

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2009 Canada Dance Festival – *Dancing Through Cultures*

A world-class presentation of diverse Canadian contemporary dance

June 26 – 27, 2009 at the National Arts Centre

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OTTAWA - The Canada Dance Festival is proud to announce its 2009 program. *Dancing Through Cultures* is a celebration of diversity - it celebrates contemporary dance by Indigenous artists and by artists of culturally diverse heritage and will feature two evenings of performance - the **Aboriginal Contemporary Dance Platform** on Friday, June 26, and the **Canadian Multiculturalism Day Gala** on Saturday, June 27. Tickets go on sale **April 29**, in concurrence with International Dance Day, through the NAC box office and Ticketmaster.

Friday, June 26 – 8:00PM
Aboriginal Contemporary Dance Platform
National Arts Centre Studio

Featuring:

- **Byron Chief-Moon** (Vancouver) – *Blood Alley*
- **Gaétan Gingras** (Montreal) – *Mémoire de sang (Blood Memory)*
- **Red Power Squad** (Edmonton)

Tickets: \$30 Adult / \$15 Students available through NAC Box Office and Ticketmaster

On June 26, three works by Aboriginal dance artists take to the stage, each work an expression from a unique aboriginal nation.

Byron Chief Moon is of the Blood Nation in southern Alberta. He is a well know dancer, choreographer, actor and teacher now residing in Vancouver. His dances fuse his many talents into transformative experiences. *Blood Alley* is riveting in its powerful ability to reveal deep seeded histories, even when the individual is disconnected from that history's source.

Gaétan Gingras has a long history of performances in Canada and abroad. *Mémoire de sang (Blood Memory)* is a contemporary ritual dance in honour of his Mohawk/Iroquois ancestors. Gaétan has worked to combine the personal with the spiritual, while still being universal and meaningful for spectators.

Red Power Squad is the here and now, representing a new generation of artists who collide Hip Hop youth culture with aboriginal identity in ways that are startling and new. A bboy / bgirl crew who also include MCs and DJs, their performances open with traditional dances in full regalia that morph into break-dance forms, reflecting the growing influence of urban cultures on traditional communities.

Saturday, June 27 – 7:30PM
Canadian Multiculturalism Day Gala
National Arts Centre Theatre

Featuring:

- **Tribal Crackling Wind (Peter Chin)** – *Transmission of the Invisible*

- **Ballet Creole** – *Breakin Out*

- **Menaka Thakkar Dance Company** - *Agni Ratha (The Fiery Chariot)* and *Riaz*

Tickets: **\$40 Adult / \$20 Students** available through **NAC Box Office** and Ticketmaster

Celebrating the occasion of Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27, the CDF presents a stunning gala featuring some of Canada's most exciting voices from culturally diverse communities. There is a dance that originated in different heritages, transposed itself through migration and is now enriched through the global exchanges emergent in Canadian culture. Three groups will deliver four separate choreographies, providing audiences with an event that symbolizes the transformative power located in the diversity of Canadian dance.

In the creation of *Transmission of the Invisible*, **Peter Chin**, Artistic Director of **Tribal Crackling Wind**, travelled to research the ritual forms of Cambodian dance. The cultural and human losses of the Khmer Rouge era forms the background to this work, but with a primary focus on the subsequent recovery and rebuilding, especially of the arts. *Transmission of the Invisible* expresses how culture is so easily annihilated, but how it also survives through intimate interaction. His ensemble of sophisticated performers includes **Andrea Nann**, featured at CDF in 2008, and is augmented by two dancers from Cambodia.

Artistic Director **Menaka Thakkar** has devoted her life to creating dance of South Asian heritage. Her company has travelled across Canada and abroad, and for this performance will feature a special cross-generational choreographic showcase, performing *Agni Ratha (The Fiery Chariot)*, a world premier, and *Riaz*, choreographed by **Natasha Bakht**, a student of Menaka's and now one of Canada's world-renowned international performers. The juxtaposition of styles between generations will highlight the passion of Bharatanatyam, the classical Indian dance form at the foundation of their choreography.

In *Breakin Out*, **Patrick Parsons**, artistic director of **Ballet Creole**, has created a dance that showcases the virtuosity of his company's male performers. His dances are created from African roots infused with Caribbean sensibility, and defined by his presence in the Canadian community. This is dance that is as energetic as any in Canada today, overflowing with rhythm, energy, machismo and nuance.

Dancing through Cultures is two days of magical dance, dance that reflects Canada's values – inclusivity and diversity.

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