

The Annenberg Center Presents the Spanish Harlem Orchestra, January 31

(Philadelphia – January 21, 2020) — Fresh off their third Grammy® win, the Spanish Harlem Orchestra returns to Philadelphia **Friday, January 31, at 8:00 PM**, presented by the Annenberg Center. In celebration of their 15th anniversary, this powerhouse, 13-member group will perform music from the Award-winning 2018 album, *Anniversary* and past favorites, promising a lively evening of Latin jazz and sizzling salsa rhythms. Visit AnnenbergCenter.org for ticket information.

Spanish Harlem Orchestra

Spanish Harlem Orchestra, the three-time Grammy® winning salsa and Latin jazz band, sets the gold standard for excellence in authentic, New York style, hard-core salsa. Now celebrating their 15th year, SHO, as they are known to fans, is dedicated to the sounds of the barrio (Spanish Harlem NYC). Their music is characterized by the raw, organic and vintage sounds defined by the genre. They are on a mission to keep the musical legacy of salsa dura (hard salsa) alive and expand its audience to those who love great music, not just Latin music. Grounded in the past, while focused on the future, they strive to keep the music relevant, creating a unique and fresh approach.

With six CD's and multiple Grammy® nominations and wins, this powerhouse orchestra is aware that it is crucial to continually push themselves and raise the bar. Their latest release and sixth album entitled *Anniversary* won the 2018 Grammy® Award for Best Tropical Album.

After two decades of session work, composing, arranging and producing, band leader Oscar Hernández was approached by producer Aaron Levinson in 2000 about the idea of assembling and recording a Latin jazz orchestra. The result was *Un Gran Dia en el Barrio*, the 2002 debut recording from Spanish Harlem Orchestra that scored a Grammy® nomination for Best Salsa Album and a Latin Billboard Award for Salsa Album of the Year. Based on the success of their first CD, Hernández and the SHO began touring and wowing audiences all over the world.

Their first Grammy® win came in 2004 with their follow-up album, *Across 110th Street*, a reference to Harlem's southern boundary. Featuring Rubén Blades as guest artist, the combination has proved to be explosive and featured Blades singing in the style of salsa dura that many of his fans longed to hear. Released in 2007, *United We Swing* earned yet another Grammy® nomination. The album features Paul Simon as a special guest, singing a burning rendition of his hit *Late in The Evening* SHO style. Their second Grammy® winning album, *Viva La Tradicion*, was released in 2010 on the Concord® Picante imprint. Their 2015 self-titled release *Spanish Harlem Orchestra* on Artistshare® featured jazz legends Chick Corea and Joe Lovano, and their most recent release *Anniversary* (Artistshare®), featuring trumpet great Randy Brecker, was a winner at 2019's 61st Annual Grammy® Awards.

Oscar Hernández (Band Leader)

Oscar Hernández has long been considered one of the most prominent pianists and arrangers in the salsa and Latin jazz scene. He is all about tradition. Born into a large Puerto Rican family living in the Bronx, it was the

nearby Spanish Harlem neighborhood that shaped his cultural musical sensibilities. The soundtrack to this bustling enclave in the '60s, emanating from any given window on any given day, was a mix of Latin jazz and American pop radio. Hernández started playing the trumpet at age twelve; he switched to piano shortly thereafter. By the time he finished his teen years, he was making a living as a professional musician and gigging with some of the most talented Latin jazz artists of the '70's. He spent much of the '80's producing, arranging and playing piano for Panamanian vocalist Rubén Blades while simultaneously leading his own band, Seis del Solar. In the 90's, Hernandez produced a recording titled Dance Cit, which received a rare review in The New York Times and led Paul Simon to call him as an arranger/producer and musical director for his Broadway show, The Capeman.

[Full bio and program notes for Spanish Harlem Orchestra.](#)

[Photograph for Spanish Harlem Orchestra.](#)

About the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

The Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts serves as a major cultural destination and crossroads connecting Penn and the greater Philadelphia region through innovative human expression in theatre, music, dance, and film, serving an annual audience of over 80,000. The Annenberg Center also serves as a key resource for the arts at Penn, connecting master artists with Penn students in support of and as an enhancement to the arts curriculum. Student performing arts groups are also key users of the Annenberg Center's multiple performance and rehearsal spaces, while also staffing many operational roles throughout the academic year. In reflection of Penn's core values as a world-respected academic institution, the Annenberg Center emphasizes artistic and intellectual excellence, diversity, and rigor in its presentations; prioritizes broad inclusiveness in the artists, audiences, and groups it serves; manages outstanding performance, conference, and meeting facilities; and stresses comprehensive event planning, production support, and customer service. The Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a major provider of performing arts access for school children and actively engages a broad range of primary, secondary, and post-secondary student audiences and inclusive constituencies from the campus, community, and greater Philadelphia region. Visit AnnenbergCenter.org.

CALENDAR LISTING

Spanish Harlem Orchestra

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At 7:00 PM the Penn Jazz Combo will perform in the main lobby.

Visit AnnenbergCenter.org for ticket information.

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