Beat: Arts

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF RUDOLF NUREYEV (NOUREEV)

TRIBUTE BY THE PARIS NATIONAL OPERA

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USPA NEWS - On the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Death of Rudolf Nureyev (Noureev), the Paris National Opera wanted to pay Tribute to him during the 23/24 Season by programming Three of his Productions at the Opéra Bastille (The Nutcracker in December 2023, Don Quichotte in March and Swan Lake in June-July 2024) and by offering, in Partnership with the BnF (Bibliothèque Nationale De France), an Exhibition which retraces Several Facets of this Immense Artist from his Career as a Dancer and Choreographer to that of Director of Dance at the Opera creating the Icon he had become throughout the World...

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Throughout his Brilliant and Itinerant Career, Rudolf Nureyev (1938-1993) established an Intense and Fruitful Relationship with the Paris Opera and its Ballet. This begins in a Brilliant Way with the Parisian Stage of the European Tour of the Kirov Ballet of Leningrad during which Nureyev decides to move to the West. It is then punctuated by the Opera Shows in which he regularly participates as a Guest Star; by the Premieres of the Thirteen Ballets that he gave at the Palais Garnier as Choreographer between 1974 and 1992; by the Six Seasons that he organized during his Mandate as Director of Dance, from 1983 to 1989; by the Creations of the Choreographers that he invites by the Nominations as Stars of the Dancers that he reveals; by the Creation, finally, of his Last Ballet, La Bayadère, in 1992, which looks like a Testament.

Few Personalities have left such a Mark on the History of the Paris Opera Ballet: the Great Classics he bequeathed to the Company remain, even today, among the most Brilliant Jewels of its Repertoire. On the Occasion of the Thirty Years since the Death of the Dancer, Choreographer and Director of Dance, the Paris National Opera and the National Library of France (BnF) are joining Forces to pay Tribute to Nureyev and explore the Different Dimensions of his Relationship with the Palais Garnier, its "House", and present the Priceless Heritage that it leaves both to France and to the World of Dance.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the disappearance of Rudolf Nureyev:
* During Season 2023/2024, by programming Three of his Productions at the Opéra Bastille "Casse-Noisette" (Nutcracker) in December 2023 - "Don Quichotte" (Don Quixote) in March 2024 - "Le Lac des cygnes" (Swan Lake) in June-July 2024.
* By offering, In Partnership with the BnF (Bibliothèque Nationale De France), an Exhibition which retraces Several Facets of the Artist from his Career as a Dancer and Choreographer to that of Director of Dance at the Opera.
* 19 Performances (Between 18 December 2023 and 1st January 2024) which mark the return, after 9 years of "Casse-Noisette" (Nutcracker) of Rudolf Nureyev at l'Opéra Bastille. No less than 6 Pairs of Soloists will alternate in the Role of young Clara and his Nutcracker becoming "Prince au Royaume des Douceurs" (Prince in the Kingdom of Sweets) With the Participation of Students from the Dance School and also "Maîtrise des Hauts-de-Seine/Choeur d'enfants de l'Opéra". This Family Ballet was broadcasted Live on December 19.
* On the Occasion of the Exhibition, an Album "Nureyev at The Opera" in On Sale at the Book Shop/Boutique of The Opera House.

- The Dancer

On May 19, 1961, on Tour with the Kirov Ballet, Rudolf Nureyev made his First Appearance on the Stage of the Palais Garnier in the Act of "Les Ombres de La Bayadere". Its Success is Dazzling. The Public then discovers a Magnetic Performer with dancing that is Both Fiery and Sophisticated.

Having chosen to stay in the West, his Career quickly became International and he danced on all the Major Stages in Europe and the United States.

He returned to the Palais Garnier in 1966 with one of his Privileged Partners, Margot Fonteyn, to dance "Marguerite and Armand". From 1967, he was regularly invited to the Paris Opera to perform Major Roles in the Repertoire including "Giselle", "Le Swan Lake", "La Sylphide"... alongside Noëlla Pontois and Ghislaine Thesmar who quickly became her Favorite Partners. He is also noted in Works created by the Ballets Russes such as "Apollion musagéte" (Balanchine) and "Petrouchka" (Fokine).

Appointed Director of Opera Dance in 1983, he kept one or Special Status which allows Rudolf Nureyev to perform on Stage in 40 Performances Per Season. He will dance in all the Ballets he creates or goes back for "The Company" (Basilio in Don Quixote, Jean de Brienne in Raymonda, Drosselmeyer in The Nutcracker, the Prince in Swan Lake, Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet...).

Sensitive to other Choreographic Languages, Rudolf Nureyev also dances in the Ballets of Roland Petit (Paradis perdu), Jerome Robbins (Afternoon of a Faun), Glen Tetley (Tristan) with Carolyn Carlson, Martha Graham (Phaedra's dream), Pierre Lacotte (Marco Spada) or Maurice Béjart whose Song of "The Wandering Companion" will be the Last Ballet that he will perform on the Stage of the Palais Garnier, in 1990.

- The Choreographer

From the Choreographic Work of Rudolf Nureyev Two Large Distinct Groups emerge: the Ballets resulting Solely from the Fruit of his Creative Spirit, on the One Hand, and those Inherited from Illustrious Predecessors that he discovered during his Apprenticeship and his Beginnings at the "Kirov Ballet" and for which he offers a Personal Rereading, on the Other Hand. Among the First, in addition to "Manfred" (1979), "The Tempest" (1984) and "Washington Square" (1985), the Choreography of "Cinderella"(1986) particularly left its Mark by transposing Charles Perrault's Tale into the Hollywood world of the 1930s.

Rereadings of Pre-Existing Choreographic Works (mostly created by Marius Petipa) such as "Don Quixote" (1981), "Raymonda" (1983), "Sleeping Beauty" (1989) or even "La Bayadere" (1992), where Lyricism and Academicism mix and in which he strives to develop a Strong Symbolic Interpretation (Swan Lake in 1984, The Nutcracker in 1985), on the Other Hand fully participate in the Legacy left by Nureyev at the Paris Opera . Perhaps even more than through his Own Works, it is through these Reappropriations that the contours of the "Nureyev Style" emerge: a Technical Complexity highlighting more particularly the Virtuosity of the Male Performers as well as the Sets and Sumptuous Costumes imagined by Renowned Artists (Nicholas Georgiadis, Hanae Mori, Franca Squarciapino, Petrika Ionesco...).

- The Director of Danse

On February 4, 1982, Rudolf Nureyev was appointed Director of Dance at the Paris Opera. He took up his Position in September 1983, after a Year of Preparation with the Opera Teams. This was Nureyev's First Permanent Position, accustomed to Various Commitments around the World, which also ensured his Artistic and Media Influence.

As Director of Dance, in particular in charge of the Programming of Ballets, Distribution of Dancers and the Nomination of the Stars (Sylvie Guillem, Isabelle Guerin, Elisabeth Maurin, Manuel Legria Laurent Hilaire but it is even more his Personality, his Passion and his Discipline which marked an Entire Generation and gave New Impetus to Ballet. International Tours, particularly in the United States, punctuated his Mandate and achieved Great Success.

Under his Direction, Three Studios are are inaugurated under the "Coupole du Palais Garnier" which bear the Name of Great Choreographers, Lifar, Balanchine (later renamed Nureyev), and of course Petipa, to whom Nureyev is deeply attached. Transmitting the latter's Heritage is Essential for Nureyev, and each Season he brings back his Ballets in which he also dances.

Building on his Career and the Connections he has made, he invites Contemporary Choreographers, some for the First Time at the Opera William Forsythe, Martha Graham, Maurice Béjart, Francine Lancelot, Jirí Kylián, Merce Cunningham, Maguy Marin, Jerome Robbins, Roland Petit...

On August 31, 1989, Nureyev left Office, one Month after the Inauguration of the Opéra Bastille.

- The Icon

Nureyev became a Legend when he was only 23 years old. His Company, the "Kirov Ballet of Leningrad" (today the Mariinsky Ballet of Saint Petersburg) toured Europe and took up Residence at the Paris Opera since May 11, 1961. Nureyev made his mark on the Stage from the Palais Garnier when he was told, at Le Bourget, on June 16, that he had to return to Moscow while the Rest of the Troupe continued their Tour in London. Escaping the KGB Agents in an Incredible Manner, he managed to take Refuge at the Airport Police Station and ask for Political Asylum.

In the Context of the Cold War, he was established as a Champion of Freedom and hit the Headlines.

Participating in Parties, Galas and Meetings of the Jet Set while giving the Full Measure of his Genius as a Dancer and Choreographer on International Stages, Nureyev is identified by the Media as "The New Nijinsky" while Magazines delight in showing him half naked on the Beaches in the Company of Celebrities or Alone, wrapped in Rich Dressing Gowns, in the Baroque and Sumptuous Interior of his Parisian Apartment on the Quai Voltaire.

The Animated Image dedicates the Icon: Passionate about Cinema since his earliest Childhood, Nureyev multiplied from 1963 the Projects of Documentaries, Filmed Shows and Ballets captured especially for the Cinema which gave him an Unprecedented Celebrity to a Large Audience, His "Cinderella" is also a Tribute to the World of Studios.

He also participates in Feature Films: "Valentino" by Ken Russell (1977), "Exposed" (Surexposé by James Totback (1983), In "Valentino", Noureer cultivates his Legendary Dimensionby agreeing to give his Features to the Legendary Actor from Hollywood, Rudolph Valentino. In 2018, the Feature Film by Ralph Fiennes dedicated to Noureer, further strengthening the Iconic Dimension of the one who remains One of the Greatest Figures of the Dance of the 20th Century.

Source: Paris National Opera
On the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Death of Rudolf Nureyev
To pay Tribute to him during the 2023/2024 Season

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