

Simplemente Soy Mexicana

Sofia Yepez

Moreno Valley College



Abstract

Amalia Hernandez brought a new way of culture to the United States. Miss Hernandez is still discovering untapped folklore in remote regions of Mexico. Her interests in folklorico began by noticing that her interest wasn't really classical ballet, but a more cultural type of dance. I did know that she was the founder of what we dance today. Although, it was really interesting to know that she was involved in classical ballet. It was cool to know that the folklorico she founded in 1952 is considered a national institution. The mixture of both classical ballet and cultural folklorico add the posture and elegance of her folklorico. Her company became successful because of the new innovations that the folklorico brought. Her eight dancer folklorico company gave her publicity on televisions across the nation. With the help of my interviewees we will speak on the struggles of the Ballet Folklorico community.

Community Map

The ballet folklórico people for the longest time have made an attempt to impact their communities through traditional folk dance. Many times these students and dancers do not know what to expect from joining classes for the first time in their life. During this project I will be interviewing dancers that have been through the struggle of others not knowing what Ballet Folklórico is. The insult that most of these students receive not only shows the ignorance in the simple pronunciation of the dance, but also the imitation of the dance steps. Despite these insults, the dancers manage to find a bond and a connection with the roots that keep them alive. In many cases the dance floor that they practice on, turns into a home and a place where there is no such thing as a criticism. Folkloristas build connections with their parents as well since they do not really know the traditions that they grew up with. No matter how apart we may be land that originated these traditions, but through the use of our body, dancers can transport themselves to many destinations across the country of Mexico. In Moreno Valley there are many dancers that have grown with and into the program giving themselves a sense of identity and belonging.



People Interviewed



Bethanie Gonzalez- Bethanie is a 19 year old girl, who has been dancing since she was 8 years old. Not only is Ballet Folklorico a way for her to communicate with her culture, but her parents also find joy in what she does. She is currently attending California State University of San Bernardino as a second year studying psychology.



Margarita Yopez- My mother is 50 years old, and has been involved in the Ballet Folklorico ever since the start of the program. Year after year she is in charge of making the hairpieces of the dancers, and assisting in the food sales of the group. No matter how many hours of sleep she loses, she enjoys seeing the work of the students on stage.

[Bethanie Gonzalez](#)

Age: 19

City of Origin: Moreno Valley

Occupation: Student attending Cal State San Bernardino

Abstract

In this interview we can witness at first hand the obstacles and changes that are meant to be overridden by a fearless individual who places their heart and soul in every action that they set their mind to. Ballet Folklórico has become a refuge place where she can balance out her general feelings, all while establishing a bond with the other dancers and encompassing a greater group of minority communities from within the dance group itself.

Bethanie Gonzalez

Hi my name is Bethanie Gonzalez I am 19 and I live in Moreno Valley I go to California State University of San Bernardino. Folklorico is just something that connects to my roots from since I was born here this is like the closest I can go to be more connected like where my parents came from, Ballet Folklorico represents Mexico. I have been dancing for the past 11 years, well those years go by so slow. I learned a lot of things I learned meeting friends that I saw and told me humble about like where it came from him to show respect of like right where I am like ethnically especially come from. She enjoys dancing even though it's really tough. It's really fun. It's a good form of exercising. It's just nice to like learning a dance. It is very fun who is your inspiration in general. Her greatest inspiration is I don't know I feel like a lot of people like I was like my parents 'cause they came with nothing they didn't come know anything with English or with any knowledge to America they just came here to work into her to get a better life and I think also my older sister filed my eldest sister because she struggle a lot my choices but she struggled but I saw her how she turned her life around right now she's living like a very loving family with her kids and that's what kind of inspires me to push to get myself to a better place. She mostly enjoys dancing and watching but I just learning about different regions like besides like yeah it's fun to dance and I'd answer each as well so it's like interesting to learn like the cultural aspect of it and learn like the history and like why some regions are like dress differently and like the meaning behind addresses and like the guys that costume for the guys and stuff teach little kids how do you like like what inspires you to teach them well it started out out as community service for a club that had to do with my senior year but then after I just really enjoy I always wanted to like working with kids and then right now for my major in psychology but

with the college I wanna work with kids further so I feel like what sitcom I just enjoy because i get to bond with other with just the younger younger generations and it kinda like I don't know which regions are your favorite 3 I like Nayarit, Calabaceado, Chihuahua. Nayarit it's just different for what I've been dancing for many years 'Cause I dance after like a year kindly look here and I really liked i really like the dresses I like the music I love the crock but the steps I just left everything about it it's very beautiful OK um are there moments where you felt like giving up yes trying to speak on one of those I think like around 13 I don't know why I like you know like when you like middle school. It just hits and you're just like well I suck so like there is a moment whereas like Brown middle school and I was like wow I kind of suck like I'm nice like I compare myself a lot to other people so I was like well like i really suck like I'm in the one dancing here and there's been point point during that time where I just wanna quit I was like I don't know why I'm here like i'm not dancing as much i'm not really like participating I'm like I'm just here and I just got home like i already do much so I was like i should just quit but then I didn't do it closed ticket and I felt bad leaving sounds like I'll just stick through it do you think there is favoritism within the group that you were yeah there was a lot of favoritism I want to say since I was I wanna see it like round 12 from 12 2 almost 1718 Oh so I see the most racism I was from like 12 for sure mostly throughout middle school from like 683 for sure and then I think it kind of end around sophomore year by remember those time that's when I was like the most sad and I just wanted to get out there's a lot of favoritism and I just felt bad goes like it's just something i'm not not a nice feeling are there any like stereotypical things that people say that like kind of bug you about whatever critical hell yeah like pronunciation names or like imitate steps or Oh yeah some things like like they can't make fun of like the dresses like that like that

like it was just like they colorful dresses they mostly just describe how leasco but then the actually meaning behind circle eagle they used in all you're just dancing and dresses and that's it that's all you do but now it's actually something more it's more significant it's more than you can say in words and it's just something beautiful something that I love you with don't understand 'cause I think these don't really pay attention to it that logo shows more than down seems more than putting address wearing red lipstick and just like going to performance to show culture is to show like just everything about like yeah like just everything about it like it's not just dancing to more it's more with us here trofa it's more like about you you can show people more but yeah it's just showing more about Mexico like Mexico you know it's a great place one thing that you would like change about all those perceptions like what's the most like the one thing that you want to like tell like first of all it's not easy and our friend she nurses through with her 'cause she told me she was like why do guys like what suffering point having for going girl because she taught at the high school um she's like you guys twice a year they already seen point for quick like what's the point of it and I was like she's like why are so I was like the reason you guys like doom requires so you guys could go out and everything is good it's easier for you you have to remember a song and like learn how to sing it for us we have to find new songs learn if they we can work with the songs find steps to match the song in that takes weeks or months because you could have steps for a part of it but then later might not work or you had to re change it and then so like there may be like the settlers are difficult for some people seem to kinda like make it a comedy Taylor coming to everyone and then from there you have to teach everyone make sure everyone knows the steps everything that you guys still like work together smoothly and then from there is choreography rajlich anyone else you have to make it on your own like your own

vision everything and sometimes that takes a few trial errors you have to make sure it worries everything by flows like it goes slowly fluidly in everything to see actually like and then that takes months because it takes awhile to like find songs it takes awhile to make the steps up and it takes awhile for people to learn it 'cause no one learns at the same pace or like their theme rapid motion so you have to be very patient with it and it takes a long long time so and that's why I like it's most not seen that's why it's not like perform as often as like say choir because working it's very I am very from scratch yeah how do you get ready for a performance my mental Eli just like game Ray like mentale mentale comentale well I'm always nervous because people are far from the people you kind of get nervous it's very very but sitcom obvious what sitcom but yeah but I just kinda just just go with the flow mostly just like well half the time was like an artist see what happens and how do you feel when you perform this last wish Oh I love performing is just i'm a very shy interair person I don't really like to be very out there X-ray only to be like just put myself out there and I forgot it goes like my scape because I to speak in front like to say a speech or for like 20 people I'm like peeing my pants. And with folklorico everything just becomes a little easier.

Margarita Yopez

Age: 50

City of Origin: Tendepracua, Michoacán de Ocampo , Mexico

Occupation: House Wife

Abstract

My mother is a hard-working, selfless individual who always wants the best for her family. Although it may be difficult for her to overcome some of the severe depression she once suffered in, now she is willing to help others and be a beacon of hope for mothers and individuals who need to seek help during conditions that alter the effects of the dancers as they dance across the stage.

Margarita Yopez

Tengo 50 años soy ama de casa. Desde que era chiquita me escogían para bailar folklórico cuando estaba en la primaria te hacen bailar para el día de las madres o el día de la graduación en los que hacen bailar con bailables culturales folclórico cuéntanos pues a mí me escogían a bailar te acuerdas sea un poco hace muchos años qué bonito lo disfrutaba vestidos de colores y listones de muchos colores muy bonitos. Bueno porque te tengo a ti qué has bailado desde cuántos años son 11 años y por qué eres tan involucrada con ustedes todo el folclórico, en haciendo muchos trabajos duro para para hacer vestuarios para que no nos salga tan claro he apoyado a la maestra a hacer las trenzas, tenemos que llevarte las prácticas a lo que se necesita es para para hacer ustedes pero uno como padre proveer lo que se necesitan para. para mí es algo bonito por qué es cultura el lugar lo que qué México se usa y es un poquito estar cerca de México disfruto mucho verte a ti claro verte bailar. Lo que más disfruto son los bailables en sí solos mirarte en el escenario lo más mírate bailar en el escenario mucho más más disfruto y se complementa y ver mi trabajo allá en cada cabecita bonito me hace sentir bonito y también a folklórica convivido con gente que quiero mucho que ha sido nuestra familia como nuestra familia hemos conseguido amigos sean y uno se han ido a otros avenida y así no se han hecho amistades ya en. Yo no tengo favoritas porque para mí cada estado que bailan representa un respeto y es muy bonito cada uno para mí no hay no hay ese algo que a veces no me gusta por qué haces eso está muy simple es no a mí me gustan todos. He visto El miedo expresaron de expresar lo que sienten de pararse al

frente de público y no les da pena mira a cada niño que llega llega tímido callado y luego un poquito después se ve enfrente del micrófono lo mismo la edad para hacer frente a todo y puede fluir y uno no puede la gente que no bailamos no podemos hacer eso pienso que les ayuda mucho y los mantiene ustedes ocupados se crearon los mira que crean se crearon amigos están en el mismo Creo que has de cuenta como si alguien te dijera tendría que están perdiendo el tiempo ya a te diría que es como yo creo que hace falta que no por qué porque lo mismo que uno puede respetar otro baile este es un baile que tiene que respetar que tiene mucha disciplina que tiene mucha responsabilidad que los hace a los muchachos a ser responsables porque porque es bien fácil podría decir no voy a práctica o que digan hoy no cumplo y no me presento en el show no se hacen pienso que el folclórico les ayuda mucho a los jóvenes a tener una disciplina desde todo porque es coordinación disciplina respeto hacia los demás siento que están ubicados siento que están alejados de hay muchas muchas cosas que a la sociedad tienen simplemente no están todo el día encerrados que ya todo el tiempo se lo pasan la juventud en el teléfono y en la computadora y estar el tiempo que están bailando que están practicando esta estancia haciendo amigos y están creciendo ustedes pienso que les ayuda a tener coordinación y todo en todas las en los ayudan mucho en todo es difícil. sí porque a veces lo que sí es difícil porque a veces la gente que ayuda no se te arrima otras personas al apoyarte ayudarte en no todos podemos ayudar todos todos somos iguales todos deberíamos aprender a porque estoy un poco aricoma también como papás te tienes que involucrar porque tienes que apoyar. así te digo todo pero en veces sí te quiero ayudar a que esto a lo mejor mejorarías pero te lo tomas como que enojada conmigo pero yo no quiero eso yo quiero que voy a hacer mejor pero todavía su romper eso que no se nudos terminando bien y en veces no nos entendemos y nos peleamos por eso porque no sé a lo

mejor no soy la manera de decirte que si no está bien que eso sí y si eso no fuera por el apoyo de la familia no se podía hacer nada sí. Me siento bien contenta de verte te falta bailar de que te gusta también que compartamos un gusto por algo no algo de nuestra cultura bueno luego siento orgullo al verte bailar. Como te dije una vez no se si se siente mas bonito verte bailar o ver a mariana tocar en la banda. Mejor sitio para otra cosa igual tú lema no pudiera asistir a una persona. Qué pues vuelva a buscar lo que él pero a contar el gusto que sí tiene talento lo disfrute en lo que no que no se deje el mes enviar porque no se deje meses llevar por lo que porque a mí no me escogieron porque yo no lo hice bien porque tienes que trabajar siempre duro siempre que tiene que trabajar si no trabajas no le van a salir bien las cosas sí si le echa ganas a salir me va a salir porque por algo estaba ahí sino que meses te desanimas porque no ese estado hay otras niñas que se lo hacen mejor que tú y otros que echan más ganas pero no es eso es que la leche no que echan ganas a veces piensas que existe el favoritismo usado el mismo podemos ver tal vez sí pero no se que decirte. En veces piensas eso no es justo, aveces nos cerramos la mente y bloqueamos nuestros pensamientos y de los demas.

Sofia Yepez

Age: 17

City of Origin: Moreno Valley

Occupation: Student at Moreno Valley High School

Abstract

I am a proud Ballet Folklórico dancer who has been dancing since I was six years old. No matter how hard it has been to stick with this group of people I am happy to be involved in a group of individuals passionate about the culture that comes from Mexico. Our parents are proud of how close we have come to our people. The different lifestyles that everyone encompasses changes the viewpoints and creates an aware society of the problems and the rich culture around us.

Sofia Yepez

With a pair of rusty pliers, I fixed her zipper before going on stage then ran to my position. This was the final performance of the semester, and as a senior, performer, and stage manager, I had to show the pride I had in my roots. My dad was sitting in the front row, watching my performance, unknowing that I had just been a stylist right before going on stage. It has been their passion that has motivated me, and enabled me to pursue my creativity and express myself. That entire week had been very hectic and my family had been supportive, like they usually are. From the age of six, I have been presenting my knowledge and desire to be connected to my ancestors through dance. Every performance, song, and choreography connected me more and more to what I feel is my history. With the help of folklorico, I have found a sense of security and the people on my dance team have seen my growth from a child to an adult, and have seen me flourish in my public speaking, presence on stage, and cultural admiration. Because of my experience in dance, I have been able to repay my knowledge by introducing other new dancers to the steps and ways of folklorico. Program-planning and stage design were things I was introduced to once I got to high school, and through props and designs on stage, I have been able to show my originality, patience, and love for my culture. Creating choreographies is a lot of work, but it is the way that I can express myself through song and dance. Visually, performing is

beautiful, and the music used to dance represents who I am, my feelings, and the interconnectedness of the past and the present. Every performance embodies who my people are, the diversity in my roots, and the overcoming of obstacles throughout our generations. Since I was six years old I have been dancing Ballet Folklórico, and through the years it has shown me how to grow closer to my culture and develop a connection between my parent's traditions and my own. Upon taking this class in high school, I was able to take on the challenge of teaching younger children, ages 5-12, and become the president of the Ballet Folklórico on my high school campus. Through the program we host two performances which take months of planning, teaching, and delegating. After High school I plan on continuing in folklórico as a hobby and a way of getting through the stress of college. Folklórico for everyone impacts the way that problems are solved, and becomes a beacon of hope for so many students. Performing arts is overlooked here in school since mainly sports and other programs get most of the support from the administration of this school.

