

Annex E

Biography of Fernando Montaña worksheet



UNIVERSIDAD INDUSTRIAL DE SANTANDERESCUELA DE IDIOMAS INGLÉS INTERMEDIO

Name: _____

Fernando Montaña

____ It is my great honor to present Fernando Rodríguez Montaña (better known by his stage name, Fernando Montaña) for the Award of Doctor of Arts in recognition of his achievements in contemporary ballet and his commitment to charitable causes Fernando was born in Buenaventura, one of the most impoverished cities in Colombia, which has suffered greatly from the combined effects of the violence of the civil war and the drugs trade. His extraordinary career began when he took up ballet at the age of 12, and within two years won a prestigious scholarship to the National Ballet School of Cuba. Having won several Cuban national ballet awards, he moved to Italy to join La Scala at the age of 19.

____ Arriving in London in 2006 unable to speak English, he successfully auditioned for the Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, where he was mentored by the great Cuban ballet dancer Carlos Acosta. Thirteen years later, Fernando is currently a Soloist at Covent Garden, and independently produces and choreographs his own shows. He has performed all over the world on Royal Ballet tours as well as for his own dance projects to promote various charitable causes.

____ Fernando has not forgotten his roots. He has performed many times in Colombia, including in 2014 on the invitation of the Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos during the state visit of HRH the Prince of Wales. He was also a judge (for 52 episodes) on Bailando con las Estrellas (Colombia's version of 'Strictly Come Dancing') earning him a huge fan-base and a place in the hearts of millions of Colombians and other Latin Americans.

____ Given his remarkable story, it is not surprising that "the Colombian Billy Elliot", as the BBC described him in 2013, has recently published an autobiography, *Una BuenAventura*, and a film based on his life is now in pre-production.

___However, Fernando is not **just** one of the world's greatest ballet soloists. He is also **committed** to humanitarian causes especially in his native Colombia, a country still recovering from the **devastation** caused by civil war and the drugs trade. He is patron of Children Change Colombia, a charity dedicated to working with children who suffer **poverty**, violence and exclusion, and regularly visits **s** projects in the country to support young people in transforming their lives for the better.

In the UK, Fernando is an ambassador for Colin Jackson's prostate cancer charity, Go Dad Run, and a Patron of The Amy Winehouse Foundation. This year Fernando has campaigned on the environmental impact caused by single-use plastics, working with the Marine Conservation Society.

___In 2017 Fernando was invited to the 2017 One Young World summit in Bogota. It was his ongoing work in support of this organization that brought him to the University of Bath in 2018 as the highlight of our One Young World Bath conference, and his relationship with the University has continued to grow since then.

___Fernando's success in becoming an internationally acclaimed ballet dancer has been due to his immense talent, hard work, self-sacrifice and passion. Yet he has never forgotten his origins nor rested on his laurels, but has used his international celebrity status to support charitable organizations in their work with vulnerable young people. Fernando is an outstanding individual who continues to inspire through his dance and his actions.

Vice-Chancellor, I present to you Fernando Rodríguez Montano who is eminently worthy to receive the degree of Doctor of Arts, honoris causa.

Activity

- **Match the following purposes with each paragraph.**
- a. Summarizes his abilities, passion and commitment with the people, and environment.
- b. Describes his commitment with his country and charity.
- c. Gives the general information and background of Fernando Montano.
- d. Mentions the productions of his own life.
- e. Describes that he has been invited to important conference
- f. Summarizes his achievements in ballet.

g. Mentions his performances in his birth country.