

SANTERIAS - Toronto Latin ensemble fires up Flamenco Fusion! New release *Demonios* will have audiences speaking in tongues

Like the religion of Santeria their propulsive music is a mystical blend of old and new world influences - tribal rhythms expressing themselves in the gospels of popular song. Flamenco guitar runs along with electric bass while congas, cajon and timbales transport the rhythm to Afro-Latin locales. Sultry vocals breathe out Bossa nova tales that teasingly take each song to a mysterious musical place occupied exclusively by **Santerias**.

This Toronto foursome bring the influences of their diverse backgrounds (Chilean, Colombian, Canadian) to the forefront of their sound in a way that has them often compared to Spain's Ojos de Brujo. Some songs bring in Middle Eastern and South Asian rhythms while some embrace a Brazilian Tropicália sensibility. Band members include: **Oriana Barbato** (bass); **Jay Guerriere** (percussion, vocals); **Juan Dino Toledo** (guitar, vocals) and **Rubi** (lead vocals, percussion). Some live concerts also include Flamenco dancers.

About to release their new full-length album *Demonios*, Santerias are set to expand the success resulting from their debut 2004 release *Bosketches*. This includes dozens of concerts at major Toronto festivals (including a repeat performance at this year's Pride parade) and widespread acclaim from media like CBC Radio and Telelatino. They have also created videos with TMN (The Movie Network) and Bravo.

In addition to their collective success, three members have also collaborated on the Drum and Bass Soul project *SolAzul*; whose 2005 debut had two songs (Encanto and Heaven) receive international airplay and worldwide acclaim by DJs and critics. Bassist Oriana Barbato has recently returned from living in London, UK and a Spring multicity tour of Holland and Germany with UK Indie Pop group The Candy Twins.

For more information on the group - and to hear their songs along with band photos and video - please visit www.santerias.ca and www.myspace.com/santerias - individual band member biographies to follow.

To contact the group:

Juan Dino Toledo

Ph: 905-507-9121 or dino@santerias.ca

For media contact:

Shane Gerard - Rhythmethod Productions

Ph: 416-671-4667 or shane.gerard@sympatico.ca

Individual Santerias Biographies:

Juan Dino Toledo:

This guitarist and composer is originally from Chile and has lived most of his life in Toronto, where he has been composing since the late 1980's and started playing and recording Rock music in various local bands -including touring with and opening for bands such as I Mother Earth & Jeff Healy.

Passionate to grow as a musician, he started studying Jazz and East Indian music with Michael Kleniec. This led to playing in multicultural groups such as Maiz Verde (South American Folk), with whom he recorded and toured Western Canada, including performances at the Expo 86 in Vancouver. He also played in Mistral (an Andean music group) who recorded two productions and toured throughout Canada.

In the 1990's he discovered and fell in love with Flamenco music. He has developed as a Flamenco guitarist under the tutelage of Flamenco guitar master Miguel de la Bastide since 1997, where he learned how to accompany Flamenco dance and "cante" (singing). Also during this time he met Jesse Cook and played in his band at the Toronto Film Festival and at some shows in Las Vegas. To complement his continued involvement in the Flamenco and Classical guitar world, he is part of the Carmen Romero Flamenco Dance Company, the Miguel de la Bastide Flamenco Music Group and the Indiantouch Orchestra.

Juan Dino has composed much of the material in and recorded both CDs with Santerias. He is also one of the composers and lead guitarist for SolAzul, a successful worldwide-release Drum and Bass Soul project. Juan Dino is also composing the music for a Canadian / Chilean documentary entitled "Uncertain Future" about homeless kids in Chile, Mexico and Toronto.

Jason ("Jay") Guerriere:

This percussionist (drums, congas, timbales, cajon) and vocalist's earliest influences were Big Band sounds of Jazz and Dixieland - courtesy of his father, a professional horn player since the 1930s. As well his mother was an actress, singer, dancer and off-Broadway performer who parlayed her talents into becoming 1955's Miss Toronto. And how perfect is this for a musician - his parents met while performing a lounge act in Toronto.

Jay has been playing drums and percussion since the age of 9 and while influenced by the various talents of his family, he was ultimately self-taught in Reggae, Jazz and Latin rhythms. Throughout high school, Jay spent all his free time on the drums exploring the rhythmic beats of foreign lands. Over the years he has become expert at audio and video production by learning the skills of music mixing as a post-production supervisor at numerous recording studios and film sound stages. Jay also lends his artistic talents to the movie world as a freelance cinematographer and editor and already is listed as a producer with a feature film to his credit. The group's new CD *Demonios* was produced in Jay's self-owned Latin Lounge Studio in Toronto.

Individual Santerias Biographies:

Rubí:

This vocalist, lyricist and percussionist was born to a Colombian mother and European father - one of four siblings in a nomadic family that traveled the globe from the deserts of the Sahara to the jungles of the Amazon. Her intrinsic love of music flourished in the vast variety of rhythms she was exposed to during her travels. This passion turned into a lifelong study beginning when she wrote her first composition, a piece for choir, flute and kettledrums at the age of 7.

She continued to write and sing throughout her childhood, attending various conservatories around the world. Rubí also became fluent in five languages - added a striking vocal depth and flair to her compositions. After graduating from high school, she left her traveling clan and settled in Toronto to continue her jazz vocal training under the guidance of renowned vocal coach, Bill Vincent. Rubí has contributed lead vocals to several recordings, including the debut CD of Toronto-based latin jazz ensemble Que Es! and the successful worldwide release in 2005 of SolAzul's debut, self-titled Drum and Bass Soul album.

Oriana Barbato:

This bassist is a composer, interpreter and multi-instrumentalist of Chilean descent. Her style, education and experience range from Flamenco to Latin American popular music to North Indian music. She has training in Flamenco guitar with Miguel de la Bastide and in tablas with Ravi Naimpally. She's also versed in the kena and charango. She has a B.A. in Literature and a B.F.A. in Music from York University. In addition, Oriana is a sound designer for film and theater who has made soundscapes for short independent films, which have screened in Canada and Latin America at international film festivals.

Oriana is a founding member of Santerias and has joined them once again as an electric bass player, after a one year leave. While with Santerias, she was involved in composing the band's first CD Bosketches. She also contributes to Indiantouch, a band that fuses Indian devotional songs with western influences. She is currently composing and producing an album of Electronic and World music (www.myspace.com/obarbato).

For more information on the group - and to hear their songs along with band photos and video - please visit www.santerias.ca and www.myspace.com/santerias