

Afanador bids farewell to 2025 in Santander

- The Ballet Nacional de España production will bring this highly successful year to a close at the Palacio de Festivales in the Cantabrian city of Santander.
- After captivating French audiences for three weeks in Cannes, Grenoble and Aix-en-Provence, *Afanador* will be performed once again in Spain on Saturday, 13th December.

Santander, 11th December 2025. As the year draws to a close, we will remember 2025 as a year filled with the affection of audiences both in Spain and abroad, as well as numerous accolades from critics.

The Ballet Nacional de España will bid farewell to 2025 at home, in Spain. Santander has been chosen as the final stop in these twelve months during which *Afanador* has continued to surprise audiences.

Afanador has become synonymous with innovation in Spanish Dance. According to Rubén Olmo, Director of the Ballet Nacional de España, its great success lies in its originality. "Until now, audiences had never seen this kind of production in Spanish Dance or at the Ballet Nacional de España."

Stages in South Korea, Italy, Belgium, France and, of course, Spain have thrilled to the choreography and overwhelming power of *Afanador*.

"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," Olmo explained.

Afanador seeks to reveal photographer Ruven Afanador's surrealist vision of flamenco through the language of dance, drawing 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 explained.

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.”

Since its premiere in 2023 at the Teatro de la Maestranza in Seville, *Afanador* has enjoyed an extensive and highly successful journey. In addition to filling major Spanish venues such as the Teatro Real and Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid, Teatro MIRA in Pozuelo de Alarcón, Teatros del Canal in Madrid, Les Arts in Valencia and the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, it has achieved the same success on 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 and Les Théâtres in Aix-en-Provence.

Afanador has received widespread acclaim from both audiences and critics throughout 2025, as reflected in the numerous awards it has received: five Max Awards, two Talía Awards and the Catalan Critics’ Awards, among others. All of them are clear evidence of the admiration this ballet has inspired among audiences and critics alike.

Programme:

AFANADOR

Ballet Nacional de España

Palacio de Festivales de Santander

Saturday, 13th December 2025, 7:30 p.m.

Last tickets available

Following the final performance of *Afanador* in Santander and a well-earned Christmas break, the Ballet Nacional de España will prepare to tour theatres in France, Germany and China, among other destinations, in 2026.

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. 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.

About de Rubén Olmo

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.

Marcos Morau & La Veronal, Choreographer

Trained in Barcelona and New York in photography, movement and theatre, Marcos Morau (Valencia, 1982) creates imaginary worlds and landscapes in which movement and image meet and consume one another.

For more than ten years, Marcos has led La Veronal as its director, choreographer and designer of sets, costumes and lighting. He is also a guest

artist with various companies and theatres around the world, where he develops new creations that consistently lie between the performing arts and dance.

The youngest recipient of Spain's National Dance Award, Marcos Morau has developed a distinctive language rooted in abstract movement and physical theatre. He has also received the FAD Sebastià Gasch Award, presented by the FAD Foundation for Arts and Design; the Time Out Award for Best Creator; and Italy's Danza&Danza Award for Best Creator of the Year, among many others. His works have won prizes at numerous national and international choreography competitions, including those held in Hanover, Copenhagen and Madrid.

Since 2024, Marcos Morau has been an associate artist with the Staatsballett Berlin, where he premieres a new creation each year with one of Europe's largest ballet companies, affiliated with the Deutsche Oper, Komische Oper and Staatsoper Unter den Linden.