

Coppélia in the Moravian-Silesian Theatre is modern tribute to the ballet evergreen

Coppélia, we had the chance to see for the first time on Saturday evening in Jiří Myron's Theatre, is work of Italian choreographer Giorgio Madia who had been inspired by the classical version of the well-known ballet, although he gave it new, distinctive and daring facelift. And as it seems, this worked in Ostrava pretty well.

Giorgio Madia used the immense dramatical and musical potential of this iconic work and timelessness of the story and portrayed **the characters not only as museum marionettes, but as vital, contemporary, mistakes-making and loving entities with sense of humor.** The key word was, however, given to brisk and fearless women who stand their ground and men are often completely powerless against them (as the women are also powerless against the men). The audience has the feeling of watching scenes from so-called „ordinary life“ throughout the whole performance.

The biggest change of Madia's interpretation can be seen in the character of Coppélius. The audience usually knows him as eccentric and a bit frightening old man, but here he's presented as shy youngster who yearns for love and understanding as everybody else. He creates his own world of mechanical dolls where he feels comfortable, nevertheless he cannot avoid the encounter with the real world. *Madia* gives this „outsider“ hope for love and place in the society.

The visual part of the performance made in Madia's collaboration with artist Domenico Franchi is in one word unmissable. Dominant is blue and sterile white and silver, colored by other shades only occasionally. There's a minimum of decoration and props on the stage, though the scene and costumes look complex and full of organic rounded shapes. Men have stylized uniforms while women wear skirts reminding of soft hoops. (...) Hats off to dancers who managed to put together a challenging combination of neoclassical dance (women part of the ensemble in pointe shoes) and contemporary technique, expressive gestures, acrobatics (and really not only the easy ones) and other styles very well.

(...) **Brittany Catalinas Haws** really „roasted“ in the role of Svalinda. This tiny dancer managed to be temperamental, but when needed she was facetious, malicious or naively in love. To have everything from technique to acting under control is an admirable achievement. As well respected is the energy Haws has put in the whole performance.

Her equivalent opposite was **Sergio Méndez Romero** who, however, attracted attention more with his dance than acting. Very significant interpretation was made by **Takafumi Tamagawa** who got the role of Coppélius. His girlfriend Olympia was played by **Réka Kiss**. The ballet ensemble's part and minor roles (including children from Ballet studio in roles of Dolls) also weren't effortless and everybody took the acrobatic scenes as a big challenge, since it was crucial to stay completely synchronized.