

*Dance Brigade*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press photos available upon request and online at [www.dancemission.com](http://www.dancemission.com)

Dance Brigade in collaboration with CubaCaribe  
presents

## **SUMMER FEAST 2014: Una fiesta de verano**

**A site-specific work of dance, drums, and drama with a Cuban flair in the enchanted hills of Northern California**

*Featuring Dance Brigade, Alayo Dance Company, NAKA Dance Theater and CubaCamp artists.*

**When: Sunday, August 31 \* Show, 6pm; Gates, 4pm**

**Where: Dance Brigade's Dos Rios Retreat Center**

10501 Dos Rios Road, Dos Rios CA (between the towns of Covelo and Laytonville in Mendocino County)

*Directions and parking instructions will be emailed once tickets are purchased. (You may also call 415-826-4401).*

**Tickets: \$30 general, \$15 youth \* [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) or 1-800-838-3006**

*Also sold at Mazahar Boutique (38 South Main Street, Willits)*

**For more information: [www.dancemission.com](http://www.dancemission.com) \* 415-826-4441**

*"In an age overrun with art as a cold, slick, commodity, the **Dance Brigade's** work remains the real thing." – Dance Magazine*

*Alayo Dance Company has "an intoxicating quality — and often a no-holds-barred political perspective — that can prove irresistible." – SF Bay Guardian*

(June 2014) Known widely throughout Northern California, **Dance Brigade** is presenting its second annual Summer Feast, an outdoor dance theater extravaganza in rural Dos Rios, California.

Working with long time collaborator, **CubaCaribe**, this site-specific performance will include dance, drumming and drama, with a Cuban flair. Featuring over twenty artists, the audience will be taken on a two-hour magical journey through the wooded landscape along the Eel River. Taking advantage of the beauty that the land has to offer, these diverse performers will look to the environment for their inspiration and guide the audience through their enchanted world of art, beauty, and sometimes challenging politics.

San Francisco-based **Dance Brigade** is celebrated for its scrumptious dancing, explosive Taiko, and delicious fun. The company explores the intersection between art and social politics with fierce inventiveness and deft comic touch. **Alayo Dance Company** is the resident dance company of CubaCaribe and artistic director Ramos Alayo articulates his creative vision through a synthesis of Afro-Cuban modern, folkloric and popular Cuban dance. **NAKA Dance Theater** creates

interdisciplinary performance works using movement, theater, art installation, multimedia, and site-specific environments. And CubaCamp

### **About the artists:**

#### **KRISSY KEEFER / DANCE BRIGADE**

**Dance Brigade** is biting, intellectual, insightful wit, and provocative originality. This dynamic multi-racial troupe of women proves that socially relevant dance can be technically brilliant, as well as exuberant with down-home hilarious fun. This company dances at full throttle. Artistic Director, **Krissy Keefer** explores the intersection between art and social issues with fierce inventiveness and a deft comic touch. Her content driven choreographies are a high-energy blend of ballet, modern dance, jazz, song, text, sign language and explosive Taiko drumming. The company has created over 12 full-length concerts of contemporary dance theater including Pandora's Box, Ballet of the Banshees, Cinderella, Queen of Sheba, Cave Women, Spell, The Revolutionary Nutcracker Sweetie and The Great Liberation Upon Hearing. For these productions, they received numerous grants and awards. Dance Brigade resides at Dance Mission Theater in the heart of San Francisco's Mission District. At Dance Mission they operate a 140-seat theater, run three dance studios, offer adult and youth classes, produce groundbreaking events, and direct Grrrl Brigade, Dance Brigade's youth company.

In 1984, Krissy Keefer and Nina Fichter, original members of Wallflower Order, founded Dance Brigade to create and perform dance-theater that addresses the complex problems of contemporary American women. Together they developed a new kind of modern dance-theater that was stylistically rooted in martial arts, athleticism, and social justice. As the Wallflower Order's members went their separate ways, Keefer and Fichter created the Dance Brigade to carry forward their activist vision. Their original works continued to explore social issues such as war, poverty, breast cancer, women's history, death and dying, and spirituality from a feminist perspective.

In 1998, Dance Brigade began to operate Dance Mission at 24th and Mission Streets in San Francisco. At Dance Mission, they created an affordable 140-seat theater and rehearsal space for San Francisco dancers and artists. They expanded the Adult and Youth Dance Programs to include a full range of dance classes in Hip-Hop, Salsa, Bhangra, Brazilian, Bollywood, Afro-Haitian, modern, ballet and more. Some of the groundbreaking events Dance Brigade has presented and pioneered include the SkyDancers, Women on the Drum, Women Against War, and the Manifest!val for Social Change. Each year Dance Mission helps emerging artists launch their professional careers through the bi-annual Choreographers Showcase and the Down & Dirty Dance Series. In 2004, the Grrrl Brigade was formed as an intensive dance/leadership development program designed to provide high quality dance training, performance opportunities, and a sense of self-empowerment for San Francisco's girls ages 9 to 18. This program began with 10 girls and has now over 60 girls participating.

#### **CUBACARIBE /ALAYO DANCE COMPANY**

**CubaCaribe** was founded in 2003 with the mission to preserve and promote the vibrant artistic and cultural traditions of the Caribbean and its Diaspora. Founded on the principle that music, dance and visual arts have the power to unite people of diverse perspectives, ethnicities and backgrounds, CubaCaribe coordinates educational programs to foster understanding and appreciation of

Caribbean, especially Cuban, arts and culture. CubaCaribe organizes classes, performances, and educational outreach programs that support and uphold Cuban and Caribbean dance, music, visual art and culture. CubaCaribe draws on the constellation of talent living both in Cuba and the Bay Area to produce a range of professional and community-oriented performances highlighting Afro-Caribbean culture, music and dance.

**Alayo Dance Company** is the resident dance company of CubaCaribe and was founded in 2001 by Cuban-born, **Ramón Ramos Alayo**. Ramos Alayo articulates his creative vision through a synthesis of Afro-Cuban modern, folkloric and popular Cuban dance. Alayo is the resident dance company of CubaCaribe. Alayo has grown an audience far more diverse than most Bay Area modern dance circuits, attracting devotees of both contemporary and folkloric arts. Alayo is known for tackling difficult issues such as slavery, racism and cancer, and since its inception has produced 12 evening-length productions that have received both critical and popular acclaim. They have performed throughout the San Francisco Bay Area at venues such as Theater Artaud, ODC Theater, Dance Mission Theater, Herbst Theater, Laney Theater, Sonoma Country Wine Theater, and La Peña Cultural Center, and have presented work in the Black Choreographer's Festival, The CubaCaribe Festival, and Intersection's Culture and Flow. In 2010 Alayo was one of the first American companies to ever perform at the Annual Festival del Caribe at Teatro Martí.

Alayo also performed at Teatro Mella in Havana, Cuba in July 2011. Alayo was featured in the article "Dance Across America" in National Geographic Magazine in 2006, and received the prestigious Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation's "Emerging Choreographer's Award" (2005) to develop his piece, Blood + Sugar. Ramos was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award nominee for the ensemble performance of Los Guedes, performed at CubaCaribe Festival (2006). In 2011 Alayo Dance Company invited the Cuban company, Danza del Caribe, to collaborate with them in the States and three of the members defected and are now dancing with Alayo Dance Company.

Ramos Alayo was recognized as "Best Dance Dynamo" in the SF Bay Guardian's "Best of the Bay 2009" and was the recipient of a SF Bay Guardian 2010 Goldie Award, hailed by dance critic Rita Felciano as "the best Afro-Cuban dancer whose choreography stands well beyond traditional modes."

## **NAKA DANCE THEATER**

**Navarrete x Kajiyama (NAKA Dance Theater)** creates interdisciplinary performance works using movement, theater, art installation, multimedia, and site-specific environments. Produced by Jose Navarrete and Debby Kajiyama, their work has been influenced by ritual, cultural studies, and the political and environmental concerns of the world in which we live. In the last five years, the themes in our work have shifted to address our deepening concern with social and environmental issues. Recent themes include: genetic modification of native crops, the commodification of water, cultural colonization, and the human response to overwhelming disaster.

Since 2001, Navarrete x Kajiyama has created work involving members of the Latino transgender community, the local Mexican-American and Japanese-American communities, and San Francisco's community of Argentine Tango dancers. From 2005-2008, we were artists-in-residency at [ODC Theater](#). In 2006, Navarrete x Kajiyama was named one of the [25 to Watch by Dance Magazine](#). In 2007, they collaborated with visual artists from [Eastside Arts Alliance](#), an organization of artists and community organizers of color in East Oakland to create the performance

environment for *The Revenge of Huitlacoche*. That same year, Navarrete x Kajiyama was invited to present their work at the [Hemispheric Institute on Performance and Politics' Encuentro](#) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In 2008 and 2014, they were chosen to be the San Francisco representative for SCUBA Touring Network performances in Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Seattle. In 2010-11 they were Irvine Fellows at the [Lucas Artist Residency Program at Montalvo Arts Center](#).

Their work has been presented by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, ODC Theater, the Queer Arts Festival, Movement Research at Judson Church (NYC), the Yerba Buena Choreographers Festival, California State University East Bay, the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center Performance Series, the Oakland Museum of California, and the San Francisco Asian Art Museum.

## **CUBACAMP**

**CubaCamp** is a four-day dance intensive of Cuban dance and drumming at Dance Brigade's Dos Rios Artist Retreat Center. CubaCamp artists will be participating in Summer Feast. Artists include master Cuban folkloric, popular, and modern dance artists including **Royland Lobato, Silfredo La O, Kati Hernandez, Jose Carrion, Jose "Cheo" Rojas, Sandy Perez** and more!

## **CALENDAR LISTING**

Please note: Hi-res jpegs are available upon request and are online at [dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com)

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