



## Cinderella - Landestheater Salzburg, Première: March 2nd, 2018

A brilliant, shiny evening to rejoice!

There again was that certain vibration in the air before an opening Night. The audience in a mixture of evening dresses, formal codes and typical Austrian costumes (I love that because this never happens in Vienna!) seemed quite excited with this Peter Breuer's piece. But what else if not great expectations? Charles Perrault's (fairy) tale, Prokofiev's music (in fact of his most beloved compositions along with "Romeo and Juliet" and – in Russia – "Alexander Nevsky"), Bruno Schwengl's sets and costumes, Leslie Sukanandarah's conducting... and the "Star" of the evening: the choreography itself.



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The scene opened, clean, spacious, light and bright and at that precise moment – and from then on – the audience knew that they were going to witness something special in those next two and a half hours... and how fast time can run if you are enjoying yourself with such high caliber work: your full attention is "caught", you are completely concentrated in what you are watching and you cannot change it. It is overwhelming and stronger than you are. These are very special moments if you are sitting in the audience in a night like this. And I love that.



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I had always wondered how Prokofiev had managed to bring to post war Russia (The original Ballet opened in 1945) at the height of its communist convictions, a tale with a fairy, a prince and nobility. But thinking back at a class of History of Art that I visited during the 70's, I remembered how a teacher had tried very cleverly to explain to us the (so-called) "roots" of the French Revolution and, of course, Cinderella's story line was connected to it: the character Cinderella represents nothing less than the bourgeoisie oppressed within her 4 walls, inside her home by the Aristocracy and the Clergy (represented by the Stepmother and the Stepsisters), the Prince represents Bourgeoisie's possibility to achieve and conquer power and the Fairy Godmother, oh, the Fairy and all the light that surrounds her: she is the spirit of the Illuminism itself – all these metaphors turn "Cinderella" into a very suitable tale for the French Revolution (Perrault died long before the Revolution!) and of course very suitably adaptable to the Communist way-of-thinking.



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Mr. Breuer's choreography is surprising. In fact it covers such a wide range of emotions, from sheer comical humor to our wish for justice for Cinderella's "fate". Also surprising because, all of a sudden, like a windmill it starts getting faster leading us to Bravura moments which require strong technique (A short example: in the first Act Marcia Jaqueline was doing lovely pirouettes en pointe and within an instant there she was doing them a la seconde – and beautifully maintaining her elevated leg in the same level without "drawing lines" in the air! Such technical "cleanness" is also, for me, a reason to rejoice!). The choreography has such vitality and dynamic that it kept amazing me. Visions... sometimes I wish I could get into people's heads in order to see HOW they look at their own visions and how they turn them into reality later on. Such a fascinating process.



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One special component of the story line is Cinderella's previous story that is a sort of epilogue to the Ballet: her Mother's Death, the way that her (future) Stepmother "conquers" her Father's attention and the way poor Cinderella is turned into a Housemaid by her Stepsisters. Also the way she remembers the past... such a delicate moment. More about it later!

It must be said that the children did a wonderful job! Very good coaching!



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Unfortunately the corps-de-Ballet needs more rehearsal. This was strongly visible during the Ball's scene. Some couples did not make it with the music and were always too late to it. The result is that they were not unison.

Cristina Uta had the difficult task of playing the Stepmother – a role that requires "some Sex-appeal" but also a sense of timing in comedy (like during the Ball while all are awaiting the Prince and she jumps on one of her daughter's back to be able to "see"! A delicious moment).

Special attention to Naila Fiol and Lucas Leonardo as the Barkeepers during the Ball. Beautiful dancers with lots of stage presence.



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Alexander Korobko and Pedro Pires "stole the show" as the two "Stepsisters". I must confess that, having had no time to study the programme and not realizing immediately that the Sisters were being played by two men, I was quite taken aback with the "bigger" Sister's looks and thought "OK, then they've got some elder member of the choir to play one of the "girls"! But it did not take me long to begin to laugh with them. Yes, Mr. Breuer created such beautiful roles and they give the dancers in action a "play-ground to create and have fun!". Both are hilarious! Special notice to Mr. Pires point-work!



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Anna Yanchuk creates a Fairy-Godmother of extreme beauty and class. It is a pleasure to watch this dancer's most delicate arms and ways around the stage. She never leaves her role – she is all time in it – and possesses such delicacy and tenderness in her movements and ways of treating Cinderella, her beloved goddaughter. Lovely, strong technique and exquisite lines!



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Flavio Salamanka – a dancer I had never see before on stage – impressed me a lot with his interpretation of the Prince. A dancer with a very strong and clean technique (beautiful pirouettes, tours-en-l'air, very strong jumps, quickness etc.). But we “can see” that he is “only” using it as a tool to his artistry. His dancing goes far beyond being “just interested” in turning pirouettes (like I have experienced not long ago with a Cuban Dancer – but they are known for just being interest in turning and nothing else). This “Brazilian Prince” brought a quality called “acting and emotion” to his role – and the public loved and was in rapport with him – as the applause later confirmed it.





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Márcia Jaqueline in her element in the title role of the evening. Technically on high form, Márcia Jaqueline has reached that certain point in the life of an artist that is incredibly important - and unique. That moment in which Youth is combined with a certain Maturity. Yes, that Maturity that brings "it" to the characters she is portraying – they are not just "shadows", they are made of flesh and blood, they have a story behind them, they are structured, they never contradict themselves, because they exist as a whole. That is the joy of Artistry. To spend two and a half hours watching one single character and all the nuances and shades that are related to her. Beautiful.



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Her Cinderella was quiet, silent, profound, leading a strong "interior life". How does one say? "Quiet waters run deep... " (can we ever forget that beautiful and very touching scene in which she "remembers the past" and steps into it? Another one of Mr. Breuer's clever, inspired "visions").



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I have mentioned before the technical "easiness" (Pirouettes a la seconde) which Miss Marcia Jaqueline uses as a tool to create her part, without mentioning the discipline that, I know, Miss Jaqueline carries with her every single day of her life. This Artist will be Salzburg's darling – in a very short time - and as curious as I am, I sort of eavesdropped conversations during intermission and after the show... Yes, many share my opinion.

Conclusion: a very beautiful production to the last details: a most enjoyable and highly recommendable evening!

Cinderella Landestheater Salzburg, Marcia Jaqueline, A brilliant shiny evening to rejoice, opening night, Peter Breuer, Prokofiev, Bruno Schwengl, a piece of high caliber, French revolution Cinderella, communist way-of-thinking, à la seconde, technical cleanness, Cinderella's previous story, Cristina Uta, Naila Fiol, Alexander Korobko, Pedro Pires, Anna Yanchuk, never leaves her role, Lovely lines, Flavio Salamanka, brought a quality called acting, the public loved him, Maturity, That is the joy of Artistry, all the nuances related to her, they are made of flesh and blood, Quiet silent profound, clever, inspired, good ideas, Quiet waters run deep, Pirouettes a la seconde, I sort of eavesdropped, many share my opinion,

Ricardo Leitner, attitude