

Swan Lake Blows Roof Off CPA

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Recession? WHAT recession?

Ballet San Jose's recent production of SWAN LAKE had the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts bursting at the seams February 25-27. The combination of new interest among non-ballet goers due to the popularity of the film BLACK SWAN with **Natalie Portman**, and a guest appearance by star dancer **Carlos Acosta** of Royal Ballet in London had the box office phones ringing off the hook. In a four performance run, with 10,132 seats for sale, 9,049 tickets sold at between \$16 and \$100 each for nearly 90% of total capacity. The company did 35.63% over single ticket dollar goal for the run of the show. Combine that with the 11% over goal for the December performances of THE NUTCRACKER, and Ballet San Jose has now exceeded single ticket goal for the entire season with one show left to go...CARMEN, April 1-3.

This was obviously not just your usual ballet crowd. Of the 1,685 orders which were placed online, a whopping 1,249 were first time BSJ customers. An online survey of the buyers showed that 12.5% of respondents had never been to a ballet before. A larger percentage of men in the audience than usual was also apparent. One reviewer noted that men, "...who looked like they would be more inclined to have memorized the theme song to Monday Night Football, were heard to be whistling the Tchaikovsky score while walking out the door." And many celebrities were spotted in the crowd including Golden Globe-winning actor Clive Owens, Raiders linebacker Thomas Howard, drummer Lars Ulrich of Metallica, and network executives from HBO, as well as numerous Bay Area politicians and entertainment personalities. An invitation to the entire cast of the ballet from a very popular talk show host (who shall remain nameless) to appear on her show, unfortunately had to be turned down due to scheduling issues, but the attention the show received has been nothing less than spectacular.

Recession? What recession? Just give the crowds what they want...quality programming.

PHOTO CREDIT: The Black Swan pas de deux from Act III of Dennis Nahat's SWAN LAKE. Carlos Acosta as Prince Siegfried and Alexandra Meijer as Odile. Photo by Robert Shomler.

