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Winona Daily News

Ballet Hispánico makes impact on community dialogue

- [Rachel Mergen Winona Daily News](#)
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Ballet Hispánico members taught a Ballet Master Class in Winona during their residency.
Theresa Remick photo

Ballet Hispánico, a performing company brought to Winona as a part of Saint Mary's University's Page Series, took last week to get to know the community and share Latin culture and dance before hitting the Page Theatre stage Friday night.

From Tuesday through Friday, people were able to enjoy workshops, classes, a talk and other events within the city.

“(Ballet Hispánico) starts a dialogue,” said Ballet Hispánico artistic director and CEO Eduardo Vilaro. “I mean, I think all art starts a dialogue, whether it’s good or bad. If people say I didn’t like it, it starts a dialogue too. Why? How come?”

“For us, it starts a dialogue of diversity and how important diversity is for our nation. And how we can look at each other beyond just face value. So if you’re looking at the culture, then you’re getting into understanding the culture a little bit more,” he said.

Ballet Hispánico is based in New York City and travels both internationally and nationally to perform in multiple cities each year. The company includes well-trained, highly experienced dancers who have varying backgrounds.

Ballet Hispánico was founded in 1970 by Tina Ramirez, a recipient of the National Medal of Arts.

The headquarters of Ballet Hispánico also includes a School of Dance and dance studios.

The Friday performance in Winona included three works, which take unique looks on cultures, society and life.



While visiting Winona, Ballet Hispánico members led workshops in the community. Pictured is the workshop that took place at Home and Community Options.
Lynette Johnson photo

SMU sophomore Natalie Munich, after the first of the three works, said, “I am in awe. I dance myself and just looking at the partnering, the strength of the dancers, how much rehearsal goes into this, you can really see the performance. I really liked just the variety of styles they had within the first act and I can’t wait to see what’s next.”

Fellow student Hannah Dahlstrom, a freshman at the performance for a class requirement, said that she was surprised by how much she enjoyed the ballet.

“It was great. I was really surprised. I was not actually looking forward to coming,” Dahlstrom said.

“I loved it. I couldn’t stop smiling throughout the entire thing.”

As for the Page Series and its importance on the campus, Munich said, “I think the Page Series is really beneficial to all students because it provides a variety of performance and art for students to view and really interpret.”

Sugar Skull! A Día de los Muertos Musical Adventure is the next performance in the Page Series to look forward to. The show is set to begin at 6:30 p.m. Friday.