

# **Primeros Pasos**

## **Ballet Hispanico's Education Program**

### **A Foundation for Achievement**

Primeros Pasos activities are rooted in the following convictions about dance and culture.

- ✓ Dance springs from the events, emotions and gestures of everyday life, and fills many functions:
  - Dance can erupt spontaneously for fun.
  - Dance expresses feelings.
  - Dance can tell a story.
  - Dance can be a means of education.
  - Dance marks certain ritual moments, both religious and social.
  - Dance reaffirms a community's sense of identity.
- ✓ Dance reveals the culture and traditions of the people who create and perform it.
- ✓ Latin American culture reflects a great range, richness and diversity of traditions. It is this mixed heritage – Spanish, African, Arab and indigenous – that gives Latin American dance and music their unique flavor.
- ✓ Individual choreographers make dances within the context of their cultures. At the same time, each has a particular "vocabulary" of gestures and movements to express what he or she wants to say, which may in turn help shape the dance vocabulary of the culture.
- ✓ Dance is a valuable and distinctive learning tool. The opportunity to experience dance first-hand furthers a child's ability to develop creativity, self expression and discipline.
- ✓ Dance is a language which expresses and communicates in its own way. (Isadora Duncan once said: "If I could tell you what it meant, there would be no point in dancing it.") Sometimes the language of dance is easy to "read"; at other times, we need help understanding it, just as we might with mathematics or science or some other discipline.

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