

Eighteen years later, the Ballet Nacional de España presents *El loco* once again at the Festival de Jerez

Jerez, 23rd February 2023. Eighteen years after appearing at the 9th Festival de Jerez in 2005, the Ballet Nacional de España, under the direction of Rubén Olmo, returns to the Teatro Villamarta with ***El loco***. The work now appears in a fuller version that celebrates dance, devotion to art and the artist's madness.

Rubén Olmo, director of the Ballet Nacional de España, explained that he was certain he wanted to revive a work from the company's historic repertoire such as *El loco*: "It is extremely important in the history of Spanish dance. The ballet's plot tells a true story: the creation of *El sombrero de tres picos* for the Ballets Russes. Manuel de Falla, Pablo Picasso and **Félix Fernández** were all involved. Fernández was a flamenco dancer who played an essential role in the new production, bringing the style and character of Spanish dance and flamenco to the ballet."

El loco was created by an outstanding artistic team whose collective work makes its revival a landmark event on the Spanish dance scene. The original concept, libretto and stage direction were by **Paco López**; the choreography by **Javier Latorre**; the music by **Mauricio Sotelo** and **Juan Manuel Cañizares**; the set and costume design by **Jesús Ruiz**; and the lighting design by **Nicolás Fischtel**. They have all come together once again to restore the brilliance of this work from the Ballet's repertoire.

For **Paco López**, "*El loco* tells the story of the artist's disillusionment, the harrowing conflict of a man who inhabits his own transformed reality within a world he does not understand and perceives as radically hostile. My 'Loco' has much in common with a Quixotic character."

According to choreographer **Javier Latorre**, certain aspects of the work have changed: "The experience we have gained over the years has given both Paco López and me a much clearer and richer vision than we had before. There is some new music, new choreography and a thorough update of the dance and choreographic language. I believe this is a far more complete 2.0 version than the original."

Rubén Olmo also emphasised the importance of reviving a narrative ballet with a leading role for a male principal dancer. "The Ballet Nacional de España has many narrative ballets, but almost all of them have female protagonists. *El loco* brings a male character to the forefront."

By reviving *El loco*, Rubén Olmo has also acknowledged that the production pays tribute to Javier Latorre, a choreographer who has created major works for the Ballet Nacional de España.

Musically, in addition to the live performance by the BNE's flamenco musicians, the production features a **new recording** made this January by the **Orchestra of the Community of Madrid** under the musical direction of **Manuel Coves**.

Following its appearance in Jerez, *El loco* will continue its tour this season at the Gran Teatro de Córdoba on 3rd March 2023.

El loco for young audiences

Taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the Festival de Jerez, with students attending the dress rehearsal, the Ballet Nacional de España will present its new interactive booklet *El loco para jóvenes*. **It is the fifth title in the #BNEnos cuenta series of educational publications** launched by the Ballet Nacional de España in 2020. The publication aims to introduce younger generations to the life and artistic career of Félix "El Loco". The booklet includes QR links to interviews and videos from the production.

Programme

27th Festival de Jerez

El loco

Ballet Nacional de España

Teatro Villamarta, Jerez de la Frontera

24th February, 8:30 p.m.

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:

Eduardo Villar de Cantos
Communications Director
Ballet Nacional de España
Tel. 91 05 05 052 / 611 60 92 44
eduardo.villar@inaem.cultura.gob.es