diner in the room I'm as much interest to them as they are to me, but their glances are subtle and nothing is said.

The room darkens and five earnest, attractive young men dressed completely in white take up their posts on the musician's stage to my left. Intoxicating tango nuevo fills the air. So large and loud (and white) are the musicians that it takes a while to become aware of two dancers performing on the stage. Their dance is acrobatic, with smooth changes in pace and floorwork that makes use of the entire area available to them. As the first number finishes and he spins her into the darkness, I wonder how anyone can fail to be moved by the atmosphere, his modern movements, and her flourishes and *zapateado*.

The show continues. Four women in baby-doll bedclothes "entertain" four men in a brothel to a traditional tango valtz. They swirl around the small stage like a cloud of peripatetic but graceful fairies until the ending chord is played. A lone singer takes to the stage. The shadow of his trilby (cocked like a 1950s film star) falls on the opulent red curtain behind him and the audience voice their approval. The dances continue, each a tiny story with a spectacular finale. The woman who sings has long dark hair, a deep, sensual voice and some staggering clothing. When finished she's lifted off the stage with a twist and flourish and the dancers perform a well-timed, frenetic milonga.

Dancers use the stage and bar area well and the audience shouts its appreciation for the more acrobatic flips or familiar songs. The dancing gets more acrobatic and the footwork faster as the evening goes on. Women in period costume of semi-undress dance to "Roxanne" from *Moulin Rouge* with their partners in full 1950s day wear. Dancers enhance the rhythm of the "Gallo Ciego" so it feels like the heartbeat of the room. "Gricel" is sung by the male vocalist and performed with humour and energy by the troupe. Each number ends so well and so spectacularly that I wonder how the finale can possibly top it. The climax is



in two parts. The first is just music. Each player is given his place to shine. Then the troupe perform a complex number to an embellished musical form of "La Cumparsita". Flexible and fleet-footed, the audience roars and claps for more.

This is show tango as it's dreamed of or as it's contrived to seem in films. It's slick, well produced, and well rehearsed. Visit Buenos Aires to learn tango and for the clubs, but be sure to book a night here. It's one you'll remember forever. ●

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