

Emotionally dazzling flamenco trilogy

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Flamenco x 3. The 14th Helsinki Flamenco Festival, Savoy Theatre. Dance: Emilia Aho and Katja Lundén; choreography: Rafaela Carrasco and Manuel Liñán; musicians: Antonio Campos, Hector González, José Luis López, Karo Sampela and Juan Antonio Suárez.

DANCE. The audience rose to a spontaneous standing ovation at the end of the flamenco trilogy performed by **Emilia Aho** and **Katja Lundén**. And for a very good reason. The performance offered impressive interpretation – subtly tuned, yet strongly expressed.

Getting **Rafaela Carrasco** and **Manuel Liñán**, two world-class flamenco stars, to tailor-make choreographies for these ultra-cool dancers is a great tribute to Finnish flamenco.

Carrasco's *Estados del yo* premiered a few years ago, but has lost nothing of its charm since then. In it, the two dancers are like night and day in terms of expression. One may also see them as representing two sides of a single individual. The roles do, indeed, mix and merge at the end.

Traditional flamenco and contemporary dance are open-mindedly mixed in the choreography, as well as in the jazzy music accompanying it.

There was no attempt to show off or flaunt superb footwork typical of tourist flamenco. The focus was on expression and on conveying emotion. It's been a while since I saw dance of this quality.

The atmosphere of Liñán's *Ni contigo ni sin ti* is particularly sensitive and touching, as if offering consolation at the time of great sorrow. In turn, *CL-rom*, Carrasco's and Liñán's joint choreography contains surprising playfulness and warmth. It is positive and exuberant, with a breathtaking sense of joy flowing off the stage.

The piano and cello of the excellent band also bring new, fresh flavours to flamenco.

A brilliant show overall.

Translation by Tiina Seidel



Emilia Aho and Katja Lundén left the audience mesmerized with their *CL-rom* and other choreographies.