

Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University, and El Barrio's Artspace PS109 present

Descubrimiento: Voice, Place, Identity
El Barrio's Artspace PS109, East Harlem, NYC
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Conceived and Directed by Kiri Avelar, MFA
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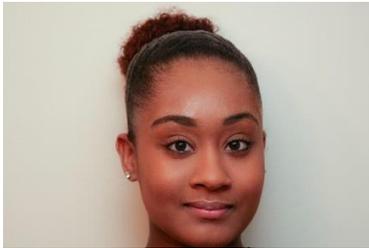
Mil gracias a Rolinda Ramos and Kim Sanchez of El Barrio's Artspace PS109; Zemi Dance Theatre; MFA in Dance Graduate Director and Thesis Committee Chair, Dr. Jeff Friedman, and Chien-Ying Wang, Thesis First Reader; Mason Gross School of the Arts Dance Department Chair Dr. Julia Ritter; Ballet Hispánico; Onyx Mayer-Dean for Stage Management; Graphic Designer Becca Wilson; and to the collaborative artists who held space with me, through thick and through thin, developing a new creative process, a way to work in community, for community.

Una dedicación especial to Sandra Rivera, a kindred spirit, mentor, and catalyst to my work.

And to my Mamita, who always pointed out with great fervency the missing stories in my history books.

- *Kiri Avelar*

COLLABORATORS & PERFORMING ARTISTS



Brianna Brathwaite is a third-year BFA dance major from Parlin, New Jersey. She has received training from the Ailey School, where she worked with choreographers Tiffany Barnes, Christian Von Howard, Fredrick Earl Moseley, and Tracy Inman among others. During her time at Mason Gross, she has been fortunate enough to work with Kiri Avelar, Carlye Eckert, Jessica Featherson, Marielis Garcia, Chien-Yieng Wang, Randy James, and Paul Ocampo. In the fall of 2018, she studied abroad at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London. She has interned with the José Limón Dance Foundation and is currently interning at The American Ballet Theatre Certified School under the direction of Maeve Dougal. She is ABT Certified: Pre-Primary to Level 3.



Franchesca Marisol Cabrera is a dancer, choreographer and instructor originally from Santa Barbara, CA with over 20 years of experience. Her dance training is primarily in the styles of Classical Spanish, Flamenco, Baroque, Ballet and Mexican Folkloric. Marisol moved to Madrid to receive diplomas in Danza Española and Flamenco. Her performances have taken her to London, Mexico, S. Korea, Spain & Hong Kong. Now a New York based performing artist her past performances include Jacques d' Amboise ART NEST, appearances with Siren Baroque, performance seasons with Company XIV and a recent debut at the Metropolitan Opera. She has been a guest choreographer and instructor featured on Sesame Street, the Juilliard Dance Department and is currently on faculty at The Ballet Hispánico School of Dance teaching Spanish Dance and Flamenco to young dancers.



Cecilia L Cáceres is an alumna who began her dance training at the Ballet Hispánico School of Dance and is a graduate of the LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. She then continued her dance training in the Junior Division of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for six years. Cecilia has a dance background in ballet, modern, hip-hop, Latin dance, jazz, ballroom dance, tap, flamenco, repertory, contemporary, and West African dance. She also studied Dance Education at Marymount Manhattan College and became a member of the Soldiers of Hip-Hop Dance Team for three years. Cecilia went on to teach hip-hop, Latin jazz, modern, and ballet at Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club in the Bronx working with various ages in students of her community. In 2009, she taught middle school and high school students hip-hop and Latin ballroom at Urban Assembly for Applied Math & Science. She has assisted the Dance Chairperson in the Dance Department of LaGuardia High School for 17 years. Cecilia is overjoyed to teach hip-hop, jazz, and salsa dance in the School of Dance and currently serves as a School of Dance Associate at Ballet Hispánico.



Radhamely De Leon is a Dominican writer from the Bronx. Pursuing her passion for storytelling, she is currently studying creative writing and journalism at the City College of New York and interning with NBC News. She plans to continue helping others share their narratives with the world.



Karina Hernandez is a graduate of Mason Gross School of the Arts where she received her BFA in Dance. While studying her profession she had the opportunity to travel to Colombia and Israel where she worked with the directors of Swing Latino, Batsheva & Vertigo. Throughout her college career she attended to various dance intensives. Now she is the Administrative Associate at NJDTE and a piano teacher at Miriam Pellicer Piano School, but still is working on opening her own dance company to give birth to her own rhythm.



Federico Garcia is a dancer and performer in the NYC area originally from New Mexico. He began studying ballet as a teenager while continuing with his passion for singing eventually earning a masters degree in Vocal performance from New Mexico State University and minoring in dance, he then decided to pursue dance intensively after moving to NYC in 2012. He has performed in various projects and with various companies in and around the city as well as abroad and around the US. He recently finished a tour to Mexico with Dzul Dance in December and is currently working with them to teach and present dance to high school students in the NYC area.



Born and raised in Las Cruces, New Mexico, **Derek Leyva** graduated from New Mexico State University with a degree in Dance. He appeared in all three dance companies at NMSU, which included Sol y Arena (flamenco and classical Spanish), Contemporary Dance Theater and DanceSport (ballroom). Derek also obtained his Smooth and Rhythm Bronze certification through Dance Vision while in New Mexico. Spending a couple of years studying in New York City, Derek worked at Dance Manhattan, Ballroom Basix and Ballet Hispanico; as well as performed with Artist's Lab's Swing Set throughout the New York and New Jersey area. In his current location, Jacksonville, Florida, Derek teaches weekly classes and is President of the Jacksonville West Coast Swing Club. He travels the U.S. and Canada teaching, performing and competing with his professional partner.



Rafael Lozada is honored to experience his second Kiri Avelar production. He served as a performer and collaborator in Avelar's "*Juntos Somos Uno*" production in December 2017. He is forever grateful to "*La Querida*" and ensemble for their work and encouragement. He dedicates the show to immigrant LGBTQIA members.



Jessica Lynch, a Choreographer, Performer, Teacher, and Arts Administrator was born in Queens, New York and currently resides in the heart of Brooklyn. She attended Professional Performing Arts School in affiliation with The Ailey School and received her BFA Degree in Performance and Choreography at The College at Brockport. During her time there, Jessica took her studies abroad in Kingston Jamaica at the Edna Manly School of the Visual and Performing Arts, where she studied African and Jamaican folk dance. Jessica choreographed a number of pieces that have been performed at SUNY Brockport, ACDF, Edna Manly School, The Apollo Theatre, and The Walt Whitman Theatre. Shortly after, Jessica was offered to perform with BrazzDance in Miami. After leaving Miami, her teaching experience expanded as a First Steps instructor at the Ailey School. With her love for students, Jessica took on the role as the Junior Division Program

Associate where she assisted in a program training 1,000 plus students. Jessica also choreographed Elmont Memorial High School musical for three years and has served as a guest teaching artist throughout the New York tristate area. Jessica currently serves as the Administrative Manager for the School of Dance at Ballet Hispánico.



Michelle Manzanales, a Mexican-American choreographer, dance educator, and arts advocate originally from Houston, TX is the current Director of the Ballet Hispánico School of Dance. Her recent choreography for the Ballet Hispánico Company, *Con Brazos Abiertos*, was described as a "savvy but deeply sincere meditation on her Mexican-American background" (-Marina Harss, New York Times). A colleague of Ms. Avelar since 2011, Michelle is honored to be a part of Descubrimiento: Voice, Place, Identity.



Johsian Martinez, born in Puerto Rico, started his informal training with traditional Latin dances. Upon starting studio work he trained at Encore Performing Arts Center and at Charter Tech for the Performing Arts High School. Currently he is a sophomore BFA Dance major and an EDM candidate for PreK-12 Master's program at Rutgers University.



Kennyth Montes De Oca is a Dominican Republic native and a Rutgers University alum holding a BFA in Dance. He is a current dancer with Ballet Hispánico's second company BHDos. Montes De Oca has performed works by Bill T. Jones, Darrell G. Moultrie, Frederick E. Mosley, George Balanchine, Maxine Doyle, Keith Thomson, Maxine Steinman, Netta Yerushalmy, Nicholas Bruder, Randy James, and many others. Montes de Oca is also interested in choreography; he presented work at the American College Dance Association in collaboration with Isabella Vergara studying the tension and resistance of immigrants in the United States. He has also collaborated and served as rehearsal director for Kiri Avelar.



Kimberly Reyes is a second year BFA Dance Major at Rutgers University from Edison, New Jersey. Her training truly began when Cleo Mack, Blair Ritchie, and Kelli McGovern of the Washington Rock Ballet School accepted her into their Ballet and Modern programs on a work-study scholarship. Kim has performed in pieces and full-length productions by choreographers such as Cleo Mack, Blair Ritchie, Sarah Batten Bland, Paul O'Campo, and others. She will be studying abroad in Israel at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance next year and one day hopes to attain her Masters of Education.



Sandra Rivera is a dancer, choreographer, educator and writer. A founding member of Ballet Hispanico, she has maintained a long association with the company as a dancer and educator. She has created and produced work for the East Harlem community at the Julia de Burgos Cultural Center including *Path of the Artist*, *An Homage to Julia de Burgos* and *Barrio Girl, A Life Through Dance* as well as serving on the East Harlem Cultural Council. At present with the Omega Dance Co. she organizes *Dance Actions* in response to the separation of families at the border. Rivera is the founder and director of the Zemi Dance Theatre, dedicated to preserving and documenting the experiences of Latinex dance artists. With an area of concentration, *Dance in the Latino Diaspora*, she graduated with a BA from CUNY's Baccalaureate for Unique & Interdisciplinary Studies. She currently performs and is a teaching artist for Dances for a Variable Population and is honored to have been selected as a 2019 Phoenix Fellows that will sponsor her choreography as a part of their third Revival program to be performed this summer.



Joel "EXTRANJERO" Moscoso is a singer, songwriter, guitarist and shamanic drummer originally from Guayaquil, Ecuador. Known for his charismatic energy, *Extranjero* taught himself how to play the guitar to accompany his songwriting. His musical influences range from rock, bossa nova, jazz, classical, rumba gitana and has over 10 years of performance experience. *Extranjero* believes music has the power to channel a unique healing energy through the experience he gains with others, as a street performer, a solo composer and collaborative artist. His inspirations as a songwriter share his experiences of love, having a social awareness, existentialism, the important of breathe and

living a present life. *Extranjero* can also be found playing the cajon, congas and djembe as an expression of dynamic passion, connection and appreciation to the earth and nature when he is not composing music on his guitar.



Rebecca Wilson is a creative artist living on the borderland, who has collaborated with Kiri on several occasions in projects related to dance, photography, and work at Emmanuel Children's Home in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. She currently also works as a mental health therapist, specializing in trauma informed care.



Joshua Winzeler (*BHdos Rehearsal Director & School of Dance Associate*) was born and raised in Miami, Florida. He trained with the Thomas Armour Youth Ballet, Miami City Ballet, and the School of American Ballet. In 2011, Joshua graduated from New World School of the Arts with his B.F.A. in Dance. In the Fall of 2011, he joined Ballet Hispánico's main Company and served as a Company dancer for the next six seasons. During his tenure with the Company, Joshua worked and collaborated with choreographers Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Gustavo Ramírez Sansano, Nacho Duato, Cayetano Soto, Michelle Manzanales, and Eduardo Vilaro. He continues to be a vital teacher and mentor to the School of Dance and to numerous Community Arts Partnership residencies in NYC and abroad. In the Fall of 2017, Joshua transitioned as a dancer and now serves as Ballet Hispánico's Rehearsal Director for the second company, *BHdos*, and as an Associate for the School of Dance.