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**BALLET NACIONAL
DE ESPAÑA**

Ballet Nacional de España brings its versatility and technical mastery to Toledo with *Invocación*

- *The Ballet Nacional de España will perform 'Invocación' on 8th May at the Teatro-Auditorio "El Greco" in Toledo*
- *The programme comprises two choreographies by Rubén Olmo, one by Antonio Najarro, and a tribute to flamenco creator Mario Maya*

Madrid, 4th May 2022. On 8th May, the Ballet Nacional de España will perform at the Teatro-Auditorio "El Greco" in Toledo a four-part programme devised by its director, Rubén Olmo, showcasing the dancers' versatility and technical mastery in three disciplines of Spanish dance. "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 the BNE's director.

Invocación opens with Rubén Olmo's contemporary approach to escuela bolera in *Invocación bolera*, featuring music by composer and conductor Manuel Busto and castanet choreography by Maribel Gallardo, recipient of the 2021 Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts. This is one of the most technically demanding disciplines of Spanish dance, requiring mastery of classical ballet, while also being one of the most spectacular because of the speed of its steps and jumps. The choreography pays tribute to the great masters who shaped the development of this style, filtered through Rubén Olmo's highly personal vision. The costumes, designed by Pedro Moreno, were recovered from the Ballet's archives and adapted for this work by the designer himself.

This is followed by *Jauleña*, a solo by the company's director that reveals the full range of his choreographic style, weaving together contemporary forms of expression with flamenco-inspired movements and placing particular emphasis on zapateado and granaína. The music is once again by Manuel Busto.

To close the first half of the programme, the company takes to the stage in Yaiza Pinillos's earth- and sea-toned costumes to perform *Eterna Iberia*, a stylised dance work choreographed by Antonio Najarro. Premiered in 2019, the piece incorporates traditional elements of Spanish dance, such as the cape and the Cordoban hat, across five movements of contrasting character. The music was originally composed in 1963 by Manuel Moreno-Buendía for Antonio Ruiz Soler's ballet *Eterna Castilla* and was later published as a suite under the title *Celtiberia*.

After the interval, the Ballet Nacional de España's flamenco ensemble of cantaores and musicians joins the dancers on stage to pay tribute to Mario Maya, one of the flamenco dancers and choreographers who renewed flamenco dance in Andalusia. A leading figure in Spanish dance, renowned for

his brilliance and sensitivity, Maya died in 2008. With *De lo flamenco. Homenaje a Mario Maya*, the Ballet Nacional de España explores the Granada-born artist's creative world for the first time, filling a significant gap in its repertoire. Rubén Olmo selected this production, premiered in 1994 by the Compañía Andaluza de Danza, which Maya directed, because its stylisation and movement refreshed the way flamenco was created and experienced on stage, particularly when performed by a large company of dancers. "Even today, it remains innovative and completely different from anything else," says the director.

The Ballet's production of *De lo flamenco* adds two new choreographies to the original works by Mario Maya, Milagros Menjíbar, A. Rueda "Toná" and Manolo Marín. They were created by two of Mario Maya's regular collaborators: Rafaela Carrasco and Isabel Bayón, who choreographed *Romance del emplazado* and *Taranto*, respectively. Artists who were part of the original cast have also contributed to this revival, including rehearsal director Manuel Betanzos and musician Diego Carrasco, one of the composers of the songs alongside Jesús Torres, Moraíto Chito and Los del Río. The costumes are replicas of Mario Maya's original designs and were hand-painted by Juan Andrés Amaya.

The Ballet Nacional de España premiered *Invocación* in 2020 and has since performed it in cities including Madrid, Valencia, Pamplona, Albacete, Santander, Zaragoza and St. Petersburg. Following Toledo, this combination of the different disciplines that make up Spanish dance will be presented at the Granada Festival on 17th and 18th June.

Invocación
Ballet Nacional de España

Teatro-Auditorio "El Greco"
Toledo
8 May 2022, 7:00 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



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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, Rafaela Carrasco and Aída Gómez.

Further information and interview requests:

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