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## Tango fever comes to America as a musical

Rocío de Los Santos is Giselle and Oscar Martínez Pey plays Gaudencio in a performance of the Argentinian musical *Tanguera* on Wednesday, October 7, 2009 in New York.

BY SIGAL RATNER-ARIAS, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NEW YORK —

Just one week after UNESCO included tango in their list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the Argentinian musical *Tanguera*, committed to the provocative two-by-four rhythm, comes to the United States' stages with a special guest: the incomparable dancer María Nieves.

"It's double the satisfaction because I believe tango deserved to be a cultural heritage of humanity, and on top of that designation we've come here to New York with *Tanguera*, a completely different and beautiful spectacle. I'm over the moon," Nieves told AP over the phone shortly before getting on the stage for the first of the two performances of the day.

The renowned play from Buenos Aires that has enthralled audiences in Paris, Berlin, Madrid and Tokyo, opened last Wednesday at Manhattan's City Center Theater where there will be one or two daily performances until October 18<sup>th</sup>. After that, they'll move to the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Nieves performed the part of the Madam in the original debut of the musical in 2002, then she retired. Now she's accepted the invitation to repeat her acclaimed performance only in the United States. The show is scheduled to open in Zurich in November and to finish the year in Vienna.

“It is not a very important part, but people love it and that's very gratifying for me,” the 71-year-old dancer said. For decades, Nieves and Juan Carlos Copes were one of the most recognized tango couples in Argentina. They danced together in Broadway as part of the cast of *Tango Argentino*.

*Tanguera* tells the story of an unrequited love at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Buenos Aires through a sensual combination of songs, music and dance and a live orchestra. A company of thirty dancers on stage perform a choreography designed by tango star Mora Godoy with precise footwork and intense looks. The music is by Gerardo Gardelín and Lisandro Adrover. Omar Pacheco is the director of the show.

The musical follows the French immigrant Giselle (played by Rocío de Los Santos), who at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century arrives at La Boca, a lower-class district in Buenos Aires where thousands of immigrants barely make a living, the criminal world is law and love is just a service offered for purchase and sale.

As intertwined couples slide along paving stones in hidden gardens and on boards of crummy bars, Giselle, a famous tango dancer, reaches a shady stardom in the world of cabarets. Gaudencio (Oscar Martínez Pey) is a criminal who seduces her whereas Lorenzo (Esteban Domenichi) is a brave dockworker who loves her. This situation will lead up to a mortal duel with knives between both rivals.

The show has been produced by Diego Romay who also wrote the book together with Dolores Espeja. The musical was enthusiastically celebrated in the Argentinian capital where it was on stage for eighteen months since its debut in 2002. In 2006, sponsored by the Argentinian-Israeli maestro Daniel Barenboim, the show was presented in Germany at the State Opera of Hamburg and the following year at the State Opera of Berlin.