

## Brazil's Balé Folclórico da Bahia Comes to LA

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Brazil's only professional folk dance company, Balé Folclórico da Bahia, returns to Southern California with "Bahia de Todas as Cores" (Bahia of All Colors).

### Press Release

This explosive 2-hour program of rhythm, motion and color is the most Bahian repertory in the company's history. Glendale's landmark Alex Theatre presents Balé Folclórico Da Bahia in "Bahia of All Colors" without intermission, on Friday, October 1, at 8:30 p.m.

"Bahia of All Colors" opens with the origins of the world based on African legend. It shows the history of the African slaves who were brought to Bahia by the Portuguese in the 1500s.

Forced to abandon their families, cultures and countries, and suffering under the worst conditions of slavery, they survived by maintaining faith in their Gods (Orixas).

Together, the African slaves, the Portuguese and the native Indians of Brazil created one of the richest and most diverse cultures in the world.

"Bahia of All Colors" is based on the most important - expression of popular Bahian culture and folklore, such as Capoeira (a form of martial arts), Maculelê (flashing blades and sticks) and Samba de Roda – the Capoeira being the only folkloric manifestation in the performance that remains in existence today.

After months of research and interviews with descendents of slaves, Balé Folclórico da Bahia has recreated the daily lives and costumes of Bahia's ancestors.

Under the artistic direction of José Carlos Arandiba, the 38-member award-winning troupe of professional dancers, musicians and singers present a performance full of history using diverse components of Afro-Brazilian and modern dance, classical ballet, martial arts, singing and percussion.

Founded in 1988 by Walson Botelho (General Director) and Ninho Reis, Balé Folclórico da Bahia is based in Salvador, in the northern state of Bahia.

The Brazilian company made its debut at the Joinville Dance Festival in July 1988, where immediate success brought invitations to perform at other festivals around the country.

That same year saw the company on its first national tour. The troupe has been seen in all the major theatres in Brazil as well as in North America, Europe and the Caribbean.

The Brazilian Ministry of Culture presented prizes to Balé Folclórico da Bahia on many occasions for Best Dance Company (1990, 1993, 1996), Best Dance Performance and Best Technical Training.

Balé Folclórico da Bahia made its European debut in 1992 at Berlin's Alexander Platz International Festival. In 1994, the company appeared at the Biennale de la Danse held in Lyon France.

This engagement led to invitations for the company to return to perform at Lyon's festival in 1996 and in 2000 as a special

guest to perform for the 20th anniversary of the Maison de la Danse Theatre.

The company's first tour of the United States resulted in sold-out performances. The 1997-1998 North American tour took the company from coast to coast, and in 2000 the company performed in 48 U.S. cities with its production of "Carnaval 2000".

Balé Folclórico Da Bahia's 16-year existence has helped to change the lives of more than 500 people from Bahia's communities. Since the beginning, the company has played a very important role in the lives of children and people of lower social and economic classes.

The company supports its own dance school where poor street children between the ages of five and 14 receive training.

Members who no longer dance in the company now work for such illustrious companies as the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Netherland Dance Company, Lyon Opera Ballet, Stomp and Disney's Lyon King in London, New York Germany and the Netherlands.

Other members have gone on to create their own dance group or capoeira schools in various parts of the world.

Balé Folclórico da Bahia believes that Brazil will make the political and economic changes to the decades old military government and one day education will be available for everyone.

In the meantime, through its drive and dedication, the company continues to do its part for its people and heritage.

The Alex Theatre's presentation of the Balé Folclórico da Bahia is sponsored by Brazilian Nites Productions, HOY and Yellowbook.

Tickets to see Balé Folclórico Da Bahia are available for \$45, \$38 (Orchestra and Terrace), and \$33, \$25 (Balcony) at the Alex Theatre Box Office night of show. To charge by phone or for more information, please call (818) 243-2539 or visit the Alex Theatre website at [www.alextheatre.org](http://www.alextheatre.org).

Validated parking is available for theatre patrons at three Glendale locations: the Orange Street Parking Garage (parallel to Brand Blvd.); the Marketplace Garage (located at the intersection of Harvard and Maryland Aves.) and the Exchange Parking Garage (on Maryland Ave., south of Wilson Ave.). The House Manager at the theatre will validate parking tickets.