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## **BALLET HISPÁNICO REIMAGINES “CARMEN” AT THE APOLLO**

October 26, 2018 – Britt Stigler



In 1875, Bizet brought Prosper Mérimée’s novella to life in his intoxicating opera “Carmen.” One hundred and thirty-seven years later, Spanish choreographer Gustavo Ramírez Sansano’s “CARMEN.maquia” spun the beloved Gypsy tale into another realm.

Originally created in 2012 for the Luna Negra Dance Theater of Chicago, Ballet Hispánico premiered Sansano’s contemporary take on the classic

at the Apollo in 2014 — a move that made history as the first full-length narrative work to be staged by the Ballet Hispánico since it was founded in 1970 by Tina Ramirez.

Now, the dizzying blend of modernist black and white that is “CARMEN.maquia” is set to return to Ballet Hispánico and the Apollo this December for a limited run.

“Storytelling and movement is intrinsic to our culture and woven into the fabric of who we are as human beings, and I am thrilled to give New York audiences the opportunity to experience the story of ‘Carmen’ through the eyes of a contemporary Spanish choreographer,” said Ballet Hispánico’s artistic director Eduardo Vilaro in a statement when the production made its 2014 New York premiere with the company.

Infused with flamenco and Spanish paso doble, the piece is also notable for its design, which eschews the colorful, fabric-drenched world that “Carmen” fans might be most be familiar with for sleek minimalist costumes by fashion designer Devid Delfin and a stark set to match, designed by Luis Crespo.

Here, the red gown so synonymous with Carmen is replaced by a black, futuristic interpretation, while elaborate city scenes are exchanged for walls that would fit comfortably within an elegant space craft. But for all that has changed, what remains in Sansano's production is the pulsating fervor at the heart of Carmen — a beat that Sansano not only retains, but elevates. "CARMEN.maquia" will be staged at the Apollo Dec. 7-8.

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