

## ***Tanguera*: Dancing brings forth love**

**For the last two years, Diego Romay as producer and Mora Godoy as choreographer live off the ascending success of a musical which is being performed around the world. They not only got married, they are coming back for more**

February 6, 2004

*Tanguera* is two years old and it will celebrate this milestone with a new season at El Nacional starting tomorrow. Many things have happened since its debut and many international stages have been witnesses of its success. One of the noteworthy events during this time was the wedding of Diego Romay and Mora Godoy, the producer and the choreographer of this hit.

"It's been a two-year honeymoon," Diego says.

"In fact, we didn't have a honeymoon," Mora rebukes. "For the last two years we've been working non-stop."

"Fortunately," Diego adds.

With *Tanguera*, they performed three months and a half in Madrid; a month in China, some more time in Latin America. Soon they'll perform in Mexico, and then back to Europe. This is something they couldn't have imagined two years ago.

"I do believe one has a dream, a goal, but... I don't think I expected this much," Mora declares. "It's surpassed all expectations. The show was designed for a two-week run and we had engaged a cast for that period. One year into the show, we began to suffer injuries and a lot of other problems. Good things that happen when the show works, but it was one hurdle after the other. We needed to train permanently and we also needed to prepare a new company so that we might have a replacement as soon as needed. It is quite a complex and very demanding show because of the staging and the dancing, so it requires rehearsing for long hours."

## **What changes need to happen in the show when it is presented in another country?**

Diego: The state of mind of that particular audience is not the same. We try to repeat the same staging. In fact, the contract includes the technical demands in order to reproduce the artistic concept. We try to be as meticulous as possible. In our next trip to Europe, we'll be performing in several venues because the traveling costs are very high. We are a company of 43 people on tour. Therefore, the theatrical operators try to have four or five venues in order to write off those costs, reduce the investment and share the risks with other theatrical operators.

## **Do you let go of the production duties then?**

Diego: My responsibilities are the technical and artistic aspects. The operators need to reproduce the show and do any local investments related to advertising, broadcast, hiring of press agents, lodging, and so on and so forth.

Mora: The artistic aspect is always the hardest part to put together. *Tanguera* presupposes a continuous movement of physical fitness, training, and technical skills.

## **Dancers get worn out as a result of the routine or because they simply get tired?**

Mora: When you do a hundred consecutive performances, it is inevitable not to lose some stamina. It is necessary to find some minor twists, not just in the character, but in the physical movements as well. The most beautiful venue is Buenos Aires. Not just because I am from there, but also because my family and friends come to the show. When you perform abroad, you are performing in front of strangers.

Diego: When you repeat a routine many times, you might harm the product in the long run because lapses occur in the markings. We try to justify the movement within the narrative. Our intention is to narrate a story coming from the dance. That is what we keep telling the company: they are not just dancing, they are performing.

Mora: It is also important to change the costumes, to feel that there is something new. Also, we have added a new act with music by Gerardo Gardelín. This is something completely new that we are looking forward to.

### **What happened with the Chinese audiences?**

Diego: To begin with, their ethics related to sex are totally the opposite of ours. They are very conservative. They are very restrained to give up their applause, they wait for a whole sequence to finish before clapping their hands. An interesting story to share is that *Tanguera* was awarded the prize for best musical comedy among ten different shows and we were asked to do the closing act of the festival. Of course, there were political as well as military leaders invited to this gala... and some officials came over to make sure that the aesthetics of the show was appropriate for the closing act. They watched the show and then we got subtle recommendations, such as dimming the lighting, the girls had to keep their legs closer, and so on. The funny thing is that the person in charge who suggested those changes, came later to the theater to see the original staging.

### **What was the audience reaction?**

Diego: Excellent. They were absolute enthusiastic! They even organized a get-together with Mora and young Chinese people who are learning to dance tango.

Mora: They were not really dancing tango, it was ballroom dancing. I was completely honest and I told them that there was no similitude to the Argentinian tango. For them, it was a real eye-opener.

### **Which of you has a better perspective of the show?**

Diego: We have different points of view. In my case, it is the perspective of the businessman, the idea of what might or might not work commercially. Mora has an artistic perspective which often goes hand in hand with the commercial point of view and sometimes has to do with the professional aspect. We enrich each other in our confrontations and understandings.

Mora: We are very passionate. Sometimes, we need to put limits in our intimacy.

## **Was it easier to work before with the producer than now with the husband?**

Diego: We were already in a relationship.

Mora: It is the same because we know our responsibilities. For me, there were no changes on the artistic aspect, but there was a huge change in our personal lives. Both of us respect each other's own place. I understand the risks involved for a producer in Argentina, but at the same time I understand the dancers' needs.

Diego: She takes good care of my money.

Mora: Now Diego understands much better many things concerning dancers. I must tell you that to be the go-between, trying to make each side understand things that are important for all the parties involved, can be quite tiresome.

## **Do you take the problems home?**

Diego: Yes.

Mora: But there is a positive side to it. I work in my studio and Diego has his office.

Diego: They are different workplaces that we preserve and we have individual projects as well. Mora is now working with her company *Tango Emoción*, where she is forming people for the shows, and she's also designing new choreographies for Maximiliano Guerra. I'm preparing *Aplausos (Applause)* for this year and I'm also thinking about something new for my venue in Madrid (Nuevo Teatro Alcalá).

## **What about the future?**

Mora: The plan is to continue with *Tanguera*, which I think can have seven years of high demand. At the same time, we are thinking about our next show.

Diego: I'm close to finish writing a book about the conquest, genocide and the arrival of the Spaniards.

Mora: I believe this is a great moment to create Argentinian original work related to our roots. There are all kinds of artists and creative teams who need continuity in their jobs.

**Susana Freire – Editorial Staff of LA NACION**