

Thursday, May 29, 2025

BALLET HISPÁNICO 55TH ANNIVERSARY EMERALD GALA Honors Henry R. Muñoz III with the Nuestra Inspiración Award

Company: BALLET HISPÁNICO
Venue: New York City Center
Location: New York, NY

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Ballet Hispanico announces The 55th Anniversary Emerald Gala honoring Henry R. Muñoz III with the Nuestra Inspiración Award on Thursday, May 29, 2025. The evening will begin with a reception and performance of CARMEN.maquia at New York City Center, W. 56th Street & 6 ½ Avenue, and continues with a tribute, dinner, and dancing at the Ziegfeld Ballroom, 141 54th Street, NYC.

An exhilarating evening of dance, glamour, and culture in support of Ballet Hispanico's Company, School of Dance, and Community Arts Partnerships programming, the evening begins with a performance in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Bizet's beloved classic opera Carmen. Gustavo Ramirez Sansano's full-length ballet CARMEN.maquia blends explosive choreography with deep emotion. Inspired by the Spanish art of tauromaquia, it captures Carmen's raw power and passion through movement. The Gala Dinner following the performance is a beloved New York event attended by some 500 leaders in the arts and business communities and is truly a spectacular evening filled with performances by the students from its School of Dance and live music by three-time Grammy Award Winner, Spanish Harlem Orchestra, that entices guests to take to the dance floor.

"As a lifelong supporter of the arts, I am thrilled to be part of Ballet Hispanico's Emerald

Gala. Their unwavering commitment to artistic excellence and bringing Latino stories to

the stage is inspiring and essential. This honor represents more than just personal

recognition; it's a celebration of Latino artists, our rich culture, and the transformative

power of the arts to shape our society and create understanding," said Henry R. Muñoz III, Nuestra Inspiración Award Honoree.

"Ballet Hispanico's Emerald Gala is both a celebration of Latine heritage and a testament to the pride and resilience that defines us. We look forward to an unforgettable evening where art and community unite," said Eduardo Vilario, Artistic Director & CEO, Ballet Hispanico.

"I know I speak for our entire Board in expressing how proud we are of all Ballet

Hispanico has achieved in its 55 years. Our Gala will be a glorious celebration in

support of this organization that has transformed the landscape of dance in America

by reflecting the stories of diverse Latine cultures – including the breathtaking

CARMEN.maquia featured this season – through world-class dance education and the

introduction of new and innovative choreography," said Kate Lear, Chair, Ballet

Hispanico Board of Directors.

Table and ticket reservations include access to the pre-performance reception and performance at New York City Center, followed by dinner and dancing at the Ziegfeld Ballroom. Attire for the evening is creative black tie, and the theme is "A Night at the Tropicana." To reserve your table or ticket, please contact Jessica Ventura at jventura@ballethispanico.org or visit <https://www.ballethispanico.org/support/events/2025-gala>.

Gala Performance Program:

CARMEN.maquia by Gustavo Ramirez Sansano

Gala Chairs:

Jody* & John Arnhold
Richard Feldman
Kate Lear* & Jonathan LaPook
David Pérez*
Joseph Wayland* & Patricia Verrilli
Gala Committee:
Melissa Alvarez-Downing* & Stuart Downing
Arnold Foundation
Avance Investment Management
Michelle Caruso-Cabrera* & Stephen Dizard
Judy & Jamie Dimon
Lois and Richard England Foundation
Auri Fenouil* & Sebastian Garcia
Matthew Ford* & Christopher Morton
Greenberg Traurig, LLP
Hiroko Ito*
Robert Kartheiser*
Sara* & Chris Lange
The Frances Lear Foundation
Richard & Juana Maloof*
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Brett* & Lauren Perlmutter
Francisco Ramírez-Valle* & Barry Abrams
Alison Ritz
Rita Rodriguez*
Samuel H. Scripps Foundation
Ronald Shechtman* & Lynne Meadow
Scott Tegethoff*
Jose* & Vanesa Tolosa
Marcos Torres*
Sergio Trujillo* and Jack Noseworthy
Danays Vichot*
Vinson & Elkins LLP
Charles Wortman* & Laura Baldwin
Committee in formation
Board Member*

Henry R. Muñoz III is an American business leader, Tony and Emmy winning producer, activist, designer and philanthropist. He has launched national movements on behalf of the underserved and the rising populations of the United States including Momento Latino, TheDream.US and Latino Victory to support the Latino community through awareness, educational funding, and electoral empowerment. But, at the core of his career, he is best described as the center of convergence across culture and industry: he existed as a DC changemaker able to float between political circles who recently transitioned his career and now owns a major comedy studio.

Eduardo Vilario is the Artistic Director & CEO of Ballet Hispánico. He was named Artistic Director in 2009, becoming only the second person to head the company since its founding in 1970, and in 2015 was also named Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Vilario has infused Ballet Hispánico's legacy with a bold brand of contemporary dance that reflects America's changing cultural landscape.

Mr. Vilario's philosophy of dance stems from a basic belief in the power of the arts to change lives, reflect and impact culture, and strengthen community. He considers dance to be a liberating, non-verbal language through which students, dancers, and audiences of all walks of life and diverse backgrounds, can initiate ongoing conversations about the arts, expression, identity, and the meaning of community.

His works are catalysts for new dialogues about what it means to be an American. He has created more than 40 ballets with commissions that

include the Ravinia Festival, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Grant Park Festival, the Lexington Ballet and the Chicago Symphony.

A Ballet Hispánico dancer and educator from 1988 to 1996, he left New York, earned a master's in interdisciplinary arts at Columbia College Chicago and then embarked on his own act of advocacy with a ten-year record of achievement as Founder and Artistic Director of Luna Negra Dance Theater in Chicago.

The recipient of numerous awards and accolades, Mr. Vilaro received the Ruth Page Award for choreography in 2001; was inducted into the Bronx Walk of Fame in 2016; and was awarded HOMBRE Magazine's 2017 Arts & Culture Trailblazer of the Year. In 2019, he received the West Side Spirit's WESTY Award, was honored by WNET for his contributions to the arts and was the recipient of the James W. Dodge Foreign Language Advocate Award.

Supporters

Transformational funding for Ballet Hispánico is generously provided by the Ford Foundation, The Mellon Foundation, and the Jerome L. Greene Foundation. Major support is provided by the Howard Gilman Foundation; the Shubert Foundation; Warner Music Group & Blavatnik Family Foundation Social Justice Fund, a sponsored project of Moore Impact; the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation; the Tatiana Pankova Foundation; and the Mosaic Network and Fund in The New York Community Trust. Public support is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council under the leadership of Speaker Adrienne Adams, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Ballet Hispánico is grateful to Artistic Sponsor Andrew Martin Weber for generously supporting the restaging of CARMEN.maquia.

MetLife Foundation is the Official Tour Sponsor of Ballet Hispánico.

Gustavo Ramírez Sansano was Artistic Director of Luna Negra Dance Theater (2009-2013), and now he combines his work as a freelance choreographer with the direction of Titoyaya Dansa, the company he founded in Spain with Veronica Garcia Moscardo in 2006. Sansano has received numerous awards for his choreography, including first prize at the Ricard Moragas Competition in Barcelona (1997), Prix Dom Perignon Choreographic Competition in Hamburg (2001), and Premio de Las Artes Escénicas de la Comunidad Valenciana (2005). Sansano has been commissioned to create works for many companies such as Nederlands Dans Theater, Compañía Nacional de Danza, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Luzerner tanz Theater, Ballet BC, The Hamburg Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Ballet Hispánico, and Luna Negra Dance Theater, among others.

Ballet Hispánico is a pioneering force in dance, shaping the future of movement with an unparalleled fusion of innovation and cultural expression. As America's leading Hispanic dance organization and the largest cultural institution of its kind, Ballet Hispánico has redefined the artistic landscape for over five decades, seamlessly blending classical ballet, contemporary technique, and the richness of Hispanic traditions into a singular, dynamic movement language.

Founded in 1970 by the visionary Tina Ramirez, the Company quickly gained international acclaim for its groundbreaking repertory and technical excellence. From its earliest years, Ballet Hispánico distinguished itself through an inventive approach to movement, commissioning diverse choreographers and developing a bold, ever-evolving artistic voice. The Company's commitment to pushing creative boundaries has earned it widespread recognition, including being named one of America's Cultural Treasures by the Ford Foundation.

More than a professional dance company, Ballet Hispánico is a comprehensive dance institution driven by its three core pillars:

The Company commissions and presents innovative works by a diverse roster of choreographers, ensuring that Latine voices remain at the forefront of contemporary dance.

The School of Dance trains students of all ages and levels, from young beginners to pre-professional dancers, through a curriculum that fuses rigorous technical training with cultural enrichment.

The Community Arts Partnerships Program brings the joy of dance beyond the stage, offering arts education programs, workshops, and performances that reach thousands of students and families in New York City and across the nation.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director & CEO Eduardo Vilaro, a former Company dancer and a bold artistic innovator, Ballet Hispánico continues to push boundaries and expand the possibilities of dance. Programs such as Instituto Coreográfico foster cutting-edge choreographic exploration, while initiatives like the Latine Leaders Summit and Diálogos ignite meaningful artistic discourse.

Celebrated for its ability to capture the essence of Latine cultures while forging new artistic frontiers, Ballet Hispánico has performed for millions across three continents. As we continue to evolve, our commitment remains unwavering: to redefine what dance can be, to inspire audiences with bold and original storytelling, and to elevate Latine artistry on the world stage.

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 dance series Artists at the Center. 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 values of curiosity, collaboration, accessibility, and inclusivity, 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. NYCityCenter.org

About MetLife Foundation

At MetLife Foundation, we are committed to driving inclusive economic mobility for underserved and underrepresented communities around the world. We collaborate with nonprofit organizations and provide grants aligned to three strategic focus areas – economic inclusion, financial health and resilient communities – while engaging MetLife employee volunteers to help drive impact. MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to continue MetLife's long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Since its inception, MetLife Foundation has contributed over \$1 billion to strengthen communities where MetLife has a presence. To learn more about MetLife Foundation, visit www.MetLife.org.

BALLET HISPÁNICO
W. 56th Street and 6 1/2 Avenue
New York, NY, 10019
<https://www.ballethispanico.org/support/events/2025-gala>

Schedule
May 29, 2025: 5:30pm

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