

Dancing in the Dark



It was the first preview of *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*," says **Graciela Daniele**, "and George de la Peña, who plays Santiago, felt a pull in his hamstring." Daniele, the creator of the Lincoln Center Theater production based on Gabriel García Márquez's novella that opens June 15, was in the audience, unaware that her lead performer was backstage standing stock still and saying to the house manager, "I can't move." She remained unaware of the injury until literally seconds before Peña's character was supposed to

reappear during the show's crucial wedding scene. "I'm looking stage left and thinking I want to change this or that," she continues. "And I'm looking stage right and thinking, I want George to do . . . George? George? Oh my God, that's not George! I had the anxiety attack of my life." Unlike *Chronicle*, in which Santiago must pay with his life after being accused of deflowering a young bride before her wedding night, Daniele's story—complete with an understudy who jumps onstage without one moment of rehearsal and finds himself tossing knives back and forth during the show's most dangerous scene—has a happy ending, with no one getting hurt and Peña returning about a week later after recovering from his injury. Mishaps aside, Daniele's latest amalgam of song, dance, narrative (and knife-throwing), much like the production of last year's *Hello Again*, which she also choreographed and directed, appears to be provoking disparate responses among its various audiences. "Young people don't get with it—they think it's very funny we're doing this whole drama about virginity. But the subscription audience loves it," she adds. "They're older people, and it seems to touch something in them about a world of morality and honor that doesn't exist anymore."

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