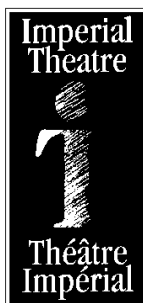


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"Amazing . . . striking . . . dazzling!" — The New York Times
Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba
Imperial Theatre — Tuesday, March 9 at 8 p.m.

Following a critically praised tour of the Netherlands, Egypt and Germany in 2009, **Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba** is bringing its crowd-pleasing all-female troupe of dancers from Havana on its second cross Canada tour in as many years, coming to Imperial Theatre on Tuesday, March 9 at 8 p.m. This remarkable company has in short order built a worldwide reputation thanks in part to the amazing technical finesse of its dancers and the astoundingly talented musicians who accompany them on stage.

Called *Fuerza y Compás* (translated as "Strength and Measure"), the performance offers a spectacular fusion of fiery flamenco, elegant ballet and passionate Afro-Cuban dance forms. Opening with a chorus line, 17 dancers burst on stage in a blaze of colourful array with amazing unanimity, their flamenco shoes flying and the air filled with the clack of castanets. From demanding lyrical pieces to the extravagant finale, all other works equally dazzle — the dancers moving with grace, strength and technical precision. An ensemble of six masterful musicians consisting of a guitarist, a bassist, a keyboard player, a singer and two percussionists, who handle everything from congas, bongos, gourds, claves and more, galvanize the performance.

"Part of the thrill were the dancers — women backed by [male] musicians, creating a perfectly coordinated flurry of ruffled skirts, stamping feet and high-beam smiles. But just as exciting was the audience's reaction . . . Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba dazzles."
— The Washington Post

Founded in 1991 by choreographer Lizt Alfonso, a graduate of Havana's Superior Institute of Art where she studied classical ballet, Alfonso created her company without government aid in a state-controlled country, and with no place to rehearse, the troupe moved from place to place. Eventually help came from the Association of Spanish People in Cuba with six hours a day of fixed rehearsal space.

In 1998, promoters in Spain organized a national tour that provided a breakthrough for both Alfonso, who had the opportunity to explore flamenco in the country of its origin, and for her company's future. Foreign success was not lost on the Cuban government and since then the company has benefited from state support and now rehearses in its own spacious studios in Old Havana.

In 2006, Toronto theatre owner and producer David Mirvish was among the 5000 spectators at the Karl Marx Theatre in Havana to see the company's sold-out 15th anniversary show. He later arranged a co-production and **Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba** went on to have an immensely successful one month run at the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto under the auspices of Mirvish and Luminato Festival that led to its first Canadian tour in 2008.

Artist Web site: http://www.stationbleue.com/artistes.e/alfonsodancecuba_li.bio.php

On tour in Canada once more, don't miss **Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba's** *Fuerza y Compás*, coming to the Fort Reliance Auditorium at Imperial Theatre on Tuesday, March 9 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$40, \$35, \$30; Youth 18 & under: \$25 and can be purchased online at www.imperialtheatre.nb.ca, by visiting Imperial Theatre Box Office, or by calling 674-4100 (or 1-800-323-SHOW for out-of-town callers).

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