



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Raúl Orlando Edwards

**EMAIL:** [rauloedwards@gmail.com](mailto:rauloedwards@gmail.com)

**PHONE:** 832.880.4065

## **PARALELOS**

*(Parallels)*

*Celebrating the African Diaspora from the US to Latin America through music, dance, and poetry*

NYC, Sunday, February 26, 2017, 3:30 PM

Though people of African descent in Latin America and the US came primarily from the same areas in Africa, both developed distinct characteristics that have shaped the way they express through their traditions, music, dances, food, and more. Illustrated via multiple art disciplines, *Paralelos* brings to life those differences but yet how they reflect the unique way with which both regions dealt with life and society.

Presented by FLAMART during African American History Month, the launching of *Paralelos* features the talented and international cast of Jeanine Otis (soprano/actress, USA), Carmen Elisa Cancél (soprano, Puerto Rico), Anthony Turner (baritone, USA), Baden Goyo (piano, Venezuela), Vissi Dance Theater (USA), and Raúl Orlando Edwards (baritone/dancer, Panamá). Works of R. Nathaniel Dett, Hall Johnson, Cecil Cohen, Langston Hughes, J. Serrano, Rafael Hernández, Fernando Albuerne, Alberto Dominguez, dance performances, and poetry, will take center stage in this salute to diversity and culture.

**Location:** St. Marks in the Bowery, 131 E 10th St, New York, NY 10003

**Cost:** FREE (donations accepted)

For more information about the program, go to <http://www.flamart.org>

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### **About the artists:**

**Raul Orlando Edwards:** Creator and director of *Paralelos*, he is the recipient of a Certificate of Congressional Recognition and four consecutive commendations from City of Houston administrations for his artistic contribution, Panamanian baritone Raul Orlando Edwards, has been actively promoting the diversity found within the Latin culture. He has launched *Salsa y Salud*, the country's largest salsa and health event celebrating 7 years; the *Afro-Latin Festival* (celebrating 4 years), and other programs. For over 20 years, he has been actively engaged in showcasing the richness Latin culture contains with special attention to Afro-Latino issues. He has taken this message such to San Francisco, Orlando, Dallas, and has now begun presentations in NYC.

### **Carmen Elisa Cancél**

Hailed as a singer possessing a "crystalline timbre and intense acting ability," (L'Arena, Verona, Italy) Puerto Rican soprano, Carmen Elisa Cancél received high praise for her performances as Countess Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, Mrs. Fiorentino in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*, Musetta in *La Bohème*,



and as Donna Elvira with the Operafestival di Roma production of Don Giovanni at the Palazzo della Sapienza in Rome. As a crossover artist, Ms. Cancél was proclaimed “flawless” and “completely believable” (Creative Loafing Tampa) in her performance as the title character of Maria’s Song, a musical drama focused on the desperate need for immigration reform in the US. Ms. Cancél enjoyed success as Sarraghina in Maury Yeston’s Nine with the Bruges Festival in Belgium, where she also performed in Shakespeare Cabaret, a musical revue of the writings of Shakespeare and his influence on musical theater. Her singing has taken her throughout the US and to Italy, Bulgaria, Belgium, Canada, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and her native Puerto Rico. In her work as Program Director for Musical Dream Inc. ([musicaldream.org](http://musicaldream.org)), she mentors talented young people of NYC through its music scholarship programs. She is a member of the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA), the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), and Opera America. One of her greatest joys comes from volunteering her time with Hope for New York (HFNY) working to diminish social injustice throughout New York City.

### **Jeannine Otis**

Was hailed by NY TIMES Critic Anthony Tommasini as a 'SHOWSTOPPER' for her performance as Ella Worker in Downtown Music Theater's Production of THE CRADLE WILL ROCK, Mimi Stern Wolfe, Director. She was on Broadway in THIS JOINT IS JUMPIN' at the Edison Theater and in Las Vegas and the National Company of YOUR ARMS ARE TOO SHORT TO BOX WITH GOD. She has also appeared in local productions of DOUBT and THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES. She has appeared in many award-winning off-Broadway avant-garde theater productions including JERUSALEM ( Liz Swados) at the Delacorte Theater, YOU DON'T MISS YOUR WATER, (Deidre Murray, Music Theater Group), EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES ( Eve Ensler/ James Lescene, Music Theater Group), IN LIVING COLOR ( Bessie Award ) off-Broadway , FABLES, ( Denver Center Theater artist-in-residence), and STEEL ( American Repertory Theater( Galt Mc Dermott/Derrick Walcott) directed by Robert Brustein. She is also a jazz recording artist for the WARNER MUSIC GROUP (MAGIC SONGS). Having begun her solo recording career as a guest soloist for the late Grover Washington Jr. on the Grammy-nominated REED SEED recording, she has worked with numerous distinguished artists of all genres including PETE SEEGER, Elliot Goldenthal ( JUAN DARIEN), and Finnish composer laureate HEIKKI SARMANTO, She is a writer who collaborated with LIZ SWADOS . Her book THE GATHERING was presented as a music-theater piece (WHO AM I), starring ANTHONY TURNER at the La MaMa Theater. She is a proud long-time member of Actor's Equity.

**Vissi Dance Theater.** Dancers hail from all over the world and bring with them their cultural diversity and unique perspective on artistry. There is a special interest in bringing out the actor in the dancer as well as the dancer in the actor. The style of dance can be described as Urban Contemporary; a spirited combination of all forms including but not limited to Jazz, Modern (Dunham), West African, Funk, and Ballet.

**Anthony Turner**, baritone, has been featured in opera, musical theatre, concert and orchestral performances throughout the United States and Europe. Featured roles include: Tony, *The Most Happy Fella*; Clarence Thomas, *Clarence and Anita*; Alfio, *Cavalleria Rusticana*; Dappertutto, *Les Contes D'Hoffmann*; Guglielmo, *Così fan tutte*. He has appeared with the opera companies in Cincinnati, Cleveland and with New York based Opera Ebony. Orchestral appearances include the Phoenix, Walla Walla, Cincinnati, Omaha, Brevard Music Center and Evansville symphonies. Anthony has also performed with the United States Air Force Band and the Lincoln Chamber Orchestra. His festival appearances include the Next Wave Festival at Brooklyn Academy of Music, Piccolo Spoleto in Charleston, SC and the Barbican Festival in London. He has appeared with Jessye Norman, Laurie Anderson and the Dance Theater of Harlem. Mr. Turner currently serves as professor of voice at Wagner College in Staten Island and at NYU Tisch School of the Arts - *New Studio on Broadway*.