

La Provincia
Cremona, Italy
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RASSEGNA LA DANZA

King: The Classic That Transforms

Two Italian Premieres Open the Dance Season at Ponchielli Theater

Cremona— Electrifying, playful, stylistically perfect and strangely new: this is the eclectic style of Alonzo King, the African-American choreographer who opens the “Rassegna La Danza” series with two Italian premieres of his work. These pieces, *Migration* and *Sky Clad*, near-paradigmatic testaments to a choreographic language born of academic ballet, but one which grafts onto this base not only contemporary influences, but also the commingling of many cultures and many traditions.

Along King, who is African-American, was given his artistic training in the American Ballet Theater and American Ballet schools, and emerged as the son of a world already globalized, although not necessarily homogenized. From diversity, and from the encounter between choreographer and dancers—each with their own origins and training—a new language is born: one that does not abandon the classical dance it springs from, but one that instead renews it and explores beyond its boundaries. King’s creations always have something experimental in them, the desire to venture into forms of music—whether jazz or Moroccan music or the ragas of India—to look towards somewhere else, and to learn something from it. But the most surprising thing about Alonzo King’s choreography is the stylistic unity; the absolutely original and limpid choreographic code, with its outstanding lucidity of gesture.

The two pieces on the program for this evening, *Migration* and *Sky Clad*, are receiving their Italian premieres here at the Ponchielli Theater in Cremona. *Migration* is a kind of hymn to material transformation: it is the story of the evolution of forms, of the birth of new life, of all new lives. Seashells, fossils: they share the same origin, they are made of the same material, and each is, in itself, an intrinsic symbol of beauty. The dancers translate this beauty into an aesthetically fulfilling work of dance, with movements that never smudge their lines, but instead gradually delineate themselves within the empty space of the stage.

Sky Clad, on the other hand, draws its choreographic inspiration from northern India. There are two types of sounds in Indian music—perceptible sound, and the type of sound that cannot be heard by the human ear—and together they create a harmony. The first type of sound, called *ahata*, is made by the temporary vibration of air produced by the human voice or the plucked string. The inaudible type of sound, *anahata* (which literally means “unexpressed sound” in Sanskrit), is thought to be the constant manifestation of being. *Anahata* is also the name of a chakra—a center of physical energy—located in the heart. The dance piece interweaves itself with these two harmonic forms as if it were a third form of harmony.

--Barbara Caffi