

Flamencos en route Dance Company

Artistic Director: Brigitta Luisa Merki

canto amor

The Myth of Orpheus – a Dance Project in Musical Theater Form

Premiere: 2 March 2012, Theaterhaus Stuttgart

“canto amor” Dossier



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Production

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– a Dance Project
in Musical Theater Form

Choreography in Five Scenes



The internationally renowned dance and music ensemble Flamencos en route presents a new interpretation of the myth of the tragic love story of Orpheus and Eurydice. In five scenes, the choreography by Brigitta Luisa Merki vividly portrays her own view of the traditional story from ancient Greece.

Eurydice finds a new existence after death in a fascinating world of sound, in paradise, a world she does not want to be freed from. Orpheus comes looking for her in the realm of shadows and she hears of his longing for her. However, she guides him out of the realm of shadows and back into the world of the living with her enchanting song.

Orpheus is interpreted by the flamenco dancer José Moro. Together with the Swedish violinist Erik Rydvall, who plays a medieval violin-type instrument called Nyckelharpa, Moro embodies the power of music.

Eurydice is portrayed by Katima Nayt, the charismatic singer and contemporary dancer from Algeria. Death is a unique character, danced with great musicality and precision by Eloy Aguilar – an interpretation which leaves no room for dark clichés.

In addition to the outstanding main characters, the dance ensemble renders an excellent performance not only in the flamenco, but also masters the branching out into other styles.

The musicians masterfully interact with the dance and make a significant contribution to the final outcome of this work of art.

The stage design by renowned sculptor Gillian White adds an ever-changing variety of representational forms to the diverse art forms already present in the production. Flamenco, oriental, and contemporary western music and dance merge into a unique auditory and visual world and become one – resulting in a touching production that captivates its audiences.

Press comments

... magnificent interpretation of the myth or Orpheus – a dance theater with strong, poetic images ...

... through a fusion of various styles and time periods Merki creates a new form of mythical theater with a precise symbolic language. Although Merki's mythical theater is dominated by the vocabulary of the flamenco dance, its expressive quality far surpasses the range of moods and virtuosity portrayed by the dance. In a very organic manner she complements the traditional Alegrias and Zapateados with jumps and affectionately performed lifts.

The softly glowing, natural colors of the stage, the costumes, and the light all complement the suggestive, precise images. Adornments transform into animated gestures, the flamenco turns into Dance Theater.

"Magazin Tanz" (Dance Magazine), August/September 2012, Angela Reinhardt



Team

Dance**Orpheus** José Moro**Eurydice** Karima Nayt**Death** Eloy Aguilar**Ensemble** Carmen Iglesias, Raquel Lamadrid,
David Coria, Daniel Hernandez,
Ricardo Moro**Music****Singers** Karima Nayt, Rocío Soto, Irina Ungureanu**Guitar** Juan Gomez, Pascual de Lorca**Percussion** Fredrik Gille**Nyckelharpa** Erik Rydvall**Choreography** Brigitta Luisa Merki**Costumes** Carmen Perez Mateos**Stage sculpture** Gillian White**Lighting** Veit Kälin**Sound** Markus Luginbühl**Production** Peter Hartmeier**Communication** Judith Voegele**Photos** Alex Spichale

Tour Dates

Tanzcompagnie
Flamencos en route
canto amor

The Myth of Orpheus
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Choreography in Five Scenes

Fall / Winter 2012

Aarau, Alte Reithalle
20–29 September 2012

Baden, Kurtheater
9 and 10 November 2012

Lucerne, KKL
11 November 2012

Birsfelden, Theater Roxy
29 November–2 Dezember 2012

Stuttgart/Germany, Theaterhaus
12–6 December 2012

Zug, Theater Casino
21 March 2013



canto amor **Orpheus and Eurydice, the Story from Ancient Greece**

Orpheus enchants everyone with his charms – even the underworld is touched by his art. The love between him and the wood nymph Eurydice does not last long since she accidentally steps on a snake and dies. A desperate Orpheus descends into the world of the dead to get her back. His voice and lyre excite the gods and cause the guards to have mercy and let him enter. Hades and his wife grant him the return of Eurydice under one condition: on the way back up into the world Orpheus may not turn around for Eurydice. But as Orpheus cannot hear the footsteps of her shadow following behind him, he looks back and loses her. Orpheus and his art are at the center of the ancient myth, while Eurydice only plays a minor role. Her death only serves to drive him to maximum artistic performance, expressed in songs and lamentations. The gods know that suffering and longing will turn Orpheus into an inspired artist – which is why they have him lose Eurydice.

Orpheus, the Flamenco Dancer

The seemingly unlimited energy of the flamenco dancer symbolizes the creative-positive power of Orpheus. The expressive, rhythmic stamping of the feet grows from a ritual to a captivating trance and is perfectly suited to translate the magical effect of Orpheus' songs. His wandering into the underworld and attempt to bring his beloved back to life is not seen as a failure; it can rather be interpreted as a metaphor for life and death as two equals, which are connected as well as separated by a threshold, a door or a passage.



Choreography

... She was deep within herself, like a woman heavy with child,
and did not see the man in front
or the path ascending steeply into life.
Deep within herself. Being dead
filled her beyond fulfillment.
Like a fruit suffused with its own mystery and sweetness ...

From Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke, edited and with translation
by Stephen Mitchell, Random House, 1982

Eurydice, Dancer and Singer

Of all the texts and poems about the Orpheus myth that accompanied Brigitta Luisa Merki in the working process of this project, she was most notably influenced by the poems and views of Rainer Maria Rilke.

In his poem, Rilke expresses the idea that death can be understood as a fulfilled state of being.

Eurydice has arrived in her new existence and does not want to be released from this state of "being-by-her-self", which, according to Rilke, is the highest form of being. Instead, she claims this paradise for herself. Inspired by Rilke's view, Eurydice occupies a central role in "canto amor".

Her sensitive singing and her dancing with him make Orpheus happy, until death enters her life wholly unexpectedly and tears her away from him.

By walking through the door of paradise she crosses the threshold into a new world and initiates her transformation.

In "canto amor" the dancer Eurydice leaves her dancing self after she dies and immerses in a new world of sound. Not only does Eurydice claim this new, inspiring world that is kind to her – she also insists on her autonomy.

Choreography

Her creativity unfolds in her departure and her confrontation with the new dimensions. Eurydice is now not only the object of the longing and love of Orpheus. She still hears his song of passion as he is searching for her in the realm of shadows. Her haunting singing also expresses her grief over losing her beloved. However, she insists on accompanying him back to his world – and out of the world which is now hers.

**Crossing into Another World,
One's Very Own Paradise**

Arriving in a new place always means saying goodbye to the old. A new life can only succeed if the old is thoroughly concluded. Many cultures offer guidance in rituals: by opening a door or performing an initiation or inauguration ritual so that death can be experienced as crossing over a threshold.



The Flamencos en route Dance Company

**Flamencos en route
Dance Company**

www.flamencos-enroute.com

The Flamencos en route dance company is known in the European dance scene for its unique and continuous development of a distinctive dance language which is based on Spanish dance. Both nationally and internationally, the company has earned a reputation for its independent approach and high artistic standards.

The name Flamencos en route says it all: to embark on a never-ending journey. This basic principle points to a lively and open future. It aims at creating independent, contemporary dance and music productions which are based on the spirit and essence of flamenco, but still maintain their own distinct flavor.

Since its foundation, the company has produced 30 stage productions which were presented on tours in Switzerland and abroad as well as at dance and music festivals. Brigitta Luisa Merki, the artistic director and choreographer of the Flamencos en route dance company, was awarded with the Hans Reinhart Ring in 2004.



Links and Informations

For more information on Flamencos en route, the dancers, singers and performers, please visit the website www.flamencos-enroute.com

Find more reviews and photo material on “canto amor” and other productions under the following link: <http://www.flamencos-enroute.com/33-1-Press.html>