

# EL PAIS

18 abril 2009

## Emotional shake-up

**GELABERT AZZOPARDI COMPANYIA DE DANSA.** *Sense fi/Conquassabit.*

Artistic directors: Cesc Gelabert and Lydia Azzopardi. Assistant choreographers: Toni Jodar and Sarah Taylor. Stage space: Llorenç Corbella. Stage adaptation: Víctor Molina. Lighting: Mingo Albir. Costumes: Lydia Azzopardi. Music of *Sense fi*, by Pascal Comelade / music of *Conquassabit*, by George Friederich Händel. Teatre Lliure. Barcelona, 16 April.

Beautiful women and handsome men dance under the full moon. A block of ice separates them emotionally while Pascal Comelade's music lulls their innocent gestures. These are the premises dealt with in *Sense fi*, an interesting work which, together with *Conquassabit*, forms the latest show which the binomial Gelabert-Azzopardi premiered on Thursday at the Teatre Lliure to a rousing round of applause and standing ovations that moved even the cast members themselves.

In *Sense fi*, Gelabert opts to show, with an abstract and slippery layout, a vital dance that encompasses a whole series of personal experiences. Love, pain, hope and solitude are intertwined into an endless series of chained sequences. The innocent and *naïf* tone that the work exudes comes as a shock for admirers of the author's energetic and versatile choreographic language. But, as pointed out by Ana María Matute in *Paraíso inhabitado*, innocence is a luxury. And a luxury that Gelabert can allow himself.

*Sense fi* begins with Gelabert dancing alone. On this occasion, his personal form of dancing flirts with the melancholy of lost youth and curiosity about old age. As he dances he is joined by nine magnificent dancers – Júlia Cortés, Virginia Gimeno, Robert Gómez, Manon Greiner, Roman Guino, Elia López, Salvador Masclans, Alberto Pineda and Charles Washington – who from the moment they appear on stage are dazzling. Their dance, in which the attitudes and arabesques of classical dance are intertwined with the vitalist contemporary language thought up by the author, captivated the audience from the very start of the performance.

The main dish for the night was *Conquassabit*. The audience melted before the expressive, elegant and vital dance that the omnipresent music of Händel inspired in the author, a dance that managed to accelerate the audience's heartbeat. It is precisely the acceleration in its polyhedral aspects that is the theme of this captivating piece.

The title of *Conquassabit* – taken from the Latin verb that figures in the text of one of Händel's oratorios and that means to move, shake, accelerate – serves the choreographer to create a whirlwind of movements rich in registers that breathes life and solemnity at the same time, and that develops under a silvery and immense canvas created by scenographer Llorenç Corbella. This baroque scenography became a column, a sky and a sea in which the protagonists of this blazing acceleration are lost. In the centre of this hurricane, a mature Gelabert, with his palatial music maestro's sceptre, controls the cyclones that sculpt the body of his dancers.

Discipline and sensuality, classicism and modernity, everything is mixed in a fast and frenetic dance that left the dancers breathless and caused the final standing ovation from an enthusiastic audience.

CARMEN DEL VAL