

April, 1-3, 2022

Ballet Hispánico announces the world premiere of Doña Perón at City Center Dance Festival

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

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Ballet Hispánico, the nation's renowned Latinx dance organization recognized as one of America's Cultural Treasures, announces the world premiere of *Doña Perón* at New York City Center, April 1-3, 2022, the concluding performances of Ballet Hispánico's 50th Anniversary Celebration, on Fri & Sat at 7:30pm, Sat & Sun at 2pm. The Company will perform as part of the first City Center Dance Festival which showcases New York companies making their triumphant return to the City Center stage after more than two years away. Tickets can be purchased online at nycitycenter.org/pdps/2021-2022/city-center-dance-festival/, by phone (212-581-1212) or in-person with New York City Center, 131 W. 55th Street, NYC.

Choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa to music by Peter Salem, *Doña Perón* is the first full evening-length work commissioned by the Company and reclaims the narrative of the iconic Latina figure by a Latina choreographer. The work is an explosive portrait of Eva "Evita" Perón, one of the most recognizable, and controversial, women in Argentinian history. The illegitimate daughter of a prosperous farmer, Evita concealed this shameful past as she rose the ranks from dancehall performer to Argentina's First Lady - all before her untimely death at the age of 33.

Doña Perón brings to light the extremes of power at the forefront of Evita's life. Her work as an activist and advocate for Argentina's women and working class raised skepticism as she indulged in the opulence of a high-class life. A voice for the people, or a deceitful actress? Ochoa explores these diverging legacies and more in this seminal work, marking Ballet Hispánico's move beyond their 50th Anniversary and the continuation of centering the voices of Latinx artists.

"She's not a fairytale character, she's not a literary character," said Annabelle Lopez Ochoa. "She's a real woman, and for me, it's interesting to put her on stage because she's difficult to pinpoint. I want to give female dancers real roles, not always the nice roles. Women are complex and it's nice to show all of these facets. I'm very grateful that I can put this woman, Evita Perón, on stage as a female choreographer."

About the Artists

Annabelle Lopez Ochoa (Choreographer) has been choreographing since 2003 following a twelve-year dance career in various contemporary dance companies throughout Europe. She has created works for sixty dance companies worldwide including Ballet Hispánico, Atlanta Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Compañía Nacional de Danza, Dutch National Ballet, Finnish National Ballet, Royal Ballet of Flanders, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, Göteborg Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, BJM-Danse Montréal, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, English National Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, to name a few. In 2012, her first full length work, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, originally created for the Scottish Ballet, received the Critics' Circle National Dance Award for "Best Classical Choreography" and was nominated for a prestigious Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production the following year. Annabelle was the recipient of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award in 2019.

Nancy Meckler (Artistic Collaborator) is a director known for her work in the United Kingdom with Shared Experience, where she was a joint Artistic Director alongside Polly Teale. Meckler has directed a production of *I.D.* She was a member of London-based collective the Freehold Theatre Company (1969-1973), where she eventually became Director. The group employed devising methodology to create work, and was the

first company to receive the John Whiting Award for "new and distinctive development in dramatic writing," traditionally given to playwrights.

Peter Salem (Music) is very much in demand as a ballet composer, and has recently completed his third ballet, Broken Wings, for the English National Ballet, which opened to huge critical and popular success in April 2016. His media work is also internationally renowned, principally his music for "Call the Midwife," which won the Best Television Programme Music category at the Music and Sound Awards 2016, as well as other high profile productions. His extensive theatre work includes many scores for productions by the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, and Shared Experience Theatre.

Mark Eric (Costume Design) is a costume and fashion designer based in New York City, where he trained at the Fashion Institute of Technology. After designing for several New York City fashion houses, he discovered his passion for costuming for the stage. He enjoys bringing his couture fashion sensibility to his design, often employing artisanal techniques when creating his signature costumes. He has designed costumes for Robert Battle, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Rennie Harris, Robbie Fairchild, Stefanie Batten Bland, Andrew McNicol, and Marguerite Donlon to name a few. He has costumed works for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, BalletX, Ballet Hispanico, Ailey II, among others.

Christopher Ash (Lighting, Set, and Video Design) is a Philadelphia-based Designer and Filmmaker whose work has been seen in 13 countries and been recognized for 15 awards. Equally at home designing projections, scenery or lighting for theatre, opera, and dance as well as direction and cinematography for film. Christopher is currently involved in a multi-phase Guggenheim Works and Process commission with artist John Jarboe. He is also co-creator of an ongoing multi-sensory performance piece "Body Language" with Dublin based dance artist David Bolger and CoisCéim Dance Theatre.

About New York City Center

New York City Center (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city since 1943. Manhattan's first performing arts center, City Center was founded by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia with the mission of making the best in music, theater, and dance accessible to all audiences. This commitment continues today through celebrated dance and musical theater series including the Fall for Dance Festival, the Tony-honored Encores! and Encores! Off-Center, and the newest series Artists at the Center and the City Center Dance Festival. The distinctive neo-Moorish theater welcomes over 300,000 annual visitors to experience internationally acclaimed artists on the same stage where legends like George Balanchine, Leonard Bernstein, Barbara Cook, José Ferrer, Martha Graham, and Paul Robeson made their mark. Home to a roster of renowned national and international companies including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, City Center's Principal Dance Company, and Manhattan Theatre Club, City Center's dynamic programming, art exhibitions, studio events, and master classes, are complemented by education and community engagement programs that bring the performing arts to over 11,000 New York City students, teachers, and families each year. NYCityCenter.org

About Ballet Hispanico

For fifty years Ballet Hispanico has been the leading voice intersecting artistic excellence and advocacy and is now the largest Latinx cultural organization in the United States and one of America's Cultural Treasures. Ballet Hispanico brings communities together to celebrate and explore Latino cultures through innovative dance productions, transformative dance training, and enduring community engagement experiences. National Medal of Arts recipient Tina Ramirez founded Ballet Hispanico in 1970, at the height of the post-war civil rights movements. From its inception Ballet Hispanico focused on providing a haven for Black and Brown Latinx youth and families seeking artistic place and cultural sanctuary. By providing the space for Latinx dance and dancers to flourish, Ballet Hispanico uplifted marginalized emerging and working artists, which combined with the training, authenticity of voice, and power of representation, fueled the organization's roots and trajectory. In 2009, Ballet Hispanico welcomed Eduardo Vilario as its Artistic Director, ushering in a new era by inserting fresh energy to the company's founding values and leading Ballet Hispanico into an artistically vibrant future. Today, Ballet Hispanico's New York City headquarters house a School of Dance and state-of-the-art dance studios for its programs and the arts community. From its grassroots origins as a dance school and community-based performing arts troupe, for fifty years Ballet Hispanico has stood as a catalyst for social change. Ballet Hispanico provides the physical home and cultural heart for Latinx dance in the United States. Ballet Hispanico has developed a robust public presence across its three main programs: its Company, School of Dance, and Community Arts Partnerships. Through its exemplary artistry, distinguished training program, and deep-rooted community engagement efforts Ballet Hispanico champions and amplifies underrepresented voices in the field. For fifty years Ballet Hispanico has provided a place of honor for the omitted, overlooked, and oppressed. As it looks to the next fifty years and beyond, Ballet Hispanico seeks to empower, and give agency to, the Latinx experience and those individuals within it.

Ballet Hispanico
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Schedule
April 1, 2022: 7:30pm
April 2, 2022: 2:00pm, 7:30pm
April 3, 2022: 2:00pm

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