La Bella Otero returns to the stage at Teatros del Canal

La Bella Otero sold out all three performances more than six weeks in advance

Patricia Guerrero will perform the leading role on 14th December, while Noelia Ruiz will take on the role on 15th and 16th December. The production will also feature a special appearance by Maribel Gallardo

Madrid, 14th December 2023. ***La Bella Otero*** comes to **Teatros del Canal** following a highly successful previous season. The production returns to Madrid on **14th, 15th and 16th December**, with **Patricia Guerrero** as guest artist on 14th December, **Noelia Ruiz** in the leading role on 15th and 16th December, and a special appearance by **Maribel Gallardo**.

La Bella Otero can be regarded as an "operatic ballet" in the broadest sense of the term. It is a large-scale production, both in terms of the number of dancers and the extensive costumes, which recreate the world of *Belle Époque Paris*, as well as in the dramaturgical development of the story.

Rubén Olmo, director of the Ballet Nacional de España, places dance at the service of the story, blending styles ranging from folklore to flamenco and stylised dance to tell, through movement, the story of a woman who reinvented herself following a traumatic event in her childhood, achieved success as an artist and courtesan, and ultimately lost her fortune through gambling. "It is a deeply moving and dramatic production because it tells the story of a woman who rises to the very top and ends her life alone and forgotten," explains the director.

The narrative, dramatised by **Gregor Acuña-Pohl**, selects some of the most significant moments from the artist's life that could be expressed through dance, without attempting to provide an exhaustive account. "I have tried to remain faithful to the historical figure and create a ballet that moves audiences without judging her. The most important thing for me was to portray someone with tremendous magnetism, charisma and strength."

"It is a role I am passionate about and one that brings me so many positive things," says guest dancer **Patricia Guerrero**. "I am portraying a remarkable woman whom I admire in many ways, and I greatly value the opportunity to play her." The Cádiz-born dancer and choreographer is currently a leading figure in avant-garde flamenco and was recently appointed director of the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía. According to Patricia Guerrero, "*La Bella Otero* is a work with a harsh underlying story, but it is also dynamic, entertaining

and fresh, with a colour and energy that will allow all of us, both on stage and in the audience, to enjoy it." Patricia Guerrero will perform the role of La Bella Otero on 14th December, in a performance followed by a post-show audience encounter.

For Ballet Nacional de España dancer **Noelia Ruiz**, portraying La Bella Otero "is a very special moment, both personally and artistically. This is the first time I have taken on the interpretation of such an important character and, without a doubt, I am feeling the nerves, but I am also very excited and eager to step into Carolina Otero's shoes and rise to the challenge of telling her remarkable story." The young dancer hopes "to fill the stage with history, dance and passion alongside my fellow dancers from the Ballet Nacional de España." Noelia Ruiz will portray Carolina Otero in the performances on 15th and 16th December.

La Bella Otero once again features the special collaboration of **Maribel Gallardo**, rehearsal director at the Ballet Nacional de España, who portrays the protagonist in her later years. "Returning to the role of Madame Otero, beyond the experience of stepping into the shoes of such a fascinating woman despite her tragic life, also means reliving the thrill of being on stage and feeling the warmth of the audience. Sadly, a dancer's performing career is very short, and life rarely offers you an opportunity like the one I am fortunate enough to be experiencing now, with intensity and gratitude."

Composer and conductor **Manuel Busto** coordinated the musicians from different genres who composed the music for the ballet, integrating their contributions into the score he created. The remaining compositions were written by **Alejandro Cruz Benavides**, **Agustín Diassera**, the group **Rarefolk**, and flamenco guitarists **Diego Losada**, **Víctor Márquez**, **Enrique Bermúdez** and **Pau Vallet**.

The nearly 200 costume designs featured in the production were created by Canary Islands-born designer **Yaiza Pinillos**. They dress the dancers for periods and settings as diverse as a Galician village, *Belle Époque Paris* and a café cantante. The set design is by **Eduardo Moreno**, who uses a single architectural structure, with only a few additional elements, to establish the time and location of each scene. **Juan Gómez-Cornejo's** lighting design brings an emotional dimension to every setting.

Since its premiere at the Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid in 2021, *La Bella Otero* has also toured to Seville, Málaga, Granada, Oviedo and Bogotá, among other cities.

Programme:

La Bella Otero

Teatros del Canal, Madrid
14th and 15th December 2023, 8:30 p.m.
16th December 2023, 7:30 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.

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https://balletnacional.mcu.es/es/sala-de-prensa/

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