

Saturday, January 19, 2019

The Innovative and Versatile BALLET HISPÁNICO Returns to Lehman Center!

Company: BALLET HISPÁNICO

Venue: Lehman Center for the Performing Arts

Location: Bronx, NY

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Susan Bestul

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Lehman College and honoring GOYA FOODS for their long-term community leadership, presents BALLET HISPÁNICO's much anticipated return to Lehman Center on Saturday, January 19th, 2019 at 8pm. America's leading Latino dance organization, the innovative and versatile BALLET HISPÁNICO has been bringing individuals and communities together through dance for nearly 50 years. Led by Artistic Director & CEO Eduardo Vilaro, this evening's program will feature Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Sombrerísimo*, Michelle Manzanales' *Con Brazos Abiertos*, and Eduardo Vilaro's *Danzón*.

This concert continues the completion of the first phase of renovations at Lehman Center for the Performing Arts. Concert goers will find that the lobbies have been upgraded for ADA compliance with new ramps and carpeting, and the interior of the theater will have new seating, carpeted aisles, and finished flooring as well. The \$15.4 million dollar refurbishment of the Center, which is expected to be completed by mid-2019, will also include 5,400 square feet of enlarged space, with a new main entrance and a redesigned box office, plus new administration offices and restroom facilities on the first and mezzanine floors, and an elevator. The Center seats 2,278 people in the concert hall and is the largest of its kind in the borough. Funding for the project is being provided by the Office of the Governor, the New York State Legislature, the Bronx delegation of the New York City Council, and the Office of the Bronx Borough President. Additional funding is being raised with a seat naming initiative, which allows community members to make a personal connection with one of New York City's most important not-for-profit entertainment venues.

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts is on the campus of Lehman College/CUNY at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Bronx, NY 10468. Tickets for BALLET HISPÁNICO on Saturday, January 19th, 2019 at 8pm are \$75*VIP, \$55, \$45, \$25 | Children 12 & under, \$10 any seat, and can be purchased by calling the Lehman Center box office at 718-960-8833 (Monday through Friday, 10am–5pm, and beginning at 4pm on the day of the concert), or through online access at www.LehmanCenter.org. *VIP Reception: The Havana Café, Goya Foods and Lehman Center special VIP pre-concert wine & hors d'oeuvres reception will start at 6:30pm. VIP tickets include the reception and the best seats in the house. Sponsored by Havana Café Restaurant and Goya Foods. Lehman Center is accessible by #4 or D train to Bedford Park Blvd. and is off the Saw Mill River Parkway and the Major Deegan Expressway. Low-cost on-site parking available for \$5.

BALLET HISPÁNICO, America's leading Latino dance organization, has been bringing individuals and communities together to celebrate Latino cultures through dance for nearly 50 years. Whether dancing on stage, in school, or in the street, Ballet HISPÁNICO creates a space where few institutions are breaking ground. The Company is a group of highly trained professionals who perform the works of Latino choreographers for audiences around the world. Ballet HISPÁNICO's repertory explores the diversity of Latino cultures and brings innovative ways of experiencing and sharing a cultural dialogue. Representing a multitude of nationalities, their artists reflect the ever-changing face of our nation.

In August 2009, Ballet HISPÁNICO welcomed EDUARDO VILARO as its new Artistic Director. Born in Cuba and raised in New York from the age of six, he is a former principle dancer and educator of the Company, and had studied dance at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance, achieved a BFA in Dance from Adelphi University, and an MA in Interdisciplinary Art from Columbia College Chicago, where he served as Artist-in-Residence at The Dance Center. Mr. Vilaro founded and led the Luna Negra Dance Theater in Chicago for ten years, during which time he created over 20 ballets for Luna Negra and others such as the Ravinia Festival, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Lexington Ballet, and the Civic Ballet of Chicago. He also did additional educational outreach in Chicago in coordination with Tina Ramirez and Ballet HISPÁNICO. During his time as Artistic Director (and since 2015, also as the Company's CEO), Mr. Vilaro has infused Ballet HISPÁNICO's legacy with a bold and eclectic brand of contemporary dance that reflects America's changing cultural landscape. To further that mission, Mr. Vilaro created the Company's dance laboratory, Instituto Coreográfico in 2010. In 2001, Mr. Vilaro was honored with a Ruth Page Award for choreography, was inducted into the Bronx Walk of Fame (2016), was chosen as HOMBRE Magazine's 2017 Arts & Culture Trailblazer of the Year, and has a classroom named after him at the Bronx Arts Middle School.

TINA RAMIREZ founded Ballet HISPÁNICO in 1970 and served as Artistic Director until 2009. Under her direction, over 45 choreographers created works for the Company, many of international stature and others in the early stages of their career. Ms. Ramirez was born in

Venezuela, the daughter of a Mexican bullfighter and grandniece to a Puerto Rican educator who founded the island's first secular school for girls. Her performing career included international touring with the Federico Rey Dance Company, the Broadway productions of Kismet and Lute Song and the television adaptation of Man of La Mancha. She had a long professional dance career before establishing Ballet Hispánico, whose grassroots origins as a dance school and community-based performing arts troupe has grown into a world-class institution. Ms. Ramirez has received many honors in recognition of her work, including the 2005 National Medal of Arts, the Dance Magazine Award, the Hispanic Heritage Award for Education, the Capezio Dance Award, the NYS Governor's Award, and the NYC Mayor's Award of Honor for Arts & Culture.

The evening's program will feature: Critics' Circle National Dance Award-winning choreographer ANNABELLE LOPEZ OCHOA's *Sombrerísimo*, an absorbing exploration of identity with references to the surrealist world of the Belgian painter René Magritte, famous for his paintings of men in bowler hats; MICHELLE MANZANALES' *Con Brazos Abiertos*, a piece that intertwines folkloric details with a distinctly contemporary voice in dance, set to music that ranges from Julio Iglesias to rock en Español- a fun and frank vision of life caught between the two cultures the choreographer experienced as a Mexican-American child growing up in Texas; and EDUARDO VILARO's *Danzón*, which transforms this traditional and quintessentially Cuban dance form and reinvents it with a contemporary language to construct a joyous celebration of music and movement.

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, Inc. is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council. The 2018-2019 Season is also made possible through the sponsorships by Goya Foods, TD Bank, Con Edison, the New Yankee Stadium Community Benefits Fund, the Rudin Foundation, the Hyde and Watson Foundation, Havana Café, and the Friends of Lehman Center.

For high-resolution photos, click these links:

http://lehmancenter.org/th_gallery/ballet-hispanico-sombrerisimo/
http://lehmancenter.org/th_gallery/ballet-hispanico-brazos-abiertos/
http://lehmancenter.org/th_gallery/ballet-hispanico-danzon/

BALLET HISPÁNICO
250 Bedford Park Boulevard West
Bronx, NY, 10468
7189608833
<https://lehmancenter.org/ballet-hispanico/>

Schedule
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