



LE FIGARO

Tuesday 6/29/99

Opéra de Bordeaux

**"Coppelia" Crosses the Atlantic**

In Charles Jude's new ballet, Swanhilde looks like Natalie Wood and Frantz resembles Gene Kelly.

BORDEAUX:

from our special envoy

**René SIRVIN**

After a delightful *Nutcracker* in the land of Tintin last year, Charles Jude follows his childhood dreams with a dazzling, Gene Kelly style *Coppelia*. The dance director of the Opéra de Bordeaux has, for the second time, successfully transposed a great stock ballet and the public awarded him with unending applause at the end of the sixth and seventh performances on Sunday night.

The ballet's heroine is no longer called Swanhilde, now it's Swanie, and Frantz has become Fonzy. As soon as the young and dynamic orchestra leader, Philippe Béran, dressed in a white Spencer jacket with epaulettes on the shoulders, steps up to the podium, the metamorphosis begins. The stage curtain takes us to the heart of New York seen from the sky and the first act on the West Side.

**Arms and Legs**

We are in a Manhattan working-class neighborhood with steam rising out of the manholes, oil drums, gas pumps coming out of a Hopper and a motorcycle emblematic of the 1950's with new fiery new chrome work. In the back, Swanie's balcony (she looks like Natalie Wood), her fiancé, a marine in a white uniform, is running towards it, like Gene Kelly in *On the Town*, while his three buddies from his regiment, seem to have jumped out of *Fancy Free*.

Coppellius is a young gangster in a stripped suite, frightening for sure, but seductive. It's no longer his key that he looses, but the remote control for his door. And there's an elevator up to his workshop. For the automatons, Charles Jude sought the advice of the illusionist Majax to realize the techniques for his ideas. In his workshop, you can see scattered arms and legs coming to life, a girl selling flowers walking along with no torso or head. Fonzy levitating and a small remote controlled monster bringing champagne. Even more dazzling is what Coppellius-Mandrake does with a swish of the cape; in the blink of an eye Swanie is a Spanish señorita, then a Scottish lass before the automatons revolt and, in turn, "disassemble" their master. Everything is logical and well pulled off in this American remake of *Coppelia*. The sets by Giulio Achilli are spectacular and evocative, Philippe Binot's costumes are in the colors of *An American in Paris* or *West Side Story*. Charles Jude's production is full of inventiveness and gags; each one funnier than the last. The choreography does, however, remain true to Nuiittier's libretto and to Delibes' music. It even seems to me that I heard echoes of the largo from *The New World Symphony* and a march from de Souza in the ballet overture.



1-800-Translate

865 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017-1809

1-800-872-6752 Fax: 1-888-872-6752 info@1-800-translate.com

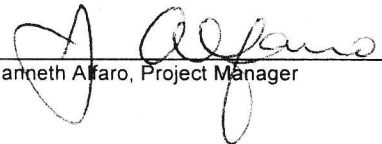
### Winks

There are still thousands of picturesque details to mention in this enjoyable show. The dancing remains very classic with virtuoso variations and sentimental adagios like the audiences love, but there are also some amusing allusions to the be-bop of the 50's, the tango, tap dancing, the dance in *West Side Story*, and the choreographies of Gene Kelly, particularly in the ingenious czarda. Charles Jude's creation is lead with liveliness by Emmanuelle Grizot, the spiritual Swanie, and Eric Frédéric, the leaping Fonzy (physically close to Sinatra in *On the Town*), two technical experts and mischievous comedians. Jean-Jacques Herment portrays a charming Coppelius and the six US marines establish the remarkable progress of the Opéra de Bordeaux's male corps de ballet. Parisians won't see Charles Jude's *Nutcracker* or *Coppelia*, which is regrettable. However, the choreographer and Jean-Pierre Brossmann promise us a Hollywood-sized creation for spring 2001 at the Théâtre du Châtelet. An amazing "musical" that will make more than one director roar in the Parisian theater jungle...

**René SIRVIN**

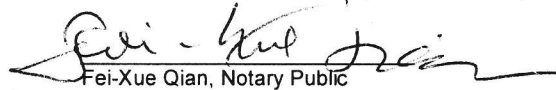
---

Michael Kowalewski, a professional translator of French into English, has translated the attached document under contract to 1-800-Translate, an American Translators Association (ATA) corporate membership company. We have examined the document and have found it to be a complete and accurate translation of the original provided to us.

  
Janneth Alfaro, Project Manager

State of New York, County of New York

Sworn to me before me this 17<sup>th</sup> day of Oct. 2007

  
Fei-Xue Qian, Notary Public

Fei-Xue Qian  
No. 01Q16057816  
Qualified in New York County  
Commission Expires April 23, 2011