

An illustration of two women dancing in a city at night. The woman on the left is wearing a red dress and has long brown hair. The woman on the right is wearing a red dress and has short brown hair. They are both smiling and looking at each other. In the background, there are city buildings and a man sitting on a bench reading a newspaper. The title '¡A bailar! Let's Dance!' is written in large, stylized letters at the top right.

¡A bailar! Let's Dance!

By/Por
Judith Ortiz Cofer

Illustrations By/Ilustraciones de
Christina Ann
Rodriguez

¡A bailar! Let's Dance!



By / Por Judith Ortiz Cofer

Illustrations by / Ilustraciones de Christina Ann Rodriguez



Piñata Books
Arte Público Press
Houston, Texas

Publication of *¡A bailar! Let's dance!* is funded by grants from the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance. We are grateful for their support.

Esta edición de *¡A bailar! Let's dance!* ha sido subvencionada por la Ciudad de Houston por medio del Houston Arts Alliance. Les agradecemos su apoyo.

Piñata Books are full of surprises!
¡Piñata Books están llenos de sorpresas!

Piñata Books
An Imprint of Arte Público Press
University of Houston
452 Cullen Performance Hall
Houston, Texas 77204-2004

Cover design by / Diseño de la portada por Mora Design

Cofer, Judith Ortiz, 1952-

¡A bailar! Let's Dance! / by Judith Ortiz Cofer ; illustrations by Christina Ann Rodriguez.

p. cm.

Summary: A young girl and her mother put on their red dresses and dance their way through the barrio, collecting friends and neighbors along the way as they go to the park to hear her father's salsa band play.

ISBN 978-1-55885-698-1 (alk. paper)

[1. Dance—Fiction. 2. Salsa (Music)—Fiction. 3. Hispanic Americans—Fiction. 4. Bands (Music)—Fiction.] I. Rodriguez, Christina, 1981- ill. II. Title.

PZ7.O765Bai 2011

[E]—dc22

2010054522
CIP

∞ The paper used in this publication meets the requirements of the American National Standard for Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1984.

Text Copyright © 2011 by Judith Ortiz Cofer
Illustrations Copyright © 2011 by Christina Ann Rodriguez

Printed in China in May 2011–July 2011 by Creative Printing USA Inc.

12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

This book is for my grandson, Elias John, and with love and gratitude to his parents, Tanya and Dory, who read to Eli every day.

As always, I want to thank John Cofer for his constant encouragement of my work.

Mil gracias to my *compañeras* Billie Bennett Franchini and Kathryn Locey, who offered their comments and expertise as this book evolved over time, until it came to fruition.

— JOC



To my parents Phil and Monica, who paid for all the art lessons and believed in me.

To my sisters Michelle, Jennifer and Brittany, who were asked to stand in as models countless times.

To Jodi and Anna for posing for almost every picture in this book.

And to my mentors Dennis, Doug and Bill, who have made it all possible.

— CAR



It's Saturday afternoon, and Mami and I have been doing our chores
and singing a song we made up to Papi's salsa music.
The rhythm of the music makes us move, move, move.
Mami makes the broom her dance partner, showing me how to dance.

*Menéate, menéate, menéate
al ritmo que nos hace . . .
que nos hace feliz . . .*

*Move, move, move
to the rhythm that makes us . . .
that makes us feel happy . . .*

"Listen to the *claves*," Mami says, "and the bongos and the cowbells.
Listen to the maracas and the timbales and the *güiro*!
They'll tell you how to move your shoulders, your hips, your feet."
As I'm putting away the spoons and the forks,
I take two spoons and imitate the *claves*' beat: *uno, dos, tres*.
Mami taps out the salsa rhythm on the floor with the broom.

*Al ritmo que nos hace . . .
que nos hace bailar.*

*To the rhythm that makes us . . .
that makes us dance.*

We move, move, move in perfect salsa rhythm, faster, faster, faster.

Menéate, menéate, menéate.

Move, move, move.



