



Advance Program Notes

Sortijas, Danzón, Jardí Tancat, and Umbral

Ballet Hispanico

Thursday, November 7, 2014, 8 pm

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

ABOUT BALLET HISPANICO

Since its inception in 1970, **Ballet Hispanico's** contemporary repertory has reflected the ever-changing diversity of Latino cultures. Led by Artistic Director Eduardo Vilaro, the Company's multifaceted performances have featured beloved master works by Nacho Duato and Vicente Nebrada, cutting-edge premieres by Cayetano Soto and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and live music accompaniment by renowned artists such as Paquito D'Rivera. The Company has performed for an audience of nearly 3 million, throughout 11 countries, on three continents.

TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE

We invite you to use the following program notes as a reference for tonight's program. These notes are meant to offer you a glimpse into the choreographer's inspirations while creating the ballets, and should not be taken as a direct narrative to the works.

Jardí Tancat

Duato's very first work, based on Catalonian folk tales sung by Maria del Mar Bonet, won him first prize at the International Choreographic Workshop in Cologne and has since become a masterwork of modern dance. With equal shades of passion and melancholy, the ballet evokes the despairing, yet hopeful prayers of Spaniards who wait for rain on their barren land.

Sortijas

In this darkly lush duet full of emotional complexity, Cayetano Soto ponders the unavoidable pull of fate in our lives.

Umbral

This work by Edgar Zendejas, with original music by Owen Belton, is a seductive new work inspired by the beloved Mexican celebration *Día de los Muertos*.

Danzón

Artistic Director Eduardo Vilaro has taken this traditional and quintessentially Cuban dance form and reinvented it with contemporary movement riffs. The work plays on the fusion of jazz improvisation and Cuban rhythms, which propel the dancers into a joyous celebration of music and movement.

REPERTORY LIST

Jardí Tancat (1983)

Choreography by **Nacho Duato**
Staged by **Kevin Irving**
Music by **María del Mar Bonet**
Costume Design by **Nacho Duato**
Lighting Design by **Nicolás Fischtel**, according to the original design by **Joop Caboort**

Jamal Rashann Callendar
Lauren Alzamora

Mario Ismael Espinoza
Martina Calcagno

Marcos Rodriguez
Vanessa Valecillos

Duato's very first work, based on Catalan folk tales sung by Maria del Mar Bonet, won him first prize at the International Choreographic Workshop in Cologne. With equal shades of passion and melancholy, the ballet evokes the despairing yet hopeful prayers of Spaniards who wait for rain on their barren land.

Intermission

Sortijas (2013)

Choreography by **Cayetano Soto**
Music by **Lhasa de Sela**
Costume Design by **Talbot Runhof**
Lighting Design by **Joshua Preston**
Conceived by **Cayetano Soto**

Kimberly Van Woesik

Joshua Winzeler

Sortijas was made possible by the MetLife Community Connections Fund of the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project. Major support for NDP is also provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

General operating support was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Pause

Umbral
(2013)

Choreography by **Edgar Zendejas**
Music by **Owen Belton**
Costume Design by **Diana Ruettiger**
Lighting Design by **Joshua Preston**

Lauren Alzamora, Christopher Bloom, Martina Calcagno, Jamal Rashann Callender, Alexander Duval, Mario Ismael Espinoza, Min-Tzu Li, Marcos Rodriguez, Vanessa Valecillos, Kimberly Van Woesik, Joshua Winzeler, Jessica Alejandra Wyatt

Edgar Zendejas's first commission for Ballet Hispanico—set to original music by Owen Belton—is a seductive work inspired by the beloved Mexican celebration *Día de los Muertos*.

Intermission

Danzón
(2009)

Choreography by **Eduardo Vilaro**
Music "You've Changed" by **Carey/Fischer**, arr. by **D. Balakrishnan**
"Danzón" by **Paquito D'Rivera**, arr. by **M. Summer**
"A Night in Tunisia" by **Dizzy Gillespie/F. Paparelli**, arr. by **D. Balakrishnan**
Reorchestrated by **Alex Brown**
Costume Design by **Diana Ruettiger**
Lighting Design by **Joshua Preston**

Jamal Rashann Callender and **Vanessa Valecillos**

Lauren Alzamora, Christopher Bloom, Martina Calcagno, Alexander Duval, Mario Ismael Espinoza, Melissa Fernandez, Min-Tzu Li, Marcos Rodriguez, Kimberly Van Woesik, Jessica Alejandra Wyatt, Joshua Winzeler

Artistic Director Eduardo Vilaro has taken this traditional and quintessentially Cuban dance form and reinvented it with contemporary movement riffs. The work plays on the fusion of jazz improvisation and Cuban rhythms which propel the dancers into a joyous celebration of music and movement.

The creation of "Danzón" was made possible through generous support from the Chicago Community Trust, The University of Notre Dame's DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, and Strathmore in North Bethesda, MD.

Ballet Hispanico

Artistic Director
Eduardo Vilaro

The Company

Lauren Alzamora	Min-Tzu Li
Christopher Bloom	Johan Rivera Mendez
Martina Calcagno	Marcos Rodriguez
Jamal Rashann Callender	Vanessa Valecillos
Alexander Duval	Kimberly Van Woesik
Mario Ismael Espinoza	Joshua Winzeler
Melissa Fernandez	Jessica Alejandra Wyatt

Rehearsal Director	Company General Manager
Michelle Manzanales	Gregory Stuart

Production Manager
Joshua Preston

Wardrobe Supervisor
Diana Ruettiger

Stage Manager
Nathan K. Claus

Founder
Tina Ramírez

Ballet Hispanico salutes Jody and John Arnhold for their visionary leadership and support. Through the generosity of the Arnhold family, Ballet Hispanico will continue to inspire communities around the world for the next 40 years and beyond.

**MetLife Foundation is the Official Tour Sponsor of Ballet Hispanico.
American Airlines is the Official Airline of Ballet Hispanico.**

BalletHispanico.org

*Program is subject to change.
The taking of video, audio, and photographs is strictly prohibited.*

About the Artists (continued)

EDUARDO VILARO, a first generation Cuban-American, began as artistic director of Ballet Hispanico in August of 2009, becoming only the second person to head the company since it was founded in 1970. Vilaro has been part of the Ballet Hispanico family since 1985. As a dancer with the Ballet Hispanico Company, he performed throughout the U.S., Latin America, and Europe and assisted founder Tina Ramirez with the development of dance education residencies.

Vilaro's passion for dance and Latino cultures began in the Southwest Bronx, where a role in a school musical ignited his journey. After training throughout New York City in dance institutions such as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center and the Martha Graham School, Vilaro received a B.F.A. in dance at Adelphi University under the direction of Norman Walker. In 1999, he received an M.A. in Interdisciplinary Arts from Columbia College Chicago and was a recipient of their Albert P. Weissman Award. Upon his graduation from Columbia College, Vilaro founded Luna Negra Dance Theater in Chicago, a company which served as a springboard for Latino dance throughout the Midwest. Under his 10-year artistic direction, Luna Negra amassed a distinguished repertory of works by Latino choreographers, such as Ron De Jesús, Vicente Nebrada, and Gustavo Ramírez Sansano.

Vilaro's own choreography is devoted to capturing the spiritual, sensual and historical essence of the 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. He has collaborated with major dance and design artists as well as musicians such as Paquito D'Rivera, Susana Baca, Luciana Souza, and Tiempo Libre. 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. In 2011, Vilaro premiered *Asuka*, his first work for Ballet Hispanico, "an unexpected interpretation of [Celia] Cruz's music...high-energy and colorful" (*Chicago Dance Digest*).

Vilaro was an associate professor at the Dance Center of Columbia College and has served on the board of directors of Dance/USA. He has also served on panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. He was a guest speaker at the Salzburg Global Forum for Young Cultural Leaders and the National Association for Latino Arts and Culture, and continues to speak to the growing need for cultural diversity and dance education.

LAUREN ALZAMORA graduated from UNC School of the Arts in 2001. She has danced for Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Eliot Feld's Ballet Tech and Battery Dance Company in New York. Alzamora has also collaborated with New York-based dance photographer Howard Schatz on several projects, including underwater dance photography. She is a fully certified Pilates instructor and enjoys teaching private clients as well as her fellow company members.

CHRISTOPHER BLOOM is from Middletown, Va., where he started training at the Vostrikov's Academy of Ballet at the age of 15. Bloom trained as a scholarship student at the Ballet and Contemporary Dance Programs in the School at Jacob's Pillow under Anna-Marie Holmes and Milton Myers. He holds a B.F.A. from The Ailey/Fordham BFA Dance program where he had the opportunity to perform works by Sidra Bell, Francesca Harper, Camille A. Brown, Jennifer Muller, Paul Taylor, and Alvin Ailey. He has performed professionally with 360° Dance Company, Thang Dao Dance Company, VonUssar DanceWorks, Parsons Dance, The Peridance Contemporary Dance Company, and with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

About the Artists (continued)

MARTINA CALCAGNO began dancing in her native Italy, where she studied ballet in Sicily and Rome. She moved to London to train at the Elmhurst School for Dance. In London, she performed with the Birmingham Royal Ballet and toured throughout the United Kingdom and China. Calcagno has danced around the world, performing with Compagnia DanzItalia, Narciso Dance Company, and BHdos.

JAMAL RASHANN CALLENDER began dancing at Ballet Tech in New York City. He attended the Professional Performing Arts School/The Ailey School under the late Denise Jefferson, while dancing at The Restoration Dance Theatre and the Harlem School of the Arts. Callender also attended Perry-Mansfield and Springboard Danse Montreal. He graduated from The Juilliard School under Lawrence Rhodes, and has worked with The Atlanta Ballet, Peridance Ensemble, Buglisi Dance Theater, Formal Structure Inc., and Hubbard Street 2. He is a recipient of the 2012 Princess Grace Dance: Performance Fellowship.

ALEXANDER DUVAL began his dance career at Teatro Popular Danzante under the direction of Professor Nereida Rodríguez. He received a scholarship to study classical ballet at Ballet Alina Abreu, and he later joined Ballet Folklórico Nacional as a soloist. In 2011, he joined Ballet Nacional Dominicano. He has danced various leading roles in neo-classical works and has performed in many international festivals around the world, including Venezuela, Haiti and Martinique.

MARIO ISMAEL ESPINOZA was born in Tijuana, Mexico. He graduated from the University of California in Irvine, where he performed with Donald McKayle's étude Ensemble. Since then he has performed with Odyssey Dance Theatre in Salt Lake City, Utah, Company C Contemporary Ballet, Man Dance San Francisco, Peninsula Ballet, Liss Fain Dance, and ODC Dance in San Francisco, Calif.

MELISSA FERNANDEZ is from Miami, Fla., and graduated from The Juilliard School in 2012. Fernandez has attended programs at American Ballet Theatre, Miami City Ballet, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and Netherlands Dans Theater 2011, among others. In 2008 she was selected as a Modern dance finalist in the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA) YoungARTS competition. She was also featured in the HBO series "Master Class."

MIN-TZU LI, a native of Taiwan, enjoyed her education at The Boston Conservatory and gained many diverse experiences working with their faculty and students. Li has been fortunate to perform works by such masters as José Limón, Thomas/Ortiz, Martha Graham, and Murray Louis, as well as creating her own works.

JOHAN RIVERA MENDEZ (*Apprentice*) was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He began his dance training at School for the Performing Arts, PR under the direction of Waldo Gonzalez. He graduated, earning his B.F.A. from New World School of the Arts in 2013. While there, he had the opportunity to perform works of Robert Battle, Darshan Singh Bhuller, Peter London, Merce Cunningham, Michael Uthoff, and Kyle Abraham, as well as simultaneously working with local dance companies in Miami, Florida.

About the Artists (continued)

MARCOS RODRIGUEZ started his professional study of dance in the Ballet Concierto Dominicano Academy. In 2006, he received a scholarship for the "Alicia Alonso" University Dance Institute at the Rey Juan Carlos University of Madrid, Spain. In this university he joined the "Youth Ballet of Camara of Madrid" as a principal dancer. In 2010, Rodriguez won the prize for the Support Program of Dance in Madrid as the only Dominican dancer. After graduation, where he received a degree in Choreography and Interpretation Techniques of Dance and a Master in Performing Arts, he joined the Dominican National Ballet as a soloist. He has been awarded with the 2009 Personality of Culture Award by the Ministry of Culture of the Dominican Republic, the 2010 Latin Pride National Award as a Dancer of the Year, and the "Young Dominican Excellence Abroad" by the Ministry of Youth.

VANESSA VALECILLOS joined Ballet Nacional de Caracas under director Vicente Nebrada in 1989. After earning a B.F.A. from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, she performed with Southern Ballet Theater, Chicago Lyric Opera, where she performed as a principal dancer in various productions, and with Luna Negra Dance Theater, where she was a founding member. Throughout her dance career, she has had the opportunity to teach students both nationally and internationally.

KIMBERLY VAN WOESIK graduated from Southern Methodist University in 2011. She has trained at Chamberlain School of Performing Arts, American Ballet Theater, Miami City Ballet, the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, and San Francisco Conservatory of Dance. Performed works by Ben Stevenson, Twyla Tharp, Arthur Mitchell, Alvin Ailey, Martha Graham, Alison Chase, Jessica Lang, Adam Hougland, Gerald Arpino, and George Balanchine.

JOSHUA WINZELER was born in Miami, Fla. He began his ballet training with The Thomas Armour Youth Ballet and the Miami Conservatory. He furthered his training with the School of American Ballet, Miami City Ballet, and Joffrey Ballet. Winzeler graduated from New World School of the Arts receiving his B.F.A. in 2011. He has performed works from Martha Graham, Darshan Bhuller, Robert Battle, and Michael Uthoff.

JESSICA ALEJANDRA WYATT began her training at The School of Oregon Ballet Theater. Under the direction of Cuban teacher Haydee Gutierrez, she also studied with her mother, Elena Carter, former Dance Theater of Harlem and Ballet Nacional de Danza principal. In 2002 Wyatt joined The Joffrey Ballet as an apprentice and participated in the filming of Robert Altman's "The Company." She later joined Luna Negra Dance Theater and was a company member from 2004-09. In 2012, Wyatt was nominated for a Bessie Award.

NACHO DUATO (*Choreographer*) Born in Valencia, Spain, Nacho Duato studied ballet at the Rambert School, the Mudra School and The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. In 1980 joined the Cullberg Ballet, and in 1981 he joined the Nederlands Dans Theater. In 1987, he received the VSCD Gouden Dansprijs. His 1983 *Jardí Tancat*, set to Spanish/Catalan music by María del Mar Bonet, won first prize at the International Choreographic Workshop in Cologne. Duato has since created dozens of works for companies including Paris Opera, Cullberg Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater, and Bolshoi Ballet, among others. Nacho Duato became Artistic Director of Compañía Nacional de Danza in 1990. He has received the grade of *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, the Golden Medal for the Merit in the Fine Arts, and the Benois de la Danse award. Since January 2011 he has served as Artistic Director of Mikhailovsky Ballet in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

About the Artists (continued)

KEVIN IRVING (*Répétiteur*) studied dance at The Ailey School and performed as a soloist with The Elisa Monte Dance Company. He has also danced with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and Twyla Tharp Dance. In 1994, he became ballet master with Nacho Duato's Compañía Nacional de Danza in Madrid. From 2002-2007, he served as artistic director of The Göteborg Ballet in Sweden. Irving is currently based in the United States where he works extensively with schools and companies such as The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, and he continues to stage ballets by Nacho Duato and Nicolo Fonte. In 2010, he founded I-DANCE (Inspiring Dance: American Nations' Choreographic Exchange), a non-profit organization that sends teachers and choreographers to Latin American dance communities.

CAYETANO SOTO (*Choreographer*), originally from Spain, studied dance at the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona and the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. Soto danced with IT Dansa and Ballet Theater Munich, where he created *Fugaz*, his first signature work. He has choreographed for companies such as Stuttgarter Ballet, the Royal Ballet of Flanders, and Northwest Dance Project, among others. Fascinated by the fashion label Talbot Runhof, Soto has collaborated with the designers for the costume design of *Carmen* at Dortmund Ballet and *Sortijas* for Ballet Hispanico. In 2006, he won first prize in the "Uncontainable Project" choreographic competition of the Royal Ballet of Flanders, and he was nominated in 2011 for the Golden Mask Award in Russia. Cayetano Soto is based in Munich, Germany.

EDGAR ZENDEJAS (*Choreographer*), originally from Mexico, began his interpretive career in Chicago where he performed with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and Giordano Jazz Dance. In the early nineties, Edgar joined Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, now BJM Danse, where he found himself evolving as an artist and choreographer. After the successful premiere of Zendejas's first work, "Breve Enlace," Louis Robitaille, artistic director of BJM, promoted Edgar to associate choreographer which led to choreographic commissions in Mexico and the United States, most notably from Jacob's Pillow; Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet; DanceWorks Chicago; Luna Negra Dance Theater; and Ballet de Monterrey, Mexico. Zendejas won the Hubbard Street 2 National Choreographic Competition in 2010, competed as a finalist for the Milwaukee Ballet's choreographic competition "Genesis" in 2011, and won the Outstanding Choreographer Award from Youth American Grand Prix in 2012. In January 2006 he co-founded ezdanza along with Julien Gagnon and Neelanthi Vadivel. Since then the company has evolved as an open space focused on research, creation and dissemination.

DIANA RUETTIGER (*Costume Design*) has served as wardrobe supervisor for Luna Negra Dance Theater and Costume Designer for Dance for Life Chicago, Columbia College, and The Chicago Academy for the Arts. She has worked as stitcher and crew for the Joffrey Ballet and numerous Broadway touring shows. Ruettiger owned and operated a costume shop for 25 years before moving to New York to begin her tenure as Wardrobe Supervisor with Ballet Hispanico.

About the Artists (continued)

JOSHUA PRESTON (*Production Manager, Lighting Design*) hails from the verdant hills of central Kentucky. As a designer he has lit all kinds of plays, operas, buildings, trees, humans and dancing humans most of all. There are few things that bring Preston more joy than lighting stuff and things. Josh went to school in sunny Chicago where he met the intrepid Eduardo Vilaro and the journey has not stopped since. Preston is eternally grateful to have worked as Technical Director for Luna Negra Dance Theater and equally appreciative to serve as Production Manager with Ballet Hispanico.

MICHELLE MANZANALES (*Rehearsal Director*) is a choreographer and dance educator originally from Houston, TX. She began working with Eduardo Vilaro in 2003 as a dancer for his company Luna Negra Dance Theater of Chicago, where she later became Rehearsal Director in 2006 and served as Interim Artistic Director 2009-2010. In 2007, Manzanales created *Sugar in the Raw* (*Azucar Cruda*) for LNNT which was applauded by the *Chicago Sun-Times* as "a staggering, beautiful, accomplished new work." In 2010, her homage to Frida Kahlo, *Paloma Querida*, was hailed as a "visual masterpiece" by Lucia Mauro of the *Chicago Tribune* and was described by the *Sun-Times* as a "gorgeously designed, richly hallucinatory, multi-faceted vision of the artist...". Her choreography has also been presented by Texas Contemporary Weekend, Spring to Dance (St. Louis, MO), Fort Worth Dance Festival, and Festival de Danza Córdoba (Veracruz, Mexico), and honored by the American College Dance Festival on four separate occasions.

NATHAN K. CLAUS (*Stage Manager*) has served as stage manager for Jennifer Muller's *The Works* both domestically and internationally. He has worked on Broadway with the productions of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *God of Carnage*, *The Norman Conquests* and *November*. Hailing from Fargo, North Dakota, Nathan began studying ballet at Dancenter North in Libertyville, Ill., before obtaining a B.A. in Theatre from Millikin University in Decatur, Ill., where he also studied dance, music, and education.

TINA RAMIREZ (*Founder*) founded Ballet Hispanico in 1970 and served as Artistic Director until 2009. Under her direction, over 45 choreographers created works for the Company, many of international stature and others in the early stages of their career.

Ramirez was born in Venezuela, the daughter of a Mexican bullfighter and grandniece to a Puerto Rican educator. Her performing career included international touring with the Federico Rey Dance Company, the inaugural Festival of Two Worlds in Italy with John Butler, the Broadway productions of *Kismet* and *Lute Song* and the television adaptation of *Man of La Mancha*.

In addition to the National Medal of Arts, Ramirez has received countless awards and honors in recognition of her work, including the Dance Magazine Award, the Hispanic Heritage Award for Education, Capezio Dance Award, NYS Governor's Arts Award, and the NYC Mayor's Award of Honor for Arts & Culture.