

CORRIERE DELLA SERA

MILANO

Infinite Gestures and Impalpable Geometries for Alonzo the King *June 2, 2009*

Smash hit at Adda Danza: two dazzling European premiers were brought to the festival “MilanOltre” [Beyond Milan], in a weekend that witnessed dance being liberated from its usual rarefied atmosphere by Alonzo King’s Lines Ballet, flown in from San Francisco to perform at the Centrale Taccani theater of Trezzo sull’Adda. This was the company’s single Italian engagement in a tour that proceeds to theatres in Jerusalem, Rouen (France), and Monte Carlo.

The potentially infinite arcs traced by the dancers’ gestures are paired with complicated steps that are never compromised, which surprise the audience by suddenly involving elbows and knees; by becoming aerial geometries drawn by legs and bodies that open like compasses, in a continual rhythm of whirling, leaping, grasping and intertwining, holding and abandoning. At the court of Alonzo the King, classical ballet conquers our frenetic modern reality, expands its athleticism and its technique—and, in the end, gives us the gift of a utopia made tangible, of a humanity in which opposites exceed their limits to achieve a beauty that pervades everything.

The diptych of two evenings unfolded four different visions by Mr. King, while he sat in the last row of the theater, rapt as his eight magnificent dancers performed. These dancers are prodigious in their technique as well as their personal qualities. Among them are the exceptionally imposing, otherworldly dancers Meredith Webster and Corey Scott-Gilbert (*in photo*): she resembles Nichole Kidman on pointe, while he could be mistaken for a hyper-flexible Denzel Washington.

Refined and glamorous, *Irregular Pearl* is comprised of duets and trios set to sonatas by Vivaldi, Handel, and Scarlatti, in homage to the Baroque—and wonderfully so. Sensual and percussive, *Rasa* is draped in orange organza and set to the Indian tabla music of Zakir Hussain. Ethnic and surprising, *Signs and Wonders*, with a score of traditional African music, was a European premiere, as was *Dust and Light*, a ballet to the music of Corelli and Poulenc: a shrine of angelic figures, tunics and shrouds, depositions and crucifixions, a memento of dust and of light made spatial.

-Valeria Crippa

