

MONTEVERDI

IL BALLO / IL COMBATTIMENTO

ANAGOOR

Il Ballo delle Ingrate and *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* are two compositions by Claudio Monteverdi that represent a fulgid moment in the origin of modern ballet and opera.

The extraordinary intuition of the Italian composer was to combine the Renaissance qualities with the rediscovery of ancient theatrical history to create a new musical experience. The brightest star of this new thespian rebirth was tragedy, shining dark while resurging from its medieval oblivion.

However, for how much it was drawn from the ancient inspiration, the form of this new hybrid creation was unprecedented.

But what was this ballet about? Why was it composed to be first represented in front of the newlywed duke and duchess of Mantua on the day of their wedding? How powerful were the images represented with the Combat during the celebration of Carnival in 1624 hosted by Moncenigo family in Venice? If no traces of the original choreography have made it to date, the tremendous evidence of women condition, cursed and destined to the living hell of obedience and blood, is as vital as ever in the music tragedy of Monteverdi.

Considering the impossibility of recovering the lost forms of these two performative happenings of the early 17th century, Anagoor's approach draws from their specific nature for the stage transposition.

The missing dance and the missing fight are the centre, the phantasmatic content and the form of a cinematic video installation in contrast to live music performance.

This diptych is also an artistic marriage between Anagoor and Il Pomo d'Oro ensemble led by Maestro Francesco Corti musical director of the project.

MONTEVERDI

IL BALLO / IL COMBATTIMENTO

ANAGOOR

IL BALLO DELLE INGRATE
IL COMBATTIMENTO DI TANCREDI E CLORINDA
music by CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

artistic project ANAGOOR
stage director, sets and costume SIMONE DERAÏ
stage director assistants MARCO MENEGONI, MONICA TONIETTO
set designer assistant FREDDY MASON
video concept, direction and editing SIMONE DERAÏ
director of photography GIULIO FAVOTTO
choreography LAURA MORO, PIERO RAMELLA, FEROLE STEBANE
Fencing coordinator GIUSEPPE TAGLIAROL

with
IOHANNA BENVEGNA
FEROLE STEBANE DONGMO NOUMEDEM
ROBERTO LAI
LAURA MORO
PIETRO NICOLI
PIERO RAMELLA
ARIANA ROSSETTO
ANNA SAMARIA
ANNA TROTTER
MARIAGIOIA UBALDI
GIULIA VIDALE
GIOIA ZANARELLA

conductor FRANCESCO CORTI
musical ensemble ORCHESTRA IL POMO D'ORO

lightning designer FIAMMETTA BALDISERRI
technical director Teatro Ponchielli PAOLO CHIAPPANI

production assistant ANNALISA GRISI
art manager MICHELE MELE
Anagoor press agent ROSALBA RUGGERI

IL BALLO DELLE INGRATE

“Prima si fa una scena la cui prospettiva formi una bocca d'Inferno”. The quote describes the scenery of this ball composed for the wedding of the very young Margherita di Savoia, daughter of the Duke Carlo Emanuele I, married to Francesco Gonzaga, son of the Great Lords of Mantua, in the spring of 1608. Claudio Monteverdi was called specifically for the occasion to compose music for a coreography which was going to be represented among many other performances including jousting, parades, comedies and sumptuous interludes staged for the celebrations organized on the banks of the Mincio at the court of Mantua.

“...finito il ballo tornano nel Inferno, nel medesimo modo dell'uscita, e al medesimo suono lamentevole, restandone una nella fine in scena, facendo il lamento che sta scritto, poi entra nel'Inferno. Al levar de la tela si farà una sinfonia a beneplacito.” This lapidary caption describes the ending and the disquieting meaning of this Monteverdi's work. A giant video backdrop by Anagor reflects the wedding in Mantua as in a mirror. Not the perspective from the table of the spouses towards the staged mouth of Hell, but the opposite point of view: true hell is the reality of the audience watching the video. The long movement of trolley brings the camera to the centre of the party where the young bride appears petrified as under Medusa's gaze.

Very slow movements of the festive and violent whirling that surrounds Margherita of Savoy unfold in front of real architectures and deceptive trompe-l'oeil. The camera zooms-in relentlessly towards the young woman's stone-like face, while every other impulse of movement is suspended in slow-motion, contributing to making this chapter of the diptych a true discourse on choreography: a journey to hell at a dance pace.

IL COMBATTIMENTO DI TANCREDI E CLORINDA

Once again, through the *mise en scene* of the *Combattimento*, Anagor faces another of the cornerstones western cultural system. Tasso's epos (full of the tragic and classical epic tradition - Homer, Euripides, Virgil, Ovid...) contains and at the same time discloses a series of crucial and problematic issues on European identity, religious fervor, spurious use of the Christian ideal, the instances of conquest, love and gender issues, the inability to recognize and welcome the others, the sacrifice of youth.

The fight becomes paradigmatic of a conflict (of love and hate) that goes beyond the clash of civilizations, but inextricably intertwines the battle of identities, a conflict within, an unresolved and violent rivalry.

The riding horse strength, the loud clash and the flashes of metal weapons, dust and wounds, vital energies escaping in the gush of blood like the baptismal water that slips between Tancredi's fingers, as they are described by Tasso and in Monteverdi's music, are here translated into a film episode in which a young man and a young woman, inside a contemporary fencing academy, fight each other in an escalation that goes beyond sport.

At the end of the short film, the acknowledgment of the young woman's face under the fencing helmet opens up questions about masculinity and the very lexicon of violence.