



# BATTLE OF THE **NXT** GENERATION

New Generation Dance Competition

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EVENT **PROGRAM**

SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025

# ABOUT THE EVENT

## **BATTLE OF THE NXT GENERATION**

**New Generation Dance Competition**

Welcome to Battle of the Next Generation, a high-energy dance event where passion, skill, and creativity take center stage! We're thrilled you're here to cheer on these talented dancers as they push their limits and shine in front of a supportive audience.

The day kicks off with an exclusive workshop led by CAM Dance Company, giving participants a chance to refine their technique before stepping into the competition. Our event officially begins with a powerful Opening Number, setting the stage for two exciting competition blocks—Kids & Youth (Block 1) followed by Teens & Adults (Block 2)—and culminating in an awards ceremony recognizing standout performances.

Thank you for joining us to celebrate the next wave of dance talent. Sit back, get ready to be inspired, and enjoy the show!

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# EVENT PROGRAM

## PROGRAM

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### Venue: Black Box Media

(12355 NE 13th Ave Unit #403-404, North Miami, FL 33161)

- 3:00 PM** Check-in
- 4:00 PM** Opening Number & Event Introduction
- 4:15 PM** Competition Block 1 (Kids & Youth)
- 6:30 PM** Block 1 Awards Ceremony
- 7:00 PM** Competition Block 2 (Teens & Adults)
- 8:30 PM** Block 2 Awards Ceremony

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## Competition Details

In this dynamic competition, dancers will showcase their incredible talent across a wide range of categories—hip hop, fusion, open style, salsa, bachata, and more—passionately highlighting the artistry and diversity of dance.

Performances will be meticulously evaluated by our expert judges based on specific criteria, and at the end of the competition, scores will be tallied to determine the top choreography in each category. We'll present first, second, and third place honors to recognize the dedication and creativity of these rising stars.

### Our Judging Platform:

The Battle of the Next Generation Competition uses PODIUM, a professional judging platform utilized by the top competitions around the world. This system ensures easy tallying of scores, with instant results!

# THE PRODUCER



## **Marielena "Mari" Martinez**

### **EVENT FOUNDER & PRODUCER**

Mari Martinez, a Miami native, is a dancer, choreographer, and entrepreneur. She founded Hotspot Enterprise, which includes Hotspot Dance Company

and Hotspot Entertainment, offering dance training and entertainment across Florida.

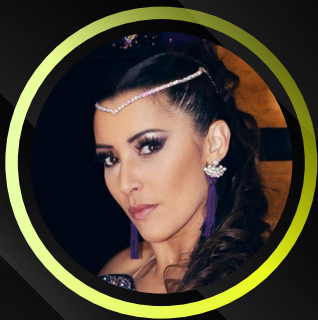
As Artistic Director of the Miami Salsa Congress and Bachateando Dance Festival, she champions Latin dance culture. She has choreographed for the Miami Heat and Marlins Energy teams and launched competitions like Battle of the Latin Clubs to support emerging talent.

A dynamic host and MC, Mari continues to inspire the next generation through coaching, performance, and community-driven dance initiatives.

### **MY VISION FOR THE LATIN CLUBS**

I dream of a future where the Latin dance community flourishes beyond our wildest imaginations! My goal is to establish vibrant programs in high schools, providing aspiring dancers with access to choreographers without the burden of class fees. These initiatives will offer the outreach and education our youth need to excel in Latin dance. By nurturing their talent and passion, we can elevate each school to form their own dance clubs, sparking excitement for competition and growth. Imagine an annual Battle of the Latin Clubs that transcends local boundaries and captivates audiences on an international scale! This vision is about empowering our youth, instilling confidence, and igniting a lifelong love for dance. I'm committed to making this a reality and won't stop until every student has the opportunity to shine !

# OUR JUDGES



**CARINE MORAIS**  
**HEAD JUDGE**

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**ELIAS TABBAN**  
**JUDGE**

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**CAMILA BRINEZ**  
**JUDGE**

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**PHILIP KENDRICK**  
**JUDGE**

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**GABRIELA PUNS**  
**JUDGE**

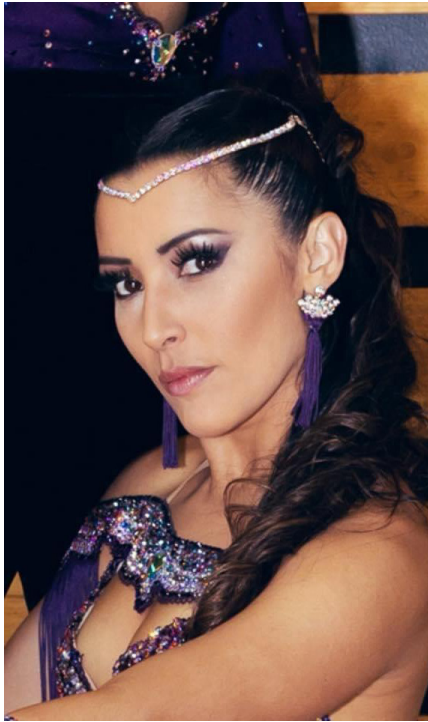
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**MELANIE CASTILLO**  
**JUDGE**

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# JUDGES



## **Carine Morais** **HEAD JUDGE**

The eight-time Salsa World Champion and organizer of the Brazil Latin Open, Carine Morais, was born in Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil. Dancing has been part of her life since childhood, when she enjoyed pretending to be a famous dancer. At the age of five, she briefly studied ballet but was unable to continue. By thirteen, she had begun her Brazilian dance studies, and

within a year, she was already teaching.

In 2003, while still very young, she traveled to Spain as part of a dance group's staff and participated in two seasons of a Brazilian music show. Her first contact with salsa took place in Ceará (Brazil) through a study group, where her first partner was Paulo Burracha. Thanks to her quality, adaptability, and dedication, Carine started attracting attention. Around 2006, she was invited to Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) to perform Brazilian dances such as samba de gafieira and funkeado, all while continuing her salsa studies and training.

In 2007, she won the Brazilian salsa championship (Brasil Salsa Open) alongside her partner, Paulo Burracha. In September 2008, she began her successful partnership with Rafael Barros, and together they have won eight world titles. Beyond becoming a leading figure in the dance world, Carine Morais and Rafael Barros have traveled to over 35 countries to teach and perform. She has also received numerous invitations to judge major dance championships around the globe and has made several appearances on television programs.



# JUDGES



## Elias Tabbán

Elías Tabbán is a professional salsa dancer, instructor, and choreographer with over 19 years of experience immersed in the world of Latin dance. He began his journey teaching children and adults, specializing in Cali-style salsa and Salsa On1, and quickly developed a reputation for shaping students into confident and versatile performers. Driven by

his commitment to excellence, Elías soon began competing on the international stage, establishing himself as both a formidable competitor and a sought-after coach.

His breakthrough came in 2011, when he won the Men Team category at the World Latin Dance Cup, followed by a victory in the Salsa On1 category in 2012. Beyond his personal achievements, Elías has guided multiple champions in various children's and youth categories, showcasing his remarkable ability to nurture talent. His dedication to fostering the next generation of dancers led him to co-found the SABA Championship Competition, a salsa and bachata event focused on elevating young performers.

Today, Elías continues to influence the global dance scene as a certified judge at the World Salsa Summit and as an organizer of prominent international competitions. Through his choreographies, he inspires dancers of all levels to strive for artistic growth and celebrate the vibrant culture of salsa.

# JUDGES



## **Camila Brinez**

3X World Salsa Champion

Camila Briñez started dancing at the age of 12. Originally from Cali, Colombia, Camila's dream since she was little was to open her own latin dance school, so that she can share her passion and love for latin dance with others. At the beginning of 2021, her dream finally came true, when she and her partner Gino decided to go all in and open

Ritmo Dance Studio in Pembroke Pines, FL.

Camila has been seen performing across many international stages and has been featured with artists like Gilberto Santa Rosa, Enrique Iglesias, Tony Succar, Pitbull and many more.



# JUDGES



## Philip Kendrick

Philip Kendrick (also known as P.K.) was born in West Palm Beach FL. And is a native of south Florida. As a dancer he is part of Tae Talent which is one of the most respected agencies in Miami. As one of the most sought after Hip Hop teachers in Florida he has taught/is teaching in some of the most respected and talked about studios through out South

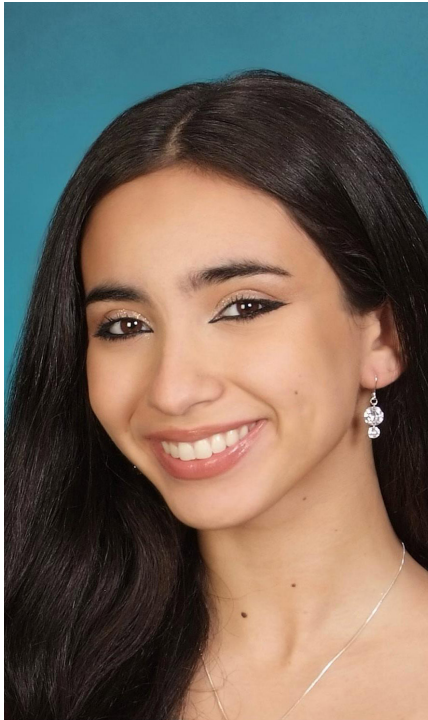
Florida. (DanceTown. Dance Attack, Focal Point, Stars, Sean's Dance Factory, etc.)

P.K has also shared the stage with Jason Derulo, Don Omar, Marc Anthony, Daddy Yankee, Trick Daddy and Danity Kane and has done videos with the likes of Luis Fonsi, French Montana, Yandel, One Direction, Flo Rida etc.

And it doesn't stop there he has also appear on shows such as MTV Super Sweet 16, BET Spring Bling, Premios Juventud and Premios Lu Nuestro.

His passion for dance has inspired others through his artistry of dance. And he is happy to pass on his knowledge and experience to the next generation of dancers as a sought after master teacher and judge.

# JUDGES



## Gabriela Puns

Gabriela “Gaby” Puns is a dynamic force in the world of competitive dance, blending talent, leadership, and a deep passion for the art. She began her dance journey at just three years old at the prestigious Maria Verdeja School of Dance, where she built a strong foundation in technique and performance. By the age of eight, she entered the

competitive dance arena, earning top placements and multiple Platinum awards over the next six years—testament to her exceptional skill and dedication.

In high school, Gaby was a proud member of the legendary Coral Gables Gablettes, where she helped secure a coveted National Championship. This experience cemented her reputation as a disciplined, elite-level performer who thrived under the rigors of competition.

Today, Gaby is not only a seasoned dancer but also an influential educator and businesswoman. As the co-owner of Florida’s only traditional dance academy (focused on preserving and promoting authentic dance styles), she fosters a supportive environment that nurtures growth and artistic excellence. Gaby remains dedicated to mentoring young dancers, sharing her love for movement, and elevating the dance community as a whole.

# JUDGES



## Melanie Castillo

Melanie Castillo, born and raised in New York City, is a professional Latin Dancer. Having Puerto Rican and Dominican roots, she is no stranger to Latin music and dance. She started her dance training at the age of 5 and all roads led her to taking salsa classes once in college. She quickly realized that her passions lied within this dance since it was so close to home

with a strong connection to her roots and her culture.

Melanie has worked closely with salsa greats Nelson Flores (Descarga Latina), Sekou McMiller (Proyecto Descarga), and Ismael Otero (Caribbean Soul), as well as successful partnerships with Elvis Collado and Nina Tirado. Melanie is the creator, director, and choreographer of Candela Dance Company, which has gone to win two titles at the World Salsa Summit.

Her dance career has taken her around the world, visiting countries such as Mexico, China, Malaysia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, and Canada, just to name a few. She was a principal dancer in the 2021 feature “In The Heights” and has worked on projects featuring Jose Alberto “El Canario” , Víctor Manuelle, C + C Music Factory, La India, Gloria Estefan and Sheila E. Today Melanie continues to work in the Latin dance community teaching, performing, training, and choreographing nationally and internationally. She also works with many studios, students, and dancers in providing them the tools necessary to grow and improve.



# UPCOMING **EVENTS**

**HOTSPOT DANCE INTENSIVE**

July 28 - Aug 1, 2025

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**MIAMI SALSA CONGRESS**

Aug 6-11, 2025