

MEDIA RELEASE

Prison Dancer: The Musical Premieres at The Citadel this May

April 11, 2023

Edmonton, Alberta – From a viral video turned award-winning web series turned stage production, an all-Filipino cast brings this exciting new musical to the Citadel Theatre.

In 2007, a video of 1,500 inmates in a Filipino prison dancing to Michael Jackson’s *Thriller* was posted to YouTube, and quickly became one of the first viral videos on the Internet. The “Dancing Inmates of Cebu” are the unlikely inspiration behind an ambitious, perspective-altering and joyous musical by Filipino creators **Romeo Candido** and **Carmen De Jesus**.

Garnering awards from New York, Los Angeles and Toronto over the past ten years, including three awards from the New York Musical Theatre Festival and Best Feature Film at the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival, *Prison Dancer* is the world’s first transmedia musical with an all Filipino-Canadian and Filipino-American creative and producing team.

“Ever since Carmen and I both performed in *Ms. Saigon* over thirty years ago, we vowed to create a decidedly authentic Filipino story where we can showcase and celebrate what we know to be a pipeline of triple-threat API (Asian-pacific Islander) talent around the world. That day has come and starts in Edmonton this month,” says book writer and composer Romeo Candido.

“Hot on the heels of the incredible success of Asians in Hollywood, we are thrilled to be premiering this much-anticipated Canadian launch of *Prison Dancer: The Musical* at the Citadel theatre this spring,” says Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television award-winning producer, Ana Serrano.

Paying tribute to pop, house, and R&B while shamelessly reveling in its deep love for sentimental ballad and drag, *Prison Dancer* is ultimately a brave musical about redemption and how a prisoner named Lola brings purpose and joy to a group of inmates by helping them come together in “harmony” through the power of song and dance.

Prison Dancer is directed by award-winning artist and Artistic Director of the National Arts Centre English Theatre, **Nina Lee Aquino**. Nina will also be the Keynote Speaker at this year’s Collider Festival hosted by the Citadel from May 11 – 14.

A co-production with *Prison Dancer Inc.* and Developed with support from the National Arts Centre’s Nation Creation Fund, *Prison Dancer* plays in the Shctor Theatre May 6 – 28, 2023. Tickets are available through the Box Office at 780.425.1820 or online at citadeltheatre.com.

Photos will be available by May 9, 2023.

CAST

Norm Alconcel	Jimmy Santos aka Hookaps
Pierre Angelo Bayuga	Mayumi Salvador aka Milky
Dominique Brillantes	Shakespeare
Josh Capulong	Eduardo Chavez Tondo
Diana Del Rosario	Cherish
Renell Doneza	Jejomar Lapitan aka Juicy
Daren Dyhengco	Christian Serrano
Chariz Faulmino	Ensemble
Byron Flores	Ensemble
Julio Fuentes	Ruperto Poblador aka Lola
Jovanni Sy	Warden
Stephen Thakkar	Ensemble

UNDERSTUDIES

Norm Alconcel	Shakespeare
Pierre Angelo Bayuga	Ruperto Poblador aka Lola
Dominique Brillantes	Warden
Josh Capulong	Jimmy Santos aka Hookaps
Renell Doneza	Mayumi Salvador aka Milky
Chariz Faulmino	Cherish
Byron Flores	Jejomar Lapitan aka Juicy
Stephen Thakkar	Christian Serrano & Eduardo Chavez Tondo

BAND

Biboye Onanuga	Drums
Kierscey Rand Regozo	Piano
Aretha Tillotson	Bass and Ableton

CREATIVE TEAM

Romeo Candido	Co-Creator, Playwright, Music & Lyrics, Music Production
Carmen Leilani De Jesus	Co-Creator, Playwright
Nina Lee Aquino	Director
Ana Serrano	Producer, Prison Dancer Inc.
Carla Serrano	Producer, Prison Dancer, Inc.
Joanna Yu	Set and Prop Designer
Joyce Padua	Costume Designer
Michelle Ramsay	Lighting Designer
Owen Hutchinson	Sound Designer
Julio Fuentes	Choreographer
Kierscey Rand Regozo	Music Director, Additional Scoring, Piano Arrangements
Rick Boynton	Dramaturgy
TBD	Fight Director
Alexander Punzalan	Ableton Arranger

CITADEL

Gina Puntill	Assistant Director
Keiran Bohoy	Associate Choreographer
Josh Capulong	Assistant Choreographer, Dance Captain
Za Hughes	Apprentice Lighting Designer
TBD	Dialect Coach
Michelle Chan	Stage Manager
Steven Sobolewski	Assistant Stage Manager
Krystal Johnson	Apprentice Stage Manager

For more information or to arrange interviews, contact:

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SPONSORS

Season Sponsor: Capital Power

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