

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ballet Hispánico Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month With Dance!

Ballet Hispánico will celebrate **Hispanic Heritage Month** with free events, performances, and dance lessons for children and adults. Events include an *Instituto Coreográfico*, which will feature an inside look at Bennyroyce Royon's new work, the annual *A La Calle* Block Party, and a Hispanic Heritage Happy Hour.

"Ballet Hispánico has been bringing individuals and communities together to celebrate and explore Latino cultures, and the shared human experience through dance, for nearly 50 years. Our Hispanic Heritage events invite everyone to celebrate diversity in all of its forms, and join our mission to be a catalyst for diversity change, all through the unifying lens of dance," said Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director & CEO of Ballet Hispánico.

- The celebration begins on **Thursday, September 13 at 6:30pm with an *Instituto Coreográfico* featuring** Filipino-American choreographer **Bennyroyce Royon**. In his new work for Ballet Hispánico, *Homebound/Alaala*, Royon explores the spirit of communal unity (*bayanihan*), the resilience of women in our society, overcoming hardship, and the feeling of being home. Guests are encouraged to explore, learn, and enter into a cultural dialogue with Royon as he examines the intersection of the Latino and Asian cultures, the similarities between the challenges faced in the United States and the Philippines, and how the *bayanihan* spirit can help an individual or community overcome these obstacles. **This event is free and open to the public.** bit.ly/BHInstitutoCoreografico
- **A La Calle Block Party on Sunday, September 16 from 12:00-4:00pm**, a four-hour celebration of Latino dance, music, art, food and community, will take place on West 89th Street (between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues), Ballet Hispánico's home. The event will include dance performances by our internationally renowned Company, School of Dance students, and second company BHdos, as well as live music, free dance classes for adults and children, children's activities, and raffles. **This event is free and open to the public.** bhblockparty.eventbrite.com
- On **Tuesday, October 2 from 5:30-8:00pm**, Ballet Hispánico will host its first Hispanic Heritage Happy Hour at La Nacional on 239 West 14th Street, NYC. Enjoy \$5 drinks while browsing silent auction items. All proceeds will support Ballet Hispánico's work to celebrate and explore Latino cultures through dance. General admission tickets are \$10. bit.ly/bhHHMHappyHour

ABOUT BALLETT HISPÁNICO

Ballet Hispánico, the premier Latino dance organization in the United States, brings individuals and communities together to celebrate and explore Latino cultures through dance. Whether



dancing on stage, in school, or in the street, Ballet Hispánico creates a space where few institutions are breaking ground.

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.

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.

ABOUT EDUARDO VILARO

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. In 2016, Mr. Vilaro was inducted into the Bronx Walk of Fame and was awarded *HOMBRE Magazine's* 2017 Arts & Culture Trailblazer of the Year.

"I think culture is that conduit of creativity that connects us to reality and magic. We need culture in order to be creative, knowing who we are, where we've come from, what interests us and what we want to create, and that is the magic. Culture allows us to go into the deep recesses of our minds in order to connect to our soul... culture is a reminder for us, which brings us back." - Artistic Director & CEO Eduardo Vilaro

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