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Performing Arts: Dance

LAR LUBOVITCH DANCE

October 11, 2013

Three unique duets and the tour de force Men's Stories celebrated Lar Lubovitch and 45 seasons of musical and moving dance at the Joyce. The soulful clarinet duet, by Mozart, Concerto Six Twenty-Two, opened the evening with the quiet companionship of Tobin Del Cuore and Attila Joey Csiki. Their subtle embraces, interlocking arms, and generous amplitude of their solos made for a gentle transition from real world to that of the theater.

In Vez, (a re-working of the 1989 Fandango) Clifton Brown and Nicole Corea appeared sensual and dynamic. Held aloft in Mr. Brown's articulate and buff arms, Ms. Corea seemed to be both an instrument he was playing and the musical counterpoint. Clad in black velvet cropped tops and legging the couple was sleek and yet fiery, smoldering at times, yet glowing. Elements of the tango were in evidence and collaborated nicely with the new score by Randall Woolf, which was performed to live guitar and voice of Gyan Riley and Melissa Hughes.

A third duet, The Time Before The Time After, was the oldest piece, from 1970, yet it seemed not only fresh but the inspiration for so many other choreographers who have come after Mr. Lubovitch. Dancing a tempestuous pas de deux, Katarzyna Skarpetowska and Reed Luplau expressed the effort it takes to maintain a serious relationship. At times they melted into one another, only to become agitated and frustrated, tempting and goading one another. Ms. Skarpetowska looked broken by the end, yet knowingly caressed Mr. Luplau.

The second half of the program was devoted to Men's Stories, A Concerto in Ruins. Nine men dance to original music in an audio collage by Scott Marshall, expressing simple elegance and physical prowess of male dancing. Wearing black jackets, pants, shirts and ties, the formal attire sets the scene as the actions of brotherhood unfold.

Through the exquisite port de bras and juicy, yet crisp moves of Clifton Brown, the youthful ardor of Anthony Bocconi, the passionate and clearly etched dance drama of Mr. Csiki, and the bravura technique and synchronicity of Mr. Luplau-- the piece both develops and unravels.

All nine men inhabit the piece, and yet Mr. Lubovitch's signature movements are visible. From the low attitude back with wind-swept arms and high chest arcing in space, to the elliptical arms, and the ever present circular nature of his work, the piece builds, virtually popping with male energy and sensitivity. It's easy to understand why Men's Stories, A Concerto in Ruins is considered a classic.

EYE ON THE ARTS, NY -- Deborah Wingert