

"Emotional Fervor, Power" of Limón Dance Company to be showcased May 7 in Mandeville Auditorium at UCSD

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Media Contact: Ruth Baily at University Events, (619) 534-0497, rbaily@ucsd.edu or

Jan Jennings, (619) 822-1684, jnjennings@ucsd.edu

"EMOTIONAL FERVOR, POWER" OF LIMON DANCE COMPANY TO BE SHOWCASED MAY 7 IN MANDEVILLE AUDITORIUM AT UCSD

Dancer/choreographer José Limón saw dance as a vision of awesome power: "A man could, with dignity and towering majesty, dance ... dance as Michelangelo's visions dance and as the music of Bach dances."

Limón established what has become one of America's most revered modern dance repertory companies. The Limón Dance Company will perform at 8 p.m. May 7 in Mandeville Auditorium at the University of California, San Diego.

Known for his dynamic masculine dancing and passionate, dramatic choreography, Limón (1908-1972) founded José Limón Dance Company in 1946. Today the company continues to embody Limón's movement, technique and philosophy of theater.

As the New York Times writes: "Just why José Limón was considered choreographically important in his time was made clear when the Limón Dance Company performed. All (dances) revealed his ability to set people moving with craggy grandeur and emotional fervor. Their power remains undiminished."

Limón's commitment, according to the Times, was "both to high tragedy, drawn from literature and history, and the celebration of the body in motion ... to expressive dance."

This commitment is passed on to each generation of Limón dancers. As when Limón was alive, the company dancers range in age from 21-year-old rookies to fiftysomething veterans who have been with the troupe since its early years. The veterans help coach and direct in various Limón repertoire perspectives. The younger dancers learn the works firsthand and are encouraged to explore the movements and to express themselves.

Carrying the Limón torch as artistic director is Carla Maxwell, who joined the company in 1965 as a dancer, became its artistic director in 1978 and is dedicated to seeing that newer dancers understand the Limón legacy. Under her direction, the company has continued to perform Limón's classics. It also has branched out to performing new and existing works from a variety of choreographers.

Maxwell received a 1995 Dance Magazine Award for her work with the Limón Dance Company as director and performer and was recognized as a master teacher of the Lima heritage that same year. A veteran dramatic dancer, she dances many of the major roles with the company. She also choreographs works for the Limón, as well as for other dance companies.

Donald McKayle is artistic mentor and a resident choreographer for Limón Dance. He is a professor of dance at UC Irvine and has taught at Juilliard School, Bennington College and Bard College and served as Dean of the School of Dance at the California Institute of the Arts.

Limón's own resume includes serving on the faculty of the Juilliard School's Dance Division and directing Lincoln Center's American Dance Theatre. He was honored with two Dance Magazine Awards and honorary doctorates from four universities. His legacy rests with the Limón Institute, an educational and archival resource organization, and the Limón West Dance Project, a group based in San José, as well as with the international touring repertory dance company.

"It is a testament to artistic director Carla Maxwell that Limón is not only the first modern dance company to decide to continue on after the death of its founder, José Limón," writes Dance Magazine, "but that it is thriving, never in better shape, and ready for the next 50 years."

Tickets for the Limón Dance Company are \$20 general admission, \$17 for faculty, staff and senior citizens, and \$15 for students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box Office, 534-8497, and at Ticketmaster outlets at 220-8497. The performance is sponsored by the UCSD University Events Office. For information on the entire season of events sponsored by the University Events Office, visit the website, <http://ueo.ucsd.edu>, or call the UCSD University Events Office at 534-4090.

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