

REVIEW: Tango Inferno sets the stage ablaze

Ten dancers, a four-piece orchestra, and a single vocalist from Buenos Aires, Argentina made for an explosive night of wonder at the Byham Theater on Saturday, February 12th. To say that Tango Inferno was hot is an understatement.

Director Yanina Fajar and Assistant Director German Cornejo choreographed much of the show. Tango Inferno showcased their artistic vision but also their artistry in execution. Both Fajar and Conejo performed as part of the company.

The first half of the show sparked a contained fire that introduced us to the entire company. We are privy to a collage of all ten dancers as they purposefully happen upon each other in a social setting, complete with tables, chairs, a live band, and a singer. The strength, agility, passion, and grace of each dancer, both male and female, are almost immediately obvious.

The show is interspersed with the beautiful, sultry sounds of vocalist Jesus Hidalgo and the violin, piano, bandoneon (looks like an accordion), and double bass of the orchestra, Quatrotnago. It was quite fascinating to find myself so enraptured by these unfamiliar melodies and lyrics in an unknown tongue. Hidalgo and Quatrotnago were like gasoline to a heat that was already beginning to rise, as the flames were fanned by fast and fancy footwork. Yet this was a mere campfire, prelude to the forest fire to come.

We are sizzling as we leave the contained fire of the social scene in the first half and meet with the unbridled and unparalleled feats of dance in the second half. Even the costumes become increasingly elaborate as does the almost acrobatic movement we wouldn't have believed if not seen with our own eyes.

"The tango cannot be danced individually; the woman seduces and the man leads. He protects and supports her, while she elaborates and outlines the dance breaking balance and resting on his chest."

They say it takes two to Tango and as evidenced by these five couples, it takes two with amazing chemistry to get the temperature to the fever pitch of this second half. With each couple the audience seems to combust all over again, boiling up and over with amazement- oohs, aahhs, and applause escaped like steam without reservation. Each pair has been dancing together for many years and it shows as the sensuality of their chemistry burns before us. Their expertise is evident in that each couple choreographed their own dance.

By the end of the show we are consumed, burned beyond the recognition of what we imagined tango could be. A final black out is followed by a spontaneous explosion of an ovation. Nothing could extinguish the thrill of such an outstanding performance.

Special thanks to Gus Mathews, the Beaver falls Kia Hamster of the Ron Lewis Automotive Group, for giving me the opportunity to witness such greatness.