

***Tiburones* (2019)**



Choreography by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa
Music by Pérez Prado, Dizzy Gillespie, and The Funky Lowlives
Compositions by James Bigbee Garver
Costume Design by Mark Zappone
Lighting Design by Joshua Paul Weckesser

About The Choreography

Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Tiburones* puts focus on the entertainment industry and its recurring misrepresentation of Latinx communities. The piece questions power dynamics and denounces how productions and media could demonize specific groups by creating distorted representations and reinforcing stereotypes.

In *Tiburones*, Lopez Ochoa deconstructs gender roles and identity to revitalize an authentic perspective of Puerto Rican icons and condemns the appropriation within the entertainment industry. Overall, the piece addresses discrimination of Latinx communities and advocates for representing authentic cultural narratives in the arts industry.

About the Choreographer

Annabelle Lopez Ochoa completed her dance education at the Royal Ballet School of Antwerp in Belgium. After a 12-year long career in various European dance companies, Annabelle decided in 2003 to focus solely on choreography. Annabelle is an award-winning and sought-after choreographer that has created works for 61 dance companies around the world. Ms. Lopez Ochoa is a versatile choreographer who works regularly within the dance field but also creates choreographies for theatre, opera, musical theatre and in 2006, for the celebrated Dutch fashion designers Viktor & Rolf.

Ms. Lopez Ochoa has won several choreography awards and accolades which range from the Jacob's Pillow Choreography Award and honorary mention in the *Libro de Honor del Teatro Alicia Alonso, Cuba*. In 2014, Fall for Dance NYC commissioned her work, *Sombrerísimo*, created for Ballet Hispánico, included in the "Best of 2013" by *Dance Magazine*.



Artistic Components

Music

The piece includes music by Dámaso Pérez Prado, a Cuban bandleader, organist, pianist, and composer who popularized *mambo* in the late 1940s and received international recognition as the “King of Mambo.”

As an emerging young artist, he worked tirelessly holding up to three jobs daily: working as transcriber for Peer Music, creating musical arrangements, and playing at nightclubs. In the late 1940s, the music industry was flourishing in Cuba, and Pérez Prado proposed to Panart, the newly founded independent record label, to do a recording test with his band. This recording turned out to be the turning point for the artist.

In 1949, Pérez moved to Mexico where he formed his own band and signed a recording contract with the international division of RCA Victor in Mexico City. He specialized in *mambos*, an upbeat adaptation of the Cuban *danzón*. Some of his most famous records, *Mambo No. 5* and *Mambo Que Rico Mambo*, sold over 4.5 million copies in one year, selling 40,000 of them in Mexico alone. Pérez Prado appeared with his band in numerous films starring Ninon Sevilla, Tin Tan, and El Indio Fernandez, which have immortalized his band playing and original *mambo* steps.

Vocabulary

Mambo

Generic term for a popular dance and hybrid music style, developed in the 1940s and 50s. The history of modern *mambo* begins in 1938, when a *danzón* called “Mambo” was written by Orestes Lopez and Israel “Cachao” Lopez. *Mambo* was popularized internationally by Cuban music artist Damaso Pérez Prado, who added an up-tempo Afro-Cuban musical style and syncopation, blending the *mambo* section of the *danzón* with elements of *son* and influences from American jazz orchestras.

Danzón

Cuban song and music style derived from the *contradanza* brought to Cuba by Haitian immigrants, interpreted by the *charanga* orchestras and instrumentation. It consists of an ABAC pattern (**A**: *paseo*/introduction; **B**: flute melody; **A**: repeat the *paseo*; **C**: string trio; **D**: new rhythm integrating the Cuban *son*, which evolved into *mambo* and the *montuno*, and later, the *cha-cha*). The final section of the *danzón* was called *Montuno* and referred to as *mambear*.

Son

Music genre from Cuba played by a sextet of guitar, *tres*, bass, bongos and singers who also played *claves*, *maracas*, and the trumpet. When the *son* evolved in Havana, it became the basis for the *mambo*, which developed into a triple *mambo*, now known as *cha-cha*.

Vogue Dance

A highly stylized form of dance created in Harlem by Black and Latinx LGBTQ communities. Between the 1960s and 80s, New York drag competitions known as “balls” transformed from elaborate pageantry to “vogue” battles. Named after the famous fashion magazine, vogue drew from poses seen in high fashion modeling and ancient Egyptian art, adding exaggerated hand gestures to tell a stories and imitate various gender performances in categorized drag genres.



Guiding Questions

1. *What are some ways the media could promote multiculturalism?*
2. *What are the implications of stereotypes in the entertainment industry?*
3. *Where do you see these representations?*
4. *How can media represent a community?*
5. *How has social media influenced the overall entertainment industry?*
6. *What are the implications and effects when we don't see multiculturalism represented in media?*

Classroom Activities

Activity A: Write a short script highlighting attributes of a community you belong to. Think about the responsibility you have as the narrator, and considering this, choose which aspects you would like to highlight in the story.

Activity B: Create a drawing that relates to your neighborhood and tells a personal story. Share this story with the group showing your work of art. How does each of us affect the community that we live in?

Additional Resources

- [Behind the Scenes: The Making of Tiburones](#)
- [Mambo Music and Dance References](#)
- [Palladium: Where Mambo was King](#)
- [A Brief History of Voguing](#)

