

From Andalusian Rock to Greek Tragedy: a journey through time with the Ballet Nacional de España at the Teatro de la Zarzuela

From 11th to 22nd July, the BNE presents a double bill featuring a world premiere, *Flamenco-Rock-Andaluz*, and a classic from the company's repertoire, *Medea*.

Madrid, 9th July 2026. The Ballet Nacional de España (BNE) presents a double bill at the Teatro de la Zarzuela from 11th July, combining the revival of a classic from the company's repertoire with a world premiere inspired directly by the roots of Andalusian rock.

The evening is divided into two distinct halves. While the second part is devoted to the revival of *Medea*, José Granero's landmark choreography, the programme opens with *Flamenco-Rock-Andaluz*, a new flamenco suite that redefines the boundaries of the genre.

A bridge between Andalusian rock and the flamenco avant-garde

The origins of this new creation can be traced back to the childhood of the Director of the Ballet Nacional de España, Rubén Olmo, for whom Andalusian rock formed part of the soundtrack to his youth: "The concept of Andalusian rock emerged from flamenco roots and transferred structures such as the farruca, alegrías and bulerías into the language of rock. That encounter between tradition and modernity inspired me to connect with audiences through a contemporary reinterpretation of this musical legacy, shaping a new creative proposal with an exclusively female identity."

This sonic and conceptual production brings together tradition and the avant-garde under the choreography of Rafaela Carrasco, a master at exploring new trends without losing the purity of flamenco's roots. Her experience and ability to remain connected to Andalusian tradition while opening herself to experimentation with new languages make *Flamenco-Rock-Andaluz* a work that cannot be confined to a single dance style. Instead, it creates a language of its

own, constructed through the dialogue between choreographic direction and the dancers' bodies: "The creation of movement develops through each encounter. It is alive because every day new things happen and emerge," the choreographer explains. Although the choreography is based on a dance vocabulary and variations created specifically for the work, Carrasco notes that "working directly with the dancers' bodies means that it continues to change and evolve according to what is needed."

Flamenco-Rock-Andaluz not only creates its own distinctive style, but does so through a large and cohesive artistic and technical team working together like a finely tuned mechanism, something Carrasco has drawn on in shaping the choreography: "The concept behind this project stems from the strength of the group as an entity, and having them there every day throughout the creative process makes everything fall into place."

Music occupies a central role in the work and becomes one of its principal creative driving forces. Ángeles Toledano leads the singing and musical adaptation, transforming historic Andalusian rock lyrics into new textures of electric flamenco that engage in dialogue with the movement and underpin the choreographic development.

The stage space is brought to life through the lighting design of Gloria Montesinos, one of the leading female figures in Spain's performing arts, for whom lighting functions as another central character within a production: "The intention is for the light not simply to accompany the action, but to become a narrative element capable of engaging in dialogue with the music and movement."

Finally, costume design is by Belén de la Quintana, who has undertaken meticulous work combining and creatively recycling historic pieces from the BNE's costume collection, giving them a new life on stage. This process has involved an additional challenge: almost all the costumes are black, which, as the designer explains, "has been the greatest challenge we have faced because, in order to bring out the light and prevent everything from becoming too dark, we have had to use many different textures and materials, while also revealing a great deal of skin."

The emotion of a story told through dance

Medea is one of the finest examples of theatrical flamenco ballet. Its dramaturgy, written by Miguel Narros based on Seneca's tragedy, the music of Manolo Sanlúcar and José Granero's choreography come together in a harrowing and seamless production: a story of love, betrayal and revenge whose artistic power remains undiminished to this day. Winner of the New York Critics' Award in 1988, it is perhaps the most performed and reinterpreted choreographic work in the history of Spanish dance.

At the heart of the work is José Granero, the Spanish dancer and choreographer of Argentinian origin regarded as one of the key figures in the development of a new choreographic language for Spanish dance. Granero endowed dance with an extraordinary narrative capacity and theatricality that have kept his creations alive and continue to guide new generations of artists.

The Maestro's spirit lives on particularly through those who performed his works and who now pass his language on to new dancers. Maribel Gallardo, former Principal Dancer and current Rehearsal Director of the Ballet Nacional de España, and Javier Palacios, dancer and choreographic supervisor, are overseeing the preparation of Inmaculada Salomón and Matías López. The BNE Principal Dancer and Soloist take on the roles of Medea and Jason in this new interpretation of the iconic choreography, which will be performed at the Teatro de la Zarzuela throughout July.

Each revival, however, opens up the possibility of discovering a different work. In approaching *Medea*, Inmaculada Salomón has chosen to let go of the certainties she has acquired as a dancer and confront the character as a *tabula rasa*, a blank canvas on which to receive the teachings of those who know the choreography intimately. Only after this process of listening and learning does she bring her own sensitivity to the tragedy's protagonist: "To bring a character like Medea to life, I decided to let go of 'Inma the dancer', to abandon all those certainties you know work when you dance, and become a sponge so I could absorb everything I am being taught. Afterwards, I will be able to bring my own self to the work." The richness of the character lies in the intensity of her emotional journey. Medea loves, desires, suffers, rebels and takes revenge. She is a betrayed and scorned woman, bewildered by abandonment and driven towards an irreversible decision. "She is an incredibly rich character. She experiences every emotion: love, desire, anger, revenge, pain... Everything about her attracts me because she possesses enormous richness and complexity," explains Inmaculada Salomón. But Medea cannot be understood without Jason,

the man whose betrayal sets the tragedy in motion. Matías López takes on a character with particular significance for him, as it was precisely José Granero's work that awakened his vocation for dance. "Taking on the role of Jason is an enormous responsibility. Performing it now, knowing that I fell in love with dance thanks to such an emblematic work, is daunting. But when you allow everything to flow naturally and surrender yourself to the music, the character and the steps, idyllic moments emerge that are impossible to describe."

On 11th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 19th and 21st July, Francisco Velasco, Principal Dancer with the Ballet Nacional de España, will also take on the role of Jason, bringing to life the man whose betrayal determines Medea's fate. The company will also feature special appearances by Currillo as Creon and Lupe Gómez as the Nurse, both essential figures in the dramatic development of the work. Esther Jurado, Principal Dancer with the BNE, will delve into Medea's emotional complexity on 21st and 22nd July.

With this programme, the BNE's artistic direction consolidates its approach of seeking the ideal balance between preserving choreographic heritage and opening the company to new trends in contemporary dance.

Programme:

FLAMENCO-ROCK-ANDALUZ / MEDEA
Ballet Nacional de España
Teatro de la Zarzuela

Saturday, 11th July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, 12th July 2026, 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 14th July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, 15th July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, 16th July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, 17th July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, 18th July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, 19th July 2026, 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 21st July 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, 22nd July 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets on sale

<https://entradasinaem.es/espectaculo/ballet-nacional-de-espana-- triana-medea/TRIANAMEDEA26>

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