

## CHE MALAMBO

MARCH 10, 2020 10:00am

**STANDARDS**

DA:Ra.7.1 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

DA:Re8.1 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

**DESCRIPTION OF MATINEE**

Presenting a thrilling, percussive dance and music spectacle, Che Malambo's work celebrates the unique South American gaucho tradition. The Argentine-based company excites audiences through precise footwork, rhythmic stomping, drumming of the bombos, and singing and whirling boleadoras. Danced solely by men, the *Malambo* began in the 17th century as competitive duels that would challenge skills of agility, strength, and dexterity. Che Malambo brings these fiery traditions and virtuosic dancing to the contemporary stage for an exhilarating and entertaining show that is perfect for the entire family.

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Sureño &amp; norteño | Southern &amp; northern

Tiempo para poesía | Poetry time

Gracias! | Thank you!

Reference

**GRADE RECOMMENDATION:**

Elementary, Middle and High School

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:**

Dance

Music

World Civilization

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## A MESSAGE FROM GILLES BRINAS

*Che Malambo* is the name of the performance that I have created by incorporating traditional *Malambo* which is a style of dance practiced in Argentina and a few other South American countries. Like many who fall under the spell of traditional dances, I was fascinated by *Malambo*. I flew to Buenos Aires in search of this dance so typical of the Pampa region of Argentina. I was inspired by the talented artists I found in Buenos Aires and was moved to create the company *Che Malambo* from the best *Malambo* dancers in the area. I was drawn to the particular rhythms, the powerful characters, and the lonely expressions of the *gaucho*, the South American cowboy, who spends his life on horseback.

If you repeat the word *Malambo* three times, "*Malambo Malambo Malambo ...*" you can almost hear the gallops and cavalcades. *Malambo* is a powerful musical dance, exuberant, nervous, quick, and inventive that is played opposite to the robust *bombo* "drum" which provides the tempo. The sound of the *boleadoras* "lassos" hitting the floor provide a counterpoint to the aforementioned percussive elements.

Although once obscure, the rhythms of *Malambo* are now understood and appreciated worldwide. Originally, *Malambo* was a rhythm that echoed the movement, voluntary and involuntary, of populations. *Malambo* then made its way to Pampa Argentina, where it developed its color and style. Today, we can trace many of its roots to Europe as we continue to watch the style evolve.

I sincerely hope that the public will be happy to share in this celebration of Argentine folklore!

## LA COMPAÑÍA | ABOUT THE COMPANY

Che Malambo, a powerhouse all-male company of Argentinian gaucho dancers, is a culturally unique ensemble dedicated to bringing the art of Malambo and a new version of Argentinian folklore to the rest of the world. In their 2019 American tour, Che Malambo is showcasing Malambo, a traditional dance from Argentina that is handed down from older South American cowboys to their younger counterparts. Che Malambo not only demonstrates the original competitive dances that exhibit the beauty, fluidity, strength, and sheer bravado of the art form, but also presents the beautiful musical traditions of Argentinian folklore.

## QUE ES CHE? | WHAT IS CHE?

*Che* is an interjection commonly used in Argentina. It is a form of colloquial slang used as "friend." It may be used either before or after a phrase and can also be added to an explicit vocative to call the attention, playing the role of "Hey," for instance. *Che* is also utilized as a casual speech filler or pronunciation to ascertain comprehension and can function like the English word "right."

## QUE ES MALAMBO? | WHAT IS MALAMBO?

*Malambo* is one of the most unique forms of Argentine folklore born in the 1600's. Unlike most Argentine dances, the essence of *Malambo* is expressed in rhythm, not words. This percussive dance is created by the interweaving rhythms of the dancer's *zapateo* "footwork," swirling of the *boleadoras* "lassos," and the striking of the *bombo* "drum."

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## QUE ES UN GAUCHO? | WHAT IS GAUCHO?

In its historical sense a *gaucho* was one who, in the 18th and 19th centuries, inhabited Argentina, Uruguay and Rio Grande do Sul. Because historical *gauchos* were characterized as brave, the word is also applied metaphorically to mean noble, brave and generous, but also one who is crafty. The *gaucho* is a national symbol in both Argentina and Uruguay. *Gauchos* became greatly admired and renowned in legends, folklore and literature and became an important part of their regional cultural tradition. An essential attribute of a *gaucho* was that he was a skilled horseman. Without a horse the gaucho felt himself unmanned. A *gaucho* could ride as soon as he could walk. *Gauchos* felt that a man without a horse was a man without legs.

## EL ZAPATEO | THE FOOTWORK

There are no rules to performing *zapateo*, a dance that is exclusively comprised of the movements of the feet. Each combination of basic movements is unique and depends on the origin of the gaucho who executes it. It could vary in the order, position, coordination rhythm and posture.

## LAS BOLEADORAS | THE BOLEADORAS

*Boleadora* is the Argentinian equivalent of the North American lasso. It is a rope with a weight at the end that is used by the *gaucho* as a weapon to capture prey for food by entangling its legs. The dancers in Che Malambo each use two *boleadoras* throughout their spectacle and showcase many difficult routines with this dangerous instrument.

## EL BOMNO LEGÜERO | THE LEGUERO DRUM

*Bombo legüero* is an Argentine drum traditionally made of a hollowed tree trunk and covered with cured skins of animals such as goats, cows or sheep. Because the fur is left on the hide, the *bombo's* sound is deep and dark. The *bombo* is played while hanging to the side of the drummer, who drapes one arm over the drum, to play it from above, while also striking it from the front. The *bombo* was brought to South America by West African slaves who came through Portugal, then traveled to Brazil and worked together with the gauchos. The *legüero* is an essential element of Argentine folklore (zamba, chacarera, etc.) that was popularized by musicians like Los Chalchaleros, Carlos Rivero, and Mercedes Sosa. The *bombo* was also used as a form of transmitting signals as well as a way of determining the periphery of the *gauchos'* terrain; the area in which the *bombo* resonated.

## SUREÑO & NORTEÑO | SOUTHERN & NORTHERN

Due to the diversity of population, culture and social class in the northern and southern regions of Argentina, two types of *Malambo* were formed: *el norteño* "the northern" and *el sureño* "the southern." The biggest difference between the two forms of *malambo* can be found in the character of the music. The *malambo norteño* possesses a faster tempo and more forceful stomping which is opposite to the slow tempo and more gentle footwork of the *malambo sureño*. The *sureño* is performed barefoot and is slightly older than the *norteño*. The *norteño* is performed with boots which were brought to Argentina by the Spaniards.

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## TIEMPO PARA POESÍA | POETRY TIME

El baile ya ha comenzado  
allá por Santiago del Estero  
retumba toda la selva  
El repicar de un bombo legüero

The dance has started  
over there by Santiago of Estero  
the ringing of a legüero drum  
rumbles through the jungle

## Gracias! | THANK YOU!

Thank you for riding the rhythm with us!

## REFERENCES

<http://www.chemalambolive.com/>