

The Ballet Nacional de España presents *Afanador* at Baluarte

The Ballet Nacional de España continues to
captivate audiences across Spain.

Afanador arrives at the Baluarte Theatre in
Pamplona this Sunday, 19th April.

Madrid, 17th April 2026. The company directed by Rubén Olmo arrives at Pamplona's Baluarte Theatre this weekend with a production that has been captivating audiences across Spain since its premiere in December 2023. But its success has extended far beyond Spanish stages. Inspired by the photography of Ruven Afanador, this production has left its mark on theatres around the world, from South Korea and Italy to Austria and Belgium, with Paris the latest city to fall under the spell of *Afanador*.

It is one of the company's most avant-garde productions. To speak of *Afanador* is to speak of innovation in Spanish Dance. According to Rubén Olmo, Director of the Ballet Nacional de España, it is precisely this originality that lies behind its great success: "Until now, audiences had never seen this kind of production in Spanish Dance or at the Ballet Nacional de España."

Since its premiere, *Afanador* has received the affection of audiences both in Spain and abroad, as well as numerous accolades from critics. And yet *Afanador* continues to thrill audiences with its hypnotic choreography.

As Olmo has explained: "The success of *Afanador* lies in its inspiration. We are always inspired by writers, poets and so on, but never by a photographer, by a photo shoot. It is something innovative in the world of dance."

Flamenco through a distorting lens

The Spanish production focuses on photographer Ruven Afanador's surrealist vision of flamenco through the language of dance, seeking to draw audiences into a universe created from fascination and desire.

The acclaimed works of the Colombian artist, *Ángel Gitano* and *Mil Besos*, provided the starting point for this production, in which Spanish Dance merges with contemporary dance to "see the world of flamenco through a distorting lens, one shaped by dreams, desire and memory", as Marcos Morau, creator of the concept and artistic director of *Afanador*, has stated.

Ruven Afanador freezes movement while capturing all the beauty and power of Spanish art; Morau allows those same bodies to move again. In doing so, he reveals the tension between vitality and stillness, between gaze and desire. The paradox of photography becomes tangible: a medium that freezes movement yet is capable of revealing an entire current of life. In *Afanador*, as Morau explains: "the bodies move again, not to imitate the photograph, but to understand what lies within that stillness."

The choreography has been created by Marcos Morau, Lorena Nogal, Shay Partush, Jon López and Miguel Ángel Corbacho, Assistant Director of the Ballet Nacional de España. Oversized bows, gallows and batas de cola accompany the musical composition created by Juan Cristóbal Saavedra, with a special contribution by singer and composer Maria Arnal. This journey through worlds dancing along the boundaries of dreams, death and life is brought to the stage with dramaturgy by Roberto Fratini Serafide, audiovisual design by Marc Salicrú and lighting design by Bernat Jansà.

Afanador has continued to shine since its premiere at the Teatro de la Maestranza in Seville in 2023. It has filled major Spanish venues including the Teatro Real, Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid, Teatro MIRA in Pozuelo de Alarcón, Teatros del Canal in Madrid, Les Arts in Valencia, the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona and the Palacio de Festivales in Santander, as well as international stages including Yeulmaru Theatre in Yeosu, South Korea, the GS Arts Center in Seoul, the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, the Concertgebouw Brugge, the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès in Cannes, the Maison de la Culture in Grenoble, Les Théâtres in Aix-en-Provence and the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris.

Afanador captivated audiences and critics alike throughout 2025, rounding off the year with numerous awards: five Max Awards, two Talía Awards and the Catalan Critics' Awards, among others.

Programme

AFANADOR
Ballet Nacional de España

Baluart Theatre (Pamplona, Spain)

Sunday, 19th April 2026, 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.

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