



THURSDAY JUNE 22 1995

DANCE: A sexy and definitive evocation of the tango comes to London

Hot movers from Argentina

THIS is dazzling, and I don't just mean the procession of glittery dresses, glossy brilliantined hair and patent shoes. We know that tango represents rhythm, co-ordination and tantalising flashes of thigh. We know it is coloured by desire, danger and any number of other emotions. But

Forever Tango actually delivers more. It makes you realise how rich the grammar

of tango can be, how a basic set can be enlarged or softened or speeded up to look different yet still remain true to the original.

You see how excitingly athletic it is, not only because it is often spiced with lifts and jumps and stretches, but because of the sheer intricacy of those four legs criss-crossing like a flurry of flick-knives. A millimetre or a second out and one partner could be seriously damaged.

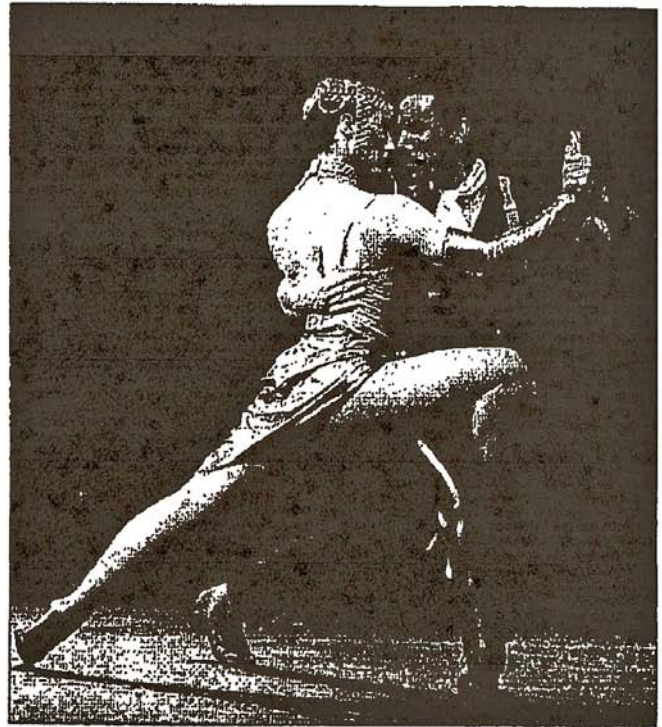
Forever Tango, created and directed by Luis Bravo, has been dazzling America and arrives here for 14 weeks. Similar to its predecessor, *Tango Argentino* — which scored a huge hit in London — it briefly traces the history of the dance. But unlike *Tango Argentino* it avoids monotony,

not least because of the diversity brought by the seven couples. Each is the choreographer of their respective duets; each has their own speciality and timbre.

There is Guillermo and Cecilia who go in for deep forking crouches and sharp rectilinear geometries that match their elegant, rangy tallness and her sleek blonde hair; then in their

closing accelerandos they shift gear into impossible cadenzas of jagged leg flashes. There is Mayoral and Elsa Maria, both of a certain age, who at first seemed correspondingly sedate in their elaborate, teasing leg games, played with the air of long-experienced connoisseurs and with the humorous mopping of a brow. But in their final dance they astonish us by revving up into fast, nimble combat.

Tango accepts all ages. Roberto Tonet is slimmer than Mayoral, but definitely looks as if he qualifies for a free bus pass; while his partner Marcela is much younger, her mane of hair streaming behind her as she subsides before him into a kind of erotic obeisance. Perhaps it is this conspicuous presence of pen-



It takes two to tango: Miriam and Sandor at the Strand

sionable age that prompts Carlos Borquez to wear a white wig for his second dance with Ines. His self-parodying, burly and unruly persona remains intact, though, as they rush across the stage with such electrifying rapidity and dexterity that you can hardly believe your eyes.

The singers, Sandra Cabal and Carlos Morel, are the evening's weakest component, but the orchestra has class, their instrumental displays culminating in a bravura performance of Astor Piazzolla's *Adios Nonino*.

NADINE MEISNER

Forever Tango
Strand Theatre