

ROCAMORA

presents

SOLOIST

With 30 years' professional experience in the theatre, Cañellas presents, solo and as the tale of a long journey, a summary of what he has produced for string-puppet theatre and for all audiences.

- Award to the Best Animation at the "11th. World Festival of Puppet Art 2007" of Prague, Czech Republic.

DESCRIPTION

Medium-format show for one actor and seven string-puppets.

SYNOPSIS

With the perspective that gives to us the time and the experience, we have wanted to recover of some of our previous spectacles, those scenes and ideas that better worked with our public. Not for doing a simple repetition, but with the desires to play, to look for new possibilities, to deepen and to continue experimenting, since, when locating them in another context, they open new territories to us to explore.

A trip by our preceding works, in order to recover sensations, ideas, situations and characters and to recompose a new puzzle with all those moments that as much we have liked to share and that as much the public has thanked for us everywhere.

The show is made up of short stories and performing acts and may be defined as Variety.

Altogether it is an hour's humour, with a great deal of poetry and humanity. To some extent it sums up the experience of the builder and manipulator of the string-puppets, considered by the international critics as one of Europe's best and most skilful string-puppeteers.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION WITH STRING PUPPET

This symbolises the discovery of the string-puppet and the start of a long journey. The actor takes out a tiny chair from inside a suitcase, followed by a wooden device that he observes at length without knowing what it is for. While he is looking at it, a puppet that can move on its own gets out of the suitcase. Every action in his brief performance is geared to displaying a basic principle of puppet theatre: unstable balance.

JOHNNY DANCE, TAP DANCER

A classic exercise in dance in which rhythm plays the leading role.

GRANDPA MANUEL WANTS TO DANCE TOO

As a reaffirmation that the string-puppets are truly independent, the grandpa interrupts the show's natural flow and forces the actor to allow him onto the stage. An impressive dialogue arises from their interaction.

FELIX, THE FIREMAN CLOWN

This is the most circus-like moment in which the actor becomes the ringmaster and the string-puppet's unwitting comedy double act partner.

PEPITA RETUERTO "LA BAILAORA"

A professional flamenco dancer is carried away by frenetic foot tapping with castanets.

PIERROT'S DREAM

A pantomime inspired by classical ballet in which Pierrot tries to reach the stars using all physical means available to him. In so doing he becomes so exhausted that he falls asleep and in his dream achieves what he wants.

AUBUSTER THE HIKER

A metaphor of modern life. Weighed down by our increasingly heavy rucksack and ever wearier, we follow the arrows marking out the path to travel along and have to deal with even the most unexpected obstacles that life sets before us.

THE GRANDPA SKATER

Apotheosis of the relationship between string-puppet and actor. The credibility of the theme set forth in the previous act reaches its height here. The likeable grandpa has to learn to skate at the actor's will and becomes a true picture of a child.

CREDITS

Author and direction: Carles Cañellas
puppet design and construction: Carles Cañellas and Col·lectiu d'Animació
props design and construction: Rocamora and Col·lectiu d'Animació
puppet wardrobe: Rocamora
actor and animation marionettes: Carles Cañellas
actress and stage manager: Susanna Rodríguez

WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE WRITTEN:

String puppets d'auteur

The Rocamora Company with Soloist, a show by the Catalan puppeteer Carles Canellas, opened the Festival. The structure is simple: using a diffuse formula, especially abroad, the show comprises a series of "numbers", the leading characters of which interact with the puppeteer. This is complicit acknowledgement of old variety theatre, borrowed from street artists and their art (acrobats, conjurers, dancers and clowns). In this case it is performed with puppets and is done so in open view. There then follows the most difficult part. Despite the simple structure, remarkable technical expertise is required. There is no story to hold onto or a curtain behind which to hide. The manipulator is alone in front of the audience. From this perspective, Soloist is a production-demonstration of technique that should be filmed and shown in puppet schools, if there are any. Canellas wins the audience over and shows uncommon skill in making the puppets' movements almost humanlike. He plays with his own role, alternating moments in which he is involved in the action with his puppets with others in which he simply manipulates, literally "disappearing" from the view of the audience. It also touches virtuosity, when one of the characters hides behind his legs and he carries on moving it without tangling the strings or losing the rhythm. An excerpt of high quality comparable with when Gassman recited Hamlet's monologue standing on his head at the Teatro Tenda in the 1970s: only that was an exhibition of virtuosity whereas on this occasion it is done to enhance the production.

Pier Giorgio Nosari. L'ECO DI BERGAMO. 22/07/1997

The magic face of Catalan string puppets charms Como

Wonderful string puppets and a summer evening in the open air. There were so many ingredients at the fourth event that the puppet theatre festival last night experienced one of its most intense moments. The programme had already hinted that Soloist, a production by the Rocamora Company from Barcelona, would be a great event. To watch Carles Canellas performing with his puppets arouses the emotion that is felt in the presence of a true master. The Catalan puppeteer shows virtuoso, almost acrobatic technique, combined with great poetic sensitivity. His characters, from the amiable granddad on skates to the exuberant Flamenco Dancer and the poetic Pierrot, seem to come alive. The audience's attention and the applause at the end showed they shared this impression.

Sara Cerrato. LA PROVINCIA DI COMO. 24/06/2000

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

TIMING: ... performance: 1 h. / stage set up (theatre): 2 hours (outside daytime): 1 h. / dismantling: 1 h.

AUDIENCE: ... all publics from 3 years upward / maximum recommended capacity: 300 people.

SCENIC SPACE: ... may be staged both in a theatre and outside, with or without interval / a stage is not required when the audience is arranged on tiers or in an amphitheatre / a stage or platform of some 80 cm in height is however required if the audience are in stalls or standing and there are over 150 spectators / (optimum measurements) width: 6 m / depth: 6 m / theatre: proscenium height 3 m / exterior: wind-sheltered area.

SOUND: ... 500 W system with Minidisk and 1 cordless Headworn or Lavalier microphone systems.

LIGHTING: ... 6.000 W general lighting is required inside or at night.

CURRENT: ... power outlet on the stage / minimal potency 2,5 kWh (220 v) + lighting.

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