

The Herald

## Visual impact in brilliant production

By Amalia Cuestas  
For the Herald

A clever producer and director. His name: Diego Romay. His new creation — after the long, still enduring Tanguera — is called Nativo. A personal challenge for Romay himself, because this is folk music, dance and traditions at their purest. This is the story of the Spanish conquest of America, and the suffering of the Aboriginal population when deprived of their rights to land and identity.

An impressive, costly production, Nativo vindicates our indigenous roots by drawing attention to the slaughter of this culture.

An extraordinary musical, this unusual production showcases forceful dancing and acting in an incredibly colourful, moving spectacle. The group of dancers can only be described as astonishing, one and all wholeheartedly immersed in their strenuous task. The events that unfold in relation to Hilario, the leading character, start with the appearance of the imposing Pachamama (Mother Earth) preceding the conquerors' invasion. Hilario embodies these two contrasts: he is a wild young man, a product of Nature itself, a man who loves horses and freedom. His life changes when he falls in love with Candelaria, of a high social rank. Everything is told with a fluency enhanced by perfect technique, with impeccable choreographies brought forward with refinement and expertise. There is much to be admired here: the creativeness in the scenes in which the dancers appear as horses, and the different malambos, zambas, gatos and other folk music pieces, all delivered with emotional strength, and with enviable stamina.

Adrián Verges is very charismatic in the leading, dancing and acting with great intensity in spite of the demanding steps he must cope with. His training is, obviously, first class. But so is that of the whole cast, fabulous dancers who excel from start to finish. The child actor Franco Martínez (Hilario as a young boy) is yet another surprise, and it's possible to foresee a solid future for him as a professional dancer, considering what he already achieves with apparent ease. This, of course, also reveals much hard work as regards choreography.

To these names must be added those of Cándida Mazacotte (a lithe and sensitive dancer with true stage presence, credible and endearing as Candelaria), Dabel Zanabria as her father, David Di Rico (another amazing dancer, as the military man who courts her), plus a numerous cast (about, I believe, thirty artists on stage), Jorge Corbalán as the foreman, and Tukuta Gordillo, who stands out as the shaman. The prestige of singer-actress Suna Rocha speaks for itself — her Mother Earth is striking, carried through by her powerful voice.

Extra assets in Nativo: La conquista musical: the excellent work of choreographers Dabel Zanabria, and Fernando 'Nehuén' Montivero, the original music score by Nicolás 'Colacho' Brizuela, the percussion music by Marcos 'Pochi' Fernández, and the song's music and lyrics by Eladia Blázquez.

Gerardo Gardelín is in charge of musical direction, original music and arrangements, and Gustavo Zajac, is the brilliant choreographer behind this magnificent production, with general supervision by the talented Omar Pacheco. Costumes were designed by Julio César and Matías Begni jointly, and masks by Ana Repetto. Lighting effects are by Ariel Del Mastro, set designs by Valeria Ambrosio, and historical research by Denise León. Diego Romay is also the author of the texts of his own production. The musicians on stage (Marcos Fernández, Iván Macchiavello, José Bale, Juan José Martínez and Juan Carlos Marras) add more lustre to this superlative show.

### WHERE & WHEN

Teatro El Nacional, Av. Corrientes 968. Weds to Sats at 9pm; Suns at 8pm.