

PostGazette.Com (Arts & Entertainment section)

Short Takes: 'Black Nativity,' Flamenco, Camerata in superior form

Tuesday, December 05, 2006

[...]

'Flamenco'

If the audience at Manchester Craftsmen's Guild was to be believed on Saturday night, flamenco was back in a big way. Jazz music's hothouse was playing host to a production under the artistic direction of Edwin Aparicio, who heads the Arte Flamenco company* in Washington, D.C., and local sponsorship of the Guitar Society of Fine Arts.

Although the heel-clicking popularity of flamenco has never matched Jose Greco's heyday in the '50s, the torrid flames of this Spanish art form periodically erupt in Pittsburgh, most notably with Pittsburgh Dance Council's "Noche Flamenco" and Pilar Rioja and the Poetry Forum's "Mano a Mano," with Samuel Hazo's original script based on famed toreador Manolete.

Aparicio brought "Entresueno," described as "a world between waking and dreaming, where memories blur and mix with imagination, and reality gives way to dreams."

Pocketed with slow swirling walks, the theme provided a loosely bound reason for a series of vividly athletic solos, accompanied by guitarists Richard Marlow and Pedro Cortes, who provided a riveting original score, and vocalists Jesus Montoya and Felix de Lola. Three women accompanied Aparicio -- the firebrand Anna Menendez, the supple Genevieve Guinn and the uncommonly sinuous Nelida Tirado.

While the audience was wildly receptive from the start of Marlow's free-form guitar solo, Aparicio took it to another level in his final dance. He resembles speed skater Apolo Anton Ohno in a way, and delivers another kind of speed, along the lines of Irish dancer Michael Flatley, with flurries of repetitively athletic rhythmic patterns.

It was a kind of flamenco that was vividly muscular and somehow essentially American.

~Jane Vranish

[...]

*Ms.Varnish erroneously notes that Edwin Aparicio heads the "Arte Flamenco" company. The director of "Arte Flamenco" is Natalia Monteleon.

