

April, 24-28, 2024

Ballet Hispánico Celebrates Eduardo Vilaro's 15th Season with Annual New York Season at New York City Center

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

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Ballet Hispánico, the nation's largest Latine/x/Hispanic dance organization recognized as one of America's Cultural Treasures, continues their 2023/24 season. A Company that "compels audiences to think differently and lean into an unseen, unimaginable cultural vibrancy" (Broadway World), Ballet Hispánico amplifies Latinx artists and cultures through innovative contemporary works.

In honor of Eduardo Vilaro's 15th season as Artistic Director of Ballet Hispánico, the program (Fri, Sat, Sun) will feature the World Premiere of *Buscando a Juan*. Vilaro's new work, inspired by The Met's exhibition of Juan de Pareja, Afro-Hispanic Painter, is a layered and immersive piece inspired by the life of Juan de Pareja, the Afro-Hispanic painter who was enslaved in Spanish painter Diego Velázquez's studio for over two decades before becoming an artist in his own right. The work is a thought-provoking homage to the nuanced dance of shared vulnerability and intimate collaboration among artists that redefines the boundaries of individual creativity, beckoning us to question the very essence of artistic identity. Unveiling the electrifying transformation of gender identity expressions in Latin America, the visionary choreographer Annabelle Lopez Ochoa fearlessly deconstructs norms in her stunning recreation, now brought to life in the pulsating rhythm of *House of Mad'moiselle*. Brace yourself for a provocative dance journey that challenges perceptions and celebrates the bold artistry of breaking boundaries; and *18+1*, Gustavo Ramírez Sansano's celebration of the vulnerability, care, and hope that comes with each artistic endeavor. Tickets start at \$45 (\$20 for the En Familia Matinee) and are available at <https://www.nycitycenter.org/pdfs/2023-2024/ballet-hispanico/>.

Ballet Hispánico 2024 Gala Performance (6:30pm) and Dinner

Tickets for the April 25 Gala Performance may be paired with a reservation for the Quinceañera Gala at the Plaza Hotel in tribute to Eduardo Vilaro's 15th anniversary as Artistic Director & CEO. For more information, please contact Ellie Craven at ecraven@ballethispanico.org or visit www.ballethispanico.org/support/events/2024-gala.

Gala Performance Program: *Recuerdo de Campo Amor* by Talley Beatty; *Con Brazos Abiertos* (excerpts) by Michelle Manzanales; *Doña Perón* (excerpt) by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa; *Pas De O' Farrill*, duet by Pedro Ruiz; *Buscando a Juan* by Eduardo Vilaro.

Ballet Hispánico 2024 En Familia Matinee

The En Familia Matinee offers a journey through Latin American culture and traditions as Vilaro leads the audience on an interactive and fun-filled afternoon featuring excerpts of classic pieces from the Company's repertory: a re-staging of Talley Beatty's electrifying *Recuerdo de Campo Amor*, the ever-popular *Sombrísimo* by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Geoffrey Holder's Caribbean-influenced *Danse Creole*, and the Latin social dance extravaganza *Club Havana* by Pedro Ruiz. Made possible thanks to the generosity of the RBC Foundation USA, the charitable arm of RBC Capital Markets, and New York City Center, all tickets for En Familia Matinee are \$20 and can be purchased online at NYCityCenter.org (\$3 facility fee and \$2 reduced handling fee), by calling 212.581.1212, or in person at the City Center Box Office (\$3 facility fee).

With cultural and historical content and movement exercises for the whole family, the audience is in for a performance to remember. After the show, young audience members will have the opportunity to meet the dancers for a photo op, learn dance moves, and enjoy Caribbean beats from musicians throughout the theater!

"Leading this company continues to be the honor of my life. Fifteen years is quite a milestone; I'm humbled," said Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director & CEO. "I look forward to celebrating at City Center with several exciting pieces, including the World Premiere of my new work *Buscando a Juan*, inspired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition *Juan de Pareja, Afro-Hispanic Painter*."

Ballet Hispánico is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature; and by the National Endowment for the Arts.

MetLife Foundation is an Official Tour Sponsor of Ballet Hispánico.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Thursday, April 25th at 6:30pm – Gala Performance

Recuerdo de Campo Amor by Talley Beatty

Con Brazos Abiertos (excerpts) by Michelle Manzanales

Doña Perón (excerpt) by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

Pas De O' Farrill duet by Pedro Ruiz

Buscando a Juan by Eduardo Vilaro

Friday, April 26th at 7:30pm

House of Mad'moiselle by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

Buscando a Juan by Eduardo Vilaro

18+1 by Gustavo Ramirez Sansano

Saturday, April 27th at 2:00pm - En Familia Matinee

Sombrerísimo by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

Danse Creole (excerpt), duet by Geoffrey Holder

Recuerdo de Campo Amor by Talley Beatty

Club Havana (excerpts) by Pedro Ruiz

Saturday, April 27th at 7:30pm

House of Mad'moiselle by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

Buscando a Juan by Eduardo Vilaro

18+1 by Gustavo Ramirez Sansano

Sunday, April 28th at 2:00pm

House of Mad'moiselle by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

Buscando a Juan by Eduardo Vilaro

18+1 by Gustavo Ramirez Sansano

Eduardo Vilaro is the Artistic Director & CEO of Ballet Hispánico (BH). He was named BH's 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. Vilaro has infused Ballet Hispánico's legacy with a bold brand of contemporary dance that reflects America's changing cultural landscape.

Mr. Vilaro'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.

Born in Cuba and raised in New York from the age of six, Mr. Vilaro's own choreography is devoted to capturing the Latin American experience in its totality and diversity, and through its intersectionality with other diasporas. 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. Vilardo 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. In August 2020, City & State Magazine included Mr. Vilardo in the inaugural Power of Diversity: Latin 100 list. In January 2021, Mr. Vilardo was recognized with a Compassionate Leaders Award, given to leaders who are courageous, contemplative, collaborative, and care about the world they will leave behind. In May 2022, he was honored to serve as a Grand Marshall of 2022 Dance Parade. Mr. Vilardo is a well-respected speaker on such topics as diversity, equity, and inclusion in the arts, as well as on the merits of the intersectionality of cultures and the importance of nurturing and building Latinx leaders.

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 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
131 W 55th St, New York, NY 10019
New York, NY, 10019
6467654773
<https://www.ballethispanico.org/>

Schedule
April 24, 2024: 6:30pm
April 25, 2024: 7:30pm
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April 27, 2024: 2:00pm, 7:30pm
April 28, 2024: 2:00pm

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