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NextSteps Showcases the Best in Canadian Contemporary Dance; Re-introduces International Dance into the Series at Harbourfront Centre

TORONTO, ON (August 16, 2017) - **NextSteps**, Canada's Contemporary Dance Series, kicks off its season at Harbourfront Centre on September 21 with veteran Toronto contemporary dance companies **lbs/sq**, **DanceWorks**, **Flamenco Sin Límites** and **MOonhORse Dance Theatre** among the more than 20 companies celebrating innovation in contemporary dance.

New this season, Harbourfront Centre's **NextSteps** is welcoming **The Navdhara India Dance Theatre**, from Mumbai, India, to share the stage with the formidable array of Canadian talent: Navdhara India Dance Theatre will perform its globally **acclaimed *Amaara: A Journey of Love***, using Indian-Australian choreographer **Ashley Lobo's** trademarked **Prana Paint technique**, on November 28.

NextSteps kicks off September 21-23 with three performances of lbs/sq's ***The Apology Project***, a multi-media event described as "a collision of performance, visual and media art that examines shame, falling and oppression from multiple perspectives." The season concludes May 25-26 with **Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre's** production of ***Alien Grace***.

Throughout the season, **NextSteps** features vibrant Canadian talents, ranging from solo performer **Belinda McGuire** (September 22) and **The Ladies Of Hip-Hop Toronto** (November 11) to **BoucharDance** (April 5-7) and the **Esmeralda Enrique Spanish Dance Company** (May 4-6.) Toronto's esteemed **DanceWorks** also offers several visually stunning spectacles, including a special **40th Anniversary Celebration** featuring artists **Esmeralda Enrique, Joanna De Souza, Holly Small, Robert W. Stevenson, Learie McNicolls** and **Denise Fujiwara** (November 16-18); the Toronto premiere of **Dancers of Damelahamid**, a Vancouver-based Indigenous dance company (February 9-10) and the incomparable **Gadfly** - known as Toronto's "urban dance phenomenon," performing **UNBXBL 2**, choreographed by **Apolonia Velasquez** and **Ofilio Sinbadinho** (May 3-5).

Rich in cultural diversity, **NextSteps** continues to explore avenues of vision with its unique programming.

"For over 40 years, Harbourfront Centre has been a leader in promoting, cultivating and defining dance in Canada, with audiences returning yearly to see groundbreaking performances from an incredible selection of Canadian artists," says Iris Nemani, Chief Programming Officer, Harbourfront Centre. "Central to our year-round programming, **NextSteps** continues to expand and define what is possible with the combination of choreography, music and the dynamism of the human body in motion. As in seasons past, many of these productions are world premieres that will go on to tour both nationally and internationally. We are proud to host these unique performances."

Among **NextSteps** 2017/2018 season highlights:

- **lbs/sq** - ***The Apology Project***: Founded in 1995 by artistic director Gerry Trentham and called "a provoking experience" by *The Toronto Star* and an "uplifting...kaleidoscopic vision" by *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto's lbs/sq has produced more than 30 works over its 20-year lifespan.
- **Belinda McGuire - *Waltz Slaughterhouse Requiem***: At the Fleck Dance Theatre on September 22, Toronto native McGuire offers two solo work world premieres - Sylvain Émard's *Waltz* and her own *Slaughterhouse/Requiem*.
- **Ballet Creole** - Founded in Toronto in 1990 by Trinidadian-born Patrick Parson, this nine-member dance company will entertain on two occasions: December 1-3 with *Soulful Messiah* and May 11-13 with *Cry Freedom*. *The Toronto Star* called Ballet Creole "a vibrant company melding the vocabulary of modern and ballet with exuberant African and Caribbean dance styles."
- **Femmes du Feu - *Circus Sessions 2018***: Developing, exploring and promoting contemporary circus in Ontario to new audiences, Femmes du Feu was co-founded in 2003 by Holly Treddenick. *Circus Sessions 2018* displays the results of 15 performers spending one week under the guidance of a mentor (April 27-28.)

About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is a Canadian charity operating the 10 prime acres of Toronto's central waterfront. We celebrate the multiplicities of cultures that comprise Canada and enliven the city through the creative imaginations of artists from across the country and around the globe.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous funding support for programming at Harbourfront Centre by the Government of Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council.

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