

Joffrey Ballet presents 'Othello'



Othello

Photo courtesy of Herbert Migdoll

The Joffrey Ballet will perform "Othello" through May 5.

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The Joffrey Ballet jumps into the Chicago performance spotlight for the next two weeks with its compelling production of "Othello."

"This is a powerful piece and it's the last chance to see this production" at least for awhile, said Ashley C. Wheeler, Joffrey Artistic Director.

"Othello," starring choreography by Lar Lubovitch, runs through May 5 at the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago. Wheeler said the three-act dance tells the popular story of Othello, Desdemona and Iago, considered one of Shakespeare's greatest works, and thrusts it in the spotlight through the mediums of classical ballet and "bold contemporary movement."

In addition to Shakespeare's work, Lubovitch also based the production on Geraldo Cintio's "The Moor," and Verdi's "Othello."

Wheeler said he "admires" Lubovitch's choreography and feels its dramatic and poignant touches are perfect for the theatrical and passion-fueled storyline.

The artistic director said this production of "Othello" is in keeping with the Joffrey's mission of delivering eclectic works to audiences.

"Othello" was last performed by The Joffrey in 2009 and holds a special place in Wheeler's heart. It was the first full-length production he added to the company's repertoire. While Wheeler, a native of the U.K., joined the Joffrey as a dancer in '85, he became the artistic director in 2007.

Starring as Othello in the Joffrey's version will be Fabrice Calmels and Dylan Gutierrez, who'll rotate performances. April Daly and Victoria Jaiani will star as Desdemona during the run. While the Joffrey as a company has long viewed its company of dancers as stars in their own right without totally singling various artists out, Wheeler said Calmels and Gutierrez are powerhouse performers in the "Othello" role.

The Joffrey Ballet will perform "Othello" through May 5 at The Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Parkway, Chicago. Tickets are \$31 to \$152. For more information, call (800) 982-2787 or visit ticketmaster.com