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Tango cabaret an entertaining embrace

Posted By SERGE ALLAIRE, FOR THE STANDARD

Posted 1 hour ago



Hanna Barczyk and Francis Vaillancourt go through some poses before the performance.
Photo by Serge Allaire

A feast for the eyes and ears. That's the only way to describe the Blind River Entertainment Series latest performance, Close Embrace: A Tango Cabaret, held on April 25 at the Alain Bray Auditorium.

The evening featured Argentine-style tango and more. Ray Luedeke, founder and artistic director of Voices Afire Pocket Opera and Cabaret, was master of ceremonies and organizer of the event.

"Tango is a feeling," Luedeke told the crowd. "It's a way of living. The heart of tango is the sound of the bandoneon, a type of accordion invented in Germany. The soul of tango is in nostalgia, a longing for the past."

An enthusiastic audience was treated to a variety of tango

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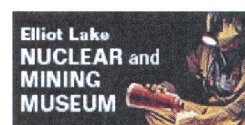
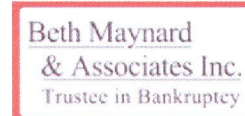
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Meeting at the Lester B Pearson Civic Centre – Tonight - April 28th, 2010
What are the duties, responsibilities and areas of jurisdiction of your Mayor? City Councillors City Hall? Mayor Rick Hamilton hosts a forum on the subject to provide information and answer your question. Date: April 28, 2010-04-21 Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Upcoming HST and Fee increases in the Digital World

In preparation for the pending HST effective on July first of this year, I decided to make an inquiry of EastLink regarding the affect of the HST. Taxable Status of Goods and Services for Consumers Under the HST – Examples No Change in Taxable/Exempt Status Cable TV Service

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Finding the Common Denominator

I have been accused of late of "pontificating" "to speak or express opinions in a pompous or dogmatic way". Maybe this is a valid criticism of my style, but I am unsure if this could be said about the content of my arguments. One of the easiest thing to do is to focus people's attent

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numbers performed by a quartet of musicians from the Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra. The repertoire was interspersed with several tango dances done to perfection by Francis Vaillancourt and his partner Hanna Barczyk. Opera singer Nelson Lohnes brought a touch of theatre to the evening lending his fine voice to many of the numbers.

Tango originated in Buenos Aires, Argentina and in Uruguay at the end of the 19th century.

Tango symbolizes this period of Argentine history, of people struggling in desperate times.

"Tango is more popular than ever in most countries of the world," said Luedeke. "In Toronto, there is milonga (a tango dance) every night and in Montreal there are live tango bands."

The audience was treated to the three types of tango: tango proper - which is the oldest style having had the fewest changes, the milonga - which came from Africa by way of Cuba and the tango waltz. There was also evidence of tango nuevo (new tango), which includes new dance figures.

Barczyk has been dancing for three years and Vaillancourt for 11. They have been dancing partners for one year. Although tango can have sudden turns and intricate moves, Barczyk is not uncomfortable performing it. She attributes that to her partner.

"Francis is a very strong lead," said Barczyk. "He keeps his body rigid so it's very easy for me to see where he wants me to go."

The team is from Toronto although Vaillancourt is from Montreal and Barczyk is of Polish descent.

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"We met in Toronto," said Vaillancourt. "We are now based there and do a lot of dance presentations all over southern Ontario."

The quartet providing the background music for the event was composed of accomplished musicians. Joseph Patric on accordion, Jin-Shan Dai on violin, Igor Gefter on cello and Susan Lipchak on viola were an anchor for Nelson Lohnes' vocals.

The evening concluded with an assortment of film clips displaying tango performances in movies. They included Scent Of A Woman and Take The Lead.

The video concluded with a delightful tango display by a young couple out walking by a river. The couple becomes engaged in a spontaneous playful tango that develops as they are out for an evening stroll, proceeds through multiple moves and ends just as spontaneously as the resume their walk.

And here was the essence of the whole evening and of the tango. We all live together in families and in society. As we interact, we inevitably become "entangled" with one another, pulled in one direction then another. And when we do become entangled in life as in the tango, there is only one thing to do and that's tango on.

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