

FRIDAY

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRIBUNE

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Dance REVIEW

'Forever Tango' sizzles

By Linda Rose
CORRESPONDENT

WOMEN'S lib won't like it, but the rituals of seduction that combine astonishing combative intimacy with inevitable submission as presented by the tango masters in "Forever Tango: The Eternal Dance" comprise about the hottest show L.A. has seen for some time. The production continues through Sunday at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

The different interpretations by the couples, who obviously must work together with as much precision as Olympic ice dancers, are as surprisingly varied as they are excitingly athletic.

Artistic Director Luis Bravo and producer Hugo Bandi have assembled an astonishingly gifted group of couples who dance with as much soul as aesthetic eloquence.

The production is simplicity at its finest. There is no set and the men and women all look marvelous. The males are Latin lovers of many sizes and ages struggling to dominate the sexy, insistent women garbed in lots of lace slit up to there, complete with stiletto heels bespeaking sophistication, longing and potential violence.

Billed with first names only, Guillermo and Cecilia are elegance personified as they dazzle with emotion and showmanship. Miriam and Fabio evince the harsh realities that hurtful love often descends into a blue-collar combat for dominance. Mayoral and Elsa Maria, both of a certain age, are sexually charged, with a grand dose of wit as they obey the insistent rhythms, but not always each other.

ON STAGE

What: "Forever Tango: The Eternal Dance"

When: Through Sunday. Today and Saturday at 5 and 8:30 p.m.; Sunday at 3 and 7 p.m.

Where: Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena

How much: \$19-\$45

Info: Ticketmaster, (213) 480-3232

Marcella Duran, whose face seems to be what cinema careers were made of, appears to virtually melt into the older Carlos Gavito's arms as one foot darts between the legs of the other with the rapid complex steps and economy of movement that distinguish this Argentinian dance from its more genteel impostors.

The tango was once a taboo blend of European and African rhythms born on the dockside bars and brothels of Buenos Aires in the 1880s. While it is nostalgic fun to relish tunes like "Jealousy" and "La Cumparsita," the superbly executed musical presentations, albeit moving and ripe with emotions from another time, mostly serve as interludes between the sensational dancing. Carlos Morel's infrequent vocal numbers unfortunately dropped the evening's quality to that of a serviceable Vegas lounge act.

For the uninitiated, "Forever Tango" is an exciting, delightful surprise of witty sensual couples dancing the dance of life and love. For the rest, look forward to a fascinating evening of tango virtuosos at the top of their form.