

BRAVA PRESENTS

Ballet Nepantla's

VALENTINA

Direct from New York // Artistic Director Andrea Guajardo // Associate Director Martín Rodríguez

“Every choreographic step was like a musical note
in a beautifully composed score.” — *Broadway World*



BRAVA
THEATER CENTER
2781 24TH ST @ YORK
BRAVA.ORG

April 15-16, 2022
at 8pm

Photo by Marty Infante

VALENTINA

BALLET NEPANTLA

Ballet Nepantla tells stories to provoke the imagination of audiences and to help our society see the beauty of our community. Nepantla evokes stories about Mexican and Mexican American people, about family, about love, and about struggles and triumphs. Through a fusion of Mexican folklórico, contemporary dance, classical ballet, and West African dance, Nepantla explores the “in-between” spaces of trans-historical cultures. The performances brought forth to the stage communicate the narrative of living in the middle of physical and metaphorical spaces. Ballet Nepantla is an affiliate of the Edinburg Dance Theatre, a nonprofit arts organization.

VALENTINA

Ballet Nepantla presents “Valentina”: a collection of stories that speak to the strength and resilience of women during Revolutionary Mexico. By fusing contemporary ballet with traditional Mexican folklórico, “Valentina” tells stories of struggles and triumph, and explores the spaces between love and hate, hope and despair.

PRODUCTION

Andrea Guajardo, *Ballet Nepantla Founder & Artistic Director*

Martín Rodríguez, *Ballet Nepantla Co-Founder & Associate Director*

WARDROBE

Yvette Iannelli

Martín Rodríguez

Yvonne Guajardo

Francesca Iannelli

Jorge Naranjo

Maricarmen B. Rodríguez

LIGHTING & AUDIO SUPERVISOR

Rene Elizarraras

BRAVA'S TEAM

Drea Schwartz, *Technical Director*

Carlie Algas, *Lead Technician*

Alba Lluch, *Production Manager*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Andrea Guajardo (Founder/Artistic Director) is from SouthTexas where she began her training at Dancentre of Edinburg. At 17, she moved to NYC when she accepted a scholarship to study at The Ailey School and graduated from Fordham/Ailey with a BFA in dance in 2013. Andrea then joined MOMIX, where she danced and toured until 2017. Andrea was a teaching artist for Dance Theater of Harlem and for Ballet Hispanico, where she delivered lecture demonstrations to schools across New York. In 2017, she founded Ballet Nepantla, where she is currently a dancer and artistic director.



Martín Rodríguez (Co-Founder/Associate Director) is from Guadalajara, México. He began dancing folklórico at age 9 at Academia de Danza Imagen. He traveled with Academia to rural indigenous areas in Michoacán, Guerrero, Guanajuato, and Jalisco to learn the traditional dances, culture, and history of the local people. In 2006, he joined Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet Company. He has worked with artists such as Luis Miguel and Lila Downs. At GMFBC, he eventually became principal dancer as well as instructor and choreographer.



Maricarmen B Rodriguez (Dancer), from Los Angeles, California, began dancing at age 10 with a Mexican Folklórico group called Sabor de México. Here, she performed throughout México and competed in Southern California and at Dance Grand Prix Italy. At 16, she began her training in stylized folklórico with Grandeza Mexicana Academy and soon after became a performing member of Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet Company (2010-2016).

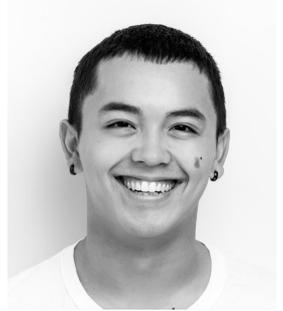


ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Brizaida García (Dancer) was born and raised in Palmview, Texas, along the US - Mexico. She first danced Mexican Folklorico in the 6th grade but did not pursue it until college at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2017, when she fell in love with the dance form. With the Ballet Folklorico at UTRGV, Briza has performed across the country, including on prestigious stages such as Jacob's Pillow Inside/Out. She will graduate in 2021 with a BFA in Dance Performance and intends to move to New York to dance with Ballet Nepantla.



Guadalupe Garza (Dancer) was born and raised in Edinburg, Texas, where he began dancing at Longoria Middle School. He then danced with Ritmo Dorado at Edinburg North High and is currently a member of Ballet Folklórico UTRGV at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley under the direction of Miguel Peña. Lupe is also a student at Dancentre of Edinburg, where he receives his classical dance training under the tutelage of Yvonne Guajardo and Yvette Iannelli.



Maria Gracia Perez (Dancer) was born and raised in Lima, Peru, and is a graduate of the Certificate Program at Peridance Center in NYC. She started her training at a very young age with Peruvian folklorico and Latin dances, and later went on to study commercial dances, ballet and contemporary dance. In Peru, she danced and performed as part of Dactilares Peru Contemporary Dance Company (2015, 2016, 2017) and Pepe Hevia Dance Company (2018) after which she decided to further her training in NYC. Maria also had the opportunity to study at renowned summer programs Batsheva Dance Company, Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company, Raca Centro D'Artes and The Joffrey Ballet School.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

From Bolingbrook Illinois, **Sarah Gresik (Dancer)** studied at the Hinsdale Dance Academy under the direction of former Milwaukee Ballet dancer, Jennifer Grapes, and the Salt Creek Ballet School under Zhanna Dubrovskaya and Sergey Kozadayez. She competed in the Youth America Grand Prix ballet competition, placing in the top twelve of the classical division. Sarah started her professional career with the Albany Berkshire Ballet and Minnesota Ballet. Most recently, Ms. Gresik performed with Ballet Frontier of Texas.



Francesca Iannelli (Dancer) was born and raised in McAllen, Texas, with Italian and Hispanic roots. She developed her talent at Dancentre of Edinburg and later attended Texas State University, where she was a member of Texas State University's pre-professional dance company, Merge. In 2017, she graduated with her BFA in dance. Francesca has had the privilege of studying and working with Gelsey Kirkland, Peter O'Brien, and Amalia Viviana Bastanta Hernández.



Jorge Naranjo (Dancer) was born in Guadalajara, México, and raised in California's Central Valley. He began his training at the Ballet Folklórico de Frank Zapata when he was 11 and ballet training at 15. He participated in workshops with the Ballet Folklórico Mexicano de Carlos Moreno and later started working on his ballet technique at Ballet San Joaquin. In 2016, he toured with the BFMCM alongside the Grammy-winning band Los Lobos, and in 2017 Jorge moved to NYC.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Dan Westfield (Dancer) began his ballet training at South Texas Dance Theatre in 1992. He trained with Houston Ballet Academy, the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater Graduate Program, and the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School at American Ballet Theater. Mr. Westfield has been dancing with Ballet Frontier since 2009.



BALLET NEPANTLA WOULD LIKE TO THANK

Aida Hurtado
Laura Martinez
Kellogg Foundation
Caroline Carpenter
Ron Black

Brava! for Women in the Arts

Brava! for Women in the Arts was founded in San Francisco's Mission District in 1986 to champion, celebrate, and create space for the voices of women, people of color, LGBTQIA+, and underrepresented communities. For over three decades, Brava has produced vibrant, culturally diverse, provocative work by prominent San Francisco feminists, community leaders, activists, and artists. Brava's producing history includes award-winning new work by Artists in Residence Rhodessa Jones & Cultural Odyssey, Marga Gomez, Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe, and Cherríe Moraga; the world premieres of *The Mathematics of Love* by Cherríe Moraga, and the Off-Broadway hit *Mighty Real: A Fabulous Sylvester Musical*, as well as the annual events *Baile en la Calle: The Mural Dances* and the San Francisco *Son Jarocho Festival*. Brava's current artistic programming encompasses traditional and contemporary music festivals, a variety of film festivals, contemporary and experimental theatrical productions, international comedy shows, lectures, and professional dance productions—making Brava one of the most eclectic and multifaceted arts venues in the Bay Area. Brava's resident youth programs include the long-standing SF Running Crew, pairing youth with professional mentors and hands-on opportunities for technical theater training; Cuicacalli Escuela de Danza, traditional and contemporary dance training for youth; Mariachi teaching students to make beautiful music mariachi style; and Young Thespians Theatre Lab, offering high quality instruction integrating drama, dance, music, and stagecraft. Brava is committed to providing affordable space for artistic development and presentation and quality professional arts training for underserved youth in the San Francisco community.

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Support

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Brava presents

QUETZAL

With special guest
Ramon Gutierrez of Son de Madera



Songs from
**PUNTES
SONOROS**

Opening Performance by
**LUCIA Y
SANDINO**

Saturday,
MAY 14
2022 at 8pm

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