



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARTS San Antonio presents
First of Four Salsa Project 2012 Events
Tito Puente's Birthday Celebration
featuring the
Tito Puente Alumni All Stars
with Special Guest **Tito Puente, Jr.**
El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel, San Antonio
Romeo and Juliet Room
Saturday, April 21, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets on sale now

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS – Celebrate Tito Puente, Sr.'s birthday by dancing the night away to **Tito Puente Alumni All Stars with Special Guest Tito Puente, Jr.** on Saturday, April 21, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. at the beautiful El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel. The four All Stars used to perform with Tito Puente, Sr. General admission tickets are \$30 at the door, \$20 in advance, and may be purchased at ARTS San Antonio by calling (800) 745-3000, visiting ArtsSA.org or in-person by visiting ARTS SA at 418 East 10th Street, San Antonio, Texas 78215.

“After the first number, the small temporary dance floor was crowded with both nostalgic couples who had danced to these songs at the Palladium and more youthful salsa enthusiasts . . . Tito Puente, Jr. provided his appreciative audience with a show to remember.”

–SalsaPower.com, reviewing a performance by Tito Puente, Jr.

Why might you enjoy *salsa* music, a popular form of Latin-American dance music, characterized by Afro-Caribbean rhythms, Cuban big-band dance melodies and elements of jazz and rock? Whether you want to find out more about salsa, already appreciate the rich and vast cultural expression that is Latin music, want to participate in salsa dancing or want to watch some expert salsa dancing, this evening is for you.

Salseros (male salsa dancer), *salseras* (female salsa dancer) and those who appreciate infectious music are invited to join us at this salsa concert, dance and celebration. Musicians, salsa dancers and guests will salute Tito Puente's music and influence. Dance exhibitions by local dance studios are part of this event. San Antonio dance studios helping ARTS SA with this event are: **Semenaya, Calle Ocho and Dance Therapy.**

The late Tito Puente, Sr. was a legendary Latin jazz and salsa musician often called "The King of Latin Music." The winner of five Grammy awards, Puente was at the height of his popularity during the 1950s, and helped to bring Afro-Cuban and Caribbean sounds, like mambo, son and cha-cha-cha, to mainstream audiences. Later, he moved into more diverse sounds, including pop music, bossa nova and others, eventually settling down with a fusion of Afro-Cuban and Latin jazz genres that became known as *salsa*, a term that Puente disliked. Puente was awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003.

Special Guest Tito Puente, Jr., whose father Tito Puente was renowned worldwide for his prowess in playing timbales as well as for a successful career in composition and arranging that spanned six decades, emulates his father's characteristic timbales out front style of playing with an enthusiastic timbales solo. Since his father's death, Puente, Jr. has devoted himself to playing his father's music. His stated goal of maintaining his father's memory and style is obvious in the way he handles the sticks and even in the way he dresses. Puente, Jr. performs "Afro-Cuban music with a New York style."

Tito Puente Alumni All Stars, performing in this one-night-only San Antonio event, are: **Jose Madera, John "Dandy" Rodriguez, Frankie Vázquez** and San Antonio's own **Henry Brun.**

- Born and raised in Santa Isabel, Puerto Rico, Latin music icon Madera spent 31 years with the Tito Puente Orchestra. He served as a percussionist and later went on to become an arranger and the musical director of the Orchestra. For almost

20 years, Madera has been devoted to preserving the musical traditions of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

- Rodriguez grew up in New York City at a time when it was the heart and soul of Latin Jazz in the United States. At 17 years old Rodriguez earned a place playing bongos in the Tito Puente Orchestra. Rodriguez spent more than 30 years with the Tito Puente Orchestra.
- Born in Salinas, Puerto Rico, Vázquez, with 34 years of professional recording experience, is one of the most in-demand *soneros* (improvising lead singer in the salsa style) today; he was one of the last vocalists to join Puente's Orchestra.
- Born in the Bronx to Puerto Rican parents, Brun, a San Antonio-based percussion dynamo, has performed on more than 690 recordings and has won a Grammy and multiple Grammy nominations. Brun cites Tito Puente as his principal musical influence and has performed with Tito Puente.

General admission tickets are \$30 at the door, \$20 in advance, and may be purchased at ARTS San Antonio by calling (210) 226-2891, visiting ArtsSA.org or visiting ARTS SA's office at 418 East 10th Street, San Antonio, Texas 78215.

This is the first of ARTS SA's **four Salsa Project 2012 events** for South Texans of all ages who enjoy the upbeat rhythms of Latin jazz and the grace, style and athleticism of salsa dancing whether as audience members or participants. The next three events are:

- **Summer Salsa Pool Party** - Saturday, August 25, 2012, Noon to 5:30 p.m., El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel
- **Celia Cruz Birthday Celebration Concert and Dance** - Saturday, October 13, 2012 at 7:30 p.m., El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel
- **Chucho Valdés "The Dean of Latin Jazz" and the Afro-Cuban Messengers Quartet** - Saturday, November 17, 2012 at 7:30 p.m., Lila Cockrell Theatre

ARTS SA Salsa Project 2012 events will culminate in 2013 with the **ARTS San Antonio Salsa Festival** - Friday, February 1, 2013 through Sunday, February 3, 2013. All festival events will be held at El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel. The other ARTS SA Salsa Project 2013 events are:

- **Tito Puente Birthday Celebration Concert and Dance** - Saturday, April 20, 2013 at 7:30 p.m., El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel

- **Summer Salsa Pool Party** - Saturday, July 20, 2013, Noon to 5:30 p.m., El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel

ARTS San Antonio is a leading non-profit presenter of performing arts in the South Texas region. ARTS San Antonio performances are supported by the San Antonio Office of Cultural Affairs, San Antonio Express-News, Texas Commission on the Arts and theFund. ARTS SA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization dedicated to the education, enrichment and entertainment of the people, especially the children, of greater San Antonio. Net proceeds from these performances and gifts from individuals and foundations make possible performing arts and ARTsTEach arts-education workshops for elementary school students and seniors.

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