

DIÁLOGOS: ART, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND LATINX DANCE WORKERS IN THE NYC DANCE ECOLOGY

Thursday, September 26, 2019

Diálogos: Art, Social Justice, and Latinx Dance Workers in the NYC Dance Ecology

By Dance/NYC

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When: Thursday, September 26, 2019, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Where: Ballet Hispánico, 167 West 89th Street, Studio 10, New York, NY 10024

Register for the Conversation: FREE. Registration is required. (Registration is now closed.)

Accessibility:  Ballet Hispánico is an accessible venue. Wheelchair ramps and elevators are available via the main entrance. All restrooms are gender inclusive and wheelchair accessible. Studios and rooms are lit by fluorescent lights. We will not be able to provide child care or health care for this event. If you require reasonable accommodation, please contact Christopher Núñez at least two weeks prior to the event via email at cnunez@dance.nyc or call 212-966-4452 (voice only).

About: Join Dance/NYC and Ballet Hispánico for a long table conversation, Diálogos, on art, social justice, and Latinx dancemakers and cultural workers in the NYC Dance Ecology. Inspired by Camille A. Brown's *The Gathering*, the event will bring together self-identifying Latinx dancers, choreographers, educators, and administrators for a long table discussion to articulate their needs and recommendations for thriving artistic practice in the metropolitan NYC area. What are the contributions of Latinx dance makers to what is today's NYC Dance Landscape? How do we continue to preserve, support and resource Latinx dance makers and cultural workers? What is the impact that systems of oppression have on Latinx dance makers and cultural workers and what is their role in addressing social justice issues?

Speakers:

- George Emilio Sanchez (Facilitator), Writer and Performance Artist
- Ana María Correa, Senior Director of Community Engagement, Miami City Ballet
- Ana "Rokafella" García, Co-founder, Full Circle Prod Inc
- Juan Castaño, Managing Director, Calpulli Mexican Dance Company
- Christopher Núñez, Visually Impaired Choreographer, Manager of Justice, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives, Dance/NYC
- Eduardo Vilario, Artistic Director & CEO, Ballet Hispánico

Speakers Biographies:



GEORGE EMILIO SANCHEZ (Facilitator) is a performance artist and social justice activist. He premiered his latest solo performance *XIV* at Dixon Place this past June. *XIV* is the first installment of his solo performance series titled, "Performing the Constitution". He is a Social Practice Artist-in-Residence at Abrons Art Center. This December he will be presenting his third 24-hour performance filibuster on gun violence at Abrons Arts called "Bang Bang Gun Amok III". For the past 12 years he has served as the Performance Director for Emergenyc that explores the intersection between arts and activism. He teaches at the City University of New York's College of Staten Island.



ANAMARIA CORREA is Miami City Ballet's (MCB) senior director of community engagement. In her role AnaMaria bridges, deepens and fosters relationships between MCB and the arts, culture, education and local communities ensuring that constituencies have access to and claim a place for themselves at MCB. In her role as a "bridge builder" she is also a "conscience raiser" leading efforts of equity and inclusion practices and competencies for the organization. In her previous role as the director of community engagement and inclusion at Avenues: The World School, she spearheaded the practice of community engagement ethics and program partnerships as well as being the founding DEI practitioner establishing cultural competency strategies for an global school community. At Ballet Hispánico, she held a dual role as the senior director of community engagement and the director for their accredited school of dance. Serving as administrative leader for a school

which provided in ballet, contemporary, folklore and flamenco for 700 students and their families. As director of community arts programs, she conceptualized and implemented community dance education programs in partnership with communities, classrooms and universities. She is the daughter of Dominican immigrants who made their life in Queens as she grew up and made a career in the streets of the 5 boroughs. She served New York City schools as an arts in education programs integrator for theater, dance, music, visual art, creative writing and architecture focusing always on the arts as a tool for transformation in pedagogy, social development and agency. Organizations and experiences that represent important touchstones in her career include: Her work as an actor in the New York theater community; Henry Street Settlement's Abrons Arts Center, the Brooklyn Historical Society, The Point, Dancing Classrooms and (of course) her years at Ballet Hispanico. AnaMaria was the founding artistic director of Washington State University's "Las Memorias" Performance as Education program. Presently a doctoral candidate in Urban Education at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, her work explores stories of the "other" and their resistance and resiliency. Her scholarship is grounded in Critical Race Theory, Narratives and Performance pedagogies. She has a lifelong commitment to work with families, children and educators in education, arts, culture, community engagement and the power of arts for transformation. She holds a B.A. in secondary education and literature from Hunter College and an M.F.A in acting from Brooklyn College. Photo courtesy of AnaMaria Correa.



ANA "ROKAFELLA" GARCIA is an NYC native who has represented Hip-hop dance professionally over the past two decades. She co-founded Full Circle Prod Inc- NYC's only non-profit Break Dance Theater company with her husband veteran Bboy Kwikstep. Rokafella has acted in theater pieces, performed poetry, directed a documentary highlighting the Bgirl lifestyle entitled "All The Ladies Say" and performs her original music based on growing up in Hip-hop's Mecca. She is hired internationally to judge Breakdance competitions based on her mastery of the classic Hip-hop dance style and she teaches unique workshops aimed at evolving and preserving its technical aspects. Presently she is an artist in residence at the American Tap Dance Foundation, an adjunct professor at The New School. She has been featured in pivotal Rap music videos, tours, film, and commercials as well as choreographed for diverse festival concerts such as the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Rokafella is a multi-faceted Hip-hop artist who references street and Latino culture as her foundation. Photo credit: Ana "Rokafella" Garcia by Paul G.



JUAN CASTANO co-founded Calpulli Mexican Dance Company with the vision of celebrating and serving the Mexican and Mexican-American community across the USA. Mr. Castano, a native of El Paso, Texas, holds an MBA in General Management from the Metropolitan College of New York. He also holds a BA in Chemistry and studied Latin American Studies while at Grinnell College in Iowa. There he also began his studies of folk dance with student instructor Alicia Gonzalez. He studied Arts Administration as continuing education at New York University and is a certified Non-Profit Financial Professional via the Fiscal Management Associates. Mr. Castano is a certified Project Management Professional via the Project Management Institute.

He continued his training in NYC with several choreographers most notably Noemy Hernandez, Daniel Jaquez, and Alberto Lopez. With over 20 years of dance experience in Mexican folk dance, Mr. Castano is now a Master Teacher with the Young Arts Foundation. In recent years, he has also been a guest choreographer for Calpulli Mexican Dance Company, developing works for "Boda Mexicana," "Puebla: The Story of Cinco de Mayo," and co-writing "Navidad: A Mexican-American Christmas." He is also a Teaching Artist with Calpulli leading workshops and co-leading the design of the company's arts-in-education experiences. He also co-created the program Calpulli Community, which offers year-round classes in dance and music across the tri-state area of NY, NJ, and CT. For over 13 years, the program is based entirely on voluntary donations to youth and reaches over 250 individuals every week. As a producer, Mr. Castano continues to partner with venues in NYC including Queens Theatre, Thalia Spanish Theatre, Schimmel Center for the Arts, and Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture. Independently, he has produced seasons at The Town Hall, City College Center for the Arts, and led all of Calpulli's domestic and international touring. Photo courtesy of Juan Castano.



CHRISTOPHER "UNPEZVERDE" NUNEZ is a Nicaraguan/Costa Rican artist and choreographer based in New York City. In NY, his work has been presented at The Kitchen, Movement Research at The Judson Church, Danspace Project, The Leslie Lohman Museum for Gay and Lesbian Art, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dixon Place, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, Green Space, among others.

His performances have been featured in publications such as The New York Times, Time Out New York, Dance Enthusiast, and The Brooklyn Rail. Nunez is a 2018 NYFA Immigrant Artist Mentoring Program Alumni, a 2019 Leslie Lohman Museum for Gay and Lesbian Art Fellow and a 2019 Dance and Process choreographer at The Kitchen. Currently he is the Manager of Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives at Dance/NYC. Photo credit: Christopher "Unpezverde" Nunez by Jo Chiang.



EDUARDO VILARO (Artistic Director & CEO) joined Ballet Hispanico as Artistic Director in August 2009, becoming only the second person to head the company since it was founded in 1970. In 2015, Mr. Vilaro took on the additional role of Chief Executive Officer of Ballet Hispanico. He has been part of the Ballet Hispanico family since 1985 as a dancer and educator, after which he began a ten-year record of achievement as Founder and Artistic Director of Luna Negra Dance Theater in Chicago. Mr. Vilaro has infused Ballet Hispanico's legacy with a bold and eclectic brand of contemporary dance that reflects America's changing cultural landscape. Born in Cuba and raised in New York from the age of six, he is a frequent speaker on the merits of cultural diversity and dance education. Mr. Vilaro's own choreography is devoted to capturing the spiritual, sensual and

historical essence of Latino cultures. He created over 20 ballets for Luna Negra and has received commissions from the Ravinia Festival, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Grant Park Festival, the Lexington Ballet and the Chicago Symphony. In 2001, he was a recipient of a Ruth Page Award for choreography, and in 2003, he was honored for his choreographic work at Panama's II International Festival of Ballet. Mr. Vilaro was also inducted into the Bronx Walk of Fame in 2016 and was awarded HOMBRE Magazine's 2017 Arts & Culture Trailblazer of the Year. In 2019, Mr. Vilaro was the recipient of the West Side Spirit's WESTY Award, was honored by WNET for his contributions to the arts, and most recently, was the recipient of the James W. Dodge Foreign Language Advocate Award. Photo courtesy of Ballet Hispánico.



Ballet Hispánico, America's leading Latino dance organization, has been bringing individuals and communities together to celebrate and explore Latino cultures through dance for nearly 50 years.

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[< back](#)

[previous listing](#) • [next listing](#)