

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 1, 2023

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

Ballet Hispánico Celebrates Eduardo Vilaro's 15th Season!

**Annual New York Season Program Includes
The World Premiere of Vilaro's *Buscando a Juan*
Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Mad'moiselle*
Gustavo Ramírez Sansano's *18+1*
April 25-28, 2024 at New York City Center**

Ballet Hispánico, the nation's largest Latinx/Latine/Hispanic cultural organization and one of America's Cultural Treasures, returns to New York City Center from April 25 to 28, 2024. 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 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*, that explores *sancocho*, a mixed soup of cultures and diasporas; a restaging of ***Mad'moiselle***, **Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's** exploration of iconic male/female images and gender identity in Latin American cultures and her first major work under Vilaro's tenure; and ***18+1***, **Gustavo Ramírez Sansano's** celebration of the vulnerability, care, and hope that comes with each artistic endeavor. Tickets start at \$35 and are available [here](#).

Ballet Hispánico 2024 Gala Performance and Dinner

Tickets for the Gala Performance on April 25 may be paired with a reservation for the *Quinceañera Gala* 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 <https://www.ballethispanico.org/support/events/2024-gala>.

"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 25, 2024 at 6:30 pm – Gala Performance

Friday, April 26, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, April 27, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, April 28, 2024 at 2:00 pm

Annabelle Lopez Ochoa has been choreographing since 2003 following a twelve-year dance career in various contemporary dance companies throughout Europe. She has created works for sixty dance companies worldwide including Ballet Hispánico, Atlanta Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Compañía Nacional de Danza, Dutch National Ballet, Finnish National Ballet, Royal Ballet of Flanders, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, Göteborg Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, BJM-Danse Montréal, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, English National Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, to name a few. In 2012, her first full length work, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, originally created for the Scottish Ballet, received the Critics' Circle National Dance Award for "Best Classical Choreography" and was nominated for the prestigious Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production the following year. Annabelle is the recipient of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award 2019.

Gustavo Ramírez Sansano was Artistic Director of Luna Negra Dance Theater (2009-2013), and now he combines his work as a freelance choreographer with the direction of Titoyaya Dansa, the company he founded in Spain with Verónica García Moscardó in 2006. Sansano has received numerous awards for his choreography, including first prize at the Ricard Moragas Competition in Barcelona (1997), Prix Dom Perignon Choreographic Competition in Hamburg (2001), and Premio de Las Artes Escénicas de la Comunidad Valenciana (2005). Sansano has been commissioned to create works for many companies such as Nederlands Dans Theater, Compañía Nacional de Danza, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Luzerner tanz Theater, Ballet BC, The Hamburg Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Ballet Hispánico, and Luna Negra Dance Theater, among others.

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. Vilaro 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. Vilaro in the inaugural Power of Diversity: Latin 100 list. In January 2021, Mr. Vilaro 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. Vilaro 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.

#

