

International

La Sylphide

Ballet Éstable del Teatro Colón, Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires – August 20, 2019

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE'S MISTY COPELAND and Herman Cornejo were invited to appear in the Ballet Estable del Teatro Colón's production of *La Sylphide*, but, unfortunately, due to injury, Copeland was unable to perform. She was replaced by the Argentinean Macarena Giménez and, while many had bought tickets to see Copeland, the truth is that when the announcement about her replacement was made to the audience, it applauded warmly. The applause was totally justified: Giménez' performance, together with that of Cornejo and the Colón, was simply perfect.

This version of *La Sylphide*, chosen by director Paloma Herrera, is not the ballet

by August Bournonville, but Pierre Lacotte's reconstruction of Filippo Taglioni's 1832 production for the Paris Opéra, originally danced by his daughter, Marie. It was first performed at the Colón in 1974 under the direction of Lacotte himself, and was last seen in Buenos Aires in 2012. Lacotte captures the Romantic style in all its detail and complexity: there are two acts (one set in the real world, the other in a supernatural kingdom), with dancers dressed in white as the Sylphs, and their arms curved and torsos tilted forwards.

The plot is well-known: set in Scotland, a Sylphide appears to young James on the eve of his wedding to Effie. The young man is conflicted between his desire for her and his duty to his fiancée. Desire wins the day, and James runs

into the forest, chasing after the spirit. Their romantic encounter, of course, ends in tragedy, but the staging, along with the sets and costumes, was perfect.

Giménez and Cornejo were harmonious and communicative in the leading roles. She, moreover, appeared to be a natural for the role. She moved through the moods of her character with grace and elegance; sometimes playful and cheerful, she was also flirtatiously in love with James. Technically, Giménez allowed the romantic style to flow smoothly and naturally through her body, as if she had always danced in that way. Her balance was aerial and delicate.

Cornejo had great stage presence and a fine technique made up of pure lines and determination. Absolutely integrated into the company with which he was performing, he danced the role with elegance.

Alongside the leading couple, the soloists and

the corps de ballet shone. Camila Bocca danced Effie with self assurance and charm, especially during a beautiful moment in the pas de trois with James and the Sylph, in which the magical creature intervenes but can be seen only by him. Edgardo Trabalón was also very good as Gurn, and the same can be said of Natalia Pelayo and David Gómez, who danced the pas de deux during the wedding scene. The corps de ballet showed precision, dexterity, agility and commitment, and were entirely delicious as the Sylphs in Act II.

La Sylphide allowed the Ballet Estable del Teatro Colón to show off its interpretative and technical skills. This revival of one of the glories of the Romantic age was very fine, and left the audience with a complete sense of satisfaction.

MARIETTA SANTI

Below: Macarena Giménez and Herman Cornejo in the Ballet del Teatro Colón's staging of Pierre Lacotte's *La Sylphide*.

