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Thursday, September 24, 2020

Ballet Hispánico Named One of America's Cultural Treasures By Ford Foundation

Company: Ballet Hispánico
Venue: Ballet Hispánico
Location: New York, NY

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Ballet Hispánico

Ballet Hispánico is committed to its founding mission of access, diversity, and inclusion. Today, after 50 years of living that legacy, it is recognized with an award from the Ford Foundation naming it one of America's Cultural Treasures.

"This remarkable recognition of our work will ensure a deeper impact for our community," said Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director & CEO of Ballet Hispánico. "The foresight of the Ford Foundation to create a coalition of national donors in support of organizations run by and in communities of color creates a social justice megaphone. It is unprecedented. We are overwhelmed by this honor."

The \$160-million-and growing America's Cultural Treasures initiative has so far awarded twenty unrestricted grants of between \$1 million and \$6 million to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) organizations across the country. Ballet Hispánico will receive \$4 million over four years.

"This award will contribute to our long-term stability and enable us to continue elevating Black and brown voices. Through our programs that nurture arts leadership, our platform will expand and enhance the growing diverse landscape," said Vilaro.

"This is the Ford Foundation's latest and most dramatic salvo in President Darren Walker's bid to reinvent how Americans - and most important, American philanthropists - value theater companies, museums, and the arts overall," as stated in today's Washington Post article.

"Our nation has raised its voice; we need to reframe engrained past structures of hierarchy in the arts. This initiative puts organizations of color at the table," added Vilaro.

The Ford Foundation is an independent, nonprofit grant-making organization. For more than 80 years it has worked with courageous people on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. With headquarters in New York, the foundation has offices in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

About Ballet Hispánico

Ballet Hispánico, America's leading Latino dance organization, has been an oasis of diversity and inclusion for 50 years. Over the past five

decades, Ballet Hispánico's mission-driven ethos has been a catalyst of change for communities throughout our nation. By bringing the richness of the Latinx culture to the forefront of performance, education, and social advocacy, Ballet Hispánico is one of America's Cultural Treasures. The organization's founder, National Medal of Arts recipient Tina Ramirez, sought to give voice to the Hispanic experience and break through stereotypes. Today, Ballet Hispánico is led by Eduardo Vilaro, an acclaimed choreographer and former member of the Company whose artistic vision responds to the need for social equity, cultural identity, and quality arts education for all. Ballet Hispánico has been, and will continue to be, a beacon for diversity. The art we create explores and celebrates the culture without the trappings of stereotypes. We foster the pursuit of art as a way of providing transformation through the exploration of the human condition. Our art often defies gravity, acting as a frontline against cultural division by releasing preconceived notions of culture and instead offering our audiences new perspectives.

Ballet Hispánico
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