHFP) grant (2020, 2021, 2022), which supports qualified individual artists and humanities practitioners who significantly contribute to the District of Columbia as a world-class cultural capital.

Alejandro has performed for ambassadors, diplomats, dignitaries, cultural attachés at events such as President Obama's Proclamation of National Hispanic Heritage Month (2016) and the Embassy of Mexico's Independence Day Gala (2018). Most notably, he trained in 2018 with Amalia Viviana Basanta Hernandez from Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernandez in New York City, Chicago, and Tulsa. Mr. Góngora has trained with instructors from: Compañía de Danza Ticuán (Tijuana, Mexico, 2006), Instituto Mazatlán Bellas Artes (Sacramento, CA, 2007/2009), Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet Company (Los Angeles, CA, 2012), UC Santa Barbara Dance Company (2009-2013), and L'Università di Bologna (2010-2011). Alejandro has a Master of Science in Public Policy and Management from Carnegie Mellon University and a B.A. double major in Sociology and Italian Studies from UC, Santa Barbara.

Elizabeth Mondragón

Elizabeth Mondragon's performance experience ranges from traditional opera to new music premieres. Principal roles include Carmen, Rosina, Dido, and Giulio Cesare, and she has been a featured concert soloist in Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, Bach's *Weihnachts-Oratorium*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor*. She is a frequent performer of American Songbook reviews, and has also performed medieval and renaissance music of Spain and Mexico with the *Ars Musicae Hispaniae* Harp Ensemble. Ms. Mondragon has presented recitals of 20th and 21st century song at The Liederkrantz Club, the Wiscasset Salon Series, and the UUC Chalice Concert Series in New York and Maryland, and is a frequent performer with IN Series Opera, DC's Songs for Seniors, and the international non-profit ensemble *Opera on Tap*, for which she is also a DC Metro chapter co-director. In addition to having a long-established collaboration with award-winning composer, David Sisco, Elizabeth regularly premieres new works – most recently at Kennedy Center – originating the title role in IN Series Opera's *Zavala-Zavala* by singer/composer Brian Arreola and librettist Anna Deeny Morales.



Kyle Marcus Bryant - Visual Artist

Kyle Marcus Bryant is a black, queer artist in his 20s, hailing from the DMV area. He's had a passion for making art since he was very young, and graduated from the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at the George Washington University with a hard-earned degree in the Fine Arts. A multidisciplinary artist and instructor, he works primarily in 2D visual media, including traditional drawing and painting, as well as digital illustration. He specializes in portraiture that captures what makes each subject unique and beautiful, and he is inspired to create by popular culture, as well as the literary and performing arts. In his free time, Kyle enjoys writing, gaming, yoga, and playing with his dog Leo.



To learn more about his practice, view his portfolio, and commission him for work, visit KyleMarcusBryant.com, or follow him on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook: @caelpictor.



Mariachi Agave

Mariachi Agave, established in 2021 by Yumhali García and Benito San Miguel, comprises musicians with a passion for the mariachi tradition. The group is committed to bringing the impressive sound, quality, and technical skill of mariachi to life for audiences that love the music and those new to it.

Members: Yumhali García, Benito San Miguel, Jorge Anaya, Dannice Crespo, Elfego Félix, Juan Flores, Javier Godinez, José Luis Oviedo, Craig Basarich.

Jorge Escamilla

Jorge Escamilla started Whitemane Studios in 2014 and has been the lead producer ever since. He has worked for and collaborated with dozens of companies in the Northern Virginia and Washington DC area, getting involved in video production projects ranging from animated explainer videos and educational clips, to customer interviews and covering live events. He enjoys a broad range of musical genres and is always eager to produce audiovisual content that will transmit the emotion of artists, whether it's through animation or video editing, to get the message across.





The Dancers



Sarah Cahlan
Las Vegas, Nevada

Sarah has lived in D.C. on-and-off for six years and is in her first year of dancing folklórico. Corazón has been an immensely supportive environment for her to learn and grow as a dancer. It has also connected her to her Mexican heritage and community.



Claudia Cárdenas
Houston, Texas

Claudia recently moved to the DC area and found a small piece of home in Corazón Folklórico. The group keeps her grounded in her roots, but also encourages her to grow. She believes Mexican culture is a combination of pride in the stories and histories of love, family, nature, and the struggles and triumphs of the community.



Paulette Chavira
Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico

Paulette has been dancing for 20 years - her first folklórico dance was from the state of Michoacán when she was four-years-old. She believes that folklórico brings the diversity of Mexico to life, and inspires pride in anyone from Mexico. She believes Corazón is an opportunity to put Mexico on stage in the Nation's capital.



Manuel R. Cuellar
Saucillo, Chihuahua, Mexico

Manuel is an Assistant Professor of Spanish and Latin American Literatures and Cultures at GW. His book, *Choreographing Mexico*, explores the relation between Mexican dance and national identity. He has danced folklórico since kindergarten and believes dancing can create community, celebrate the complexity and beauty of heritage, and educate others about the diversity of Mexico.



Mayra Cuevas
Compton, California

Mayra has been dancing folklórico for over ten years. She works for the Washington Office for Latin America, developing partnerships that support human rights throughout the region. When Mayra isn't dancing or working, she loves to spend time with her beloved dog Chili. She believes Mexican culture is a truly complex tapestry that is full of color, flavor, joy, and resiliency. She is proud to be of Mexican ancestry.



Maria Eugenia de la Peña
Mexico City, Mexico

Maria is a mother of two, as well as a water and sanitation expert focusing on Latin American countries. She has been dancing folklórico for five years and loves to share the richness and diversity of the different regions of Mexico in her dancing and costumes.



Imelda Garcia
Mexico City, Mexico

Imelda started dancing when Corazón was founded, almost five years ago. She dances folklórico to express herself and as a way to share the culture and traditions of Mexico.



Cynthia Hernández
Tucson, Arizona

Cynthia has been dancing folklórico for almost ten years. She dances because it connects her to her culture and allows her to express herself through movement. When she's not dancing, she's most likely reading or baking.



Óscar Holguín
La Paz, Baja California Sur, México

Oscar is a Mexican diplomat, a pianist, traveler and reader. He has been dancing since he was in elementary school, and believes Mexico is an ever-evolving country with different cultural manifestations connected by its multiple roots.



Victor Ibarra Jr.
Garland, Texas

Victor is a proud son, brother, and uncle. He likes to joke that he is unemployed so people leave him alone at happy hours, but he is a proud nuclear engineer. He is new to dance, and for him, Corazón Folklórico means family. He recently moved to D.C. alone, but Corazón has helped him find peace and a new home.



Maria Elena Laríos
Pihuamo, Jalisco, Mexico

Maria has been living in the D.C. area for about 22 years. She believes that one is never too old to start learning something new and that's why she started dancing folklórico two years ago. She feels proud to represent Mexico through song and dance.



Elise López
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Elise just recently started dancing and has found Corazón to be a supportive community that challenges her to grow. Folklórico has allowed her to connect with her culture and meet wonderful people.



Sara Rebecca García

Santa Clarita, CA

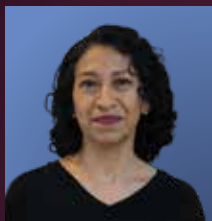
Sara has been dancing Mexican ballet forklórico for about 18 years. For her, dancing folklórico means a way to keep the tradition and culture alive! To never forget your roots, knowing where we come from is a part of the American dream. She would like people to know that Mexico's culture is more diverse than perceived. Each region has its own unique music and traditional outfits to showcase the beauty of it all.



Sherida Magana-Williams

Washington D.C.

Sherida has been dancing for over a year and believes Mexican culture is diverse - shaped by each region's unique and rich history - and welcoming to all who appreciate it.



Sara Martínez

Tuxtepec, Oaxaca

Sara moved from her hometown of Tuxtepec to the U.S. 32 years ago. She likes to share her Mexican roots through dances, costumes, colors and music.



Enrique Dareth Nahuacatl

Veracruz, México

Enrique started dancing three years ago at a time that he personally needed it the most. He likes to dance to learn about his roots and his people. He believes Corazon is a family with whom he can count on in any circumstance.



Kelley Marie Rayo

Port Clinton, Ohio

Kelley was born in Ohio but has lived in D.C. for 27 years. Kelley loves to cook for family and friends. She enjoys cultivating plant pollinator gardens for the Monarch butterfly migration. She also enjoys long walks with her Chinese Crested rescue dog. She just recently started dancing folklórico but has found support and friendship in Corazón. She is also learning Spanish!



Samantha Rose Romero

Gilroy, California

Samantha has appreciated and participated in musical arts since childhood. She toured France with her high school choir, singing in several cathedrals. And she performed with the same chorus at Carnegie Hall. Following that, Samantha took a hiatus from music and performance to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps. For Samantha, folklórico incorporates the best of dance—grace, precision, inconspicuous strength—with the ideal sense of life—joy, wonder, and heroism.





Nina Michelle Rines

Washington D.C

Nina is half Russian and half American and lived in France for five years. She enjoys learning about new cultures and languages and has been dancing Mexican folklórico for ten months. Nina has also danced Eastern European folklórico for three years. For her, Corazón Folklorico has opened a window into a new world, and has offered her a welcoming family that has exposed her to the depth and richness of Mexican culture.



Angelina Romualdo

Maryland, USA

Angelina was born in the DC area, she has more than ten years of folklórico experience. Dancing is her passion, an expression of her emotions, and a celebration of her roots. For her, Corazón is a home and a safe place.



Yasmin Torres

Los Angeles, California

Yasmin moved to D.C. three years ago and recently joined Corazón Folklorico. For her, Corazon is a space where she can continue expressing her passion for dance, bringing her closer to her culture.



Lino Torres

Veracruz, México

Lino recently started dancing, and discovered that it was a way for him to learn more about Mexican culture and to inspire others. Outside of folklórico he loves to run - having completed several marathons - and is a trainer with ten years of experience.



Rosa Villegas

Los Angeles, California

Rose moved to D.C. 20 years ago and has worked in healthcare for over 14 years. She recently started dancing folklórico and finds it fun and as a way to express herself. She enjoys learning about the different regions and some of the history behind the dances. To her, Corazon is a connection to community and friends.



Board of Directors

Joseph W. Frandoni, Chair
Peter J. Anthony, Secretary
David Mayhall, Member
Alejandro Cóngora, founding member
Ix-Nic Iruegas Peón, Advisor
Manuel R. Cuellar, Academic Advisor
Alberto Fierro, Past Advisor
Beatriz Nava Domínguez, Past Advisor

Staff Volunteers

Operations: Imelda García, Diana Alexanderson,
Maria Eugenia de la Peña and Claudia Cardenas
Costume Committee: Elise Lopez, Rosa Villegas,
Noemí Ramírez, Víctor Ibarra, Sara Martínez,
Sara García and Sherida Magaña-Williams

Artistic Committee

Alejandro Cóngora - Artistic Director
Cynthia Hernandez - Instructor
Paulette Chavira - Instructor
Manuel R. Cuéllar - Instructor
Diana Alexanderson - Instructor



Authentic folkloric costume designs and artisan works by:

- Braids By Bryan artist (Los Angeles, CA), Bryan Osorio
- Fiesta Mexicana Ballet Folklórico (Puebla, Puebla) Director, Professor Victor Hugo Cruz Ramirez
- Oaxacan Textiles from Biosa Guyaa Lu (Zimatlan, Oaxaca) Director, Emmanuel "Manu Manolo" Pérez Pérez
- Charro designs (Guadalajara, Jalisco) by Maestro, José Luis Espinoza Nolasco
- Chihuahua costuming by Ballet Folklórico Navezari Director (Chihuahua, Chihuahua), Professor Cesar Alejandro Orta.



Special Thanks

Corazón Folklórico looks forward to its continued success thanks to the help and support from several organizations in the DMV area. Thank you for being part of the Corazón experience and helping to cultivate a community of dancers passionate about diversity and multiculturalism.







The Mission

Corazón Folklórico DC, Inc. was established in 2017 to promote the arts and celebrate cultural diversity through folklórico dance performances in the DMV Metro Area.



Corazón is a non-profit non-profit organization that showcases Mexico's rich cultural diversity through dance performances & offers free classes to adults who want to learn how to dance.

If you would like to contribute, please, contact us:

-  @CorazonFolkloricoDanceCompany
-  @CorazonFolkloricoDC
-  Corazon Folklorico DC
-  corazonfolkloricodc.com

