

UNION CITY INTERNATIONAL BALLET FESTIVAL

PRESENTS

AMERICAN LIBERTY BALLET

IN

***“La Zambra
del Zorro”***



September 28, 2024, 7 PM

Union City High School Theater

2500 Kennedy Blvd.

Union City, New Jersey 07087

INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

LA ZAMBRA DEL ZORRO will delight people of all ages. Told in ballet and dance, the story is set in California during the early 1800s – against the backdrop of Mexico’s struggle, under the banner of Our Lady of Guadalupe, for independence from colonial “New Spain”. The *Pueblo de la Reina de los Angeles* is under oppressive military/caste/class rule – the indigenous Natives are dispossessed and subject to heavy taxation and enslavement by a “pure-blood” Spanish power structure.

Young Diego de la Vega is half-Native (his mother: a Native Tongva warrior) and half “*Mulatto*” (his father: a former military officer, half-Spanish, half-African). Inspired by his mentor Padre Felipé’s opposition to the exploitive colonial rule, Diego dons the black mask and cloak of *El Zorro* (The Fox). With his adopted Native brother Bernardo, he wages a stealth campaign against injustice.

They are joined by like-minded allies, childhood companions Fiorella Torres and Victoria the Gypsy who manages the local tavern. Meanwhile, Diego and Esperanza are smitten with each other, even though she is the niece of Zorro’s opponent, the ruthless *alcalde* (mayor) Luis Quintero whose wife Inez longs for the lavish lifestyle she had enjoyed in Spain. This drives Luis to collect (and pocket) more taxes – and to concoct a scheme with the more ruthless military Capitan to discredit Zorro. Can Esperanza and Victoria, with the aid of the Native servants and tavern workers, undo these nefarious plans? It unfolds in a comedy of errors at Esperanza’s *debutante* party.

The local folk do their best to celebrate life in spite of the oppressive regime. The plaza and tavern become stages for festive dances, including the *Zambra*, a style of barefoot *Flamenco* performed by Roma (Gypsy/Gitano) immigrants. In the end, Natives and Roma join forces with Zorro’s friends to bring down the regime and advance the cause of “*Tierra y Libertad*” – “Land and Liberty” for all.

La Zambra del Zorro is inspired by a century of variations on the character created by Johnston McCulley in 1919 and portrayed by actors Douglas Fairbanks, Tyrone Power, Guy Williams, George Hamilton,

Duncan Regehr, Anthony Hopkins, Antonio Banderas, and many others. It also draws upon the 2005 novel *Zorro*, by Chilean author Isabel Allende who recast the legend in an historical light, with indigenous and feminist perspectives, for 21st century audiences.

La Zambra del Zorro is produced by American Liberty Ballet of Union City, New Jersey, as directed by Valerie Mae Browne, under license from Zorro Productions, Inc. This original production is choreographed by Osamu Uehara in collaboration with librettist Mark A. Sullivan. It's debut production was on March 2nd & 3rd, 2024, at The Theatre at St. Jean's, 150 East 76th Street, New York City. A revised version now follows on September 28, 2024, at Union City International Ballet Festival, Union City High School Theatre, Union City, New Jersey.

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A FOREWORD BY THE CREATORS OF “LA ZAMBRA DEL ZORRO”

We humbly and proudly present our re-casting of the story of “*El Zorro*” as innovative and more relevant today than when this champion of freedom and justice first appeared. He made his debut in “The Curse of Capistrano” serialize novel by Johnston McCulley in 1919, and the film versions, *The Mark of Zorro*, in 1920 and 1940. Inspired by these and later iterations including novelist Isabel Allende’s 2005 “reboot”, our humorous “take” on *Zorro* also draws upon the historic struggle of Mexico (including California) for independence from colonial Spain. Our ballet story speaks to social issues such as racism, sexism, poverty and tyranny that prevail to this very day, while it celebrates cultural roots and diversity in music, song and dance – including “*La Zambra*”, a form of shoeless or barefoot *Flamenco*.

“La Zambra del Zorro” presents the ethnic under-castes of colonial “New Spain” – our character *El Zorro* being of Native Mexican, African and Spanish descent. We are also proud and pleased to reveal, perhaps for the first time since 1910, something forgotten about the “Father of Mexican Independence”, *Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla*.

Not only a secular priest ahead of his time, supporting liberal and progressive causes, such as “Land & Liberty” – *“Tierra y Libertad”* – for the Natives, along with the abolition of slavery

-- and not only suspected of “heresy” and persecuted by the “Holy Office of the Inquisition”

– and not only to be ultimately tried and executed by the colonial government of *Nueva España* (New Spain) for treason in 1811

– *Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla* earned the nickname *“El Zorro”* (“The Fox”) while a university student, and this nickname stuck with him for life.

Mexico won independence in 1821 and abolishes slavery in 1829, and one might well say Don Miguel’s martyrdom was not in vain.

“La Zambra del Zorro” acknowledges and pays tribute to this historic *“El Zorro”* and the banner of *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, under which he led the first movement and people’s army for Mexican independence and social justice. We are grateful for the permission granted by *Zorro Productions, Inc.* * which holds the rights to *“Zorro”* as created by Johnston McCulley. We are honored to collaborate with *American Liberty Ballet* ** and its Director, Valerie Mae Browne, in presenting our imaginative tale of *Zorro* in music, song and dance, drawing on the Native Mexican and Californian heritages that contribute to the wonderful diversity of our shared American culture and story.

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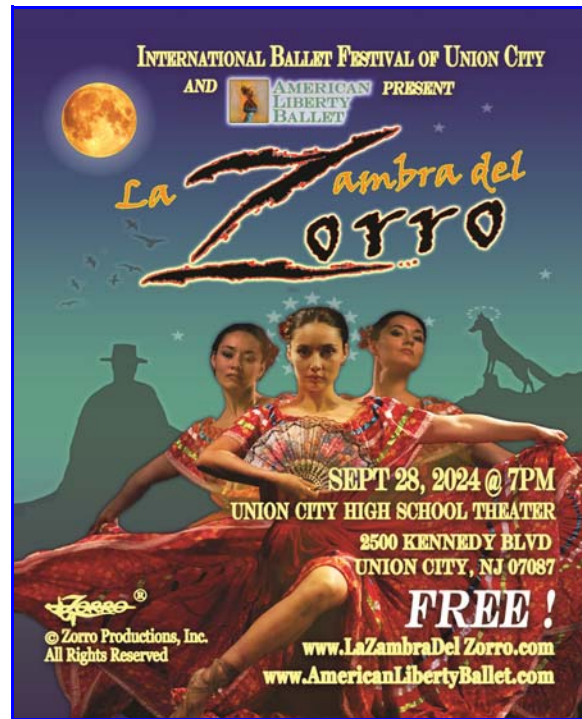
“La Zambra del Zorro”

“It takes a village...”

THE TITLE: “Zambra” is a barefoot or shoeless Flamenco-style dance form., related to Roma (Gypsy or Gitano) culture. *El Zorro*” means “The Fox” in Spanish.

THE SETTING:

Early 1800s in Alta (Upper) or New California, a part of Mexico, which was part of *Nueva España*, i.e., “New Spain” – under colonial occupation. Specifically: *El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles* (*The Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels*) and the Franciscan Mission *San Gabriel Arcángel*.



SOURCES & INSPIRATIONS: The character “Zorro” and stories about him were originally created by Johnston McCulley starting with *The Curse of Capistrano* (1919). Our own story also makes selective use of subsequent movie and television versions including “*The Mark of Zorro*” (1920 & 1940), “*Walt Disney’s Zorro*”, “*Zorro the Gay Blade*”, New World “*Zorro*”, “*The Mask of Zorro*”, and Telemundo’s “*Zorro: La Espada y La Rosa*”. We also took inspiration and ideas from various comic book and animated versions of Zorro. We are particularly grateful to Isabel Allende, whose Spanish novel “*El Zorro*” (or “*Zorro*” in English translation) rebooted and transformed the legend with indigenous Native and women’s perspectives. We also drew upon the culture and history of California and Mexico – as well as our own creative imaginations.

– Mark A. Sullivan & Osamu Uehara

“ LA ZAMBRA DEL ZORRO ” PADRE FELIPÉ’S NARRATIVE

BEFORE THE PROLOGUE

Dear Guests, Children of all ages,
from 2 to 102,

Welcome to “La Zambra del Zorro”.

You are about to embark on a strange and exciting journey with me.
Are you ready?

My name is Padre Felipé. My family name is, well, my secret... after all, we Franciscan Friars let go of our limited biological families and embrace all humanity, the entire world, as our family. I was born a subject of the Spanish Empire, in colonial “New Spain” – now known as Mexico – in the year 1776 –



the same year our northern neighbors declared independence from another colonial Empire, the British. As a young man, I studied under the great freedom-fighter Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who became my mentor, and I his protégé.[See Note 1]

Hidalgo was a secular or parish priest, and a scholar, social reformer and the first leader of the movement for independence from Spain. Back then we called ourselves “Independents” and “Americans”, not yet “Mexicans” – that came later. With Hidalgo, I labored as a young Friar to help the downtrodden Natives and enable them to become self-sufficient in spite of the oppressive caste system that put so-called “pure-blood” white Spaniards in charge, as despotic rulers, over everyone else. Alas, most of the Spanish missionaries, even fellow Franciscans, more or less went along with the system – more or less. In my case, not more but less... Like Miguel Hidalgo, I longed and worked for the system’s abolition.

Before I was sent to the northern frontier of Alta California, Hidalgo gave me his precious Medallion, to remember him, and as a symbol of our shared cause. This is the Medallion that I passed on to... oh, forgive me, I’m getting ahead of myself.

Where was I going with this? Ah, yes, ever since Hidalgo was a young student, his wise yet wild ways led his fellow students to call him “El Zorro” – The Fox. This nickname stuck with him all his life, even as he led a rag-tag army of Natives, second and third generation Spanish immigrants, and people of so-called “mixed blood” or “mixed-race”, against colonial rule.

Hidalgo – “El Zorro” – issued proclamations abolishing slavery and the heavy taxes and tribute imposed upon dispossessed Natives as well as the landowners – the *Caballeros* or Dons – and restoring land to the Natives. But the Natives had bottled-up three centuries-worth of resentment against the *conquistadores* and colonial rulers, and so they ignored the so called civilized “laws of war”. And so, even as he was on the verge of great success, Miguel Hidalgo was reluctant to attack the people of Mexico City

itself – not wanting any more blood on his hands. Or so it seemed to me when I first heard the news.

Not that long after, Hidalgo was defeated in battle, captured, and was eventually executed by firing squad in the year 1811. Even though a Roman Catholic priest, he was influenced by enlightenment ideas such separation of church and state, free speech and human rights, even for women, and for “Tierra y Libertad” – restoring “Land & Liberty” to the Natives. And, oh yes, he led his people’s army under the banner of Our Lady – *La Virgen de Guadalupe* – the protectress of the Natives. I shared this devotion to Our Lady with Hidalgo, the Natives, and the other oppressed peoples of New Spain including the Roma – the *Gitano* or Gypsies.

Eventually, Hidalgo’s movement, under the banner of Our Lady, succeeded in 1821, and slavery in the Republic of Mexico was abolished in 1829 – some three and a half decades before it was abolished north of the border, also at the price of much human bloodshed. In any case, the Virgin Mother of Guadalupe is to this day venerated as the Patroness of Mexico and Queen of the Americas. And Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla is honored and celebrated as the “Father of Mexican Independence.”

And now, let us see how a new “El Zorro” inherited Hidalgo’s Medallion and took up the cause of liberty and justice, and how this inspired and galvanized an entire community to throw off oppression.

We set our scene in *El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles* – The People or Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels – now the great city of Los Angeles. Indeed, by coincidence, or maybe destiny?, our maestro conducting this performance, our Osamu, was born in Queen of Angels hospital, which stood on the very land associated with our story.

The year is 1806, and I have been assigned to manage the Mission of San Gabriel and educate and care for the local children – the children of Native Tongva, Roma/Gypsies, and those of so-called “mixed-blood” as well as those

of “pure-blood” – whether “Peninsulares” born in Spain, or Mestizos and Creoles and others born in so-called “New Spain”. We are on the San Gabriel Mission grounds and I am teaching the children how to use the sword to defend themselves, but not to kill. Yes, I am preparing them to defend their freedom. After all, “Freedom. Is. Everything.” [See Note 2]

So, as you will see, here I am: With young students of tender age, including Diego de la Vega – son of Native Tongva leader Doña Regina Toypurina, and Don Alejandro. And with Diego’s adopted Native brother Bernardo. With Fiorella the daughter of Doña Isabel and Don Ignacio Torres. And with Victoria, a local Gypsy/Roma girl whose resourceful immigrant parents manage the only decent tavern in town... well, the *only* tavern in town.

BEFORE ACT ONE

And so Bernardo lost his power of speech when the soldiers murdered his parents before his very eyes. Diego’s father, Don Alejandro adopted him into the de la Vega family, and Bernardo and Diego continued to study under my care, along with Fiorella, Victoria, and the other children. Eventually Alejandro sent Diego and Bernardo to Spain for further education and training in the arts of fencing, horseback riding, and so forth, plus the civil and social skills they would need as adult members of a leading local family. Ah, Diego and Bernardo! They would die for each other... and almost did! And Fiorella and Victoria! Well – girls will be girls – and their loyalty and bravery, like Diego’s and Bernardo’s, defied the caste hierarchy and broke all the rules.

It is now 1820, and after being away more than three years, the two young men return home from Spain, and we await their arrival by coach off the ship docked in San Pedro harbor. Oh yes, while they were away Toypurina returned to her Native people, feeling that her duties as mother were over; and Don Alejandro was forced to step-down or “retire” as Alcalde or Mayor, being replaced by the ruthless and corrupt Don Luis Quintero from Spain. “That foul viper! Could I have been alone with him for five minutes, five minutes! I would have snuffed him out like a candle! God forgive me!” [See Note 3]

And the military attaché, Capitán Rafael Enríque Franco, was even more ruthless than his boss. On many occasions he showed no mercy toward the Natives and Gypsies. Franco was an ambitious young Spanish soldier seeking to rise in social rank by any means necessary, trying to infiltrate one or another family of wealth and power – perhaps by marrying Fiorella Torres or, even, Esperanza del la Cruz, the young niece of the Alcalde's wife Inez. Oh, Inez! Inez! She's another one – what a piece of work! – longing for her comfortable and lavish lifestyle back in Spain, she set off a chain of events that led to the return, or rebirth, of “El Zorro”. As we shall now see.

BEFORE ACT TWO

Welcome back *mi Amigos*! Now where were we? Oh yes ... so as you have seen, I conferred upon my dear protégé – “My boy, my Diego!” [See Note 3] -- Hidalgo's precious Medallion and name of “*El Zorro*”. And as *El Zorro*, Diego, with the help of Bernardo, Fiorella and Victoria went on to undermine and oppose the wicked designs of Alcalde Quintero and Capitán Franco. While many stories about Zorro – the man, the myth, the legend – have flourished and multiplied over these many years, the roles played by Zorro's women friends, along with his Roma and Native friends, often went unnoticed, or at least under-reported. As you have seen, it is a story that can be told with music and dance.

My favorite dance was *La Zambra*, the shoeless or barefoot *Flamenco* so popular among the Roma who managed and socialized at the Tavern. Yes, even this aging Friar was known to sneak a peek from time to time and enjoy the local wine at the only worthy hangout in town – well, other than San Gabriel, of course!

As you will see, the Tavern becomes the venue for Esperanza's *debutante* party. Back in the day, this would take place when a girl became 15 years of age. Very young by today's standards. That Diego and Esperanza are smitten with each other becomes obvious. That Capitan Franco regards Diego as a rival also becomes obvious. That Franco and Alcalde Quintero have cooked-up a plot to discredit Zorro, by having Sergeant Gonzales

impersonate Zorro and rob the guests, is not obvious – except to Diego, Bernardo, Fiorella, Victoria and the Tavern workers and domestic servants. They have already set in motion their own secret plan to undermine the plot, replacing the real party invitations with counterfeit ones saying that the party will be a Masquerade Ball and, furthermore, all the men should arrive disguised as Zorro. “Amusing, don’t you think?” [See Note 4]

But, alas, I must add “the Empire strikes back”! [See Note 5] You will see how it becomes necessary for everyone of good will to open to a Higher Power – even their “Inner Zorro”: To bring lovers together. To launch a beloved community of diversity and mutuality, instead of tyranny. To share the land, understood by the Natives as our precious Mother Earth. And to bring about truth and reconciliation under the guidance of that mysterious Power of Love that is Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of the Angels, Queen of the Americas. In the end, we find that it is true that “It takes a village.” [See Note 6]

And after our story has ended, may Our Lady always stay with you throughout life and “bless your voyage”. [See Note 1] *Pax vobiscum*. Peace be with you. And now – *¡Con permiso!* – Let us return to “*La Zambra del Zorro*”.

NOTES:

[1] While Padre Felipé is a fictitious character, Hidalgo y Costilla was the historic “Father of Mexican Independence”. The details of his life, as presented here, are taken from *The Life and Times of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla* by Arthur Howard Noll & A. Philip McMahon. 1910, A. C. McClurge & Co. Reprint, 1912, www.ForgottenBooks.org

[2] The motto of American Liberty Ballet.

[3] Quotation from Padre Felipé, played by Eugene Pallette, in the 1940 Hollywood movie “The Mark of Zorro”.

[4] Quotation from Don Diego, played by Tyrone Power, in the 1940 Hollywood movie “The Mark of Zorro”.

[5] From the title of the 1980 movie “Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back”.

[6] A proverb of uncertain origin, in full: “It takes a village to raise a child.” It was made popular in the United States by Hillary Clinton and others.

“La Zambra del Zorro” - Padre Felipe’s Narrative, by Mark A. Sullivan © March 2, 2024, as delivered on stage at the March 2 & 3, 2024 production by American Liberty Ballet, at the Theatre at St. Jean’s, 150 East 76th Street, New York City. Amended for on-line publication in connection with the ALB performance at the International Ballet Festival of Union City on September 28, 2024. Zorro ® & © Zorro Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

“La Zambra del Zorro”

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

September 28, 2024

DIEGO - Diego de la Vega – Wealthy stylish young man of “mixed blood”*. Romantic poet, scholar, philosopher and “man of letters”. Disguised as a “Fop” by day, and as a masked and caped “man of action” by night, he fights for liberty and justice as ZORRO – *El Zorro* - “The Fox”*. *Portrayed by Marcos Antonio.*



BERNARDO - Bernardo de la Vega – Native/Tongva orphan & adopted brother & lifelong companion and helpmate of Diego. Head Vaquero of Rancho de la Vega. Trained in Tongva survival skills and Spanish martial arts. Having lost his power of speech, he also pretends to be deaf to serve as the clandestine ears and eyes of the Fox. *Portrayed by Osamu Uehara.*

FIORELLA - Fiorella Torres – Señorita. Creole*. Childhood “tomboy” friend and confidante of Diego, Bernardo and Victoria. Daughter of Ignacio & Isabel. A brave and free spirit with a mind of her own. *Portrayed by Allie Hutchins.*

VICTORIA - Victoria Califia - Gypsy/Roma Princess. Manager of the Tavern. Daughter of Sara Califia. A young independent business woman in a man’s world. *Portrayed by Ciara Cicalese.*

FELIPÉ - Padre Felipé - Franciscan Friar or Fray. Mentor/counselor to Diego, Bernardo, Fiorella and Victoria. Head of the Mission San Gabriel. Opposes harsh treatment of the Gypsies and Tongva Natives, including the “neophytes” (converts) and workers in his care. A secret ally and friend of the martyred revolutionary, Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, whose nickname “El Zorro” Felipé confers upon Diego. *Portrayed by Mark Sullivan.*

TOYPURINA - ** Toypurina Regina - Native/Tongva woman leader, warrior & shaman. Was baptized Regina, married Alejandro, and with him had one biological child, Diego, and one adopted child, Bernardo. When Diego and Bernardo were sent to study in Spain, she returned to live with her people. She helps the rescue party overthrow the local Spanish rulers. *Portrayed by Ciara Cicalese.*

ALEJANDRO - Don Alejandro de la Vega - former Alcalde (mayor); leading landowner; biological father of Diego & adoptive father of Bernardo. Although a Mulla^{to}*, for distinguished military service he was awarded a large grant of land in Alta California, a frontier territory of New Spain’s Mexico. Married Toypurina, a Native Tongva leader he had defeated in battle. *Portrayed by Dario Sanchez.*

IGNACIO - Don Ignacio Torres - Peninsulare* landowner and father of Fiorella, of whom he is very proud. Friend of Don Alejandro. A cultured gentleman with empathy toward the less privileged. Influenced by the ideals of the Mexican independence movement. *Portrayed by Jonathan Hare.*

ISABEL - Doña Isabel Torres - Creole*. Loving wife of Don Ignacio & mother of Fiorella. A very proper Spanish lady. *Portrayed by Alejandra Villela.*

EULALIA - Sister Eulalia Pérez ** - Young Native Tongva woman “neophyte” (convert) & assistant to Padre Felipé as the “Key-Keeper” at the Mission San Gabriel. *Portrayed by Yuna Khawaji*

BARTOLOMEA - Sister Bartolomea ** - Young Native Tongva “neophyte” (convert). Assistant to Eulalia. Friend of Victoria. *Portrayed by Claire Gaylor.*

LUIS - Don Luis Quintero - Alcalde (mayor) of the Los Angeles district and boss of the Capitán. Luis is a “Peninsulare* who resents being assigned to

a frontier outpost of “New Spain”, and is the “henpecked” husband of Inez. He is as exuberant about life as he is oblivious to the suffering and damage he causes others. *Portrayed by Ricardo Lopez.*

INEZ - Doña Inez Quintero - Wife of Don Luis. Aunt/guardian of Esperanza, whom she loves, and yet envies. Longs for her lost lifestyle as a “pure blood” peninsulare* in Madrid. She dislikes the local people. Regards Diego as a sophisticated kindred spirit. Her demands upon Luis sets in motion the story plot-line. *Portrayed by Lucie Schultze.*

ESPERANZA - Esperanza de la Cruz - Orphaned niece of Inez, on the verge of womanhood. The mutual “love at first sight” between Esperanza and Diego is complicated by *El Zorro* – who is so much like, yet so much unlike, Diego. *Portrayed by Lindsay Stepanovna Johnson.*

CAPITÁN - Capitán Rafael Enriqu  Franco - *Commandante* of occupying Spanish military that oppresses the local Natives and lower-caste people. He seeks to become a powerful landowner by any means necessary – even by marrying the wealthy Esperanza or Fiorella. *Portrayed by Aaron Davies.*

SERGEANT - Sergeant Pedro Garcia Gonzales – Well-meaning but conflicted second-in-command under Franco; befriended by Diego; turns against Franco in the end. *Portrayed by Quimen Sanchez.*

SARA - Sara Califia - Local Roma/Gypsy Queen, fortune teller, and Zambra Flamenco Dancer. Friend of the Tongva and Toyupurina, their matriarch. Sara has a motherly concern for her daughter Victoria and Victoria’s childhood friends Fiorella, Bernardo and Diego. *Portrayed by Brigid Leminez.*

PEDRO - Pedro Mendoza - Poor Family Farmer – Arrested for inability to pay tax increase. Rescued by a masked Diego & Bernardo, granted sanctuary by Padre Felip  at the Mission. *Portrayed by Nicole Mandy.*

BELLOTA - Roma Tavern Girl. *Portrayed by Alise Dular.*

MAIZA - Roma Tavern Girl. *Portrayed by Victoria Baryesheva.*

CONSTANZA - Domestic Servant to Torres family and sister of Juliana. *Portrayed by Adalyn Babic.*

JULIANA - Domestic Servant to the Quintero family and Dueña to Esperanza, “on loan” from the Torres family. Constanza's sister. *Portrayed by Nicole Mandy.*

DOÑAS & DONS – Wealthy landowning couples of the district – they love to party and dance. *Portrayed by Claudia Logi & Sebastian Rodriguez; Wonjin Chang & Esteban Rodriguez; Ciara Cicalese & Allison Maas; Petra Archibald & Alexandra Bryukhanova.*

ENSEMBLES:

Children – Young Diego, Young Bernardo, Young Fiorella, Young Victoria, and others. *Portrayed by ALB child students.*

Native Neophytes – resident converts at the Mission. *Portrayed by ALB child students.*

Tongva Day Workers for the Mission and the Pueblo - *Portrayed by TKK Taekwondo Martial Artists: Israel Bercerril, Hansell Bravo, Ander Cabrera, Ruben Cabrera, Jeremiah Comas, Joseph Sovenis, Leonidas Sovenis, Andres Vasquez, Andressa Vasquez, Daniel Vasquez.*

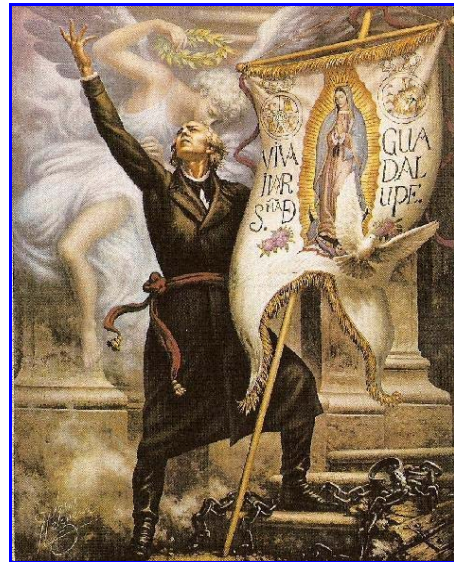
Roma/Gypsy Dance Troupe – Performers of Gypsy Folk Dance, Flamenco and Zambra at the Tavern. *Portrayed by company members.*

Soldiers - Spanish and Mexican, overworked, undertrained and underpaid. Garrisoned in the Cuartel, they hang-out at the Tavern. *Portrayed by company members, and guest artists Esteban Rodriguez and Sebastian Rodriguez.*

Dream Swallows and Dream Foxes. *Portrayed by company members.*

LADY - Lady in White – Mysterious Native Woman or Spirit or Watcher who transforms from Bernardo's murdered mother into the Lady in White during the story, and finally into “Our Lady of Guadalupe” - “*La Virgen de Guadalupe*”. She watches over and guides Bernardo, his friends, and the entire village in their shared quest for freedom and justice, truth and reconciliation. As such, she can also be seen as a symbol or metaphor for our Story and its background rooted in the history, cultures and lives of the Native Californian, Mexican and American peoples. *Portrayed by Wonjin Chang.*

HIDALGO - Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla**.- Mestizo* “Father of Mexican Independence”; secular parish priest, scholar and fighter for “*Tierra y Libertad*” (Land & Liberty) and the abolition of slavery, under the banner of *La Virgin of Guadalupe* (image, right). As a student he was given the nickname “*El Zorro*” (The Fox), which stuck with him throughout life. He was captured, tried and executed by the Spanish authorities in 1811. Independence from Spain was achieved in 1821, and slavery abolished in 1829.



Our story depicts Padre Felipé as the personal link between the historical *El Zorro* (Hidalgo) and the fictional *El Zorro* (Diego) – all three, along with their friends and allies, are portrayed as archetypal champions of the same noble Cause.

*** NOTE 1:**

Race-based colonial caste system of New Spain: There were at least 16 race-based social castes in “New Spain”. As combinations multiplied, terminology became less consistent.

The Complex Web of Casta Categories included:

Peninsulares: Individuals born in Spain, holding the highest social status and privileges in the colonial hierarchy.

Españoles (Spaniards): Those born in Spain or the colonies, positioned at the top of the hierarchy.

Criollos: Children of two Spanish parents born in the colonies, typically occupying high social and economic positions but ranked below Peninsulares.

Mestizos: Children of a Spanish parent and an Indigenous parent, often facing societal limitations.

Mulatos: Children of a Spanish parent and an African parent, generally placed lower in the social hierarchy.

Zambos: Children of an Indigenous parent and an African parent, typically at the lower end of the social scale.

Castizos: Children of a Mestizo parent and a Spanish parent, often considered closer to the Spanish lineage.

Moriscos: Children of a Mulatto parent and a Spanish parent.

Tresalvos: Children born from a union of a Morisco parent and a Spanish parent, (often considered a step towards 'Cleansing' the lineage back to Spanish purity.)

Additional categories included **Lobos** and **Chinos** (from Amerindian and African ancestry), and **Coyotes** (from Mestizo and Indigenous parents). There were even more classifications signifying different combinations of racial heritage. All these categories played a significant role in determining social status, personal rights, and legal privileges in colonial Mexico, including California.

In our story, Alejandro is "Mulato" and Toypurina is Indigenous Tongva. But we have not yet found the precise label that therefore would apply to their son Diego. "*Chino*" and "*Lobo*" come close. Ironically, while "*Zorro*" means "Fox", "*Lobo*" means "Wolf".

The role of the Church was to educate and convert the Natives to European ways, often by harsh means. Converts were called **Neophytes**, and were attached to the mission as workers until they were allowed to marry and live off site. Some clergy, like the historical Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, and our fictional Padre Felipé, resisted and rebelled against the abusive treatment, dispossession, and enslavement of the indigenous Natives.

The Natives local to our story are often called "Gabrielinos" or, preferably, their own chosen name, "Tongva". Their descendants are active today in reviving Tongva culture.

**** NOTE 2:**

These particular characters with ** are based on historical figures:

El Zorro, a creation of Johnston McCulley, bears certain resemblances to the historical Mexican heroes William Lamport (Don Guillén de Lampart) & Juakin Murrietta (as well as Baroness Orczy's fictional character, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*). The historical Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla bore the nickname "*El Zorro*" all his adult life, and fought for liberty and justice under the banner of Our Lady the Virgin of Guadalupe, the unifying symbol of an egalitarian, mixed Indigenous/European Mestizo culture in an independent Mexico.

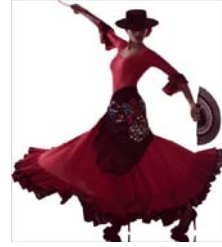
In our story, Diego/Zorro takes up the Medallion and cause of Hidalgo in opposition to colonial Spanish rule, as he is similarly portrayed in *The Mask of Zorro* movie (1998), and Isabel Allende's novel *El Zorro* (2005).

“La Zambra del Zorro”



The Story on Stage

“It takes a village...”



OVERTURE

Music: Jacob Gade - *Tango Jalousie*.

PROLOGUE

In 1806 at the *Mission San Gabriel Arcángel* in Spanish California. Padre Felipé instructs local children, including Diego, Bernardo, Fiorella and Victoria, in the Spanish art of swordsmanship. Colonial soldiers, sent to quell a Native Tongva uprising, shoot and kill Bernardo's parents. He will never speak again and will be adopted by Diego's father, Don Alejandro de la Vega. Toypurina Regina, the Tongva Matriarch and Diego's mother, is prevented from completing funeral rites, and so Bernardo's mother is left unburied.

Music/ Música: Sebastián Yradier - *La Paloma*. Andres Henestrosa (after a traditional Mexican Folk Tune) - *La Llorona*.

ACT ONE

Scene 1 -- Fourteen years later, the Plaza market of *El Pueblo de la Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles* [The Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels]. Diego & Bernardo return after three years of study in Spain. They are reunited with family & friends, and introduced to the new Alcalde Luis Quintero, his newly arrived wife Inez, and her niece Esperanza. Inez is beside herself trying to arrange Esperanza's debut in this frontier village. Meanwhile Gypsies & Natives are being harassed by the Alcalde & Capitán Franco. Inez, fascinated by Diego's knowledge as a educated man of culture and sets about pairing him with Esperanza.

Music: Joaquin Rodrigo - *Concierto de Aranjuez (Allegro con Spirito)*

Scene 2 – Alcalde's Residence. Diego and his father Alejandro visit the Alcalde. While Alejandro and Luis discuss civil matters, Inez invites Diego to join her and Esperanza in the sampling of wares that Victoria the tavern keeper has prepared. Horrified by the local wares, Inez demands money from Luis to order appropriate settings from Spain or Mexico City for Esperanza's debutante party. Luis devises a scheme to inflate the taxes and skim money to pay for the party.
Music: Antonio Soler - *Sonata in Re b Mayor R.88 / Sonata en La Mayor / Sonata en Do Menor*

Scene 3 – The Plaza. Soldiers drill and praise Capitán Franco. Luis sends Franco to collect the new taxes, and is delighted with his scheme.
Music: Carlos Cava de Llano - *El Generalissimo* / Silvestre Vargas / Rubén Fuentes - *El Gavilancillo*

Scene 4 – The Plaza. The new taxes are collected from the townspeople. Pedro Morales, a poor peon family farmer, is unable to pay the excessive tax amount and is arrested, which Diego and others witness.
Music: Agustín Lara - *Noche de Ronda*

Scene 5 – *Hacienda de la Vega*. Diego is angered by the injustices he has seen. Bernardo advises him against overt conflict with the authorities, but instead to seek justice incognito under cover of night.
Music: Jaime Texidor Dalmau - *Amparita Roca*

Scene 6 – *Cuartel de los Angeles*. A masked Diego and Bernardo rescue Pedro as well as the falsified tax ledger & tax money. The Capitán and soldiers make chase.
Music: Pablo de Sarasate - *Carmen Fantasy (Habañera & Finale)*

Scene 7 – Bernardo attempts to hide Pedro in a Native Tongva village, but finds it deserted. A mysterious Lady directs them to the Mission.
Music: Pan Flute improvisation

Scene 8 – Sanctuary of the *Mission San Gabriel* at Vespers. Bernardo

arrives with the fugitive, followed by a masked Diego with the tax ledger and money. The matron Eulalia does her best to hide them while Padre Felipe turns away the pursuing Capitán and Soldiers. Diego, now disguised as a friar, encounters Fiorella and Esperanza, and gives a rose to Esperanza. Felipe confers upon Diego Miguel Hidalgo's medallion and nickname of "*El Zorro*" ("The Fox").

Music: Enrique Granados - *Orientale*

Scene 9 – The many exploits of *El Zorro* as "Wanted" notices are posted.

Music: Josep María Tarridas - *Islas Canarias [adapted for California]*

Scene 10 – Courtyard Garden of *Hacienda Torres*. Esperanza pays a visit to her new friend Fiorella. Franco has followed Esperanza and makes inappropriate advances to the ladies. Zorro dispatches the Capitán.

Music: Ernesto Lecuona - *Gitanerias* / Agustín Lara - *Granada*

Scene 11 – The Alcalde's Office. Alcalde & Capitán annoyed by Zorro's constant interference, decide to discredit Zorro by having Sergeant Gonzales impersonate him and rob the guests at Esperanza's debutante ball.

Music: *Sonata en Do Menor*

Scene 12 – Victoria's Village Tavern. Drunken soldiers annoy the tavern workers. A distraught but tight-lipped Gonzales arrives. Gypsy tavern manager Victoria and her girls loosen his tongue with a generous helping of wine. He finally divulges the plan to discredit Zorro. Victoria devises a counter-plan to undermine the Sergeant's disguise: Invite each Don to come to the Debutante Ball dressed as Zorro (while unaware that other Dons are also invited to do the same).

Music: Quirino Mendoza y Cortés - *Ferrari Jesuita en Chihuahua* / Agustín Lara - *Granada* / José Guízar Morfín - *Guizar Guadalajara*

Scene 13 – Hacienda servants, Roma/Gypsies, & Tongva/Natives conspire and distribute the counterfeit invitations along *El Camino Real*, the Royal Road or King's Highway. Music: Luigi Boccherini - *Fandango*

INTERMISSION

ACT TWO

Scene 1 – Esperanza's Debutante Ball at the Tavern. Masked Guests arrive with the Dons dressed as Zorro. Inez, Luis and the Capitán are confused, but Inez will not permit anything to stand in the way of her niece's debut. A quadrille leads to a conflict between Diego and the Capitán over Esperanza. Desperate to maintain decorum, Inez begs Victoria to create a diversion. But Inez is mortified when Victoria's intervention turns out to be a local popular dance. The fumbling Sergeant finally arrives impersonating Zorro. Diego switches the Sergeant's bag of loot with a bag of vegetables. After the party, Diego as Zorro returns the stolen jewelry and money to the departing guests along the *Camino Real*.

Music: Domenico Scarlatti - *Sonata en Sol Mayor K. 91 / Sonata* / José Padilla Sánchez - *El Relicario* / Pascual Marquina Narro - *España Cañi* / Domenico Scarlatti - *Sonata en Re Mayor K. 84* / Jesús González Rubio - *Jarabe Tapatío (with Gioachino Rossini - La Calumnia from Il Barbiere di Siviglia)* / Augustin Lara - *Granada*

Scene 2 – Diego as Zorro sneaks into the Quintero home to return Inez's and Esperanza's valuables. Esperanza finds him in her room but does not give him away.

Music: Ernesto Lecuona - *Malagueña*

Scene 3 – The Mission Orchard. Native workers harvest oranges while Fray Padre Felipe returns the excess tax money to those who were unjustly taxed. Capitán Franco accuses the Padre of stealing the money from the Spanish Crown and arrests him. The Dons protest and Franco has them all arrested, including Diego.

Music: Quirino Mendoza y Cortés - *Cielito Lindo* / Augustin Lara - *Granada*

Scene 4 – Night. The prisoners will be executed in the morning. Don Ignacio sings to comfort his fellow prisoners. As his song is heard drifting through the pueblo, the townspeople turn to prayer.

Music: Macedonio Alcalá Prieto - *Dios Nunca Muere*

Scene 5 – Native/Tongva matriarch Toypurina (Diego's mother) & Roma/Gypsy matriarch Sara Calafia (Victoria's mother) burn Datura (Jimson Weed) seeking a vision of guidance and resolution. The smoke drifts into the valley. Music: Flamenco Guitar Tarantas and Pan Pipe

Scene 6 – A communal dream ensues, induced by the Datura smoke. Neophyte children bearing candles form a crown of stars around the Lady in White. Swallows and Foxes appear as Spirit animals. In the dream, Esperanza sees Diego as he really is. All come to realize what they must do. Music: Daniel Alomía Robles - *El Condor Pasa* / Pablo de Sarasate - *El Canto del Ruisenor* / Narciso Serradell Sevilla - *La Golondrina* / Joaquin Rodrigo - *Concierto de Aranjuez (Adagio)*

Scene 7 – Morning in the Plaza de los Angeles. The Lady in White is drawn to the impending events. The prisoners are led from the Cuartel jail to freshly built gallows. Esperanza and Fiorella plea for the lives of the prisoners. Bernardo and Victoria lead a rescue party of many Zorros including Roma/Gypsies, Tongva/Natives, tavern girls, domestic servants and San Gabriel workers. A fierce battle ensues.

Music: Bernardino Bautista Monterde - *La Virgen de la Macarena* / Joaquin Rodrigo - *Asturias, War Drum*, Pablo de Sarasate - *Ziguenerweisen*

Scene 8 – The Lady in White is fully transfigured by the events and actions of the people.

Music: Ernesto Granados - *Orientale*

Scene 9 – Luis and a delighted Inez are leaving for Spain, but Esperanza, now of age, has decided to remain in California. Alejandro will once again become Alcalde and keep Franco in his place. Victoria invites Luis and Inez to join one last dance before their departure. All enmity dispelled, a united Pueblo celebrates the spirit of reconciliation, peace, freedom, and an open future. They dance a *Zambra Mora* – “*La Zambra del Zorro.*”

Music: Flamenco Tarantas, Pan Flute and Tabla (*Raksat Al-Jamila, Al Harakat, Sabrina*)

CURTAIN CALL:

Music: Manuel Penella - *El Gato Montes*



“La Zambra del Zorro”
American Liberty Ballet,
www.AmericanLibertyBallet.com
www.LaZambraDelZorro.com



Choreography © Osamu Uehara
Libretto © Mark A. Sullivan



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**The International Ballet Festival of Union City,
New Jersey, presents on September 28, 2028:**

Uehara & Sullivan's

"La Zambra del Zorro"

Featuring

American Liberty Ballet & Guest Artists

Chloe Aiello

Victoria Califia

Chloe Aiello is soloist with American Liberty Ballet, who performs in and around New York City with companies including International American Ballet and City Dance. A Michigan native, she graduated from Columbia University with a Master of Science in journalism and the University of Michigan with bachelor's degrees in dance and political science. She spent summers studying at School of American Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Miami City Ballet and Orlando Ballet and trained at North Carolina School of the Arts' ballet program in high school.



Marcos Antonio

Diego de la Vega / El Zorro

Marcos Antonio is a dancer, teacher, and choreographer from Los Angeles, CA. He is currently dancing with Jennifer Muller/The Works, and Company XIV's Nutcracker Rouge. He has performed with American Liberty Ballet in "Giselle" and "The Titanic Tale", as well as the premier of "La Zambra del Zorro" in New York City, March, 2024. He is excited to reprise his role of Diego/Zorro in this new production for the International Ballet Festival of Union City.



Petra Archibald

Soldier & Guest at the Debutante Masquerade Ball

Petra Archibald, PhD, MBA is a patented Research Scientist and Clergy. Driven by her love of ballet and character dance, Petra began pursuing her dream of becoming a dancer about 7 years ago when she came to American Liberty Ballet. She has performed in *The Nutcracker* (2017, 2018, 2023), *Giselle* (2018). When the Lights Go on Again (2023) and *Zorro* (2024). Petra is married to Peter Burval.



Victoria Barysheva

Maiza – Roma/Gypsy Tavern Worker

Victoria Barysheva was born in Omsk, Russia and started dancing at the age of 7. Victoria's first introduction to dance came in the form of traditional character dance. She later enrolled into Omsk College of Arts and Omsk State University, Faculty Culture and Arts, studying contemporary, modern, and character dance. Victoria is attending Broadway Dance Center, NYC via the International Student Visa Program.



Ciara Cicalese

Toypurina Regina

Born in Bethesda, Maryland, Ciara cannot remember when or where she started dancing, but she knows why she dances: it brings joy! *The Nutcracker* is her easy choice of favorite ballet, and one of her dream roles is the Bluebird Princess in *The Sleeping Beauty*. She is excited to perform in *La Zambra Del Zorro*!



Aaron Davies

Guest Artist

Capitán Rafael Enríque Franco

Aaron began studying at Classical Ballet Academy in St Paul, Minnesota at age 10. He pursued ballet under the guidance of Andrew and Cheryl Rist. Aaron attended high school at St Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists, where he graduated under their dance track. During that time, he performed with the flash mob in America's Got Talent (2008). Aaron was invited to train with the National Ballet of Guatemala, under the directorship of Dama Sonia Marcos. He spent 3 summers training with them and performed in their production of Bayadere in August 2012-2015. Aaron has performed in Ballet Minnesota's classic ballet productions of The Nutcracker, Don Quixote, Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, and Giselle. Including original works of Andrew Rist from 2011-2020. In 2017, he danced with Metropolitan Ballet in their production of Fairy Doll. In 2020 he performed with Kanopy Dance Co. a modern dance company, in "Love is Love" In 2022 Sleeping Beauty with Metropolitan Ballet. In 2023 Swan Lake with Metropolitan Ballet. In 2024 Giselle with Metropolitan Ballet as Hilarion, alongside Danill Simkin and Skylar Brandt. Additionally, he performed with Continental Ballet during their 2018-2023 season, appearing in their Nutcracker and Copeland's Rodeo, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Swan Lake. Aaron performed as the Prince in St. Croix Ballet's Sleeping Beauty Spring of 2024. Aaron performed with City Dance NY as Bottom in A Midsummer Night's Dream, Summer of 2024.



Alise Dular

Bellota – Roma/Gypsy Tavern Worker

Alise is originally from New Hampshire, where she attended the University of New Hampshire and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and in Dance. Alise has danced with the UNH Ballet Company and Northeastern Ballet Theatre, based in New Hampshire. Alise is also a full-time development coordinator at Pro Bono Partnership, but continues to dance and perform as often as she can.



Lena Easter

Roma/Gypsy Tavern Girl & Soldier

Lena Easter started her ballet training at Ballet School of Kingston in upstate NY under Melissa Bierstock she went on to join the Gelsey Kirkland Academy at age 14 under the direction of Gelsey Kirkland and danced in productions with both the school and studio company . She finished her training in New York City at the Premiere Ballet Division under Nadege Hottier. She then began her professional career, She has been privileged to attend many summers training with The Philadelphia Ballet summer intensive programs, and additional summers with Colorado Ballet and Eglevsky Ballet. She has been coached by Francis Veyette and Lauren Fadeley Veyette and has trained under faculty including Andrew Veyette, Andra Corvino, Ernesta Corvino, Maurice Curry, Anne Hebard, and Charles Askegard. She is excited to be dancing in the Corps de Ballet with ALB this season .



Jonathan Hare

Guest Artist

Don Ignacio Torres

Baritone Jonathan Hare's singing has garnered praise from The New York Times, The New York Daily News and Classical Singer Magazine. He most recently recreated the role of Didier in Victor Herbert's MADELEINE with VHRP LIVE!. He created the role of Tim in Thomas Pasatieri's GOD BLESS US EVERYONE, and sang the role of Trigorin in Pasatieri's THE SEAGULL, both with Dicapo Opera and at the Szeged National Theatre in Hungary. Recent performances include singing on Late Night with Jimmy Fallon, Silvio in I PAGLIACCI and Schaunard in LA BOHÈME with The New Rochelle Opera, Ford in SIR JOHN IN LOVE with Bronx Opera, and Belcore in L'ELISIR D'AMORE with Regina Opera.



Allie Hutchins

ALB Principal Dancer

Fiorella Torres

Allie Hutchins is originally from Mobile, Alabama and began her training at Sheffield School of the Dance and Mobile Ballet under direction of Winthrop Corey.

She went on to work as a convention teaching Assistant touring the U.S. for the Tremaine National Performance Company while dancing Corps and Demi Soloist roles with Mobile Ballet (Don Quixote, La Bayadere, Snow White, Swan Lake, Nutcracker, Stars of American Ballet, Sleeping Beauty.) Each summer she trained with Northwest Florida Ballet and in Los Angeles on full scholarships from Break the Floor and Tremaine Dance. She trained with SLK Ballet (NY) briefly before joining American Liberty Ballet as a Willis (Giselle), and was quickly promoted afterwards to soloist in 2018 and Principal in 2021. Notable roles include Giselle (title), Elizabeth Carroll (Titanic Tale), Fiorella Torres (La Zambra Del Zorro) Clara, Snow Pas de Deux, Rat Queen, and Dewdrop (Nutcracker), Lucy (Dracula, Michael Buoni), Fairy of Song and Precious Stones (Sleeping Beauty), along with Grand Pas de Deux and Principal Soloist variations in Original works (Spirits of a Summer Day, Evening of Repertoire, Valerie Browne). She has also guested with Victoria Ballet Theatre and the role of Stepsister (Cinderella) for CityDanceNY.



Wenhan Jiang

Roma/Gypsy Tavern Girl & Soldier

Wenhan, a dedicated financial professional, embarked on her American journey in 2018 to pursue a Master's degree in Quantitative Finance at Rutgers Business School. Her academic prowess led her to a successful career as a Financial Risk Manager. Beyond her professional pursuits, Wenhan has found a passion for dance. She values the supportive and nurturing environment at American Liberty Ballet, where she has honed her skills and discovered a newfound joy in movement.



Yuna Khawaja

Sister Eulalia Pérez

Yuna has been with American Liberty Ballet since 2016. She has performed in ALB's original "Nutcracker In A Nutshell", The Dying of Swan Lake, An Evening of Repertoire, Sleeping Beauty, Dracula, Giselle, Don Quixote, When The Lights Go On Again, and *La Zambra Del Zorro*.



Olga Kosolapova

Roma/Gypsy Tavern Girl & Soldier

A dedicated ballet dancer, I joined the American Liberty Ballet in 2022, blending classical and contemporary styles in my performances. My artistic journey began in Russia, where I performed in major productions such as Swan Lake, The Nutcracker, Don Quixote, Giselle, and The Sleeping Beauty with the Moscow Theatre "Ballet Dream" and as a guest artist at the Art Center "Saint-Michel" in Saint Petersburg. Now studying Dance Pedagogy at the National Academy of Arts and Psychology at BMCC, I approach every role with focus and commitment, continuously honing my craft on stage.



Brigid Le Minez

Sara Calafia

A native New Yorker, Brigid Le Minez was trained at some of the most prestigious institutions in the United States. Her journey began at Elfriede Merman's Manhattan Ballet School and she later joined the Staten Island Ballet School, the Joffrey Ballet and the famous American Ballet Theater summer program. Her career path has allowed her to attend several renowned institutions; Brigid thus became an accomplished professional and was able to leave an indelible mark on the world of ballet and character dance. Her repertoire includes performances with companies such as Staten



Island Ballet, Victoria Ballet Theater, and American Liberty Ballet, where audiences have been captivated by her artistry and passion. Among her achievements, we can cite her spectacular interpretation of the solo role of Raymonda at the prestigious Detroit Opera (Michigan, United States). In the same vein, she left a lasting impression with her mesmerizing performances in the iconic choreographic masterpiece Bolero under the direction of Victoria Lebedeva. With an unwavering commitment to diversity and inclusion, Brigid Le Minez founded the New York International Dance Festival, which is held annually. This festival celebrates the coming together of diverse dance styles and musical expressions, creating a space where artistic genius from around the world can shine. The NYIDF performed at Le Mandapa theater in Paris, France last May and was invited to return in April 2025.

Claudia Logi

Guest at the Debutante Masquerade Ball

Claudia Logi is a dancer and choreographer based in New York City. Originally from Paris, France, she moved to New York to attend The Ailey School, where she graduated with a Certificate in Dance in Spring 2024. She has performed repertoire by Jie-Hung Connie Shiau, Paul Taylor, Jacob Jonas, Johan Inger and Jirí Kylián. She is now a Company Member with Chutzpah Dance and a Soloist with American Liberty Ballet.



Ricardo Lopez

Alcalde Luis Quintero

Dancing with ALB since 2015, Ricardo studied ballet starting 2007 with Part Dokoudovsky, Kat Wildish and others, performed several roles and solos with prestigious ballet companies in CT, NY, and NJ. He danced folklore with Mazarte and Calpulli dance companies.

Ricardo received his acting training from Wilma Theater in Philadelphia and Mexico. He stated his ballet regiment in 2007 when studied in The Ballet Conservatory NY, Alvin Ailey and Steps on Broadway extension schools. Since 2009, he has danced solos and several roles with The Connecticut ballet,



Lumiere ballet, American Liberty Ballet, Jersey City ballet, on productions of Nutcracker, Don Quixote, Giselle, Sylvia, Peter and the Wolf, and Dear Nadezhda. He also participated in several showcases for Coppelias and Swan Lake. Ricardo also danced folklore with Calpulli Dance and Mazarte dance companies. He helped found the latter; served as Treasurer in the Board of Directors. Ricardo enjoys advising and serving on the Boards of Non-profit companies. He holds an MBA; he is the CEO of RL Consulting -IT and business transformation services.

Allison Maas

Guest at the Debutante Masquerade Ball

Allison was raised in North Bergen, NJ and has been dancing with American Liberty Ballet since 2022. She trained competitively at Edie's Dance Factory for 13 years and studied ballet and modern as a dance major at High Tech High School. Allison has been in several ALB productions, such as The Nutcracker and The Titanic Tale, with La Zambra del Zorro being her 7th performance. Outside of dance, Allison currently works with Hackensack Meridian Health in Pediatric Neuro Oncology research.



Nicole Mandy

Juliana & Pedro Mendoza

Nicole Mandy is excited to join ALB for the second production of La Zambra del Zorro. She has been dancing since she was four under the late Barbara Crockett with Sacramento Ballet, Deane Dance Center, and Sacramento Civic Ballet. She is a recent graduate of Hofstra University where she studied multiple dance styles under Robin Becker, Robbie Cook and others. She has also been in multiple theatre productions with Sacramento Theater Company and American River College. She wants to thank her parents for always supporting her dreams.



Dario Sanchez

Don Alejandro de la Vega

Dario Sanchez began his dance training as an adult with the Alvin Ailey Extension program over 9 years ago. With a background in music and gymnastics he was able to quickly learn the fundamentals of ballet. After a year at Alvin Ailey he started training with Peter Brandenhoff (Buornonville technique) over at Ballet Arts. He has also trained with Richard Marsden (NYC Ballet), and currently Anna Fateeva and Simon Katanasev (Vaganova Academy Training). He has performed with American Ballet Theater since 2016 in several of their ballets. As well as danced solo and principal roles for American Liberty Ballet.



Quimen Sanchez

***ALB Principal Dancer & Ballet Master
Sergeant Pedro Garcia Gonzales***

M. Quimen trained with Lynda De Chane and Raskin Dance Studios in Orlando, and continued at Orlando Ballet School with a full scholarship from Fernando Bujones. He performed as Dr. Coppelius in **Coppélia** and in the first full-length **Spartacus**. Quimen has danced as a principal with Ohio Dance Theatre, Fort Lauderdale Ballet Classique, Cuban Classical Ballet, South Florida Ballet Theater, and Sierra Nevada Ballet. He currently works as a ballet master and principal dancer with Ballet for Young Audiences/Ballet Repertory NYC and American Liberty Ballet, also serving as the main rehearsal director for ALB's children's division. He has performed principal roles in **Giselle**, **Swan Lake**, and **Sleeping Beauty** under Valerie Mae Browne. His extensive career includes opera, musical theater, and film across the U.S. His choreography has been reviewed by **The Miami Herald** and **Broward Sentinel**. Quimen is excited to reprise his role as Sergeant in "La Zambra del Zorro" and work with Osamu again.



Lucie Schultz

Doña Inez Quintero

Lucie grew up dancing in New Jersey and has been dancing for the past 21 years. She currently freelances in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. She is excited to dance in *La Zambra Del Zorro!*



Lindsay Stepanovna-Johnson

Esperanza de la Cruz

Lindsay received her initial training in artistic gymnastics and competed with huge success across the U.S. Eventually, she moved on from gymnastics to pursue her true passion, ballet. She found Mia Song, Korean international Vaganova graduate, and former head instructor of Festival Ballet Academy of Performing Arts. Lindsay trained intensively in the Vaganova Method and progressed quickly. Even performing principal roles in the Academy's gala performances; such roles in: Don Quixote, Sleeping Beauty, Spartacus, Grand pas Classique, Paquita, Flames of Paris, Raymonda, Swan Lake, Dying Swan, Nutcracker, ...etc. Immediately after graduation, she began performing professionally. She has shined in repertoire from directors and choreographers such as Toni Pimble (Eugene Ballet), Peter Anastos (Ballet Idaho), Marc Spielberger (Miami City Ballet), Ceci Klein (San Francisco Ballet), and Nancy Paradis (Richmond Ballet). And now, as Principal with American Liberty Ballet, Lindsay is honored to portray Esperanza in *La Zambra del Zorro* for the International Ballet Festival.



Alejandra Villela

Doña Isabel Torres

Alejandra Villela is a dancer of Mexican and Colombian descent. She started her ballet training in Colombia, where she later worked in small companies and projects. She moved to New York in 2018 after being accepted to The Joffrey Ballet Trainee Program. She trained there until she was offered an apprentice position with Atlantic City Ballet in 2020. Alejandra stayed with the company for 2 years in which she performed ballets such as Dracula, Nutcracker, Carmen, Carmina Burana, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and more, on stages such as The Caesar's Circus Maximus, Stockton University, The Strand Theatre in New Jersey, and more. Currently, Alejandra is a soloist with American Liberty Ballet and a teacher in their academy, a dancer with Rumbamena Company and does freelance work. She performs in different venues in Manhattan and New Jersey.



More ALB Company Members & Guest Artists in “LZDZ”

Adalyn Babic - Constanza - Torres Domestic Servant

Alexandra Bryukhanova - Debutante Party Guest & Soldier

Blu - Scenery Designer

Wonjin Chang - The Lady in White

Claire Gaylor - Sister Bartolomea

Esteban Rodriguez - A Local Don & Soldier

Sebastian Rodriguez - A Local Don & Soldier

TKK Taekwondo Martial Artists

Tongva Workers at Mission San Gabriel

Students of TKK TaeKwondo School of Martial Arts, Union City and West New York (Carlos Garcia, Head Instructor; Mariano Sovenis, Instructor. www.tkktaekwondo.com; 201-866-0191).

Back row (left to right): Hansell Bravo, Israel Becerril, Leonidas Sovenis, Daniel Vasquez, Joseph Sovenis.

Front row (left to right): Jesús Marquez, Ruben Cabrera, Andressa Vasquez, Ander Cabrera, Andres Vasquez, Jeremiah Comas.



Osamu Uehara & Mark A. Sullivan

LZDZ Choreographer & Librettist

Bernardo de la Vega & Padre Felipe

The partnership of Uehara & Sullivan created **La Zambra del Zorro** with music selection and original Choreography by Osamu, and original libretto by Mark. Together they manage www.LaZambraDelZorro.com. A dance professional since the 1980s, Osamu currently works with several dance companies – in various creative capacities both on- and off-stage – including American Liberty Ballet, City Dance NY, Karen Lynch Ballet, Ai Dance, Performing Arts Ensemble of New Jersey, Ballet & Body (NYC), and Great Neck School of Dance.

As Osamu's sidekick, Mark has volunteered for some of these companies, also on- and off-stage. Mark edits and publishes *Heresy! A Journal for Free Spirits*, and, with Osamu, advocates for liberty, equality, diversity and eco-sustainability via Earth-Sharing Associates.

Mark writes: *What does Zorro mean to me? Ever since I first saw Guy Williams on TV as Walt Disney's "Zorro" I fell in love with the character of Diego de la Vega with his secret identity. Even at seven years old I knew that I also had a secret identity, but did not know what it was. It took another fifteen years before I became conscious enough to come out of the closet. But there is more: Zorro inspired me -- one of the shortest kids in class -- to stand up to bullies in defense of myself and, going through life, also in defense of others, and in defense of the values that Osamu and I -- and American Liberty Ballet -- try to communicate via "La Zambra del Zorro": liberty, equality, individuality, diversity, mutuality, community. We hope that, along with the pen, "the dance is mightier than the sword".*



Valerie Mae Brown

Director of American Liberty Ballet

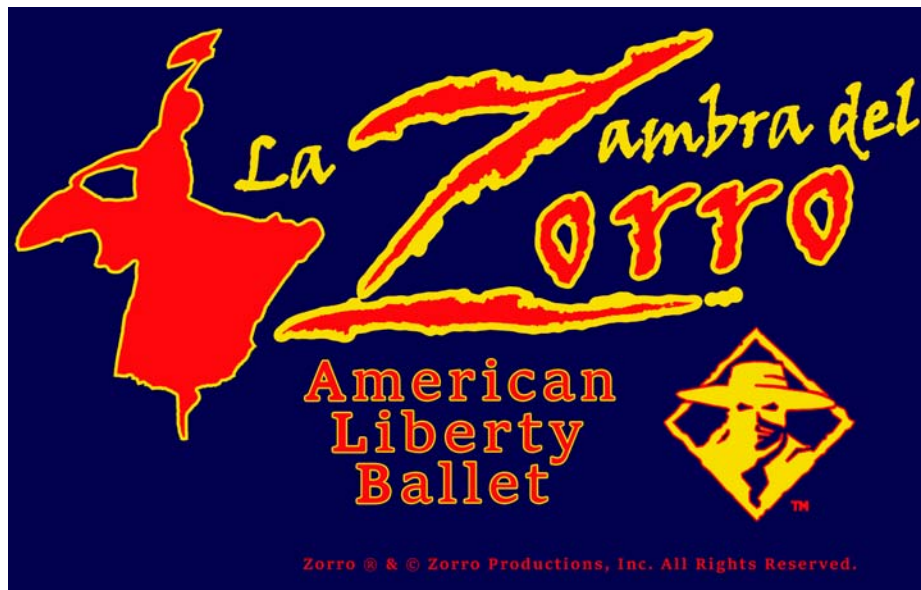
Valerie is a native San Diegan who graduated from UC Irvine in 2008 and moved to New York in 2009. In 2011, she co-founded (with Rebeccah Bogue) Pink Pig Ballet, which later became **American Liberty Ballet**. She has premiered seven original full length ballets, and created many new works for ALB. Her work has been featured in international films, TV programs, and rock concerts. Valerie is a passionate proponent of health and inclusivity in the dance community and is incredibly proud of ALB and its exciting future.



MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AMERICAN LIBERTY BALLET
can be found on www.AmericanLibertyBallet.com
You may also contact ALB Director Valerie Mae Browne at
AmericanLibertyBallet@gmail.com

MORE MATERIALS ABOUT “LA ZAMBRA DEL ZORRO”,
including lyrics to the music, can be found on: www.LaZambraDelZorro.com
You may also contact Osamu Uehara at: OsamuUeharaFDT@aol.com
And Mark A. Sullivan at: MarkAelredCFS@aol.com

MORE ABOUT ZORRO & ZORRO PRODUCTIONS, INC.
can be found on: www.zorro.com



Design for “La Zambra del Zorro” T-shirt © Osamu Uehara.

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