

Geisinger

and

Northwest

are the 2021 *Up Close and Virtual* season sponsors.

Contributions from the members of the Center for the Performing Arts and a grant from the University Park Student Fee Board make this program free of charge.

Funding for advertising for this event is provided through a grant made possible by The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau and the Centre County Board of Commissioners.

Ballet Hispánico
50 Year Legacy Experience
With Artistic Director & CEO Eduardo Vilaro

Watch the event beginning at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 17. It will be available for streaming until 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 24.

The Center for the Performing Arts debut of the recorded performance, at 7:30 p.m. March 17, will be followed by a live conversation between Eduardo Vilaro and Amy Dupain Vashaw, the center's audience and program development director.

BALLET HISPÁNICO 50 YEAR LEGACY EXPERIENCE

Fifty years ago, an extraordinary Latina immigrant, Tina Ramirez, embarked on a journey to share her joy of dance and create avenues of access for artists of color in her community. This journey resulted in Ballet Hispánico, now America's leading Latinx dance organization and one of America's cultural treasures.

The *50 Year Legacy Experience* is an hour-long exploration into Ballet Hispánico's past, present, and future. Hosted by Artistic Director and CEO Eduardo Vilaro, be immersed in the depth and breadth of Latinx culture and dance.

Narrated by
Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director & CEO

Concept and creation by
Eduardo Vilaro, Artistic Director & CEO

Chief operating officer
Joshua Preston

Community engagement director
Natalia Mesa

Edited by
Natalia Mesa

Featuring excerpts from:

Danse Creole by Geoffrey Holder
Tres Cantos by Talley Beatty
Group Portrait of a Lady by Vicente Nebrada
Batucada Fantástica by Vicente Nebrada
Recuerdo de Camp Amor by Talley Beatty
Cada Noche Tango by Graciela Daniele
Solo by Susan Marshall
Good Night Paradise by Ramón Oller
Guajira by Pedro Ruiz
Palladium Nights by Willie Rosario
Nube Blanco by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa
Asuka by Eduardo Vilaro
Con Brazos Abiertos by Michelle Manzanales

Videos provided by
Nel Shelby Productions
Video D Studios

ABOUT THE COMPANY

BALLET HISPÁNICO is the nation's renowned Latino dance organization and one of America's cultural treasures. Ballet Hispánico brings communities together to celebrate and explore Latino cultures through innovative dance performances, transformative dance training, and enduring community engagement experiences.

Founded in 1970 by National Medal of Arts recipient Tina Ramírez, the organization emerged during the post-civil rights movement on New York's Upper West Side, providing a safe haven for primarily black and brown Latinx youth seeking artistic sanctuary during New York City's plight in the 1970s. The need for place, both culturally and artistically, led families to find Ballet Hispánico. The focus on dance as a means to

develop working artists, combined with the training, authenticity of voice, and power of representation, fueled the organization's roots and trajectory.

With its strong emphasis on dance, achievement, and public presence, the organization has flourished in its three main programs: its Company, School of Dance, and Community Arts Partnerships. The organization serves as a platform for historically omitted and overlooked artists providing them with increased capacity, voice, and affirmation.

Over the past five decades, by leading with Latinx culture at the forefront of performance, education, and advocacy, Ballet Hispánico's mission is a catalyst of change and possibility for communities throughout our nation.

EDUARDO VILARO (artistic director and CEO) rejoined Ballet Hispánico as artistic director in August 2009, becoming only the second person to head the company since its founding in 1970. In 2015, Mr. Vilaro added the role of chief executive officer to his responsibilities. He has been part of the Ballet Hispánico family since 1988 as a dancer and educator until 1996. After completing his master's in interdisciplinary arts at Columbia College Chicago, he 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. 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 the intersectionality of cultures and the importance of nurturing and building Latinx leaders.

Mr. Vilaro's own choreography is devoted to capturing the Latin American experience in its totality and diversity, and through its intersectional points with other diasporas and ability to spurn new dialogues about what it means to be an American. He has created more than forty ballets during his career for Luna Negra and Ballet Hispánico, with 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.

The recipient of several awards and accolades, Mr. Vilaro 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. He is a well-respected speaker on such topics as diversity, equity and inclusion in the arts.

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 can initiate ongoing conversations about the arts, expression, identity, and the meaning of community.