

Ballet Nacional de España brings escuela bolera to Zaragoza and Pamplona as part of the *Invocación* programme

The programme, which offers a comprehensive overview of Spanish dance, also pays tribute to Mario Maya

The performances are scheduled for 7th and 16th May at the Palacio de Congresos in Zaragoza and Baluarte in Pamplona, respectively

Madrid, 6th May 2021. The *Invocación* programme, which the Ballet Nacional de España will perform in **Zaragoza and Pamplona on 7th and 16th May**, includes one of the few escuela bolera choreographies created in recent years. In *Invocación bolera*, **Rubén Olmo**, director of Spain's public Spanish dance company, **updates the essence of traditional escuela bolera** while paying tribute to the great masters who shaped the development of this style: Mariemma, Ángel Pericet and Antonio 'el Bailarín'.

This style of Spanish dance is also known as *danzas goyescas* because its costumes—with knee-length trousers for the male dancers and full skirts and hairnets for the female dancers—recall the popular figures depicted by Goya in his paintings. Bolero dances also originated in the eighteenth century, when they were popular dances performed at pilgrimages and local festivities. Over time, they became increasingly complex and incorporated techniques from classical ballet, eventually reaching theatres throughout Europe in the nineteenth century. Today, *escuela bolera* is one of the most demanding disciplines of Spanish dance, owing to the speed of its steps and the need to master castanets, also known as *palillos*.

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**. The recording to be heard in Zaragoza and Pamplona was made by the **Orchestra of Extremadura** under the direction of the composer himself. The costumes were designed by **Pedro Moreno** for the Ballet Nacional de España's 1988 production *Fandango del Padre Soler* and have been adapted for this work by the designer himself.

The Ballet Nacional de España's performance at the Palacio de Congresos de Zaragoza on 7th May forms part of the series *Música para Goya. De salones, tonadillas y fandango*. The Provincial Council of Zaragoza and the Government of Aragon have organised a range of concerts and dance performances inspired by Goya's era to commemorate the 275th anniversary of the painter's birth. The public company has not performed in Zaragoza since 2006. The return to Pamplona has not been quite so long awaited. Although only three years have passed since the company last performed in the Navarrese capital, **tickets for the sole performance at Baluarte on 16th May have already sold out.**

From escuela bolera to flamenco

Invocación bolera forms part of ***Invocación***, a comprehensive overview of Spanish dance encompassing most of its styles, which the Ballet Nacional de España premiered in March 2020 at the closing of the Festival de Jerez. Following the enforced pause caused by lockdown, the programme has travelled to Albacete, Pozuelo de Alarcón in Madrid and Terrassa in Barcelona. "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.

Jauleña is also by Rubén Olmo, with music by Manuel Busto. It is a solo performed by the director of the Ballet Nacional de España that interweaves several dance styles, with particular prominence given to zapateado and granaína.

The first part of the performance is completed by **Antonio Najarro's *Eterna Iberia***. Premiered by the Ballet Nacional de España in 2019, it is a stylised dance choreography that 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 blue, green and burgundy, symbolising three of its treasures: the sea, olive trees and wine.

The *Invocación* programme also marks **the first time in its history that the public company has incorporated a choreography by Mario Maya**, the flamenco dancer, choreographer and teacher who died in 2008, into its repertoire. Mario Maya is a leading figure in the world of Spanish dance, renowned for his genius and sensitivity. He was a pioneer, the creator of daring and innovative productions, and one of the most tireless researchers of his generation.

"With *De lo flamenco*, Mario Maya brought a new freshness to the way flamenco was created and experienced on stage in 1994, particularly with a large company of dancers. This production, premiered by the Compañía Andaluza de Danza—now the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía—of which he was the first director, marked a turning point because of its stylisation, freshness and movement. 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 to the original choreography by Mario Maya, Milagros Menjíbar and A. Rueda "Toná" **Manolo Marín's *Los cinco toreros***, together with 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 have also collaborated, including rehearsal director Manuel Betanzos and musician Diego Carrasco. The costumes are replicas of the originals and were hand-painted by Juan Andrés Amaya. The Ballet Nacional de España's flamenco ensemble, accompanied by three guest cantaores, will perform live the music composed by Diego Carrasco, Jesús Torres, Moraíto Chico and Los del Río.

Invocación Ballet Nacional de España

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

**Palacio de Congresos
Zaragoza**

7th May 2021, 8:00 p.m.

Tickets: <http://bit.ly/entradas-zg>

**Baluartes
Pamplona**

16th May 2021, 7:00 p.m.

Sold out

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.

Further information and interview requests:

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