

THE GALA THEATER ENDS ITS 2021 SEASON WITH A LIVE SHOW



Rosalía Gasso and Alejandro Barrientos, choreographers and dancers of "Ella es tango" at GALA Theater. Photo J.Ring. Courtesy: Gasso-Berrientos.

GALA Theater ends its 45th Anniversary Season with "Ella es tango", a musical revue that highlights the contribution of women composers and singers. Created and directed by Hugo Medrano, GALA's Producing Artistic Director, with assistance from Claudio Aprile. Musical direction and orchestration are by Sergio Busjle of the Pan American Symphony Orchestra (PASO).

"Ella es tango" is performed in Spanish with English surtitles Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm and will continue until June 20. Noche de GALA is Saturday, June 5 at 8 pm, under the patronage of the GALA Board of Directors and the presence of Jorge Argüello, Ambassador of Argentina. This production is made possible with generous support from the DC Commission on the Arts and

Humanities, the Embassy of Argentina and others local organizations.

The conductor of this musical is Argentine composer Ariel Pirotti, the choreography is by Argentine dancers Rosalía Gasso and Alejandro Barrientos. Texts are by Argentine playwright Patricia Suárez Cohen with the participation of Argentine singers Mariana Quinteros, whose album "Carmín" has been a success in Argentina and in Florida, U.S.A., and Patricia Torres, who won the First Prize at the Hugo del Carril Contest in Buenos Aires (2006) and Honor Mention at the Medellín Tango Festival in 2018.

"Ella es tango" explores the overlooked contributions of talented, strong, and witty female artists who both composed and sang



unforgettable songs. The show features interpretations of pioneers like Tita Merello, Libertad Lamarque, Camila Quiroga, and Azucena Maizani, who had the vision to create songs in different vocal ranges and use body language techniques that revolutionized the way tango had been displayed until then. Their innovations contributed to the explosion of tango during its golden years and opened the doors for future female powerhouses in tango artistry.

"In an originally male-dominated genre such as tango, women moved slowly into the field by singing tangos with inuendo or double meaning," states Medrano. "They hid their femininity, dressing up like men, and becoming part of a bigger spectacle such as a sainete. Many of them transcended hunger, injustice, and social barriers through their voices and songs. Each one has a unique style and a particular branding that clearly identifies them, making them relevant over time."

For 46 years, Medrano, GALA's Founding Producing Artistic Director, he has directed and performed in classical and contemporary plays in Argentina, Spain, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Cuba, New York, Miami, and Washington, DC. He has directed over 125 theater productions and numerous musical revues, including two previous tango revues, "Puro Tango I" and "Puro Tango 2"; "Perú Negro" and "El Bola-Cuba's King of Song", among others. He was nominated for a 2000 Helen Hayes Award for his direction of Lope de

Vega's "La dama boba", received a Helen Hayes Award nomination for his performance in "El protagonista", and received the 1994 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Actor for his role in "Kiss of the Spider Woman".

Featured in the production are outstanding artists from Argentina and the U.S. Alejandro Barrientos and Rosalía Gasso, choreographers and dancers. Joining Gasso and Barrientos are finalists in the World Tango Championship (2017, 2018, and 2019), Marcos Pereira and Florencia Borgnia.

The three live musicians from the Pan American Symphony Orchestra are 2018 Latin Grammy award-winning (album "Vigor Tanguero" by Pedro Giraudo) bandoneón player Rodolpho Zanetti, the soloist John Philligin on the violin, and former member of the U.S. Army Band (Pershing's Own) Pete Ostle on obass. Directly from Argentina, the conductor and pianist Ariel Pirotti, 2017 Latin Grammy nominee and tango music teacher.

The cast features GALA company members Lorena Sabogal (Libertad Lamarque), who last appeared in "En el tiempo de las mariposas", and Krystal Pou (Camila), last seen in "Dancing in My Cockroach Killers". Suárez Cohen (Tita Merello), Cecilia Esquivel (Azucena Maizani), and Claudio Aprile (Various men's roles) are making their debut at GALA.

Scenic design is by Clifton Chadick, who designed sets for "La tía Julia y el escribidor" and "El perro del hortelano" this season, the Helen

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Hayes award-winning “Fame”, and “Exquista Agonía”. Lighting design is by Christopher Annas-Lee, who received a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lighting Design for GALA’s “In the Heights en Español”. Projections are by Dylan Uremovich, and Nicolas Onischuk oversees additional media. Costumes are by Jeannette Christensen, who designed GALA’s recent “El perro del hortelano”. Stage Manager is P. Vanessa Losada and Tony Koehler is Production Manager.

Reservations are necessary through June 10 as only 66 patrons will be seated. Starting June 11, GALA will begin to operate at full capacity and reservations are highly encouraged. The wearing of masks is required throughout the run.

To purchase tickets, call 202-234-7174 or visit www.galatheatre.org. Tickets are also available on Goldstar and TodayTix.



Argentine composer and conductor Ariel Pirotti. Photo: Gala Theater.