



La Femme Entices with Artistry of the Nude at MGM Grand

By Michelle White

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One might think that, with all the shows to come through the City of Entertainment, that Las Vegas lacks anything truly new to offer, or that innovation has reached its peak. Beautiful women run rampant (especially here in Los Angeles), and all we have to do is turn on the TV or look around at billboards or even just the streets to see their sexualized appeal. Yet Summer 2004 celebrated a new type of revue with the re-launch of French cultural phenomenon La Femme at MGM Grand. A satellite version of the acclaimed Crazy Horse show in Paris, La Femme (pronounced "La Fahm") literally places the female form in a whole new light.



Champagne Taste

Crazy Horse has won fame for more than half a century based on its productions reveling in beautiful women and "L'Art Du Nu" - the art of the nude. All 13 dancers in La Femme are members of the original Paris dance troupe. This incarnation of the show boasts new and remixed music by renowned French producer Laurent Gueneau, remarkably vivid lighting design, sensuous choreography, and tantalizingly tiny couture costumes created by acclaimed French designer Gaspard Yurkievich. The result is a kaleidoscope of vibrantly colored and textured designs formed of bare skin and played upon by light effects and projections. The potent visuals, stimulating music and spirited dancers combine to imply an intimate complicity between the dancer and the spectator.

When the first dancer sashays out from behind the curtain, patterned light spills over the entire scene, creating an amazing fluidity of movement. In the early act entitled "La Leon D'rotisme" a dancer frolics and fawns over a plush red couch shaped like a luscious set of lips. She mouths French lyrics, and, as teasing hands begin to undo the already-minimal clothing, audience members looked like they wanted to believe the dancer's sensuous gaze would fall on them alone. The multicolored lights begin to create a surreal effect, as though the dancer is moving through water.

In true La Femme style, each new number is completely independent of the next. Astrological interludes play a role as each dancer performs a solo number in between acts to introduce her character and astrological sign, and later performs with the rest of the group to represent all twelve signs simultaneously, the entire spectrum of feminine wiles.



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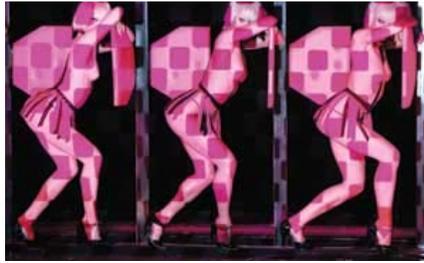
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Tuesday May 20th

7:30 PM | Tartuffe: South Coast Repertory



Beauty Boudoir

The act "Beauty Boudoir" proclaims "She will do anything to satisfy your desires." This act features seven topless girls who look remarkably alike - septuplets gone wild? The dancers are clad in matching platinum short wigs and pink squares of light. They prance in saloon doorways, doors strategically placed to show just a hint of that bottom cleavage.

In "Blue Taboo," fog billows from the sparkly curtains, which part to reveal three golden-lit dancers writhing on steps, legs akimbo. As fog rises around this sultry number, Indian-flavored percussive music overlaid with a flute provokes a jungle sort of feel.



Fly

"Fly" opens with a dancer taking naughty advantage of her perch against the bars of a cage. Yet these bars are flexible, only accentuating the movements of her taut body. The golden-lit dancer displays the wild feline energy of a lioness, barely contained behind bars. In mere scraps of clothing, she rocks and rolls with the abandon of an animal, with that ferocious caged energy.

The closing number, "Va-Va-Voom" displays all the dancers in multicolored wigs moving along a horizontal ballet bar. Their rapidfire strutting causes triangular patterns of shadows to play provocatively upon on their bodies.

And as if all of this wasn't stimulation enough, be prepared for a few surprises, including Stephane Vandel's sleight of hand and rakish smile, and "Micro Jackson."

Out of all the well-designed components of the show, the lighting creates perhaps the most astounding effects. One act concludes with the visual of a dancer's outstretched arms and legs, and in a final burst of light she resembles the figure of a star. The ladies might appear as moving silhouettes against a backdrop of the same illuminated geometric patterns that cover their skin, and this indiscriminating wash of light lends the grace and speed of a cat to the dancers' disappearances behind the curtain. They slink through so seamlessly, it is almost as if a ghost left just a flutter of curtain to reveal her movement. In addition to the cloaks of light, the skillful synchronicity of movement often makes the ladies appear as complementary mirror images of each other, lending a dreamlike quality to the scene.



Va-Va-Voom

The music is also not to be overlooked, as its variety profoundly impacts the diversity in mood of the different numbers. The ladies may romp to good-natured opulent old-style music, or move with more deliberate sexuality to a more down-tempo, rhythmic electronic track. The ballet training of the women is evident in the strength with which they arch up on their toes, solidly maintaining taut poses of heightened sexuality.

Crazy Horse exalts the female form as both artistic expression and entertainment. In its early days,

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Wednesday May 21st
12:00 PM | Free LOST Exhibit at The Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills, For a Limited Time Only!
7:30 PM | Tartuffe: South Coast Repertory Season Finale
8:00 PM | Surely Lorraine's Anime Wong at Malo's Silver Lake Sessions
Thursday May 22nd
12:00 PM | Free LOST Exhibit at The Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills, For a Limited Time Only!
7:30 PM | Hovorostovsky @ LA Opera
8:00 PM | Tartuffe: South Coast Repertory Season Finale
9:30 PM | Comedy Palace

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founder Alain Bernardin wanted to create something more striking than the traditional American striptease and yet acceptable to a wide audience. He experimented with innovative uses of light and color. Ten years ago Alain Bernardin passed the torch to his children Didier, Sophie and Pascal. In 2001, Crazy Horse celebrated its 50th anniversary. This same year, Crazy Horse took up permanent residency in Las Vegas. MGM Grand constructed an exact replica of the showroom in Paris; the La Femme Theater has the same stage - show, dancers, colors, carpet, lighting, drapery, furniture, and more - as its sister venue. Now, three years later, the venture has proven to be a tremendous success.

Lest your urge for truly provocative entertainment go unsatisfied for too long, refrain from cynically sighing, "C'est la vie." Feast your eyes on the MGM Grand's unique offering: "C'est La Femme."

The show takes place at the 300-seat La Femme Theater at MGM Grand, designed to re-create the one-and-only Crazy Horse located on the glamorous Avenue George V in Paris. La Femme performs nightly at 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m., dark Tuesdays. Guests must be at least 18 years of age to attend the show. Tickets are priced at \$59.00 inclusive and include show program. Group tickets are available for groups of 10 or more and can be obtained by contacting Dana Longfield with La Femme Group Sales at 702.891.3372. Tickets can be purchased at MGM Grand Ticketing outlets, by phone at 702.891.7777 or 800.929.1111, or online at www.mgmgrand.com.

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