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**BALLET NACIONAL
DE ESPAÑA**

Ballet Nacional de España closes the 2020/2021 season with *Invocación* at the Santander International Festival

- *The Ballet Nacional de España will give a single performance at the Palacio de Festivales in Santander on 7th August*
- *The company's next season will open on 7th October at the Auditorio de Murcia with a performance of Centenario Antonio Ruiz Soler*

Madrid, 6th August 2021. On **7th August**, the Ballet Nacional de España will offer audiences at the 70th Santander International Festival (FIS) a comprehensive overview of almost every style of Spanish dance. The company, directed by **Rubén Olmo**, will perform ***Invocación***, a programme premiered in 2020 that has since toured several Spanish cities. The programme includes a tribute to **Mario Maya**, one of the pioneers of flamenco theatre in Andalusia. "It is a very complete programme in which audiences can enjoy flamenco filled with life and energy on stage, a ballet representing the purest form of stylised dance and one of the few recent *escuela bolera* choreographies," says **Rubén Olmo**.

Invocación opens with the *escuela bolera* choreography ***Invocación bolera***. This style is one of the most demanding disciplines of Spanish dance because of the speed of its steps and jumps, and its combination of classical ballet technique with castanets, also known as *palillos*. In this work, Rubén Olmo updates the essence of traditional *escuela bolera* while paying tribute to the great masters who shaped the development of the style: Mariemma, Ángel Pericet and Antonio 'el Bailarín'.

The music for *Invocación bolera* is an original contemporary composition commissioned by the Ballet Nacional de España from the young Seville-born composer and conductor **Manuel Busto**, who later also took part in the creation of ***La Bella Otero***. The composer conducted the recording made by the **Orchestra of Extremadura**, which will be heard at the Palacio de Festivales in Santander. The costumes were designed by **Pedro Moreno** for *Fandango del Padre Soler*, premiered by the Ballet Nacional de España in 1988, and have been adapted for this work by the designer himself.

The same creative partnership of Rubén Olmo and Manuel Busto is responsible for ***Jauleña***, a solo interweaving several dance styles, with particular prominence given to zapateado and granaína. It will be performed in Santander by José Manuel Benítez.

Antonio Najarro's *Eterna Iberia* completes the first part of the performance. Premiered by the Ballet Nacional de España in 2019, this stylised dance choreography makes striking use of traditional elements of Spanish dance, such as the cape and Cordoban hat. The music was originally composed by Manuel Moreno Buendía for Antonio Ruiz Soler's ballet *Eterna Castilla* and was subsequently arranged as a suite under the title *Celtiberia*. Yaiza Pinillos's sophisticated costumes represent the richness of Spain through the use of



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blue, green and burgundy, symbolising three of its treasures: the sea, olive trees and wine.

Flamenco takes centre stage in the second part of *Invocación* with the inclusion, for the first time in the Ballet's repertoire, of a choreography by **Mario Maya**, a leading figure in Spanish dance renowned for his genius and sensitivity. Maya, who died in 2008, was a pioneer of flamenco theatre, the creator of daring and innovative productions, and one of the most tireless researchers of his generation.

Rubén Olmo selected ***De lo flamenco*** because, in his view, Mario Maya's production, premiered by the Compañía Andaluza de Danza in 1994, brought a new freshness to the way flamenco was created and experienced on stage through its stylisation and movement, particularly with a large company of dancers. "Even today, it remains innovative and entirely unlike anything else," says Rubén Olmo.

The Ballet Nacional de España's production of *De lo flamenco* adds three pieces to the original choreography by Mario Maya, Milagros Menjíbar and A. Rueda "Toná": **Manolo Marín's** *Los cinco toreros* and two new works created by two of Mario Maya's regular collaborators, **Rafaela Carrasco's** *Romance del emplazado* and **Isabel Bayón's** *Taranto*. Artists who formed part of the original cast also collaborated on this revival, including rehearsal director Manuel Betanzos and musician Diego Carrasco. The costumes are replicas of those originally designed by Mario Maya and were hand-painted by Juan Andrés Amaya.

The Ballet Nacional de España's flamenco ensemble, accompanied by three guest cantaores, will perform live in Santander the music composed by Diego Carrasco, Jesús Torres, Moraíto Chico and Los del Río.

Coinciding with the Ballet Nacional de España's appearance at the Santander International Festival, a group of twenty children aged between eight and eleven will take part in the **educational workshop *Bailando un tesoro***, to be held on the same day, 7th August, at the Centro Botín. Ballet Nacional de España rehearsal director Maribel Gallardo and Belén Moreno, head of the Educational Activities Department, will introduce the children to Spanish dance through some of its most distinctive elements, including the shawl, handclapping, footwear and castanets. The activity is also supported by interactive educational materials published by the Ballet Nacional de España, including an illustrated book, two augmented-reality activity booklets and a video game.

With the performance in Santander, the Ballet Nacional de España brings its 2020/2021 season to a close. During the season, it also presented two world premieres, *Centenario Antonio Ruiz Soler* and *La Bella Otero*, and continued its live broadcasts of rehearsals from the company's headquarters.

The first scheduled performance of the next season will take place at the **Auditorio de Murcia** on **7th October**. The Ballet Nacional de España will



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present *Centenario Antonio Ruiz Soler*, a programme reviving some of Antonio el Bailarín's most outstanding choreographies, including *Sonatas* and *Fantasía galaica*, together with new creations inspired by the flamenco style he presented and a tribute to his appearances in Hollywood films.

Invocación
Ballet Nacional de España

Palacio de Festivales
Santander
7th August 2021, 8:30 p.m.

Programme:

Invocación bolera, by Rubén Olmo

Jauleña, by Rubén Olmo

Eterna Iberia, by Antonio Najarro

De lo flamenco. Homenaje a Mario Maya, by Mario Maya, Milagros Menjíbar, A.

Rueda "Toná", Manolo Marín, Isabel Bayón and Rafaela Carrasco

About the Ballet Nacional de España

The Ballet Nacional de España (BNE) has been Spain's leading public company for Spanish dance since it was founded in 1978 under the name Ballet Nacional Español, with Antonio Gades as its first director. It is one of the production units of the National Institute of the Performing Arts and Music (INAEM), which forms part of the Ministry of Culture and Sport. The BNE's mission is to preserve, promote and pass on Spain's rich choreographic heritage, embracing its stylistic diversity and traditions through its different forms: classical dance, stylised dance, folklore, escuela bolera and flamenco. It also works to bring Spanish dance closer to new audiences and strengthen its national and international profile within a framework of full artistic and creative autonomy.

Rubén Olmo, director of the Ballet Nacional de España

Rubén Olmo, winner of the 2015 National Dance Award, joined the Ballet Nacional de España in September 2019 with the aim of preserving, promoting and expanding the reach of the traditional Spanish Dance repertoire, while also incorporating new creations and opening the company to avant-garde approaches and experimentation. This marks his second period with the BNE, having previously danced with the company from 1998 to 2002.

From 2011, he served as director of the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía, an institution belonging to the Regional Government of Andalusia, where he premiered his own productions, including *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* and *La muerte de un minotauro*. Before that, he founded his own company, for which he created productions such as *Érase una vez*, *Belmonte*, *Las tentaciones de Poe*, *Horas contigo*, *Naturalmente Flamenco* and *Diálogo de Navegante*. He has also worked as a choreographer and dancer with leading figures in Spanish Dance, including Aída Gómez, Antonio Najarro, Eva Yerbabuena, Víctor Ullate, Antonio Canales, Rafael Amargo, Isabel Bayón and Rafaela Carrasco.



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