

## Q&A: KAREN RUIMY

Karen Ruimy is a dancer, musician, author and charity campaigner. She tells **Katie Gregory** about *Karen Ruimy Presents*, a dance show due to run in London in early 2014

### Tell us about your latest show.

It's a real mix of styles. I wanted to express my Arabic roots – I was born in Morocco – as well as flamenco, which is my passion. There's also a Sufi influence and an element of contemporary dance and music. As usual, it started from a small, organic idea and has become something much bigger!

### You gave up a high-flying career in finance to pursue your artistic passions. What have you learned along the way?

That you must follow your intuition. When you have an artistic passion – when something is burning inside of you – you just have to do it. You won't survive otherwise.

### What barriers did you have to overcome?

Nobody believed me at first. They didn't think you could successfully bridge the gap between two such different worlds – finance and art. Plus, there was the

age issue – I'm not old, but I'm old for a dancer. The magic of flamenco, though, is you can dance whatever your age. You have to work harder, yes, but as long as you have the drive, you can do it.

### What did it feel like to put on your first stage show at the Théâtre de Paris?

It was completely exhilarating. It was more than ten years ago now, and I actually went into writing before that. But I had always been passionate about my

dancing and decided to create a show with my teachers. It was a dream come true for me.

### Fast-forward to 2013 – what has been your highlight of the past year?

I recorded a jazz record with Phil Ramone, the legendary record producer. I also continued my work with the GREAT initiative – which stands for Gender Rights and Equality Action Trust – and which I founded, with Mariella Frostrup, five years ago.

### What projects are you working on for 2014?

I'm planning my next dance show, and also working on a TV programme that's in the pipeline – it's about realising your potential.

### Lastly, if you could have three wishes granted, what would they be?

I'd like to see a more peaceful world, to create an amazing show for 2014, and to see my children flourish. ●

Visit [www.karenruimy.com](http://www.karenruimy.com) to find out more about Karen Ruimy, and for details of *Karen Ruimy Presents*.



Karen Ruimy dances in *Sangre*