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Puerto Rican group dances through Austin

By: Jitin Hingorani

The [Puerto Rican Folkloric Dance](#) Company is using rhythm, movement and costumes to promote cultural awareness. It may sound a little like salsa and merengue, but this music has its own beat -- a Puerto Rican beat.

"As we all know from the census, the Hispanic community is growing profoundly, not only in the United States, but here in Texas, and there's more to Hispanic community than just the wonderful, beautiful culture of Mexico," said Ana Maria Maynard of the company.

Most people may not know much about the Puerto Rican culture, but this group is changing that. "I thought it would be very beautiful for them to know something about who we are and why we're so much fun and the kinds of dances that we do."

The dances range from the Bomba to the Plena to the Seis and they are influenced by many cultures. "Like African culture, you have the Spanish culture influencing in there," said Ricardo Palacios, a dancer in the company. "Anybody could be interested in it. You just have to be interested in dance."

But even if you're not interested in dance, the mesmerizing rhythm and hypnotic beat will keep you entertained.

"They're going to feel like they've walked into another piece of time because everything that we're going to do is going to be very colorful, very joyful, very historical," said Maynard. "People are going to leave the theater not only having had a lot of fun, but really understanding something about the roots of Puerto Rico."

The performance will be Sunday at the State Theater. For ticket information, call 469-SHOW.