

BRAVA SON

Featuring Bay Area musicians Arwen Lawrence, Ayla Davila, Cassandra Millspaugh, Kyla Danysh, Dolores Garcia, Maria de la Rosa, and Miguel Govea as Rehearsal Director

Arwen Lawrence, vocalist, dancer, and instrumentalist (guitar and some regional guitars of the Mexican son), is co-founder of [Cascada de Flores](#), a group from the San Francisco Bay Area who has for twenty years fused Latin tradition with individual expression and musical communication. In twenty years, Cascada de Flores has recorded five albums, collaborated on multidisciplinary projects with theater, cinema and dance, and performed in various venues throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Cuba.

Originally from New York, Arwen was raised in Southern California, surrounded by academics, musicians and impromptu musical parties. Early music influences included traditional folk songs, Scottish waltzes, African song, blues, and rock, with Peruvian songwriters adding color to her forming musical palette. As a college student, Arwen found her voice among the Mexican community in Los Angeles. Her taste for poetry, romance and dance is rooted in Mexican song and danceable sones.

Arwen began to excel under the tutelage of Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano, with whom she traveled and recorded, singing in forums such as the Degollado Theater in Guadalajara and the Lincoln Center in New York. Nati always nudged her towards what came naturally: to sing with heart. After forming Cascada de Flores, Arwen later toured with Jorge Saldaña (announcer, journalist, composer and singer), and veterans of his "Nostalgia"; program, singing in performing arts centers in Chiapas, Veracruz y la ciudad de México.

Arwen earned her BA in Latin American Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles. She then completed her Masters in Music Education at Holy Names University in Oakland, California, where she investigated the use of traditional music in the bilingual primary classroom. In the Bay area, she has taught music in bilingual public schools, led workshops for Music Teachers about curriculum in Spanish, and with Cascada de Flores presents musical stories for children, in forums from libraries to theaters, from California to Oaxaca to Ontario, Canada. www.cascadadeflores.com

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Ayla Davila started her music career at an early age as a student with Los Cenzontles, learning son jarocho and participating in some of the earlier fandangos of the Bay Area. Currently a full-time bassist playing with groups such as Mixta Criolla, Carne Cruda and others, she works for Pandora.

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Kyla Danysh is a Berkeley native who is passionate about playing and teaching music. A violinist since the age of five, Kyla grew up studying classical and Klezmer music, and discovered her love of improvisation through the exploration of Son Jarocho, Son Huasteco, swing jazz, Balkan music and

boleros. She has since traveled to Veracruz a number of times to study, record and perform with her mentors there, and currently plays with local groups Tarimba and Cascada de Flores. In addition to playing, Kyla is a dedicated teacher. She is certified in the Orff Schulwerk approach and is the pre-K through 4th grade music teacher at Escuela Bilingue Internacional in Oakland.

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Dolores García is a full-time staff member of East Bay Center for the Performing Arts (EBCPA), she has trained extensively under the tutelage of Artemio Posadas since a young age. She is currently the co-director of the resident music/dance ensemble, Son de la Tierra, based at EBCPA, training hundreds of students over the years in various son traditions. Works as a teacher of son tradition in Contra Costa County. She is the founder of and performer with Tarimba, a Bay Area son jarocho group.

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María de la Rosa is a native of San José, California, who has studied for 30 years with masters of Mexican dance and music; taught traditional arts for 25+ years; has performed throughout California and in Hawaii and Mexico, primarily as a dancer with Los Lupeños de San José, and was the Artistic Director for the company for three years. Honors include selected works to the SF Ethnic Dance Festival; collaborations with the Limón Foundation, NY; "Champion of the Arts" by SJ Mercury News; Artist Fellowship for Choreography by Arts Council SV; and grants and honors for new music works including 2016 NPN Creation Fund award. In 2016 she was an invited lead artist in the Doris Duke Foundation Building Demand for the Arts initiative. In 2013, she choreographed MACARIO, the NEA funded theater production of the book and movie of the same name. Maria's music collective, DíaPaSón, performs throughout the Bay Area and beyond and opened the 2013, 2015 and 2018 SF Son Jarocho

Festival. María has completed three California Arts Council Artist in Schools residencies. She has guest lectured in the music departments of UC Berkeley, University of San Francisco, San Jose State University, Stanislaus State University and San Francisco State University. She currently teaches part time as a music teacher in Oakland Unified School District and free-lances throughout the Bay Area as a performing artist and teaching artist. María earned her BA and master's from Stanford University and holds a Professional Clear California Teaching Credential.