

- KAREN MORASH

MAYRA ANDRADE AND SON DE LA FRONTERA **The Barbican, Silk Street, EC2**

THE BEAUTIFUL 23-year-old Cape Verdean, Mayra Andrade, and the Andalusian flamenco five-piece, Son de la Frontera, are both nominees for BBC Radio 3 Awards for World Music – Andrade for Newcomer and Son de la Frontera for Europe.

The double bill at the Barbican was packed and the double encore testament to the quality of this gig. Son de la Frontera (Sound of the Frontier) is a flamenco band with a twist. Band leader Raúl Rodríguez pairs his Cuban tres-guitar with flamenco-guitar to bring a Latin American element to the more traditional sound.

Whether dueting or being accompanied by Moi de Moron on vocals and other members on compas, this band's mesmerising rhythms make flamenco seem fresh and exciting. After the high of Son de la Frontera's set, Mayra Andrade's low key West African beats seemed rather uninspiring.

But as Andrade warmed up, so did the atmosphere and by the end of the two-encore evening, the Barbican audience was utterly charmed.

- JO CAIRD

ISLINGTON GAZETTE 3/4/08