

COMPAÑÍA

RAFAELA CARRASCO

HUMO

Smoke

Flamenco in the feminine plural. **A tribute to the women of the tobacco factories.**

inaem

Comunidad de Madrid

Junta de Andalucía | Consejería de Turismo, Cultura y Deporte | Agencia Andaluza de Instituciones Culturales

ABOUT THE SHOW

HUMO

Smoke



Choreographer and dancer Rafaela Carrasco (Spain's National Dance Prize, 2023) pays tribute to a historic community of women: the **cigarette makers** of the Spanish tobacco factories.

An anonymous group of women of scarce means who — somewhere between myth and reality, between literature and life, between popular song and newspaper chronicle — have become part of our country's collective imagination.

Their legendary figures still flash like sparks: Carmen, of Mérimée and Bizet; Amparo, of Emilia Pardo Bazán's *La Tribuna*; Colasa of the Madrid chotis… and, above all, the nameless cigarette makers who appear in the popular songs of Spanish folklore and flamenco. The women who fought for their daily subsistence; who supported and sheltered their own families and those of their workmates; the women awaited every evening at the factory gates by a swarm of workers and idlers; the fearless, sharp-tongued women who shaped an entire popular archetype in the memories, symbols and dreams of generations.

Their working days in the workshop, their internal hierarchies (from apprentice to forewoman), their clandestine feasts and rituals, their black-market dealings; their conflicts, their joys and their sorrows unfold in a flamenco show in the feminine plural, inspired by that singular, self-governed world — festive and rigorous at once — born inside the thick walls of the Tobacco Factories and the seed of the civil liberties that would be won in the decades that followed, down to our own day. A workplace steeped in rumours, legends… and hour upon hour of labour and companionship.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the hand-rolling and street-selling of tobacco in Spain — during decades of full industrial expansion in the Western world — had its epicentre in the so-called *women's establishments*, the Tobacco Factories of cities such as Cádiz, Seville, Madrid and A Coruña. Those enclosed spaces became something more than a workplace, thanks to the unusual women who were the active protagonists of a working and social world which, for an entire century, was a genuine exception — together with the laundresses and, to a lesser degree, the weavers — to a labour system ruled and run by men.

Through dance and song we approach questions that still resonate today: from suffrage to gender equality, from work-life balance to sisterhood, from the struggle against abuse to economic and personal emancipation. The difficulties, challenges and contradictions of these women offer us a mirror in which to see our own society and to celebrate the fight for Spanish women's rights, in a show that traces the rough road where they left their footprints, their marks and their wounds, while the haze of tobacco smoke weaves together stories danced, sung and told.





"...while the haze of tobacco smoke weaves together stories danced, sung and told."

After the resounding international success of *Creaviva* (2024), *Nocturna. Arquitectura del insomnio* (2022), *Ariadna. Al hilo del mito* (2020) and *Nacida sombra* (2017), choreographer and director Rafaela Carrasco and playwright and poet Álvaro Tato continue their shared creative process in this new work, alongside an outstanding team that takes flamenco music and dance into new territory for exploration and enquiry.

DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY

Rafaela Carrasco

DRAMATURGY

Álvaro Tato



ABOUT THE

Choreography

Rafaela Carrasco

Woman as a presence on stage, in dance and in sound.

Female voices take the leading role in the work's sound world and in the power of the stage. A shared workplace where we meet stereotypes of women confronted with the realities of a society that dictates a country's customs.

Working women, anonymous yet with names of their own, who set the strength in the movement and the sensitivity in the emotion.

The choreography will heighten, on the one hand, the power of the group as a single body, as a force of protest; and on the other, the exaltation of individuality which, far from revealing fragility in its solitude, takes on absolute presence in the solo performance.

"A flamenco show in the feminine plural."

ABOUT THE

Dramaturgy



Álvaro Tato

The nineteenth-century boom in tobacco consumption produced an intense national demand that reached every social class — from the Havana cigar of the upper bourgeoisie to the cheap cigarette of the working classes — replacing powdered tobacco and snuff. It called for the *fine work* of the cigarette makers, who at each stage of the process shaped the bundles of cigars and cigarettes one by one: a tireless labour that faded away in the early twentieth century with the arrival of assembly-line machinery.

Tobacco — a social and personal vice, a drug of drawing rooms and streets, a mark of distinction and seduction, a source of addiction and a pattern for new forms of behaviour — invaded public and private spaces until it became a symbol of urban industrial society. In that context it is hardly surprising that, over several decades, an image took shape — perhaps more mythical than real — of a community of women associated in the popular imagination with pleasure, roguery, quick wit and even a certain rebelliousness and longing for freedom. Fascinating, contradictory aspects that we address through dance in the feminine plural.

The dramaturgy of the show rests on three pillars. First, the historical and literary records of the Tobacco Factories across Spain. Second, the popular songs about tobacco and about the cigarette makers — and about working women in general — forged over the decades within the traditional flamenco repertoire on both sides of the Atlantic. And third, a number of songs and lyrics written for this production, weaving together the many threads of a show born to convey to audiences the essence and the life journey of a community as unknown as it is compelling: the cigarette makers of the nineteenth century, grandmothers and mothers of hard-won rights, real and dreamed women to whom we pay tribute in pieces that move between laughter and pain, between daily labour and festive splendour, between the joy and the sorrow of each day, of each shift, from dawn to dusk for a handful of coins.

CREDITS

HUMO

DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY
Rafaela Carrasco

DRAMATURGY AND LYRICS
Álvaro Tato

DANCERS
Rafaela Carrasco, Cristina Soler, Carmen Coy, Nazaret Oliva, Alejandra Gudí, Julia Gimeno / Cristina San Gregorio

MUSICAL DIRECTION
Jesús Torres and Pablo Martín Jones

COMPOSITION
Jesús Torres, Pablo Martín Jones, Isidora Ó Ryan, Gema Caballero and Marta Estal

RECORDED MUSIC
Soundscape: **Pablo Martín Jones**
Guitar: **Jesús Torres**
Cello: **Isidora O'Ryan**

LIVE VOICE
Flamenco voice: **Gema Caballero**
Lyric voice: **Marta Estal**

COSTUME DESIGN
Belén de la Quintana

LIGHTING AND SET DESIGN
Gloria Montesinos (A.a.i)

SOUND DESIGN
Ángel Olalla

STAGE MACHINERY
Miguel Ángel Guisado

EXECUTIVE PRODUCTION AND PRESS
Alejandro Salade

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT
Emilia Yagüe

PRODUCTION
Rafaela Carrasco

BOOKING
Emilia Yagüe Producciones

A co-production of **Rafaela Carrasco**, **Théâtre de Nîmes** and **Centro de Danza Matadero**.
With the collaboration of Móstoles City Council and Escena Móstoles.





DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY

Rafaela Carrasco

Choreographer and flamenco dancer Rafaela Carrasco (Spain's National Dance Prize, 2023) has been a leading figure in flamenco since she founded her own company in 2002, the same year she won the main awards at the 11th Spanish Dance and Flamenco Choreography Competition. Her career has been marked by fruitful artistic collaborations ever since.

She was director of the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía from 2013 until September 2016. Her career stands out for her work as a dancer and, above all, as a choreographer.

From the beginning she has sought to rethink, research and personalise flamenco. To take risks. Her professional aim has been to create a vision of dance entirely her own: warm, finely crafted, conceptual, and conceived for an ensemble within a scenic space.

To elaborate flamenco. To bring it up to date. To that end she has absorbed knowledge from other dance disciplines without ever abandoning her flamenco roots, in a deeply personal journey there and back in the way she lives and expresses dance.

Carrasco is a profound connoisseur of Spanish dance and flamenco thanks to her two great teachers: Matilde Coral, with whom she learned discipline, technique and a passion for dance, and Mario Maya, who gave her her first professional opportunity and with whom she discovered the stage — first in the Mario Maya Company and later in the Compañía Andaluza de Danza.

Alongside her performing career she has developed a significant profile as a teacher. She is currently Professor of flamenco dance at the María de Ávila Higher Conservatory of Dance in Madrid, and gives courses regularly all over the world.

RAFAELA CARRASCO

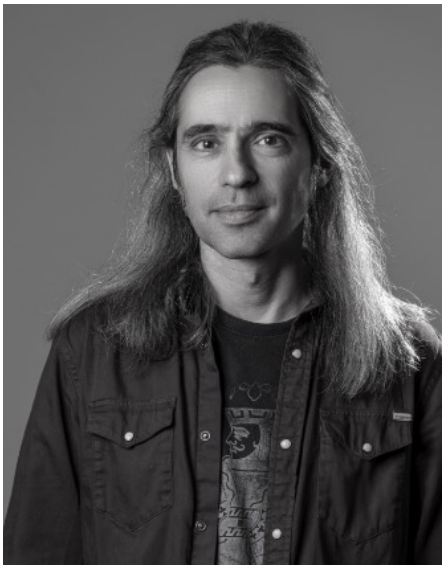
Awards and distinctions

2023	National Dance Prize of Spain.
2023	Critics' Award at the Jerez Flamenco Festival for *Nocturna. Arquitectura del insomnio*.
2018	Critics' Award at the Jerez Flamenco Festival for *Nacida sombra*.
2016	Giraldillo Award for the ensemble of the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía for *Tierra Lorca*.
2014	Giraldillo Award for Best Show for *Imágenes. 20 años del Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía*.
2012	Giraldillo "Special Jury Award" for her work as Artistic Director of the closing gala *La punta y la raíz. Un paso por el baile de Sevilla*.
2010	Culture Award of the Community of Madrid, Dance category.
2008	Giraldillo Award for Best Choreography and Press Award for *Vamos al tiroteo*.
2002	Best Choreography and Best Musical Composition — 11th Spanish Dance and Flamenco Choreography Competition for *A cinco*.



DRAMATURGY

Álvaro Tato



Writer, actor and playwright, founding member of the companies *Ron Lalá* and *Ay Teatro*. His shows have toured 20 countries and won numerous awards.

He has written the dramaturgy of *Tebanas* (2025), *La Desconquista* (2025), *Burro* (2023), *Ron Lalá 4x4* (2023), *Vive Molière* (2022), *Villa y Marte* (2022), *Malvivir* (2021), *Andanzas y entremeses de Juan Rana* (2020), *Todas hieren y una mata* (2019), *Crimen y telón* (2017), *Cervantina* (2016), *Comedia multimedia* (2016), *Ojos de agua* (2014) and *El intérprete* (2013), among others. He collaborates as playwright on the most recent productions of the Rafaela Carrasco company: *Creaviva* (2024), *Nocturna. Arquitectura del insomnio* (2022), *Ariadna. Al hilo del mito* (2020) and *Nacida sombra* (2017).

He has written several versions for the Spanish National Classical Theatre Company, directed by Helena Pimenta: *El castigo sin venganza* by Lope de Vega (2018), *La dama duende* by Calderón de la Barca (2017), *El perro del hortelano* by Lope de Vega (2016) and *El alcalde de Zalamea* by Calderón de la Barca (2015), as well as *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare (2022, Ur Teatro).

For the Teatro de la Zarzuela he has written *Adiós Apolo / La verbena de la Paloma* (2024), *El sobre verde* by Jacinto Guerrero (2022) and *Zarzuela en danza* (2017 and 2020; dir. Nuria Castejón).

All his theatre texts are published by Ediciones Antígona, along with the poetry collections *Año luz* (2021), *Vuelavoz* (2017), *Zarazas. Coplas flamencas reunidas* (2015), *Gira* (2011) and *Cara máscara* (2007), among others. He also edited the volume *¡Linda burla! La risa en el teatro clásico* (Cuadernos de Teatro Clásico, CNTC, 2018). He teaches Dramaturgy and Verse on the Master's in Theatre Creation at UC3M, among other institutions.

SELECTED AWARDS

2024 · Teatro de Rojas Award, Best Author for *Burro* (Ay Teatro).

2023 · Talía Award, Best Show for *Malvivir* (Ay Teatro) and Best Producer, Ron Lalá.

2023 · Co-author of *EAEA* (Blanca Paloma), Spain's entry at the Eurovision Song Contest.

2022 · Francisco de Quevedo Poetry Prize (Madrid City Council) for *Año luz*.

2022 · José Estruch Award, Best Author for *Malvivir* (Ay Teatro).

2022 · Fuente de Castalia Award — Ron Lalá.

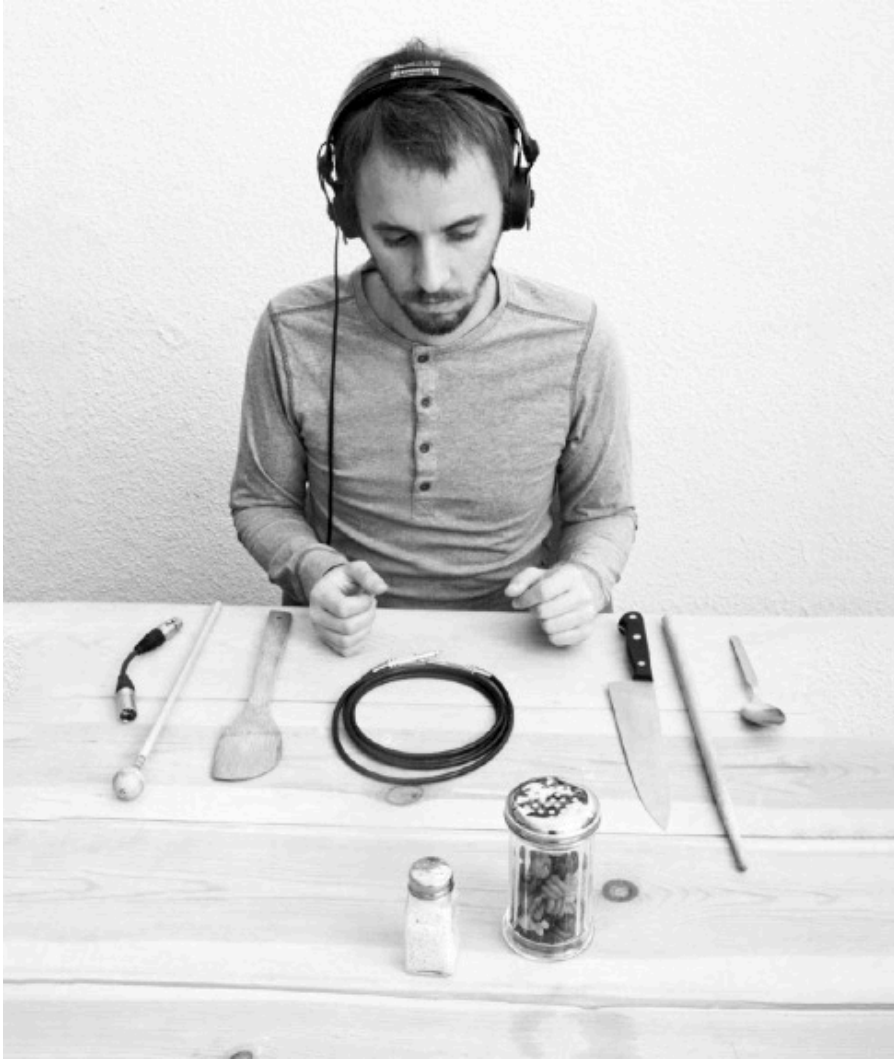
2021 · Francisco de Quevedo Poetry Prize for *Año luz*.

2019 · Teatro de Rojas Award, Best Author for *Todas hieren y una mata* (Ay Teatro).

2018 · José Estruch Award, Best Show for *Crimen y telón* (Ron Lalá).

2017 · Max Award, Best Musical Show for *Cervantina* (CNTC / Ron Lalá).

Creative team



MUSICAL DIRECTION

Pablo Martín Jones

Son of a flamenco guitarist and a flamenco dancer, both of them Americans settled in Spain.

Surrounded by music from an early age, he became especially drawn to percussion, exploring several instruments and styles, though flamenco and Iberian folk music remain his main source of inspiration. In parallel, his sound world has widened to take in practically everything that makes a noise, while he began to explore electronic music.

During this period he has worked with a good number of artists from different disciplines and styles: Rosario "La tremendita", Rocío Molina, Eliseo Parra, Raúl Rodríguez, Jackson Browne, Jorge Drexler, Radio Tarifa, Fetén Fetén, Moisés P. Sánchez, La Shica, Olga Pericet, Zoobazar, Carmen París, Chevi Muraday, La Musgaña, Amancio Prada and Martín Buscaglia.

He is also building an increasingly prolific career as a composer for dance, the performing arts and audiovisual work.

LIGHTING AND SET DESIGN

Gloria Montesinos (A.a.i)



Born in Madrid, where she studied Performing Arts between 1987 and 1990. In 1991 she took a lighting scholarship at *Paddington College* in London, with a placement at *The English National Opera* in the same city. Since 1992 she has worked as a lighting and scenic space designer for the stage.

She has designed lighting for dance for: Compañía Nacional de Danza, Ballet Nacional de España, Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía, the National Ballet of Cuba, the Ballet of the Essen Opera (Germany), Introdans (Netherlands), the Madlenianum Kamerna Opera Ballet of Belgrade, the Choreographic Centre of the Valencian Community, the Andalusian Dance Centre, IT Dansa, and the companies of Rafaela Carrasco, Teresa Nieto, Olga Pericet, Ramón Oller, Belén Maya and Mayte Martín, Chanta La Mui, Manuel Liñán and Selene Muñoz, Ballet Flamenco David Morales, Nuevo Ballet Español and Compañía Pepa Molina, among others.

Her lighting designs for dance have been seen at the Joyce Theater in New York, the Théâtre National de Chaillot in Paris, the Aoyama Theatre in Tokyo and the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, among others, and at leading national and international festivals.

AWARDS

2003 · Performing Arts Award of the Valencian Community for Best Lighting for *Sangrepura* (Compañía Metros — Ramón Oller).

2004 · Performing Arts Award of the Valencian Community for Best Lighting for *Congelado en el tiempo* (Choreographic Centre of the Valencian Community).

Her work in opera and music includes *Dido and Aeneas* by Henry Purcell and *Actéon* by Charpentier for Les Arts Florissants, directed by William Christie / Vincent Boussard and premiered at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York.

In theatre, her credits include *Closer* by Patrick Marber, directed by Mariano Barroso; *Salir del armario* by Francis Veber, directed by José Luis Sáiz; *Una nit d'òpera* for La Cubana in Barcelona; *Richard II* by Shakespeare, *Scapin the Schemer* by Molière, *The Triumph of Love* by Marivaux and *The Comedy of Illusions* by Corneille, all directed by Adrián Daumas for the International Classical Theatre Festival of Almagro.

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