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BALLET HISPÁNICO
presents
Diálogos: Women of Color in the Arts
Thursday, January 10, 2019

Ballet Hispánico, the nation's premier Latino dance organization, presents ***Diálogos: Women of Color in the Arts*** on Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 6:30pm at the Arnhold Center, 167 West 89th Street, Studio 10. Admission is free and reservations can be made at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dialogos-women-of-color-in-the-arts-tickets-47854309528>.

Diálogos is Ballet Hispánico's conversation series that explores the interconnections of the arts, social justice, and Latino cultures. Ballet Hispánico has partnered with **Brooklyn Dance Festival, founded by Tamia Santana**, and **Maria Torres Emerging Artists Foundation, founded by Maria Torres, John O'Connor, and award-winning actress Vanessa Williams**, to create the evening's panel featuring influential Latina women across the arts. The discussion, the first in the series *Women of Color in the Arts*, will explore our panelists' accomplishments, the challenges they have faced, available resources, and ways to bring more women of color into arts leadership positions. **Women networking with a purpose.**

The evening's conversation will be moderated by **Tamia Santana**, Founder and Director - Brooklyn Dance Festival, and features the following panelists: New York State Senator **Marisol Alcántara**; **Ayodele Casel**, Actress, Tap Dancer, Choreographer; **Maria Torres**, Director, Choreographer, Producer; **Lauren Argentina Zelaya**, Assistant Curator, Public Programs – Brooklyn Museum.

DIÁLOGOS: PANELISTS

STATE SENATOR MARISOL ALCÁNTARA (*Panelist*) is a longtime labor organizer and community activist who has devoted her life to empowering low-income communities, women, workers, and immigrant New Yorkers. During the 2017 and 2018 state legislative sessions, she proudly served the people of the 31st Senatorial District in Albany as the first Dominican woman elected to the New York State Senate and was the only Latina serving in the chamber at the time. State Senator Alcántara is a graduate of Manhattan College where she earned a BA in Government and Politics, and the CUNY Murphy Institute of Labor where she obtained a Masters in Labor Relations. Upon graduating, State Senator Alcántara began her career as a trade unionist, first as a labor organizer for SEIU 32BJ, and then as an organizer for the New York State Nurses Association.



AYODELE CASEL (*Panelist*) is the 2017 recipient of the “Hooper Award” and premiered her one-woman show *While I Have The Floor* at the Spoleto Arts Festival to rave reviews. A frequent New York City Center collaborator, she served as choreographer for Carole King and Maurice Sendak’s musical *Really Rosie* for its *Encores! Off Center* under the direction of Leigh Silverman, a soloist for Jeanine Tesori’s *Jamboree*, a soloist at *Fall for Dance*, and a soloist for *¡Adelante Cuba!* as part of Latin Jazz great Arturo O’Farrill’s Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra. Casel will be leading New York City Center’s *On The Move* in Spring 2019, and she is currently an Artist In Residence at Harvard University. Hailed by the legendary Gregory Hines as “one of the top young tap dancers in the world,” and by *The New York Times* as “a tap dancer of unquestionable radiance,” Casel has steadfast become an internationally sought after artist and powerful voice for the art form. www.ayodelecasel.com

TAMIA SANTANA (*Moderator*) is the Executive Director and Founder of the Brooklyn Dance Festival and Jeté Dance Center, a preparatory school for high school and college-bound dancers. A true Brooklynite, born and raised, and currently raising her family there, she is an advocate for the arts. Santana serves on the Board of Directors for One Brooklyn through Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, is the proud producer of the Bessie New York Dance and Performance Awards, and the Resident Dance Director of the Brooklyn Museum. She has executively produced and directed concerts and events at Brooklyn Academy of Music, Alvin Ailey, Summer Stage, The Brooklyn Art Museum, and more. Santana has danced at Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, the Apollo Theater, Lincoln Center, Europe, and more.

MARIA TORRES (*Panelist*) is a world-renowned choreographer whose contributions have led the way for Latinos in the arts. She is an active member of the Society of Directors and Choreographers and the League of Professional Theater Women and has served as an advocate for artists over the entire course of her career. Major credits include Broadway’s *On Your Feet!*, Off-Broadway productions *Latin Heat* and *Four Guys Named Jose*, and television and movie hit *Dance With Me*, Disney’s *Enchanted*, *El Cantante*, and the Billboard Latin Music Awards. Recent director choreography projects include *Havana Music Hall* and *Pasión*.

LAUREN ARGENTINA ZELAYA (*Panelist*) is a cultural producer, curator, educator, and DJ based in Brooklyn, NY. As Assistant Curator of Public Programs at Brooklyn Museum, Lauren curates and produces *Target First Saturdays* and other free and low-cost public programs that invite over 100,000 visitors a year to engage with special exhibitions and collections in new and unexpected ways. Lauren is committed to collaborating with emerging artists and centering voices in our communities that are often marginalized, with a focus on film and performance and creating programming for and with LGBTQ+, immigrant, and Caribbean communities. Recent projects she presented include *Cuerpxs Radicales: Radical Bodies in Performance* and *Black Queer Brooklyn on Film*. She is currently co-organizing an exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. In her spare time, she co-hosts and produces a radio show called *Queer Art Radio* and serves as a screener for the Brooklyn Film Festival. Known and respected equally for her nail art and her fierce commitment to bringing art and culture to the people, Lauren was named one of *Brooklyn Magazine*’s 30 Under 30 in 2018.



DIÁLOGOS: ORGANIZATIONS

BALLET HISPÁNICO, the premier Latino dance organization in the United States, has been bringing individuals and communities together to celebrate and explore 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 organization's founder, National Medal of Arts recipient Tina Ramirez, sought to give voice to the Hispanic experience and break through stereotypes. Today, Ballet Hispánico is led by Eduardo Vilaro, an acclaimed choreographer and former member of the Company, whose vision of social equity, cultural identity and quality arts education for all drives its programs.

Ballet Hispánico, a role model in and for the Latino community, is inspiring creativity and social awareness in our neighborhoods and across the country by providing access to arts education.

BROOKLYN DANCE FESTIVAL is dedicated to pursuing the best of concert dance and making it accessible to everyone and in partnership with other arts institutions and arts organizations presents work to over 16,000 audience members annually.

MARIA TORRES EMERGING ARTISTS FOUNDATION (MTEAF), which also stands for Motivation, Teaching, Education, Action, and Fellowship, is a rigorous, interdisciplinary educational and mentorship program in the performing arts empowering pre-teens and young adults, from multi-ethnic and underserved communities, to achieve their goals as professionals in the entertainment industry. After years of teaching, mentoring, and advocating, Maria Torres founded this organization in 2011 alongside award-winning actress Vanessa Williams and her husband John O'Connor. Torres is a philanthropist with a strong desire to encourage aspiring artists, and create connections between supporting organizations, cultivating a reliable network that will uplift, inspire, and "pay it forward." MTEAF is currently collaborating with The Miracle Center in Chicago, IL and with MAD Dance Performing Arts Academy in Miami, FL.

BALLET HISPÁNICO LEADERSHIP

EDUARDO VILARO joined Ballet Hispánico as Artistic Director in August 2009, becoming only the second person to head the company since it was founded in 1970. In 2015, Mr. Vilaro took on the additional role of Chief Executive Officer of Ballet Hispánico. He has been part of the Ballet Hispánico family since 1985 as a dancer and educator, after which he began a ten-year record of achievement as founder and Artistic Director of Luna Negra Dance Theater in Chicago. Mr. Vilaro has infused Ballet Hispánico's legacy with a bold and eclectic brand of contemporary dance that reflects America's changing cultural landscape. Born in Cuba and raised in New York from the age of six, he is a frequent speaker on the merits of cultural diversity and dance education.

Mr. Vilaro's own choreography is devoted to capturing the spiritual, sensual and historical essence of Latino cultures. He created over 20 ballets for Luna Negra and has

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received commissions from the Ravinia Festival, the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Grant Park Festival, the Lexington Ballet and the Chicago Symphony. In 2001, he was a recipient of a Ruth Page Award for choreography, and in 2003, he was honored for his choreographic work at Panama's II International Festival of Ballet. Mr. Vilaro was also inducted into the Bronx Walk of Fame in 2016 and was awarded *HOMBRE Magazine's* 2017 Arts & Culture Trailblazer of the Year.

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