

# THE NEW YORKER

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## DANCE

### **Ballet Hispánico**



Illustration by Daiana Ruiz

Founded almost fifty years ago, **Ballet Hispánico** doesn't look its age. Eduardo Vilaro, its artistic director for the past decade, has been keeping the troupe up to date, encouraging contemporary choreographers to express the breadth and complexity of Latino identity today. The most fun way to check in on this effort is to attend the company's annual shows at the Apollo Theatre, in Harlem. Even when the new works are misfires, the evenings have the energy of a special occasion. All the pieces on this year's programs, Nov. 22-23, are by women. The in-demand Belgian-Colombian choreographer Annabelle Lopez Ochoa offers a première, "Tiburones" ("Sharks"), about the role of the media in perpetuating stereotypes. But the sure winner is "Con Brazos Abiertos" ("With Open Arms"), a recent homegrown effort by Michelle Manzanales, the head of Ballet Hispánico's school. Its subject is the difficulty of hyphenated

identities, especially Mexican-American, but the treatment is light, funny, and fresh.

— [\*Brian Seibert\*](#)