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MAMBO MEMORIES BRINGS BACK THE PALLADIUM ERA TO HOSTOS CENTER

May 14 Concert to Feature Cándido Camero ▪ Frankie Figueroa ▪ Nayibe La Gitana
Orlando Marín ▪ Frankie Morales ▪ Papo Pepín ▪ Cita Rodríguez
The Steve Oquendo Mambo Orchestra ▪ The Eddie Torres Dancers

April 26, 2016 (Bronx, NY) - The Hostos Center closes its Spring 2016 season with “Mambo Memories,” a tribute to the Palladium Ballroom era of the 1950s with a concert featuring a wide array of artists and dancers on Saturday, May 14, 7:30 p.m., in the Main Theater at the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture, 450 Grand Concourse, in the Bronx.

Vocalists **Frankie Figuerora**, **Nayibe La Gitana**, **Frankie Morales** and **Cita Rodríguez**, along with NEA Jazz Master and conguero **Cándido Camero**, timbalist **Orlando Marín** and master percussionist **Papo Pepín**, join **the Steve Oquendo Mambo Orchestra** for an evening of music from the Palladium era including selections from Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito along with songs of La Lupe and Graciela. The internationally –renowned **Eddie Torres Dancers** are also featured. WFDU Radio personality **Vicki Sola** is mistress of ceremonies. The show is co-produced with the Hostos Center and Richie Bonilla Artist Management.

Although the Mambo (“conversation with the gods” in Kongan) originated in Cuba in the 1930s, the art form enjoyed its greatest popularity and its own unique styling in both music and dance at the Palladium Ballroom in New York in the 1950s. Although many artists were featured at the Manhattan club, they were dominated by “the big three”— the bands of Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez and Machito. Puente’s band featured the Cuban singer La Lupe in the last years of the Palladium and Machito featured Graciela (Pérez) many times during the 18-year run of the club which closed in 1966. Both Camero and Marín, who are featured in the “Mambo Memories” concert, performed regularly at the legendary venue.

Tickets for “Mambo Memories” are \$25 and \$30, with \$10 tickets for students and are available at www.hostoscenter.org or by calling (718) 518-4455. Box office window hours are Monday through Friday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and two hours prior to performance.

Support for Hostos Center for Arts and Culture programs are provided by the Eugenio María de Hostos Community College Foundation, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the New York City Council, the Office of New York State Assemblyman José Rivera, and the Office of New York State Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Providing the backbone of "Mambo Memories" is **The Steve Oquendo Orchestra**. Founded in 2009 by renowned Bronx educator Steve Oquendo, who as a trumpeter has toured the world with the late Celia Cruz, Destiny's Child, Wynton Marsalis, Eddie Palmieri and others, the band performs weekly at Mamajuana's Café in the Bronx in addition to performances throughout the New York area. Its members have individually performed with a wide array of artists such as Ray Santos, Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, Machito, Tito Rodríguez, Hector Lavoe, Benny Golson, Jon Faddis, Marc Anthony, Dave Valentín, Arturo Sandoval, Juan Luis Guerra, and a host of others.

Cándido de Guerra Camero, also known simply as Cándido, is a Cuban-born (1921) percussionist and is the most recorded conga drummer in the history of jazz. He has worked in all aspects of popular music from pop, rock, R&B and disco to Afro-Cuban dance music as well as Latin jazz. He is the first player to develop the techniques to play multiple conga drums, coordinated independence and the use of multiple percussion -- one player playing a variety of percussion instruments simultaneously. Early in his career, Camero recorded in his native Cuba with many of the early pioneers of the son movement as well as being the conga drummer for the Tropicana night club. In 1948, he made his first U.S. recording with Machito and later recorded with Dizzy Gillespie, Billy Taylor, and Stan Kenton, among many others. Camero was honored with the National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters Award in 2008.

Orlando Marín, known as a band leader and timbales player, was born in the Bronx. He formed his first band, Eddie Palmieri and his Orchestra, in 1951-52 with himself as director and Eddie Palmieri as musical director. Following, he played for three years at 'Sunnyside Garden' in Queens, and also at the Palladium Ballroom among other venues. After his military service in Korea, he was once again a regular fixture at the Palladium in addition to performing at the Bayside Manor, Hotel Taft and the Bronx's Hunts Point Palace. In 1961, Marín released his hit charanga record "Se Te Quemó la Casa," one of many recordings during his career as a bandleader. Still actively performing, Marín was honored in 2006 by Congressman José E. Serrano as "The Last Mambo King," for "his continuing to provide Latin American music and his willingness to devote time to helping the less fortunate."

Percussionist **Papo Pepín** was born in Río Piedras, Puerto Rico. He migrated to Brooklyn, N.Y with his family at the age of two. His father, Toño Pepín, (who later became one of the first bongoceros of a young Tito Puente in the 1950s,) taught Papo Pepín to play the congas at the tender age of three. Papo Pepín moved on to study music at the Conservatory of Music in Brooklyn while traveling and touring with his father's band. Pepín has since recorded and

performed with some of the greatest musicians in the history of Mambo/Salsa music including Tito Puente, Mario Bausá, Machito, Celia Cruz, Rubén Blades, Roberto Roena, Louie Ramirez, Willie Rosario, Bobby Valentin, Charlie Palmieri, Danny Rivera, Victor Manuel, Willie Colón, Marc Anthony and La India, among many others.

Cita Rodríguez, the daughter of the famed salsa singer Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez was born in the Bronx and attended Boys and Girls Harbor School in Spanish Harlem, where she studied flute and sang in the chorus. She moved with her family to Puerto Rico in 1979, and soon after she appeared frequently with her father's band. While a student at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music, Rodríguez became part of the salsa group Los Hijos de Salsa which involved recording and touring. In 1991 after the family returned to New York, Rodríguez and her brother, Pete, became part of the group Generaciones with her father. After her father's passing in 2000, she has performed and recorded with her own group as well as being a featured vocalist, often performing Graciela tunes, with the Mambo Legends, comprised of former members of the Tito Puente Orchestra.

Singer **Frankie Morales** was raised in "El Barrio," attended Boys and Girls Harbor School to study voice and percussion, and at the age of 14 was singing back up for Joe Bataan. Over the next few years, he would sing backup and coros for artists such as Hector Lavoe, Ismael Rivera, Ismael Miranda, Celia Cruz, Pellin Rodriguez, and Cheo Feliciano. He became the lead singer for Lebron Brothers and recorded two albums as a solo artist -- "Frankie Morales: En su Punto" and "Standing Out," which led to appearances with the Fania All Stars and Tito Nieves, and ultimately to his role as lead singer with Tito Puente. With Puente, Morales recorded several albums including "Mambo Birdland" and "Masterpiece," Puente's final album and collaboration with Eddie Palmieri, which both won Grammy Awards.

Maria Fernandez, **Nayibe "La Gitana"** was born in Cali, Colombia. From an early age, Nayibe loved to sing all the old Cuban sones, rumbas and boleros, especially those of her mother's favorite artist, Celia Cruz, as well as the songs of Celina Rautilio "La India del Oriente" and La Lupe. At age 18, Nayibe performed with the Mexican group La Sonora Latina and the Salvadorian group La Banda Ardiente. She was discovered by Henry Montalvo, a recognized music producer and promoter from Tropical Buddha Records which led to the recording of her two CDs with Julio and Ray Castro of Conjunto Clásico. Now a resident of the Bronx, she sings all over the City including Lehman Center and clubs such as Mamajuana's Café, The Iguana and other venues.

Felix "Frankie" Figueroa was born in Guayama, Puerto Rico and started out as a percussionist, joining the Municipal Band of Guayama at a very young age. He was inspired by the music of César Concepción in whose orchestra he would one day join. In 1959, he came to New York and became a member of Paquito Lopez Vidal's orchestra as a percussionist but also sang a song at each show. He then worked with Carlos Pizarro for two years at the Broadway Casino before joining the Willie Rosario Orchestra as the lead singer, where he made a number of recordings. At the recommendation of Charlie Palmieri, he was hired by Tito Puente which led to 23-year run with "El Rey," and with whom he also recorded including the popular album "Frankie Figueroa: Mr. Estilo."

Eddie Torres (born on July 3, 1950) is a renowned salsa dancer and instructor who with his wife, Maria, has trained thousands of dancers. Torres' technique developed from various sources including Afro-Cuban son, mambo, and North American jazz dance. He is one of the more popular dancers of New York style salsa. He is noted for his way of dancing and teaching salsa, with the female starting to move forward (always on 2 timing). Torres' style can be contrasted with the more showy Los Angeles style. In 1980, he began a long association with Tito Puente after the leader spotted him dancing at the Corso Club on the Upper East Side. The Eddie Torres dancers became a regular fixture for Puente shows. In addition to Puente, Torres has choreographed music videos for artists such as Rubén Blades, Tito Nieves and David Byrne.

[LINK TO ARTISTS PHOTOS](#)

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What: Mambo Memories: Reliving the Palladium Era
With the Steve Oquendo Mambo Orchestra and special guests Cándido Camero, Frankie Figueroa, Nayibe La Gitana, Orlando Marín, Frankie Morales, Papo Pepín, Cita Rodríguez, The Eddie Torres Dancers, & Vicki Solá, Mistress of Ceremonies. Co-Produced by Richie Bonilla Artist Management

When: Saturday, May 14, 7:30 PM

Where: Main Theater
Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture
Hostos Community College
450 Grand Concourse
Bronx, NY 10451

Pricing: \$30 (orch), \$25 (mezz) (\$10 for students and under 18)

Box Office: 718-518-4455

Website: www.hostoscenter.org

Subway/Bus: IRT Trains 2, 4, 5 and Buses BX1, BX2, BX19 to 149th Street/Grand Concourse.

About the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture

The Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture consists of a museum-grade art gallery, a 367-seat Repertory Theater, and a 900-seat Main Theater, presenting artists of national and international renown. It is easily accessible from Manhattan, Queens and New Jersey and is a mere 15 minutes by subway from midtown Manhattan

About Hostos Community College

Hostos Community College is an educational agent for change, transforming and improving the quality of life in the South Bronx and neighboring communities since 1968. Hostos serves as a gateway to intellectual growth and socioeconomic mobility, and a point of departure for lifelong learning, success in professional careers, and transfer to advanced higher education programs. The College's unique "student success coach" program, which partners students with individualized guidance, is emblematic of the premier emphasis on student support and services.

Hostos offers 29 associate degree programs and 5 certificate programs that facilitate easy transfer to The City University of New York (CUNY) four-year colleges or baccalaureate studies at other institutions. The College has an award-winning Division of Continuing Education & Workforce Development that offers professional development courses and certificate-bearing workforce training programs. Hostos Community College is part of CUNY, the nation's leading urban public university serving more than 480,000 students at 24 colleges.

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