

Clara Isabel Díaz Maldonado: Dancer and Arts Administrator

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Bio

Clara Isabel Díaz Maldonado is an Utuado native Afro Boricua Dancer and Cultural Administrator. She begins her journey in Utuado, a crucial place for her due to the importance in Taino Culture as well as the Nationalist Movement, where she is raised and lives in until 2012. She moved to Hato Rey in order to pursue her Bachelor's Degree in Universidad de Puerto Rico, Río Piedras. Her science major quickly transforms into an Art History Major, where she explores Caribbean Art History and Legacies. Her Undergraduate Thesis, "*The representation of Bomba Dance in Puerto Rico's Visual Arts*" gives her a chance to dive deeper into her passion for Bomba, as well as the historical background in Puerto Rico's Art History.

After living through the devastation of Hurricane Maria in her hometown Utuado, in 2019 she is accepted into Baruch College to pursue a Masters Degree in Arts Administration, where she graduates in 2021. Since then, she has been living in Jersey City and living between both worlds: Jersey City and New York City, East Coast and Puerto Rico. She has developed programs at El Museo del Barrio, The Public Theater, and worked with organizations like New York Latino Film Fest and Studio Museum in Harlem. Currently, she performs Bomba with groups like Segunda Quimbamba, Bomba Yo, Bombrxs de NYC, Pa Afinar and Taller Tambuyé. She continues her bomba journey with Segunda Quimbamba as a Dance Teaching Artist since 2020 and develops programs and workshops focused on Bomba Dance and Tradition.

Artistic Statement

The creation of my movement is inherent to my life. Nature, Ancestors, Surviving, Decolonizing, Thriving. I am absolutely inspired by nature, art pieces and open spaces, always reminding me and urging me to dance, to move. My education in Bomba comes from an urge to understand myself, an afro boricua femme growing up in the middle of the mountains and separated from parts of her history. Learning and understating Bomba was not a luxury choice, it was a need to understand myself better. This curiosity became my passion and journey that I embarked in 2013 and continues to fuel me and my practice.

The study of Bomba has led me to be curious and invested in Afro Caribbean rhythms, such as Rumba Cubana, Tumba Francesa, Haitian Dances and others, while continuing to be inspired and practice Contemporary dances. Creating as a way of breathing, of existing, will remain to and continues to guide my artistic practice: Art as a Way of Existing.

Teaching Experience

2019-Present Nimbus Dance Center: Teaching Artist with Segunda Quimbamba	NJ
2023 BAAD Bronx: Bomba Workshops and Presentation with Bomberxs	NYC
2021 Bread and Butta: Community Bomba Workshop with Bomberxs	NYC
2019 Andrew Freedman Home: Corvé Workshop with Bomba Yo	NYC

Training

2023 Rod Rodgers Dance Studios: Isabel Estrada, Afro Cuban	NYC
2023 Gibney Dance: Argelia Rosanna, Afro Contemporary	NYC
2021 EBDC Ivelisse Díaz: Bomba Song and History	CH
2020 Gibney Dance: Beatrice Capote, Rumba and Afro Contemporary	NYC
2019 Gibney Dance: Stevie Insua, Rumba	NYC
2018 Alvin Ailey Extension: Katherine Acrenoux, Horton Modern Dance	NYC
2018 Alvin Ailey Extension: Noibis Loicea, Afro Cuban Modern	NYC
2018 Pleneros de la 21 (Julia Gutierrez Rivera): Bomba	NYC
2018 Andanza: Claroscuro Dance Ensemble, Contemporary Workshop	PR
2018 El Bastión: Catherine Palmier, West African	PR
2017 Ballets de San Juan Summer Intensive: Contemporary/Modern	PR
2014-18 Taller Tambuyé: Bomba Dance and Drum	PR
2016 Monk School: Modern/Contemporary/Flamenco/Sevillanas (Salamanca)	SPAIN
2016 Awilda Sterling: Improvisation	PR
2015 University of PR, Petra Bravo: Modern Dance	PR
2012 Escuela de Bomba Cepeda: Bomba Intensive Workshop	PR

Education

2021 Baruch College: Masters in Arts Administration	NYC
2019 Gibney Dance: Summer Intensive Certification	NYC
2017 Ballets de San Juan: Summer Intensive Certification	PR

Selected Performances

2019- Present El Grito: Puerto Rican Day Parade (Sunset Park)	NYC
2019 Día de Reyes Celebration, El Museo del Barrio (East Harlem)	NYC
2018 Festival del Fuego, Teatro Heredia, Performances and Workshops (Santiago)	CUBA
2017 Centro de Bellas Artes de Santurce, Showcase for Ballets de San Juan Intensive(SJ)	PR
2017 "She's Gotta Have It" Netflix Production, Rumba Dancer Extra (Loiza)	PR

Notable Mentions:

Centro Cultural Utuado, Teatro Liceo de Salamanca, Junta Hispana Festival in Queens, Mana Contemporary, All About Downtown, Ferry Slip Festival, Kaleidospace, El Puente, Casa de Pedro Albizu, Terraza 7, Arawax Records, Stage Garden Rumba at Pregones Theater, BAAD Bronx, Samsung 837, Bronx Brewery, Nimbus Dance Center Theater

Additional Skills

Community Outreach, Bilingual Dance Teaching, Fluent in Spanish, Arts Administration, Choreography, Consultancy, Bomba Workshops Facilitator

Publications

Stoddard Cortes, Stephanie. "*#RickyRenuncia: The Powerful Symbols in Puerto Rico's Historic Uprising*". Emperifolla. 22 July 2019.

<https://emperifolla.com/2019/07/22/rickyrenuncia-the-powerful-symbols-in-puerto-ricos-historic-uprising/>

Cruz-Malavé, Arnaldo. "*Bailando en un encierro: Duelo, danza y activismo en las manifestaciones del verano Boricua de 2019*". Editora Emergente. 2023.

https://www.editoraemergente.com/index.php?id_product=186&rewrite=bailando-en-un-encierro-duelo-danza-y-activismo-en-las-manifestaciones-del-verano-boricua-de-2019&controller=product&id_lang=2

Díaz, Clara. "*Painting Figure with a skirt: Representation of Bomba Dance in the Visual Arts of Puerto Rico*". Seminario Revista subgraduada de Historia del Arte. May 2017.