

the garden of the Hesperides



Alicia Soto
Hojarasca

An international co-production with Direction and choreography: Alicia Soto




In recognition of its quality and subject matter, the show has been awarded the official seal of the 5th Centenary of Magellan's First Circumnavigation of the World, granted by the **Ministry of Culture**.



V CENTENARIO
1ª VUELTA AL
MUNDO

Award "**Special Jury Mention**" 6th Baghdad International Theatre Festival,
2025



*What lies behind every woman's face I have known.
What story lives behind each gaze.
No matter the place, nor the country they come from, the gardens are the same, there are similar
hells, and paradise is not reserved for them, because they are women.*

1. Show Synopsis

The Garden of the Hesperides is an international **Spanish-Moroccan** co-production born from the creative encounter between **Spain and Morocco**. Created under the **choreographic direction of Alicia Soto**, this sensorial odyssey offers an experience of pure synaesthesia that rewrites the classical myth through the influence of Morocco's rich cultural heritage, transforming it into an **inner space of freedom**.

Through a subtle fusion of Spanish contemporary dance, spoken word and original music, the work delves intensely and poetically into the labyrinths of the female soul. On stage, a cast of **five actress-dancers** from diverse roots builds a living sculpture.

With a staging of elegant austerity that highlights the power of movement, these five free and courageous women embody **a universal tale of liberation**.

This is a deeply committed work that stands as a reflection on **identity, resistance and the emancipation of women** anywhere in the world. An intercultural journey of perseverance and shared effort that culminates in a vibrant explosion of joy, colour and hopeful transformation.

2. Origin and Concept

Prologue: The Universal Face of Woman

Behind every woman's face I have known, a story dwells hidden in her gaze. Geographic origin and social context do not matter: **the gardens they inhabit are the same**, sharing common hells and a paradise that is often denied to them for the mere fact of being women.

Despite temporal and generational borders, **the same stigmas, differentiation and inequality persist**. Yet so too do **the same struggles, resistance, love, solitude and resilience**. These are deep and dramatic stories born of their very nature and roots.

The Myth and the Inner Garden

According to Greek mythology, *the Hesperides* were **the nymphs of the sunset** who guarded a sacred garden of fruit trees and golden apples that granted immortality. Classical accounts placed this oasis at the western edges of the world, whether in the south of the Iberian Peninsula or in the Moroccan Atlas Mountains — hence the perfect geographical duality of this project.

In this work, our *Garden of the Hesperides* symbolises the inner universe of woman in a universal way, **regardless of culture, religion or era**. From a dreamlike and deeply poetic perspective, the show unveils that intimate refuge that every woman builds for herself in order to dream, rest, catch her breath and rebuild her own identity; a vital space to carry on and, at times, to survive. Because **the garden only blossoms once darkness has been known**.





Identity, Ancestry and Rituals

The work connects the universality of womanhood with the powerful visual and cultural imagery of **the women of Morocco**, a land deeply tied to the ancestral, the sacred, ritual and a sense of community. To return to the essence of woman is to return to the origin, to the primal source of life.

Drawing on the experience and reality of **Moroccan women**, the piece seeks to tear down the walls of cultural prejudice. The stage recreates this garden through a collective female imaginary that retrieves everyday rituals and unique traditions:

- **Women at the Hammam:** a space of purification, shared confidences, intimacy and mutual care.
- **Women weavers:** craftswomen of rugs and guardians of myths, keepers of a vast oral tradition, of the symbols of the Berber alphabet and of the writing of dreams.

The women who gather seaweed from the sea, the independent women, the illiterate women who still exist and the educated ones. The young women and those who are no longer so young, the artists.

3. Literary Architecture and Linguistic Polyphony

The work portrays a universe through the language of the body in movement and a rich linguistic plurality in which **Spanish, French and Darija** (Moroccan Arabic) converge. By observing history and activating collective memory, we recognise situations that repeat themselves across different societies; realities that feel familiar to us despite cultural distances. To move forward, it is only a matter of time and of the legitimate struggle that belongs to women in whatever part of the world they inhabit.

To give voice to these realities in a universal and timeless way, the work draws on **texts by great women writers, poets and philosophers from different eras**, interwoven with real testimonies and stories gathered from Moroccan women:

- **María Zambrano**
- **Clarice Lispector**
- **Malika Assimi**
- **Maya Angelou**
- **Paola Masino**
- **Carmen Boulosa**

The Facets of the Hesperides and the Stage Atmosphere

Through this polyphony, the show unveils the many faces of our Hesperides:

- The dreaming woman**
- The woman in love**
- The resilient, fighting woman**
- The working woman**
- The solitary woman**
- The independent woman**



This human journey describes a garden defined by the sensorial presence of water, the art of fabrics, rugs and a vibrant, colour-filled wardrobe.

It is a space inhabited by red dust, the strength of the **BODY** and the truth of the **VOICE**, where youth and maturity hold a dialogue.

An atmosphere built from popular songs, ancestral rituals and scents that invite the performers and the **AUDIENCE** to share stories and tales.

— **Alicia Soto**

*"Everything begins with a woman's body and the desire to feel life
Only afterwards do fear and the greed to possess and dominate
take hold Freedom and fearlessness frighten those who have never
set out on a journey But the deep blood patiently digs out the
place of the flower that will become a star*

*In every womb the call of the garden echoes, primordial and
eternal And despite the dangers, the abandonment and the
weariness, From grains of sand and droplets of tears, new roots
and another sky are invented"*

Julio Martín da Fonseca





4. Synergy and Multicultural Artistic Cast

The true soul of this project lies in the strength of a **diverse performing cast** and in a **network of creators** who have managed to fuse their visions from both shores of the Mediterranean. On stage, the piece comes alive thanks to the talent and physicality of an exceptional group of **actress-dancers** made up of **Lorenza di Calogero, Paloma Calderón, Sanae Assif, Ester Lozano and Alicia Soto**.

This choreographic and human journey is deeply enriched by the valuable contributions of a team of top-level artistic collaborators. In the conceptualisation, dramaturgy and development of the staging and visual space, the perspectives of **Carmen Kostina, Julio Martín da Fonseca, Miguel Ángel Camacho, Abdellah M. Hassak, Abdellah Chakiri and Elisa Sanz** come together. Together, they shape a creative fabric in which each discipline converses in perfect harmony.

5. Project Development Phases

- **Phase 1: Social Research Laboratories (February 2020)**

- **Locations:** Casablanca (Morocco) and Valladolid (Spain).
- **Action:** Meetings and choreographic workshops with Moroccan and Spanish women to gather the lived experiences, oral traditions and rituals that underpin the work's imaginary world.

- **Phase 2: Artistic Residencies and Co-creation (Mid-2020)**

- **Locations:** Théâtre Ain Harrouda (Casablanca), Serrada Cultural Centre and Teatro Calderón in Valladolid.
- **Action:** Studio work focused on choreographic composition, the design of the living sculpture with the five performers, and the development of the digital sound environment.

- **Phase 3: World Premiere and International Tour (September 2020)**

- **Premiere Venue:** Teatro Calderón, Valladolid (25 and 26 September 2020).
- **Tour Highlights:** Subsequent performances at Teatro Principal de Burgos, Teatro La Nave del Duende (Cáceres), the Mohammed V National Theatre in Rabat and the Mohammed VI Theatre in Casablanca.





Reviews and Specialist Critiques

The impact of ***The Garden of the Hesperides*** transcends borders, earning the unanimous endorsement of performing arts analysts and specialised press both nationally and along its international tour.

Prestigious International Review: **Bachtrack Magazine (London)**

"A show rich in dance imagery and emotionally very powerful... A universal reflection on female identity... The choreography created by Alicia Soto features powerful images and symbols."

— **Cristina de Lucas** (*Academic of the Performing Arts and critic for the London-based magazine Bachtrack*) — March 2021

Spain: Press and National Reception

"A step forward in her career. A reflection on women of any condition and ethnicity, from any part of the world."

— *Carlos Toquero, Theatre Review (Valladolid) - November 2020*

"That island lies within every woman... The actress-dancers are excellent. The original music, the lighting and the theatrical direction are remarkable."

— *Carlos Toquero, Theatre Review (Valladolid) - November 2020*

"Alicia Soto's choreographic work succeeds in conveying to the audience a true experience of synaesthesia."

— *Margarita Muñoz Zielinski, La Verdad de Murcia - 3 February 2021*

"That garden becomes the inner self of women who are free, brave, strong and independent... The finale is an explosion of joy."

— *Margarita Muñoz Zielinski, La Verdad de Murcia - 3 February 2021*

 **Tunisia: Theatres of the World Festival (Tunisian National Theatre)**

"A look at the feminist struggle against restrictions... A sensorial and contemplative experience that dazzled the audience."

— *Backstage newspaper (Mohamed Sami) - 21 March 2025*

"With an innovative artistic vision, director Alicia Soto rewrites this story, turning the 'garden' into an inner space for every woman."

— *Backstage newspaper (Mohamed Sami) - 21 March 2025*

"A sensorial and introspective odyssey that leads spectators through the labyrinths of the female soul."

— *Le Quotidien - 21 March 2025*

"The show stands out for a subtle fusion of the visual and the musical. Through the union of myth and modernity, The Garden of the Hesperides asserts itself as a deeply committed work, carrying a message of emancipation and female solidarity."

— *Le Quotidien - 21 March 2025*

 **Iraq: VI Baghdad International Theatre Festival (Iraqi Ministry of Culture)**

"The mastery of the work is revealed in the unity of its intellectual, aesthetic and dramatic discourse."

— *Kurdistan (Arslan Darwish) - October 2025*

"It is not confined to acting or dance, but expands into a philosophical and poetic experience that conceived space, time and the body as interconnected entities."

— *Kurdistan (Arslan Darwish) - October 2025*

"Thus, from its very title, the work wages its 'feminist' battle both aesthetically and intellectually."

— *Hoshank Waziri (Lectura analítica de la representación teatral) - November 2025*



Artistic Credits

A garden brought to life thanks to the outstanding work of a top-tier artistic team, made up of names such as **Alicia Soto** herself — creator, choreographer, dramaturg and performer; **Julio Martín da Fonseca**, in charge of theatre direction; the renowned **Elisa Sanz**, designer of the set and costumes and holder of 8 Max Awards — having won yet another this year, 2020 — who has designed the entire wardrobe of the piece; and the distinguished designer **Miguel Ángel Camacho**, also the recipient of several Max Awards.

Paloma Calderón, dancer nominated for Best Female Performer at the 2020 Max Awards; **Lorenza di Calogero**, winner of Best Dancer 2019 at the Performing Arts Awards of the Generalitat Valenciana.

Creation and choreography: **Alicia Soto**

Dramaturgy: **Alicia Soto, Julio Martín da Fonseca and Carmen Samudio Kostina**

Theatre direction: **Julio Martín da Fonseca**

Performers: **Lorenza Di Calogero, Paloma Calderón, Sanae Assif, Ester Lozano and Alicia Soto**

Texts: **Carmen Samudio Kostina, other authors**

Original music: **Abdellah M. Hassak**

Lighting design: **Miguel Ángel Camacho**

Technical operator: **Paloma Cavilla**

Costume design: **Elisa Sanz**

Cover: **Ana Lola Cosin**

Photography: **Luis A. Barajas**

Video: **Mundimag**

Communications: **PreciseFuture SL**

Production: **João Sousa Marques and Marina Arranz**

Administration: **Sofía García Fernández and Virginia Grigelmo**

Management: **João Sousa Marques**

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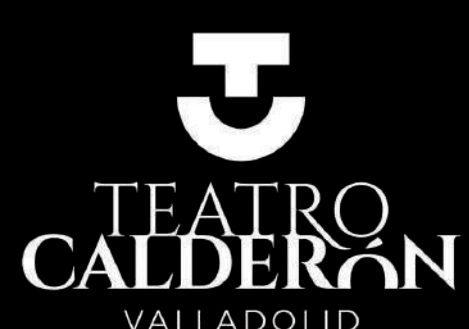


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AN INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTION WITH DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY: ALICIA SOTO

WITH THE SUPPORT OF:



WITH THE COLLABORATION OF:



COMPANY FUNDED BY INAEM AND THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF CASTILE AND LEÓN

