

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michelle Tabnick, (646) 765-4773, michelle@michelletabnickpr.com

Ballet Hispánico School of Dance Announces 2018-19 School Year Class Registration

Ballet Hispánico, the nation's premier Latino dance organization, announces that registration is now available for classes during the 2018-19 school year. Celebrating nearly 50 years of dance and culture, the Ballet Hispánico School of Dance, located at 167 W. 89th Street, NYC, is a leading center of excellence in dance education accessible to the community at large.

At the School of Dance, children learn in a nurturing and disciplined environment, discover dance as a language of ideas, and explore the rich history and aesthetics of Latino cultures. With an internationally renowned faculty led by School Director Michelle Manzanales and a staff of seasoned dance professionals, students are exposed to three signature-training programs and a bevy of performance opportunities. With live music accompaniment for many of the classes and spacious studios located in Manhattan's Upper West Side, the School also offers over \$150,000 in annual scholarships to talented and need-based students.

The Ballet Hispánico **School of Dance** trains eclectic, versatile dancers who stand out in a competitive professional environment for their mastery of the classical ballet tradition, contemporary techniques, and Spanish Dance. Accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance, the School empowers students by offering a holistic approach to movement discovery, including pre-professional training and classes for the novice dancer. The School also offers adult classes and workshops that provide cultural enrichment and the joy of dance to everyone.

Alumni of the School have gone on to prestigious conservatories such as The Juilliard School and Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Performing Arts; to careers in theater (Nancy Ticotin), dance, music & film (Jennifer Lopez), and television (Michael DeLorenzo), as well as careers with leading dance companies such as Ballet Hispánico, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Paul Taylor, ABT II, San Francisco Ballet, Flamenco Vivo, and María Pagés Compañía.

"Ballet Hispánico offered a variety of the techniques that prepared me far beyond my imagination. It taught me to be the dancer I am today."

-Linda Celeste Sims, Principal Dancer, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

"We have terrific talent on Broadway, film, and TV who were trained at Ballet Hispánico."

-Broadway star Chita Rivera

Los Pasitos Early Childhood Program (ages 2-5)

Ballet Hispánico's Los Pasitos early childhood program for ages 2-5 merges creativity, cultures, and technique. Its curriculum focuses on developing coordination, spatial awareness, and musicality, with an emphasis on each child's individual self-expression. Students learn proper



dance etiquette, explore the wide spectrum of Latino cultures, and build a solid foundation for dance training in a joyful, creative environment.

The Los Pasitos program helps students gain the following skills:

***Physical:** Coordination, refinement of gross and fine motor skills, understanding of space and their bodies

***Social/Affective:** Listening, responding, taking turns, working cooperatively

***Cognitive:** Recognizing, recalling, identifying, differentiating, and sequencing

<https://www.balleshispanico.org/classes/early-childhood>

Encuentros Open Class Program (ages 6-18)

The Encuentros Program at the Ballet Hispánico School of Dance offers something for everyone. Developed with the highest level of artistic excellence, our program supports dancers interested in taking anywhere from one to multiple dance classes per week. Offering a wide array of classes including Ballet, Flamenco, Afro-Cuban, Hip-Hop, Latin Rhythms, Salsa, Jazz, and Tap -- our students can create a tailored schedule to fit their needs.

<https://www.balleshispanico.org/classes/open-program>

La Academia: Pre-Professional and Professional Program (ages 7-23)

Ballet Hispánico's Pre-Professional division, La Academia, trains eclectic, versatile dancers who stand out in a competitive field of dance for their mastery of the classical ballet tradition, contemporary techniques, Spanish Dance, and performance skills. This program is designed to support students interested in attending performing arts schools, conservatory/university programs, and/or those pursuing a career in dance. Performance skills are honed through exposure to repertory, community performances, and preparation for two annual school productions. Admission to La Academia is by audition only. High school and college-aged students that reach the Professional Studies Level in La Academia have the option of pursuing the full curriculum or one of three specialized tracks—ballet, flamenco, or contemporary.

<https://www.balleshispanico.org/classes/LaAcademia>

ABOUT BALLETHISPÁNICO

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.

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 Vilario, 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.

EDUARDO VILARIO 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. Vilario 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 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.

MICHELLE MANZANALES, Director of the Ballet Hispánico School of Dance, is a choreographer and dance educator originally from Houston, TX. Ms. Manzanales has over 25 years of teaching experience serving on the faculties of Lou Conte Dance Studio (home of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago), the University of Houston, Rice University, as well as numerous dance studios, high schools, and college dance programs across the country. Her students' accolades include New York City Dance Alliance Teen Outstanding Dancer of the Year and numerous scholarships and top awards from Houston Ballet, The Rock School, Joffrey Midwest, and Youth American Grand Prix, to name a few. *Con Brazos Abiertos*, her critically acclaimed first work for Ballet Hispánico, premiered to rave reviews at The Joyce Theater in April 2017, and explored the iconic Mexican symbols that she was reluctant to embrace as a Mexican-American child growing up in Texas.

Ms. Manzanales began working with Ballet Hispánico Artistic Director & CEO Eduardo Vilaro in 2003 as a dancer for his then-company Luna Negra Dance Theater of Chicago, where she later became Rehearsal Director in 2006, and eventually served as Artistic Director in 2009-2010. Prior to her appointment to School Director, Ms. Manzanales served as Rehearsal Director and Artistic Associate of Ballet Hispánico's main Company for seven years.

###