

# Limón

## Limón Dance At A Glance

August 2, 2009



LIMÓN COMPANY MEMBER, DANIEL FETECUA SOTO,  
TEACHES COLOMBIAN FOLKLORE DANCE

DANIEL FETECUA SOTO, MIEMBRO DE LA COMPAÑÍA DE  
DANZA JOSÉ LIMÓN, ENSEÑA DANZA FOLCLÓRICA  
COLOMBIANA

Daniel with Pajarillo Pinta'o. Click on photo to see video.

### Daniel taught two classes for the public during the residency at SUNY College at Brockport. Here he explains more about this particular style of dance:

I started studying Colombian folklore as a child growing up in Bogotá Colombia. After moving to Germany, I founded Pajarillo Pinta'o, a Colombian Folklore dance ensemble with the purpose of sharing and showing the culture and spirit of Colombia through its dances and music. After almost six years of research and work dedicated to the folklore, I have started to give workshops and classes in NYC and around the world.

I structure my classes as regular dance classes with a warm up, a center and combinations where the students can explore very different kinds of movement and rhythms. I focus on preserving the folklore in its original and traditional forms, but I use my modern dance background and knowledge to teach folklore. My folk dance classes also teach musicality and rhythm, as I talk about how to listen to instruments and explain how instruments are made and why they sound the way they do. Usually I choose a region or a particular dance to highlight in a workshop. I explain where the dances come from and what identifies that particular region (the weather, the people, the rituals). Sometimes, if the time allows, I spend time describing costumes and accessories used in the dances.

Colombian dance is really colorful; it's about happiness and love. Most of the dances refer to how to make a woman fall in love with the man through the dance. There are also some dances about nature, like "gallinazos" (native birds similar to vultures) or "perdices" (partridges). These dances tell funny stories about animals acting like human beings (like in tales) or animals fighting against each other.

Folk music and dances are directly related to the climate and to the everyday life and habits of the population. Colombia is a very diverse country, and depending on the geographical region, we find very different weather conditions and landscapes. For this reason, there are many differences in the way the population lives and behaves.

Colombia is divided in six different regions: Caribbean, Pacific, Andes, Orinoquía, Insular, and Amazon. The Colombian folklore is playful, about love, and related to the earth. It's a celebration of the earth's gifts and a ritual to thank the mother earth, as well as a social encounter. Colombian folklore has a mix of three different cultures: Colombian indigenous, African and Spanish (or European).

Colombia has many different music and dances in each region. For example, in the Caribbean region alone there are more the 20 different folklore dances. The Cumbia is more well-known, but this region has a lot of carnival dances for the huge Carnival that happens in Barranquilla in February every year. Since this region is by the Caribbean Sea, the weather is really nice, it's like always summer, so people use less clothing and are more used to the body contact. These dances also have a strong African influence.

The Pacific side is a humid jungle, also very hot weather. There, the African influence is the strongest in the country. They also have a lot of native Colombian (indigenous people) that preserve the dances as well. The instrument more important in the Pacific area is the Marimba de Chonta, "the piano of the jungle" as it was defined by the master musician Gualajo. The music and dances there have a lot to do with the religious celebrations and pagan celebrations, mixing Catholicism with the African religions. A lot of these dances are related to the Pacific Ocean and local rivers.

The Andes is the most extended region of Colombia and has three branches: Eastern range, Central range and Western range. In this region depending of the altitude the weather changes a lot. In just one hour driving up or down the mountain you can have a difference of 20 degrees. In the upper mountain the weather is cold, so people use heavy clothes and their behavior is more contained, but the dances still reflects the courting between man and woman. Also the dances about food are very strong and one special one is about a native ritual: the Dance of Chicha. "Chicha" is a fermented drink that our indigenous make, and they celebrate when the drink is ready to be drunk. People dance with a cup of chicha in top of the head.

The Orinoquía Region of Colombia goes through Venezuela and is the cowboy area, as men are most of the time riding horses. The dances from this area have a very strong masculine resonance. The man is tapping on the floor very strongly making the same sound of a horse running while the woman dances with little fast and elegant steps, really fast!

There are also a lot of dances about the Amazonian region which are more related to indigenous celebrations and rituals that still happen in this area.

It is very difficult for me to pick one dance as a favorite, as I feel a different connection with all of them and I love them all! Right now, I am focusing my classes on the Pacific coast, and really enjoying the full, rich rhythms of the curulao music. I love teaching Colombian folklore because it opens people's eyes and makes them look to one other's eyes with joy for dance, life and love.

### Daniel impartió dos clases magistrales de Danza folclórica Colombiana en la Universidad de SUNY Brockport. A continuación Daniel nos cuenta más a cerca de este estilo de danza.

Comencé mis estudios de Danza folclórica colombiana cuando era niño en Bogotá, Colombia. Cuando me mudé a Alemania, fundé Pajarillo Pinta'o, una compañía de baile de cámara, especializada en danza folclórica Colombiana, con el propósito de compartir y enseñar la cultura y el espíritu Colombiano a través de la música y la danza. Después de 6 años de investigación y trabajo dedicados a la danza folclórica colombiana he decidido comenzar a ofrecer talleres y clases en la ciudad de Nueva York y alrededor del mundo.

Estructuro mis clases de Danza folclórica Colombiana como cualquier otra clase de danza: con un calentamiento, combinaciones centrales y diagonales donde los estudiantes exploran diferentes tipos de movimientos y ritmos. Me concentro en preservar la danza folclórica en su forma y tradición original, pero también hago uso de los conocimientos y el entrenamiento que tengo en danza moderna para enseñar las clases. En mis clases también enseño musicalidad y ritmo. Enseño los diferentes instrumentos del folclor colombiano y explico como los instrumentos están contruidos y porque suenan de la manera que suenan. Generalmente selecciono una región de Colombia o una danza en particular, y explico su origen y cómo se identifica con las características de esa región (su clima, gente, tradición y rituales). A veces, si queda tiempo, también les hablo de los trajes típicos y los accesorios que se usan en las danzas de dicha región.

La danza folclórica colombiana es muy colorida, las danzas tratan temas como el amor y la felicidad. La mayoría de las danzas se refieren al coqueteo con una mujer y de como hacerla sentir amada por el hombre. Algunas danzas tienen su raíz en la naturaleza, como los "gallinazos" (los pájaros típicos de la región) o las "perdices." Estas danzas cuentan fábulas e historias de peleas entre animales.

La música folclórica esta directamente relacionada con el clima y con la vida cotidiana de la región y su gente. Colombia es un país diverso y las diferencias en la región, el clima, la fauna, la flora y el terreno afectan la manera en que la gente vive y se comporta.

Colombia se divide en seis regiones diferentes: Caribe, Pacífica, Andina, Orinoquía, Insular y Amazónica. El folclore colombiano es juguetón, habla del amor y de la tierra. Es una celebración de un ritual para agradecer a la madre tierra todos sus frutos al igual que una diversión social. El folclore Colombiano mezcla 3 culturas: La indígena, La Africana y la Española/Europea.

Cada región tiene varias danzas y música típicas. Por ejemplo, solamente la región del Caribe tiene más de 20 danzas diferentes. La cumbia (que es la más famosa) y el Carnaval, una celebración que ocurre en Barranquilla en el mes de febrero. Ya que esta región esta bordeada por el Mar Caribe, el clima es caluroso –siempre es verano– la gente usa menos ropas y están más acostumbrados al calor humano. Estas danzas tienen influencias africanas.

La región Pacífica es bastante húmeda y calurosa, típico clima selvático. Aquí es donde se ve más fuerte la influencia Africana. También tiene influencia indígena quienes preservan esta danza también. El instrumento más tocado en la región pacífica es la Marimba de Chonta o "piano de la selva" como le dice el maestro de la música (José Antonio Torres) "Gualajo". La música y la danza tienen mucho que ver con las tradiciones religiosas y las tradiciones paganas, el resultado es una mezcla del catolicismo con las religiones africanas. También se refieren al clima de la costa del Océano Pacífico y de los ríos locales.

La región Andina es la región más extensa de Colombia y tiene tres partes: El este, el centro y el oeste. En esta región el clima varía inmensamente dependiendo de la altitud de cada lugar. Si manejas una hora por las montañas, el cambio de temperatura puede ser de hasta 20 grados. En las montañas altas el clima es frío, y por ende la gente usa ropa pesada y las personas son más reservadas. Las danzas de esta región muestran la relación cordial entre un hombre y una mujer. También están las danzas que celebran los platos tradicionales de Colombia, como ejemplo esta la Danza de la Chicha. La "chicha" es una bebida fermentada que hacían nuestros antepasados indígenas y con esta danza celebraban cuando la bebida estaba lista para tomarse. La gente baila esta danza con un vaso de Chicha en la cabeza.

La región Orinoquía de Colombia pasa por Venezuela. También se le conoce como la región vaquera ya que la mayoría de los hombres andan a caballo. La danza de esta área gira en torno a la masculinidad, por lo tanto los hombres bailan usando muchos golpes con los pies como imitando el sonido de los caballos galopando mientras que las mujeres bailan muy rápido pero muy elegantemente. Bailan rápido!

También se encuentran las danzas de la región Amazónica. estas danzas son más que todo danzas que celebran los rituales indígenas.

Para mi es muy difícil escoger una danza favorita, ya que siento una conexión diferente con cada danza y la verdad es que me gustan todas! En este momento estoy enfocando mis clases en la región Pacífica y disfruto mucho los ritmos de la música del Curulao.

La respuesta de los estudiantes que han tomado mis clases ha sido muy alentadora, me han dicho que mis clases les inspira y que descubren nuevos movimientos y sonidos que nunca antes habían explorado.



### THIS MONTH'S FEATURED DANCER:

Daniel Fetecua Soto

Favorite Hobby: Colombian Folklore Dance. I also love to go salsa dancing on the weekends and am now learning to Tango.

Enjoy learning: New languages. My native language is Spanish, but I also speak English, German and Italian.

Favorite Limón Dance: It's hard to choose. I like *Unsung*, because it touches me the most because it relates to native Americans. I especially love the fact that the entire piece is in silence, and the power of the work is accentuated by the male dancers listening to their own rhythms and to mother earth. I love *Choreographic Offering* too because of the amazing masterpiece of choreography that it is. It's like an inspiring lesson of choreography and poetry every time I dance it.

Daniel Fetecua Soto was born in Bogotá, Colombia in 1979. Like most children in Colombia, he was taught how to move and feel music from a young age. His first approach to the professional dance studies started when he was studying at the National University of Colombia where he joined the Folklore Dance Ensemble. Training and performing with this group, Daniel was exposed to the disciplines of ballet and modern dance through his teachers Edgar Sandino and Patricia Martínez, fellows of Master Jacinto Jaramillo who studied for many years with Isadora Duncan and brought the principles of modern dance to Colombia. In 2001, Daniel entered the Arts Academy of Bogotá where he received more formal dance training, and began performing with PSOAS Contemporary Dance Company.

The following year, Daniel left Colombia to audition for The Folkwang Hochschule in Essen, Germany. As he only had the money for a one-way flight, he was determined that he was going to pass the audition! He did pass it, and graduated from the school in 2006. While still a student he was chosen to perform as guest artist in Pina Bausch's masterpieces, *Rite of Spring* and *Tannhauser*. In Germany, he also worked with La Fura dels Baus, Kuo Chu Wu and won a Salsa Award in the European Championship in 2004.

Daniel created his own dance company, Pajarillo Pinta'o, a folklore dance ensemble of dancers from Colombia and Venezuela and students of the Folkwang Hochschule. In 2006 Daniel received an Honor for Contribution and Conservation of the Colombian Folkloric Dances from the National University of Colombia.

In 2006 Daniel was given a full scholarship to the Limón summer workshop, and was subsequently invited by Artistic Director Carla Maxwell to join the Limón Dance Company.

Since moving to and board member of ID Studios Theater, a not-for profit organization led by Colombian actor and director German Jaramillo and composer and musician Pablo Mayor. In spring 2008 he was commissioned to create a new piece by Dancing in the Streets with funding from Harlem Stage.

Recently Daniel has been invited to teach Colombian Folklore to elementary school kids at the Roosevelt Island Elementary School and The Yard, including elementary schools in Martha's Vineyard.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

**July 19-August 7: Company residency at SUNY College at Brockport**  
Events are at 7pm in Studio 152 of Harwell Hall, \$15 at the door

Thurs. Aug. 8: Limón Dance Company Studio Showing: features new work in progress by Company member Jonathan Frederickson and excerpts from the new reconstruction of Limón's *There is a Time*

**September 1: Professional Studies Program begins**

**Nov. 27-Dec. 7: Join the Limón Dance Company on tour to Beijing, China**

The Limón Dance Company has been invited to perform at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, China and you are invited to go on tour with us! This will be the Company's inaugural trip to China, and will include four performances of two different programs featuring live music performed by the Chinese Musical Conservatory. This unique 10-day travel package includes round-trip airfare from New York City, accommodations in a four-star hotel, sightseeing trips and "behind the scenes" events with the Company.

[Click here for more information.](#)

**BEHIND THE CURTAIN**

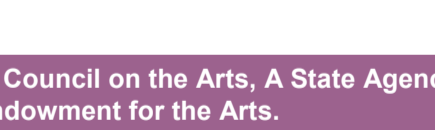
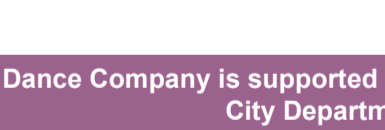
**At SUNY College at Brockport**

**Daniel Fetecua Soto:** Being in Brockport is just fabulous. I love the green and to be the whole day focused on dancing. I feel ahead the spirit of "There is a Time," just learned some parts but I can feel it already. I think I will enjoy this process and this piece a lot.

**Ryoko Kudo:** The company has been super busy teaching and rehearsing every day. I'm enjoying teaching my favorite piece, "Psalm," for repertory class and having a new appreciation for José's choreographic genius. The company is also rehearsing for Company Member Jonathan Frederickson's new piece and restaging Limón's "There is a Time." Each piece presents its unique challenges, and they are both keeping me on my toes, one with it's contemporary quickness and the other with it's classical clarity.

**Kurt Douglas:** Teaching the new course, "Dancers are Musicians are Dancers," we are unlocking new and improved theories which are solidifying the union between music and dance and beyond.

**Dante Puleio:** This is my first year doing the residency here. The students are so inspiring, they all work so hard and they get better every day, so its great to be a part of that. I also enjoy having the time to get more training for myself. Limón isn't a technique that has a specific destination, it is an on going process that encourages you to work on yourself and your artistry and your interpretation of the work and the technique.



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