

About.com/Baile Review by Corazon Tierra, English Translation

For original review in Spanish copy this link to your Browser:

<http://baile.about.com/od/Flamenco/a/La-Rumba-Flamenca.htm>

Recently I had the opportunity to see a completely innovative show of flamenco fusion. “La Rumba Cubana y Flamenca After 150 Years” reveals the organic connection that exists between Latin rhythms such as la Rumba Cubana and Flamenco. This show is the latest offering of flamenco fusion by Flamenco Latino.

Under the direction of Aurora Reyes (dancer, singer & choreographer) and Basilio Georges (musician, guitarist and composer), this original show expands the boundaries of flamenco. One hundred and fifty years after the flamencoization of the Cuban rumba, Flamenco Latino launches a creation of new flamenco forms, as much in the singing as well as in the dancing.

In “La Rumba Cubana y Flamenca After 150 Years,” the Songs of the Round Trip become the point of departure to explore new rhythmic and dance spaces. Deep flamenco tradition converses and blends with the Cuban rumba, Mambo, tap and jazz in a harmonious manner.

We see Aurora Reyes, with dancers “Olyda la Cubana” and Tatiana Green, dancing a Cuban mambo using flamenco style. The rhythm of the famous Cortijo song, “El Yoyo,” the dancers execute footwork and armwork with a Latin flavor. They create accents on upbeats not only in the footwork, but also in the sensual movement of hips and shoulders.

Next, we see Aurora dancing a Guajira Flamenca in traditional style. At the end of the dance the flamenco rhythm changes fluidly to the Cuban Guajira rhythm, returning to its roots.

An unforgettable piece in the second part of the show was the “Sevillanas Afro-Cubanas.” This work is a smart musical and choreographic fusion. Aurora and Basilio succeed in creating a new form, where one doesn’t feel a separation between flamenco and Afro-Cuban movement. Both methods of expression are harmoniously tied together.

This show also counts on the participation of two extraordinary dancers: Jose Moreno and Max Pollack. Jose Moreno brings to the show a pure interpretation of flamenco, improvising unexpected rhythmic sketches. He is a master of contrasts. In his dancing silences have weight and each of his movements whether it originates from arms, torso or footwork, beats out rhythm. His improvisations in footwork unaccompanied by guitar, are simply delightful. The presence, strength and magnetism of Moreno fill the stage with soul.

The dancer Max Pollack brings to the show his fusion of Cuban Rumba and Tap. Pollack is famous for being the first artists to fuse American tap rhythms with Afro-Cuban music. In “La Rumba Cubana y Flamenca” Pollack is a one-man percussion orchestra. In his dance, Pollack travels through the rhythmic patterns of the rumba, using his entire body. We hear the “tumbadora” drum accents in his footwork, when he strikes parts of his body, and when his fingers strike the palm of his hand.

The show ends with a piece called “Los Tres Amigos,” with Aurora, Moreno and Pollack. Each of the dancers interprets his dance with his own stamp. At some moments they dance together in duets and as a trio. They discover each other to have a conversation with rhythms, giving calls and answers between flamenco and rumba, and rumba to flamenco.