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Ludens Ludy

Starting from the traditional circus, "*Nebbia*" by Daniele Finzi Pasca brings together theatre, drama, music and showmanship.

By VERA MILARKA

A game has never been so professional. This affirmation is not a quote from Jose Ra, but refers to the fact that the simplicity and freedom of the *homo ludens* was shown in all its splendour in "*Nebbia*", a hybrid of theatre-acrobatics-dance-music-showmanship-circus presented through two unique shows at the Teatro de las Artes of CENART, last week.

The audience that came to this show, the third part of the "El Cielo" trilogy, directed by Daniele Finzi Pasca under the umbrella of Cirque Eloize based out of Montreal and in co-production with the Teatro Sunil of Switzerland, was fundamentally people devoted to clown acts, pantomime and expression of the body, in addition to some children.

This provided a very favourable framework for receiving the company, and communication flowed like a river of emotions that moved from laughter to nostalgia, moving from surprise to amazement.

This range of emotions comes from the basic nature of the set structure, designed in the manner of a traditional circus. In fact, it is full of images and concepts - we would say retro - of acrobatic numbers from the past and what could be the circus of the 19th century, combined into an extraordinarily minimalist contemporary structure, and therefore with a high artistic value.

The fog is the *leit motiv* of the scenery, which although does not have a linear story - the visual scenes work independently - they do have a common theme. The fog is white, the opacity of memories, the cataracts of the grandmother's eyes, an

environment where things appear and disappear behind a sheet of will that is not human but rather of nature. Niebla "tells" of the events of a place (that could be any location in Colombia, Xalapa in Mexico) where people take out a white handkerchief to say goodbye, because there - it is said - goodbye can be "forever".

Finzi, as the director and creator of several shows, among them those created for Cirque du Soleil and the closing ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Turin (2006), accurately defines each part of his actors/acrobats. There are no wasted images and no failures.

Everything is balanced within an order of opposite tensions in consonance: the chromatic scale of the dress with the textures or images, which are impressive scenes, whose beauty creates collective dreams.

A presenter serves as a connection between one scene and another, in addition to telling what happens in that town where people, when they leave, may never see each other again (a metaphor of cities and towns where, for example, drug dealers have changed the daily goodbye into a symbolic farewell to the next life, and so they are our Latin American towns - "phantoms").

The group of actors, dancers, musicians, acrobats and even contortionists make up an interesting mosaic of Latin nations, in addition to the Canadian members. The narrative is done in Spanish and this is why (among other reasons) there are the lasting emotional ties in the memory of the audience members.

The general poetry is not only sustained by the aesthetics of its images, but also by the incisive range of sentimentality that is imprinted with each scene, whether comical or revealing the understanding of a man (the village "idiot") with whom a human group shows its solidarity by dressing in a tutu.

However, more than all of the theatrical mechanics, the stage design, the variety of body resources, the live music or the talent of the cast, there is the "magic ingredient", the absolute simplicity of the radically "spontaneous": the pure form of the game (*Ludens Ludy*).

Creating the aesthetic notion of what is caused by a simple leap on a jumping bed, making the result appear to be tragic, but creating a dialogue and a message, is the most impacting achievement of Finzi. What is masterly overpowering from the show is to witness the essence of human excitement in its highest expression.

nebbia

Written and Directed by DANIELE FINZI PASCA