

SUMMARY

AMERICAN LIBERTY BALLET PRESENTS

La Zambra del Zorro

3 pm & 7 pm, March 2, 2024

3 pm, March 3, 2024

The Theatre at St. Jean's
150 East 76th Street
New York City



Choreography by Osamu Uehara
Based on the Libretto by Mark A. Sullivan

With Music by:

Sebastián Iradier, Joaquín Rodrigo, Ernesto Lecuona y Casado, Pablo de Sarasate, Jesús Gonzalez Rubio, Macedonio Alcalá (*Dios Nunca Muere*), Narcisco Serradell Sevilla (*La Golondrina*), Daniel Alomia Robles (*El Condor Pasa*), Guiseppe Domenico Scalatti, Ridolfo Luigi Boccherin, Antonio Soler, Isaac Albéniz. Other works including: *Espana Cañi*, *Granada*, *El Relicarjo*, *La Virgen de la Macareña*, *Cielito Lindo*.



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, and with permission from **Zorro Productions, Inc.** This original production is choreographed by Osamu Uehara in collaboration with librettist Mark A. Sullivan. Performances are scheduled for **March 2nd & 3rd, 2024, at The Theatre at St. Jean's, 150 East 76th Street, New York City.**



Zorro ® & © Zorro Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Diego de la Vega / El Zorro	Marcos Antonio
Bernardo de la Vega	Osamu Uehara
Señorita Fiorella Torres	Allie Hutchins
Padre (Fray) Felipé	Mark Sullivan
Sister Eulalia	Yuna Khawaja
Sister Bartolomea	Nicole Mandy
Don Alejandro de la Vega	Darwin Black
Don Ignacio Torres	Jonathan Hare
Doña Isabel Torres	Alejandra Villela
Victoria (Roma/Gypsy Tavern Boss)	Ciara Cecalese
Don Luis Quintero, Alcalde	Ricardo Lopez
Doña Inez Quintero	Nadine Azoulay
Señorita Esperanza de la Cruz	SangHee Lee
Juliana (Dueña to Esperanza)	Grace Tao
Constanza (Juliana's sister)	Adalyn Babic
Capitán Rafael Enríquez Franco	Alex Haquia
Sergeant Pedro Garcia Gonzalez	Quimen Sanchez
The Prisoner-Fugitive	Nicole Mandy
Sofia (Roma/Gypsy Tavern Girl)	Elizabeth Archer
Valeria (Roma/Gypsy Tavern Girl)	Lucie Schultz
Doña Anna Cortez	Chloe Aiello
Don Jorge Cortez	Mark Maestranzi
Doña Lucia de Soto	Victoria Barysheva
Doña Gloria Lopez	Petra Archibald
Roma/Gypsy Queen Dojiá	Victoria Barysheva
Toypurina Regina de la Vega	Alejandra Villela
The Lady in White	Chloe Aiello

The Soldiers

Petra Archibald Alexandra Baryesheva Rosa Guzman
Imani Jackson Olga Kosolapova Allison Maas

Tongva Natives & Roma Gypsies

Members of the Company
Guest Martial Artists
ALB Academy Students

GUEST MARTIAL ARTISTS

The Students of TKK Tae Kwondo, Union City

(Carlos Garcia, Head Instructor. Mariano Sovenis, Instructor):

Israel Becerril Noah Bosch Hansell Bravo
Jeremiah Comas Satya Lavana Tej Miryala
Jesús Marquez Newman Joseph Sovenis

AMERICAN LIBERTY BALLET ACADEMY STUDENTS

(Valerie Mae Browne, Director. Quimen Sanchez, Ballet Master)

Violet Austin Adalyn Babic Sienna Camion Sofia Collantes
Catalina Collantes Dominique De Leon Mirabella Himes
Elibeth Jacinto Emma Lopez Talia Medina
Valeria Mendoza Blagojevic Audrey Orihuela Tanishi Panda
Vahin Panda Grace Rui Tao Julia Ryazanova Alexandra Sampar
Lily Sperber Meadow Stella Ella Strasser Jack Strasser
Zenobia Thomas-Greaves Katya Vetga Violet Vega

La Zambra del Zorro

INTRODUCTION: 2024 – Padre Felipé narrates the background to our story, including his friendship with Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the “Father of Mexican Independence” and the first “El Zorro”.

PROLOGUE: 1806 – At the Mission of San Gabriel in Spanish California. Padre Felipé teaches local children, including Diego, Bernardo, Fiorella & Victoria, how to use a sword in a defensive manner. Colonial soldiers shoot & kill the parents of Bernardo, causing him to never speak again. (Orphaned Bernardo is later adopted by Diego’s father, Don Alejandro.)

ACT ONE: 1820

Scene 1 -- The Plaza of *El Pueblo de la Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles*. Diego & Bernardo return after 3 years studying in Spain.

Scene 2 – Alcalde’s Residence. Inez demands money from Luis for Esperanza’s debutante party. Luis orders Franco to increase taxes.

Scene 3 – The Plaza. Soldiers drill & praise Franco. A poor Peon is unable to pay the new excessive tax & is taken to jail.

Scene 4 – Hacienda del la Vega. Diego & Bernardo decide to go in disguise & rescue the prisoner & redistribute the taxes.

Scene 5 – Cuartel de los Angeles. A masked Diego & Bernardo rescue the prisoner and abscond with the tax treasure & ledger.

Scene 6 – Bernardo brings the ex-prisoner, now a fugitive, to a Native Tongva village, but finds it deserted.

Scene 7 – Sanctuary of San Gabriel Mission. Vespers. Diego & Bernardo arrive with the fugitive & tax treasure – and hide. Padre Felipé refuses Franco entry. Felipé dubs Diego with Hidalgo’s medallion & nickname of “El Zorro” (The Fox).

Scene 8 – Various exploits of El Zorro, for whom a reward is posted. Franco makes advances on Fiorella. Zorro dispatches the Capitán.

Scene 9 – Alcalde & Capitán hatch a plan to discredit Zorro by having Sergeant Gonzales impersonate him at Esperanza's debutante ball & rob the guests.

Scene 10 – The Tavern. A distraught Gonzales gets drunk and spills the beans about the plan to discredit Zorro. Victoria, the Gypsy tavern manager & debutante party host, devises a counter-plan: to invite the Dons to dress as Zorro (thus undermining the Sergeant's disguise). Servants, Roma Gypsies, and Natives distribute the counterfeit invitations.

INTERMISSION

ACT TWO

Scene 11 – Esperanza's Debutante Ball at the Tavern. Guests arrive. Dons dressed as Zorro. A Quadrille is danced, which leads to a conflict between Diego, the Capitán, and the Alcalde. Diego switches the Sergeant's bag of loot with a bag of stones.

Scene 12 – Diego as Zorro returns the stolen jewelry and coins to the guests on the Camino Real; then sneaks into the Quintero home to return jewelry to the private rooms of Inez and Esperanza.

PAUSE

ACT THREE

Scene 13 – The Mission Orchard. Native "neophytes" harvest oranges. Padre Felipé is returning excess tax money to those unjustly taxed. Capitán Franco arrests the Padre. The Dons protest and Franco has them all arrested and imprisoned, including Diego.

Scene 14 – Night. Don Ignacio sings from his prison cell "Dion Nunca Muere". Others pray. Toyipurina & the Gypsy Queen burn Datura

seeking a vision of resolution. A communal dream results: Native children bearing candles form a crown of stars around the Lady in White. Swallows. Foxes. Esperanza dances with Diego in her dream.

Scene 15 – Next day. The Lady in White with Toyipurina & the Gypsy Queen. The prisoners – Ignacio, Alejandro, Diego & Felipé – are led from the Cuartel prison to the gallows. A rescue party arrives & a battle ensues. A Zambra Mora is celebrated – **La Zambra del Zorro**.

CURTAIN CALL

WE DEDICATE "La Zambra del Zorro", our work of art & labor of love, to the following artists who have touched our lives: Dominico Caro, flamenco singer. Juan Martinez, flamenco dancer. Arnold Fern, visual artist. Barbara Hazlett, folk dance teacher & dancer. Johan Renvall, ballet dancer & teacher. Edward Malzone, who exemplified the art of living. - Mark & Osamu

ALB acknowledges all who helped with the premier of "La Zambra del Zorro", including: Mexiterranean Restaurant for catering; Earth-Sharing Associates for the programme booklet and wall exhibit. Rob Virzera for sound and lighting; the ALB students & their parents; the adult trainees for going beyond the call of duty; Daniel at PiE Print for expediting the T-shirts; the staff at the Theatre at St. Jean's; John Gertz & Otto Schmidt at Zorro Productions, Inc.; the volunteers helping Osamu with costumes & props. Thank you all – Valerie Mae Browne. PS: "La Zambra del Zorro" is invited to perform at the Union City Festival this September.

Z