June, 1-3, 2023

Ballet Hispánico presents Two World Premieres: Sor Juana by Michelle Manzanales Papagayos by Omar Román de Jesús

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

Ballet Hispánico, the nation's largest Latinx cultural organization and one of America's Cultural Treasures, returns to New York City Center after its critically and publicly acclaimed run of Doña Perón. From June 1-3, 2023, Ballet Hispánico will present a mixed bill curated by Artistic Director & CEO Eduardo Vilaro featuring repertory favorites, two new commissions and an exciting new addition to the repertory. Tickets start at $35 and are available at nycitycenter.org/pdps/2022-2023/ballet-hispanico.

Ballet Hispánico uplifts and serves as a platform for Latinx voices and artists. The Company takes the City Center stage with a program of incredible dance, beginning with an opening night performance and Gala paying tribute to The Miranda Family. Each performance includes the signature work Club Havana, Pedro Ruiz's homage to his Cuban home-land; a riveting duet from New Sleep by master choreographer William Forsythe, presented in tribute to Ballet Hispánico's founder Tina Ramirez (1928 – 2022); and two new works: Sor Juana by Michelle Manzanales; and Omar Román De Jesús' first work for the Company, Papagayos.

Ballet Hispánico 2023 Gala Performance and Dinner

Following the opening night performance on June 1, a gala dinner will take place at the Plaza Hotel. Celebrate Ballet Hispánico's transformative legacy, robust future, and commitment to artistic advocacy as the organization honors The Miranda Family with the Nuestra Inspiración award. Gala table and ticket purchases include ticketing for the June 1 Gala Performance at City Center. If you are interested in attending the gala, please contact Ellie Craven at ecraven@ballethispanico.org. For more information, visit https://www.ballethispanico.org/support/events/2023-gala. Gala Opening Night Program: Sor Juana, Papagayos, Club Havana

"We are thrilled to return to New York City Center with an extraordinary program featuring some of today's most visionary Latinx choreographers, offering tribute to the legacy of Tina Ramirez's mission and the inspirational Miranda Family," said Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director & CEO, Ballet Hispánico.

Sor Juana – World Premiere

Mexican-American choreographer Michelle Manzanales' groundbreaking creative force will tell the story of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, a seminal figure who was centuries ahead of her time in advocating for women's rights and education, and whose legacy continues to shape the rich tradition of Mexican literature. Manzanales' work will feature poetic excerpts with moments from Sor Juana's life, interweaving music of Baroque Mexico, and tackling deeply personal themes of family, a love for learning, and the yearning for artistic voice.

Papagayos – World Premiere

Enter the world of Puerto Rican choreographer, Omar Roman de Jesus and hi upside down forest, where paradise comes ready laden with wings and psychedelic stories write themselves out of order. A three second love ritual between two birds transforms into a movement poem celebrating the pleasure of human physicality. We can be both as we want and as we are here where the colors cry out at their maximum volume. The work explores the human condition and the need to connect with another. "Sometimes all we want to be is part of someone else."

New Sleep (excerpt)

William Forsythe's New Sleep (1987) – a neoclassical master work scored by composer Thom Willems – demonstrates Forsythe's ability to deconstruct classical vocabulary and maintain a strict precision without confining the physical expression within the movement. His work was long admired by Ballet Hispánico founder Tina Ramirez who, for many years, sought an opportunity for the Company to present one of his pieces. In honor of Tina, two members of the Company will perform an excerpt from New Sleep at each performance.

Club Havana (2000)

One of the company's signature works, this is Latin dancing at it's best. The intoxicating rhythms of the conga, rumba, mambo, and cha cha are brought to life by choreographer Pedro Ruiz, himself a native of Cuba, as he imagined his very own "Club Havana."

Presented in cooperation with New York City Center.

MetLife Foundation is an Official Tour Sponsor of Ballet Hispánico. The 2022-2023 Ballet Hispánico National Tour is made possible by JP Morgan Chase, an Official Tour Sponsor.

Michelle Manzanales is a NYC-based choreographer whose recent choreographic commissions include new works for the Paul Taylor Dance Company, Oregon Ballet Theater, and Contemporary West Dance Theatre. Manzanales' work for Ballet Hispánico, Con Brazos Abiertos, described as a "savvy but deeply sincere meditation on her Mexican American background" (-Marina Harss, New York Times) and "an exceptional, heart-tugging beauty" (LA Times), premiered in 2017 and has since toured worldwide to critical acclaim including its feature in the 2022 BAAND Together Dance Festival at Lincoln Center and New York City Center's 2018 Fall for Dance Festival. Other acclaimed works by Manzanales include her homage to Frida Kahlo, Paloma Querida, which was hailed a "visual masterpiece" by Lucia Mauro of the Chicago Tribune and was described by the Chicago Sun-Times as a "gorgeously designed, richly hallucinatory, multi-faceted vision of the artist." Sugar in the Raw (Azucar Cruda), was also applauded by the Chicago Sun-Times as "a staggering, beautiful, accomplished new work." Manzanales is the co-founder of the Latinx Dance Educators Alliance and Director of the Ballet Hispánico School of Dance. She previously led the organization's professional company as Rehearsal Director & Artistic Associate for seven seasons.

American choreographer William Forsythe has been active in the field of choreography for over 45 years. His work is acknowledged for reorienting the practice of ballet from its identification with classical repertoire to a dynamic 21st century art form. Forsythe's deep interest in the fundamental principles of organization has led him to produce a wide range of projects including Installations, Films, and Web based knowledge creation. Raised in New York and initially trained in Florida with Nolan Dingman and Christa Long, Forsythe danced with the Joffrey Ballet and later the Stuttgart Ballet, where he was appointed Resident Choreographer in 1976. In 1984, he began a 20-year tenure as director of the Ballet Frankfurt. After its closure, Forsythe established a new ensemble, The Forsythe Company, which he directed from 2005 to 2015. Forsythe's works developed during this time were performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier pieces are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including the Mariinsky Ballet, New York City Ballet and Paris Opera Ballet. More recently Forsythe has created works for the Paris Opera Ballet, English National Ballet and Boston Ballet.

Omar Román De Jesús (Bayamón, Puerto Rico) is a Queer Puertorriqueño choreographer and director of NYC-based dance company Boca Tuya. He is a 2022 Princess Grace Award Winner in Choreography, a 2022 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow in Choreography, and a 2020 Recipient of The Ann & Weston Hicks Choreography Fellowship (Jacob's Pillow). He has been commissioned to create work on over 20 companies and pre professional schools including: The Baryshnikov Arts Center, Limón Dance Second Company , The Paul Taylor Dance Company, Whim W'him, and Parsons Dance, Omar's stage work has been awarded recognition through the Joffrey Academy of Dance's Winning Works Choreographic Competition, Whim W'him's Choreographic Shindig, The Dance Gallery Festival, Reverb Dance Festival, and the International Dance Festival of Puerto Rico where he was awarded the Ambassador of Dance medal. His 2021 screendance, Los Perros del Barrio Colosal, has been viewed by audiences in over 20 countries and was awarded Best of Screen Dance International and Best Choreography and Best Narrative of ReThink Dance Film Festival. He was a faculty member of The Ailey School (2022), and has experience teaching workshops and master classes all over the world for professional dancers, students with special needs, people with physical disabilities, and marginalized communities.

Pedro Ruiz was trained in his native country, Cuba and in Venezuela, Mr. Ruiz choreographed three celebrated ballets while a principal dancer with Ballet Hispánico for twenty-one years. Choreography credits include: The Joffrey Ballet, Luna Negra, New Jersey Ballet, The Tribeca PA C, The Jacob's Pillow Festival, The Marymount College, the Ailey/Fordham B.F.A. Program, Ailey's Spring Celebration and Summer Sizzler concerts. He is on the dance faculty of Marymount College, the staff of The Ailey School and Scarsdale Ballet. Awards include: the Bessie Award, the Choo-San Goh Award, The Cuban Artist's Fund, and The Joyce Foundation Award to create a new work for The Joffrey. Mr. Ruiz has performed at the White House and was profiled nationally on PBS's In the Life.

Ballet Hispánico is the largest Latinx/Latine/Hispanic cultural organization in the United States and one of America's Cultural Treasures. Ballet Hispánico's three main programs, the Company, School of Dance, and Community Arts Partnerships bring communities together to celebrate the multifaceted Hispanic diasporas. Ballet Hispánico's New York City headquarters provide the physical home and cultural heart for Latinx dance in the United States. It is a space that initiates new inclusive cultural conversations and explores the intersectionality of Latine cultures. The Ballet Hispánico mission opens a platform for new social dialogue, and nurtures and sees a community in its fullness. Through its exemplary artistry, distinguished training program, and deep-rooted community engagement, Ballet Hispánico champions and amplifies Latine voices in the field. For over fifty years Ballet Hispánico has provided a place of honor for the omitted, overlooked, and othered. As it looks to the future, Ballet Hispánico is pushing the culture forward on issues of dance and Latine creative expression.

NEW YORK CITY CENTER (Michael S. Rosenberg, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city since 1943. The distinctive Neo-Moorish building was founded by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia as Manhattan's first performing arts center with the mission of making the best in theater, dance, and music accessible to all audiences. This commitment continues today through celebrated dance and musical theater series like the Fall for Dance Festival and the Tony-honored Encores! series; the annual season by Principal Dance Company Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; and new series Artists at the Center and the City Center Dance Festival. City Center welcomes audiences to experience internationally acclaimed artists including Kyle Abraham, Matthew Bourne, Ayodele Casel, Manhattan Theatre Club, Nederlands Dans Theater, and Twyla Tharp, on the same stage where legends made their mark. Dedicated to a culture built on the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, City Center's dynamic programming, art exhibitions, and studio events are complemented by education and community engagement programs that bring the performing arts to thousands of New York City students, teachers, and families every year, in all five boroughs. NYCityCenter.org

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Schedule
June 1, 2023: 6:30pm
June 2, 2023: 7:30pm
June 3, 2023: 2:00pm, 7:30pm