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International Flamenco company

This fall, for the first time in Canada, international Flamenco company "**La Caramelita**", will unravel the mysteries, origins and nuances of Flamenco in a mesmerizing, intimate and original production called **NRITYA**.

Led by Vancouver born artistic director, Deborah Dawson, the production is an Indo-Canadian woman's exploration of her heritage through flamenco dance. Presented with incendiary emotion and hypnotic rhythms, **NRITYA** isn't an Indian-Flamenco fusion show but a musical tapestry that showcases the shifting contours of crossculturalism and the power of plurality.

"We have used existing parallels between two cultures to tell the story of an immigrant family and an artist connected to a seemingly distant art form," explains Dawson. "As a first generation Canadian, born to Malaysian parents of Indian descent, it was a struggle to find my identity. I stumbled upon Flamenco in my early teens and soon found out that flamenco has some of its roots in India. The idea that I had come full circle, studying an art form that shared the same background as my family, fueled me to move to Spain - the birthplace of Flamenco."

"La Caramelita Flamenco Company" is based in Bordeaux, France, where Dawson and her husband, Flamenco singer Alejandro Mendía, call home.

NRITYA is powered by guitarist, Guillermo Guillén, who won the prestigious **Lámpara Minera** Festival Award when accompanying famed Flamenco singer **Rocio Márquez** in 2008. Multi-instrumentalist, Alex Carrasco brings a modern, electronic beat to **NRITYA** mixing traditional percussion instruments like the cajon drum with an MPC. Also joining the company for **NRITYA** is the Madrid based flautist, Lara Wong. Another Vancouverite that followed her passion to Spain, Wong's talent transcends flamenco, jazz, classical, and latin genres. The McGill music graduate's original bansuri compositions in **NRITYA** are haunting and desolate, fragile and strong - reflecting values associated with female emancipation, spirituality, and the importance of art in a divided time. **NRITYA** seamlessly intertwines familiar Indian songs, such as the spiritual "Kattey" by activist Bhanvari Devi, with the traditional flamenco rhythm, "tarantos" to share religious tones that speak of love and spiritual guidance in trying times. Another example of the company's blend is the use of Konnakol, the vocal performance of percussive syllables in South Indian Carnatic music, to match the percussive staccato of Flamenco footwork.

"We've created a new language - a new algorithm if you will, mixing various Indian influences with flamenco. We try to do this with respect and during the creative process we've found that the possibilities are endless," - explains singer Mendía.

La Caramelita Flamenco Company will be performing **NRITYA** in the Mary Irwin Theatre at Rotary Centre for the Arts on October 2 at 7pm. Tickets can be purchased at RotaryCentrefortheArts.com.

K e l o w n a V i s u a l a n d P e r f o r m i n g A r t s C e n t r e S o c i e t y

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