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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**BROOKLYN, NY (May 20, 2008)** Brooklyn Arts Council's Folk Arts program presents **Folk Feet Circle 'Round Brooklyn 3**, an afternoon of traditional dance workshops and performances held from **3 – 5pm on Sunday, June 8 in Fort Greene Park**. This year's theme is *Earth Stomping Dance Traditions* featuring South African gum boot and Zulu warrior dance, Lebanese style *debka* line dance, Indian *Kathak* dance, and Panamanian *cumbia atravesada* with *zapateo arreglos*. Audience members will have an opportunity to learn dances suitable for all ages at this free family event.

Folk Feet programming facilitates the understanding of culturally specific traditional dance forms. Circle 'Round typically focuses on the teaching of *social* dances, as opposed to choreographed narrative dance forms. Circle 'Round 3 highlights traditional dance's relationship to the earth in its most physical form: through the dancers' feet. The qualities expressed by footwork, whether percussive or soft, and the placement of the foot on the earth—stomping with the sole, brushing the toe, striking with the heel, or springing off the ground—often exemplify feelings such as belonging, rootedness, strength, and reverence. Sometimes footwork is just a vehicle for showing off and having fun.

### FEATURING:

#### **JUXTAPOWERS, SOUTH AFRICAN SONG AND DANCE**

Founder Sduduzo Ka-Mbili and Michael Nyonende Forde perform and teach *Zulu* dance (traditional foot-stomping warrior dance) and gumboot dance of South Africa, a syncopated rhythmic step dance innovated by mine workers in the oppressive and violent conditions of South Africa's apartheid-era gold mines.

#### **OUR LADY OF LEBANON DEBKAS TROUPE**

Debka troupe members of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church in Brooklyn Heights, Danny Antoun and John Wakim along with other Bay Ridge-based *debka* aficionados demonstrates and teaches the earth-shaking steps of Lebanese-style *debka* while Jad Lebbos plays the resounding tabl *beladi*. *Debka* is a social line dance that has been performed in the Levant (*Bilad el Sham*) since Ottoman times. Although variations are found between Palestinian and Lebanese/Syrian styles, group unity and a strong relationship to the earth as expressed through heavy stomps and precise heel-toe footwork always characterize practiced and passionate *debka* dancers. Whether choreographed or danced socially, *debka* can express national pride, and political resistance, or simply joyfulness at a social event.

## **NAJMA AYASHAH**

*Kathak* is a classical dance form from North India. It's a partially narrative dance form characterized by fast footwork (*tatkar*), spins (*chakkar*). Najma Ayashah, *Kathak* dance exponent of the Jaipuri tradition, is known to have enriched and integrated the established Jaipur tradition with elements of folk and Gypsy dance with an unusual sense of aesthetic adventure and free form. Her creative repertoire finds expression in integrated compositions with cross-cultural or fusion pieces performing to music and rhythms of Flamenco, Africa, and the Middle East.

## **CONJUNTO NUEVO MILENIO**

Brooklyn-based Panamanian Folklorico ensemble Conjunto Nuevo Milenio and director Alberto Gonzalez present the cultural and regional diversity of Panamanian traditions and perform at celebrations such as Brooklyn's Panamanian Parade on Franklin Avenue. The troupe teaches and performs Afro-Panamanian dances, such as *congo*, from the costal areas of panama as well as dances rooted in the Spanish colonial heritage of the central province, such as *punto*, and *tamborito*, a couple-dance. For Circle 'Round 3 the ensemble demonstrates a popular social dance called *cumbia atrevesada*. Sections of the cumbia feature quick, eye-catching, percussive footwork called *zapateo*, usually performed by men to challenge each other and impress their female counterparts.

## **DIRECTIONS:**

Fort Greene Park

A/C to Lafayette; G to Fulton; Q/R to Dekalb; or 2/3 to Atlantic Avenue. Enter Fort Greene Park on the south side (Dekalb Ave. and South Portland) and walk to the grassy area near the War Martyr's Monument.

Rain Date: July 13

Program subject to change

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