

FRANÇOISE NYDEGGER

24 heures
Geneva (SWITZERLAND)
December 6, 2007

The world premiere of *Nebbia* was performed in Geneva Tuesday, thrilling the audience.



DR | The acrobats feel carried away by the music played live by performers who cheerfully move from the trapeze or the trampoline to the violin or accordion.

Genevans are familiar with fog. There's no need to paint them a picture. But *Nebbia*, its Italian version, is something completely different. Particularly when it floats over the stage at the Théâtre du Léman, making way for amazing acrobatic heights and the wildest of dreams. Tuesday evening, the world premiere of the creation by Cirque Éloize and Teatro Sunil demonstrated that this fog had nerve, guts, poetry and heart. At the end of the performance, the enthusiastic audience waved white handkerchiefs as a devilish saraband, performed by artists wearing carnivalesque tutus, caught in the snow, came to an end.

Dreams and buffoons

Fellini had already used the fog to give his imagination free rein. Daniele Finzi Pasca, Tician author and director of *Nebbia*, is following in his footsteps. To his childhood memories, he adds his dreams and a few charismatic characters, including his grandmother, who is often evoked by the evening's bamboozling buffoon, the excellent Gonzalo. A jack of all trades performer, he handles the intermissions in front of the curtain, giving the artists behind the curtain the time they need to prepare the next number.

Quietly, this bearded buffoon with the impossible accent weaves a close tie with the audience, the bond of village festivals in days gone by, of the grandmother and the simpleton. This narrative, both tender and humorous, structures the entire show, and gives it meaning. It sets the performance, which flirts ostensibly with the clouds, firmly on the ground.

Flight and contortion

"The fog is an adventure!" the story-teller warns us. This is confirmed throughout the show, through fifteen numbers where esthetics and thoroughness hit the bull's eye. And, even though most of the numbers are superbly aerial, between flights with straps, dances using fabrics and dolls spinning on their trapezes, other performers opt for more horizontal performances. The hula hoop, as practiced by Stephane Gentilini in this work, is a moment out of time. As is the performance by the contortionist, whose movements are so unnatural they cause the audience to grimace. As a result of a tight cinematographic framework, the trampoline number renews the art, with angels who literally fall from the sky or who, on the contrary, take flight, with mystical, comical momentum.

It's not possible to list all eleven *Nebbia* performers here, who all excel at their disciplines and are multi-talented. Many of them play the marimba, violin or accordion, supporting the other acrobats and balancing artists as they perform. The music, moreover, plays a major role, alternating between the symphony recording played full blast and popular ambiences. This is all enhanced by screened lighting and diaphanous veils which create the impression of persistent fog. But ever so magical!

Nebbia, Cirque Éloize and Teatro Sunil, Théâtre du Léman (formerly the Grand Casino Genève), Quai du Mont-Blanc, until December 15, loc. Ticketcorner, Fnac.

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