



Theatre

FRENCH TROUPE
PRELJOCAJ BALLET
PERFORMS LES 4
SAISONS, A FRESH
INTERPRETATION
OF A CLASSIC

LES 4 SAISONS,,,

– WHERE?
Teatre Nacional de Catalunya

– WHEN?
June 12 to 15

– HOW MUCH?
€28-€32

– MORE INFO?
www.tnc.cat



Choreographer Angelin Preljocaj brings Les 4 saisons to the TNC./JC CARBONNE



Vivaldi on the move

ALEX PHILLIPS

● In contemporary dance piece Les 4 Saisons... (The Four Seasons), French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj has worked with artist Fabrice Hyber to create an intriguing fusion of music, stage and costume design, and movement.

The piece is set to the familiar composition of 17th century Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi, one of the pioneers of baroque: a musical style which was immensely innovative at the time, and which shocked the austere religious establishment with its exuberant celebration of creativity and virtuosity.

The work begins with a question, Preljocaj says: "Can this piece of music, so well known, still deliver more sur-

prises, more grey zones, more secrets? Can we erase the tainted image of this music?" He responds with a colourful production incorporating 12 dancers, selected from his prestigious company of 24, for the personality they bring to the stage.

Preljocaj has established himself as one of the most acclaimed and unusual figures in contemporary dance. After studying ballet and joining a rock group, the Frenchman rose to fame in the 1980s dance boom and belongs to the innovative group of dancers and choreographers that the French refer to as "Young Dance."

He has choreographed some 30 productions and his troupe performs about 110 dates a year on international tour.

A companion piece to El Grec

M. TOPOR

● When El Grec ends, Barcelona is practically left without any theatre shows at all. Big theatres are on holiday and theatre lovers are left to wait until September. Fortunately, there is still Avantime, a project born eight years ago at Versus Teatre to cover Barcelona's dearth of theatre during August. As its name suggests, the festival presents theatre premières before the actual official openings of the theatre season in September.

From this year though, Avantime is no longer just a post-Grec event: Ever Blanchet, the man behind this initiative, has gone even further by prolonging the festival from June to September and including the new



Ever Blanchet set up Avantime eight years ago/ANDREU PUIG

venue of the Theatre Gaudí (TGB) to the already classic Versus Teatre.

Avantime opens on June 17 at Versus with *Èdip 1, 2, 3, 4*, a contemporary version of the Greek tragedy directed by Pablo Levy (until July 6). Meanwhile, from June 18 to August 10, TGB will host the musical *Cançons per a un nou món*, by JR Brown, with the Bohémias company.

Macabre humour at Muntaner

CATALONIA TODAY

● The contemporary play *La Nevera*, a work by the acclaimed Argentine playwright Copi, who fled his native Buenos Aires in the mid 1960s to settle in Paris, is being staged at Sala Muntaner in Barcelona until July 6. Copi, born Raoul Damonte in 1943, was an important member of the French *Teatre de l'absurd* movement, also associated with Irishman Samuel Beckett. He is famed for his macabre humour.



Carles Romero Vidal stars in the dark comedy *La Nevera* at Sala Muntaner

INTERVIEW. JOSHUA ZAMRYCKI. DIRECTOR OF JOCLAR THEATRE

'We stage dark, twisted comedies'

ALEX PHILLIPS

● Jocular Theatre is a Barcelona-based English-language theatre company, set up in 2003 by New Yorker Joshua Zamrycki. The troupe is currently performing two plays by controversial American playwright Christopher Durang: *The Nature and Purpose of the Universe* and *The Actor's Nightmare*, at Raval's Antic Teatre Riereta from June 12 to 15.

– Tell us about yourself.

I was born in 1976 in Longbeach. I have a degree in mathematics, but I ended up minor-ing in theatre. I love theatre and theatre people too... although actors do have the reputation for being selfish and I've never met any that had a normal personal life!

– Why Barcelona?

When I graduated, everyone felt pressured to settle down into careers. I wanted something dif-

ferent. I once had a boss who had lived in Malaga and I thought that was the most romantic thing I'd ever heard! But I chose a larger city, near the water.

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"The Nature and Purpose of the Universe is a cutting commentary on blind faith"
●

– Did you plan to act here?

No, but one day I saw an ad for auditions for an English-language theatre company called Twelve by Twelve and ended up being cast in four productions. I also worked on a one-off production for Black Custard theatre, we ended up taking the play to the Edinburgh Fringe.

– Can you live off acting?



Joshua Zamrycki, founder and director of Jocular Theatre

I lived as an actor for a very long time, doing educational theatre and dubbing films and cartoons for companies that need to make samples in English to sell their products abroad. Now that I have a family, how-

ever, I need something more stable, so I also work at Hewlett Packard.

– Why did you set up Jocular?

I wanted to stage comedies: the darker and the more twisted the better! We put on a production in June and then in November. I have a group of actors that I

love to work with but I always hold open auditions too.

– Tell us about the plays.

Both are semi-autobiographical pieces where Durang lashes out against his strict upbringing. *The Nature and Purpose* is a cut-

ting commentary on blind faith. The main character is put to the extreme test yet refuses to believe that God will not save her. I want the audience to despise her, although there's nothing despicable about her.

– Do you go to Catalan productions?

Yes, and I'm always pleasantly surprised. I saw *Els Mots de Yorik* in Joan Brossa Espai Escènic recently and I thought what the director did with it was very interesting.

– Any plans for future productions?

I've about six plays in my head that I want to do next! Three years ago I directed my first large scale production of *Little Shop of Horrors* with a cast of 15 and a live band on stage! It was an amazing success but very stressful. I'd like to try something like that again.

www.joculartheatre.com