

## PRESS REVIEW - EXTRACTS



**СЕГА ЕАД - Irina Gigova - 17/06/2023**

**«LIFE IS A DREAM», BUT “AMORE” MAKES US AWAKE**

“Amore” by Pippo Delbono is a magical act of love to the audience, to oneself (...) and maybe it is an act of searching God.

**НОЩНИ ПТИЦИ- Iskra Angelova - 09/06/2023**

**AN ITALIAN PRODUCTION BY THE FAMOUS DIRECTOR PIPPO DELBONO BROUGHT THE AUDIENCE AT THE SATIRICAL THEATRE IN SOFIA TO ITS FEET**

And the dry tree, which was watered every day, and which we remember from Tarkovski's "The Sacrifice" finally, in the end, is blooming. In white, childish colours, Delbono slowly passes through the whole auditorium, goes on the stage and falls asleep under it. 10 minutes ovation!

**BTV НОВИНИТЕ - Daniel Dimitrov - 09/06/2023**

**LYING DOWN IN ONE'S OWN WOMB - LOVE ACCORDING TO PIPPO DELBONO**

In “Love” there are no rules, no limits, no laws. But there is enough strength, capable of quietly flipping our brain cells over – one by one, in savage calmness and deliberate cutting out of everything rotten. This vaguely expressed feeling is my attempt to explain the effect of this performance. (...)

Pippo Delbono's performance (...) constitutes a small world, confined in the lights and shadows of love. It is the tree of life, which blooms only in the season of immortality – Love. Maybe this is why at most of the time the tree remains dry, but it is still beautiful and the only “material” scenery on the stage, where without magic tricks a miracle happens...

**SIPARIO.IT - Francesca Maria Rizzotti - 14/03/2023**

**AMORE BY PIPPO DELBONO**

It is hard to grasp, in Pippo Delbono's theatre, the boundary between life and theatre, between truth and fiction. It is neither a theatrical biography nor a documentary theatre but it is life itself that becomes theatrical material and, even before that, theater that is born as a vital urgency. On stage, a humanity in its diversity and richness, both for the extraordinary talent of some artists who have recently joined the Company, and for the generosity and the intense, sometimes ferocious, encounter with the lives of the historical members.

(...) I would start my report from the very end: from those long, almost endless minutes of applause, not thunderous but marked, slow and heavy, as if there were a need for a time to find each other, to put the pieces back together, to absorb the emotions and to embrace the entire Company before taking leave.

**MÁLAGA HOY - Pedro Hofhuis - 30/01/2023**

**WHEN THEATRE CARESSES YOU**

Pippo Delbono Company's theatre production is living poetry. Poetry that moves, which is sung, which is felt.

(...) Passion and nostalgia in the warm voices and guitars that accompany a series of “living paintings” that bring us closer to the ritual, to the beginning of the theater, to a way of communicating as primitive as love. (...) The best thing to do is to let yourself go and not get lost trying to find a specific meaning in what you see on stage, or find an order to the most human existing feeling. (...) On stage a stage box of an intense red color like blood and passion, frames the space where everything takes place. (...) There

is no element that distorts the aesthetic and scenic order. Everything is studied to the millimeter to arouse emotions and astonishment in an audience hypnotized by the beauty and harmony of the staging. (...)

It had been a long time since I had seen something so beautiful, sensitive and true on the stage of a theater. A total staging; poetry, dance, theater, music and plastic arts. As if Wagner were a minimalist. If one day you come across a play by Pippo Delbono, please come in and let yourself be caressed by his art.

**SUR - Regina Sotorrió - 25/01/2023**

**THE LAST MADNESS OF LOVE BY PIPPO DELBONO AT THE CERVANTES THEATRE**

Delbono, a celebrity of contemporary European theater, one of those crazy geniuses who does not stick to any standard but his own, staged Love in all its forms. With tenderness, with sorrow, with fear, with bewilderment, with violence. (...)

Words (the chosen ones exact and loaded with lyricism), music and dance are put together in an apparently simple sequence, but where even each single shadow is measured. With hardly any set design, only effective lighting and the work of the actors, 'Amore' composes overwhelming, shocking and even disconcerting scenes.

As always Delbono with his Company - performers who do not respond to any canon, with beautiful imperfect bodies and ages that have since some time left youth behind.

**IL FATTO QUOTIDIANO - Paolo Martini - 31/12/2022**

**THE BEST THEATRE OF 2022**

**What's left of feelings when the pandemic takes away a loved one: Delbono's show.**

(...) No doubt: two shows in particular were the most deeply moving, even though so different in their style and setting, 'Amore' by Pippo Delbono and 'Billy's Violence' by the Need Company.

The almost trivial title chosen by Delbono, "Amore", could create a barrier, but Delbono, an extraordinary actor-writer-director, immediately thought about it, and not since yesterday, to straighten the ones who had turned up their nose, and to fill them with tears with an 'open-heart' story of what's left of feelings when a pandemic takes away the dearest person, as well as everyone's freedom (I confess: I've seen it twice in a row, with the joy of paying both tickets, and the second one was even more exciting).

**TÉLÉRAMA – Fabienne Pascaud – 14/09/2022**

**THIS WEEK WE ARE: MOVED**

**In "Love", the burning Pippo Delbono is in search of the truth about death, about the love - cradled by the nostalgia of fado.**

After the audience has taken their seat in the theater he enters in his splendid white suite; white being the color of grief in many cultures across the world. He sits among the audience, towering and nostalgic, as if from a play by Anton Chekhov. The Italian 63-year-old playwright, actor and director Pippo Delbono will attend "Love" together with us. He will share it with us on the notes of fado and the moves of gaudy dances, of his pains, his grieves, his despair, his unquenchable yearn for love. But it is an ever more cosmic love that does not restrain itself into an individual passion, a love that shapeshifts and transforms into a spiritual substance before the world. On stage there are blood-red walls and a bony tree evoking the one seen in "Waiting for Godot" by Samuel Beckett. Which Godot is Pippo Delbono still waiting for - he who involved us since the 90's in poem-shows, in dream-shows to compel us to accept the radical difference of the "Other", of death and solitude? With "Love" he finds peace and becomes minimalist. A journey through Portugal has turned the artist to the heartrending and lonely Portuguese saudade. The excess of bodies erupting in their singularity is no longer necessary. Tall or thin, slowed down or aged. Only some magnificent singers who accompany with the guitars their heart-wrenching fado, only some poems by Eugénio de Andrade or Daniel Damásio Ascensão Filipe - written on the street walls, whispered by Pippo Delbono's breathless voice that takes us on the verge of the abyss. A few women dance once more on stage and through their dramatic gestures they remind us of how much the Italian artist has shared with Pina Bausch. Voice and silence, full and empty. "Love" explores love in terms of its loss, its apparition and vanishing. Grief. Love for another when the other one is missing. Love that tries desperately to drag the deceased out of the emptiness, the threat that could come at any moment, love that becomes an endless listening to the world. On stage the barren tree will end up covered with flowers. Only then Pippo Delbono will leave his seat to lie down underneath its branches. Smiling. So, is this the birth of a new deal with existence in this short and dense show that combines a feverish mixture of sadness and joy? If the form is less inflamed, less flammable than usual, both the descent into hell, into danger, and the calmer coming back give life to an extraordinary inner adventure. An inner search of truth that rejects all pretexts, illusions, appearances and lies.

**LE FIGARO – Ariane Bavelier – 09/09/2022**

**PIPPO DELBONO TELLS US ABOUT LOVE**

**With his last work, "Love", now on stage at the Théâtre du Rond-Point in Paris, the Italian artist strikes to the heart.**

He enters the theater among the audience, impeccable from the point of his glinting hair to his white suit. Blackout.

Pippo looks huge, a bit more worn out, a bit more human than usual. He sits with the spectators. There, on stage, a woman sings near a red wall. A veranda is towering with a shadow play. She stands alone and has her shoes in her hand.

"What else can a creature do, among his fellow creatures, if not love? Love and forget, love and mislove, love, unlove, love? Love what the breeze brings ashore, love what it buries, and what, in the sea-breezes, is salt, or love's yearning, or plain anguish? (...) This is our destiny: to love without accounting. To love even our own lack of love."

The voice of Pippo Delbono rises. In the night of the theater he recites the verses. This text, based on the works of the Brazilian author Carlos Drummond de Andrade, gives the start to the show. The irregular voice that every now and then the artist pushes to the verge of Poetry Slam flays our romantic illusions. It has the same strength that we all know, but it is also shaky at times. Because of the humility, the impatience, the desire, the disappointment, and the joy, depending on the situation: "It's urgent to invent a joyfulness, multiply kisses and cornfields, discover roses and rivers and glistening mornings- it's urgent." He says, reciting a poem from Eugenio de Andrade. In this work inspired by Portugal, Pippo Delbono has gathered a collection of poems, most of them Portuguese: Carlos Drummond de Andrade, Eugénio de Andrade, Daniel Damasio Ascensao Filipe, Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen... but also Rainer Maria Rilke and Jacques Prévert. Each poet puts within the folds of their words this need to love ruling over the human beings, according to their stories, rising and breaking endlessly like a dissolving wave. On the walls onto the stage everything is red. The shadows glide on those same walls or rather those walls absorb them. A thin leafless tree grows among dry rocks. The richness of poetry contrasts with the emptiness on stage: Pippo Delbono directs his images by pulling the reins. We did not believe that his Mediterranean embellishment could be reduced to such minimalism. Then there are his twelve actors. A gallery of lonely portraits, in full contact with the night of the heart, they are like mystics standing out from the crowd - sweet madness, joyful fragility. They play their own texts or dance on the words of their director. They sit like wise ones on a chair or in an exhortation attitude with the mic in their hands. One of them leans on a golden shower that eludes his embrace. An old man half naked seeks refuge in the arms of a young woman, who shines in her ceremonial dress. Another more mature woman protests against the dictatorship of love.

"One day you are in a good mood and you love me. The next day you vanish, you don't respond, you have got other things to do..." "I've got other things to do, I'm busy. I can't make it today". What a mysterious and terrible phrase.

The omnipresent music strikes all the chords of love and makes them vibrate. Guitar and songs - some amazing artists like Pedro Joia - who played with Gilberto Gil - and Miguel Ramos whose voice has got such nostalgic nuances that can touch your deepest core are performing live. For the entire span of this hour-long performance we are taken to an unprecedented journey of poetry in which one can glance at all seashores, walks, promises, memories. A moving and unique chant of the world.

**LES ECHOS - Philippe Chevilley – 08/09/2022**

**PIPPO DELBONO IN THE NAME OF LOVE**

(...) In "Love", his last work on stage at the Théâtre du Rond-Point in Paris, Pippo Delbono drives out his fear for a world that is sinking with an ode to love. An occasionally sweet love, sometimes burning, and overwhelmed by the infinite nostalgia of fado. Inspired by the cultural context of Portugal but also of Angola and Cape Verde the Italian director has drawn his heart map. Everything begins in demi-shadow with a red set resembling a scarlet court where a young woman sings a heartrending chant "a cappella". Soon after a barren tree appears which will be covered with flowers by the end of the show. With its bony outline and the massive rocks at its roots it reminds of Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot".

Waiting for love, Pippo (or one of his actors) recites some verses. Beautiful verses. From Carlos Drummond de Andrade to Jacques Prévert, Rainer Maria Rilke and Florbela Espanca... Such tremors of love in which the fear of loss, and of passion that devours and annihilates are mixed together. "This is our destiny: to love without accounting. To love even our own lack of love...". His words give shape to a rival attraction to what is essential: the singing and the music that best tell us about the dizziness of love. The Portuguese Artists - guest singers and musicians hosted by the Company - are all remarkable: virtuosi at their ease both in the Salle Renaud Barrault of the Théâtre du Rond-Point in Paris and on a stage of Lisbon. A moment of suspension when the young Angolan girl Aline Frazão sings "Belina" - the only love song from her wounded country. (...)

Pippo Delbono enchants us with his images, his lights, and his strong shadows: the tree multiplies itself, an actress' hair starts floating like a vermilion flag in the wind. "Love" is a theater of shadows animated by the angels of the company who are always equally inspired. The music of fado is the music of the angels as well.

Pippo Delbono wants to cast a spell on the pain of the whole world, he wants to remove the solitude, the imprisonment of the long months of isolation, his own grief and pain. We sense he's going through a crisis, he is exhausted but somehow relieved when he lies down at the roots of the flowering tree. Theater saves him once more. With the moved support of his audience in love.

SCENEWEB.FR – Cristophe Candoni – 08/09/2022

**AMORE BY PIPPO DELBONO: A SONG OF LOVE AND PAIN BETWEEN PASSION AND PURITY**

Inspired by Portugal, led by the voice of poets, the Brazilian Eugenio de Andrade among others, and by the vibrant nostalgia of the traditional arias of fado, Pippo Delbono friendly and somehow sweet, in a refined white suit, seems willing to let go of the great fiery and poetic eruptions we are used to in order to reach a new art form - more sensitive and essential. On a big bare stage, simply framed on three sides with high burning red walls, we see a fleeting celebration in which pale figures - some of them wearing animal heads on their faces - begin a parade and some peasants dance in a compelling and frenzied twirl around the thin trunk of a dead tree. The carnival joyfulness that characterizes Delbono's works, his libertarian and multicolored artistic act, this time give way to feebler pictures that echo the favorite themes of the artist: a new interpretation of a Pietà, for instance, but with more solemn tones and a total restraint of ostentation. The scenes flow and inspire beauty and sadness and a certain kind of wisdom. They seem simple isolated presences - often dressed in black without lacking cheerfulness. The undetectable emptiness of time is palpable. Emptiness emerges in a vast spectrum of colors widely warm and moist spanning from the light and dark shades of the days and the endless Mediterranean nights. (...)

Without Bobò (who passed away in 2019) the Company of actors, so familiar and so unique - the sweet and wicked Gianluca Ballaré in particular - is now accompanied by musicians and singers like the radiant Angolan artist Aline Frazão. The song - accompanied by the guitar - tells what could not be told otherwise in all its power and fullness. Delbono sings about love, about the lack of love, about the need for love. He offers us a show that is at one time deep, fragile and necessary just like the feeling it explores. "This is our destiny: to love without accounting" he tells us with determination. To the brute force and violence that act upon the world Delbono opposes art, nature and spirituality.

And the emotion reaches its peak.

LES INROCKUPTIBLES – Patrick Sourd – 23/08/2022

**AMORE IN PARIS**

**The Italian director offers us the score of an excruciating anthem to love, combining the songs of fado with the theater of images of his Company.**

It is a crossroads of paths marked by the feeble twisted outline of a dead tree. The set of "Love" reprises the purity of sets suggested by Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" and Pippo Delbono puts his last creation under the sign of a search for love that is like an eternal wait. (...)

At the origin of this adventure there's the Italian artist's wish to exalt Portuguese-speaking culture by going beyond the borders of Portugal. The director keeps in mind the colonial history of the country and uses it to expand his radius of action in order to evoke a much broader choice of works gathered from Brazil, passing through Angola and Cape Verde islands. (...)

To signal the start of the show Pippo Delbono enters the auditorium dressed in a white suit like a real Master of Ceremonies before sitting at a work desk in a central row among the audience. From this place, mic in his hand, he will punctuate the evening by reading a selection of poems taken from the Portuguese-speaking literature or paying tribute to Jacques Prévert and Rainer Maria Rilke. (...)

On the stage - defined by the geometrical surfaces drawn by a blood-red light - loving evolves like a dance with the devil. And so, the demons that live within us take hold of the stage and become incarnate in a ritual exorcism. Waiting until the very last moment to go on stage Pippo Delbono allows himself a bewildering gesture that ends the show reaching an unforgettable peak.

LA REVUE DU SPECTACLE – Bruno Fourniès – 12/09/2022

**ODE TO LOVE - LOVE RESTS LIKE A SOAP BUBBLE OF TENDERNESS AT THE THEATRE DU ROND POINT IN PARIS**

"What else can a creature do, among his fellow creatures, if not love? Love and forget, love and mislove, love, unlove, love? Love what the breeze brings ashore, love what it buries, and what, in the sea-breezes, is salt, or love's yearning, or plain anguish? Love the barren, the unpolished, a flowerless vase, an iron floor, a bird of prey. This is our destiny: to love without accounting. To love even our own lack of love."

This poem by Carlos Drummond De Andrade spoken or sung during the show ( I can't remember exactly now) encapsulates the show itself in its entirety. Its original language, Portuguese, is the cradle in which Pippo Delbono brought it to life. Languages and strong, purged, symbolic images are the pieces of a tangle of poems, music, songs, Italian words mixed up with Portuguese fado. Just one theme, as the only, final, whole thing to be expressed seems to have inspired the outstanding Italian artist Pippo Delbono: the imperative, dizzying need to love. (...)

It is a journey we're invited to join taken by the vibrant embrace of fado from Portugal to Angola, through Cape Verde.

On stage the characters seem to be squashed by red walls as tall as cliffs.

Overwhelmed and forced to fight, to expand, to run in order to express the powerful and devastating feelings told by the songs, the music and the words of poets. These are the images that stress all the excess of these feelings and the weakness of the bodies

and the creatures that live them. On a bare stage a lone tree hangs its dead branches - motionless. Even the sun that spreads its rays through an enormous shutter creates a constant state of melting.

To the Company of actors loyal to their director some new artists have been added. Pedro Jónia, a virtuoso guitarist who gives birth to pieces of sparkling music, all by himself, sitting on a simple chair. He sometimes accompanies Miguel Ramos - elegant and erect like a crooner - but whose fado reopens old wounds of the heart. And then there is Aline Frazão: a young Angolan singer who, in a moment of bare truth, tells the story of Belina, the only love song desperately found among the memories of the traditional songs in an old Portuguese colony.

That moment is sweet and simple at once, cradled by the whispering voice of Pippo Delbono who sits among the audience at the beginning of the show sharing with them a span of time, the view of a landscape, a memory, a feeling.

**ARTS-CHIPELS – Sarah Franck – 08/09/2022**

**“LOVE”: OF DEATH, OF BLOOD, OF PASSION AND LIFE. A POETIC RADIANCE.**

When Pippo Delbono's personal mythology is rooted and intertwined with the solemn authenticity of Portuguese fado it becomes an inspired and poetic dream, unusual and upsetting that fascinates and takes us away.

A space without a set defined and marked only by the light. An abstract space dressed in red, an omnipresent red, intrusive that covers the walls encapsulating the scene. It is the color of blood, like the flowing life that runs through our veins, and also the life we lose by shedding blood, symbol of pain and suffering. For it is in this double movement, in this constant swinging between hope and despair, between the liberated air that blows a new wind and the loss - real or imaginary - that the show is floating and gives us a reflection in the shape of a poetic intuition about the ever-changing figure of love in the form of a ceremony at one time barbaric and mystical. (...)

The beauty of the lines is accompanied by the dreamlike force both brute and sophisticated of a performance that combines the unusual and the poetic, the strength of voice and the enlightenment of the apparition. Because the composition of pictures leaves to each their own strength... Pedro Jónia's guitar expands its ringing and its elaborate embellishments, not without breaking and dramatic points; in a transformation process the scene changes into a shell-shaped temple in which the characters come to pay tribute to a bare-breasted deity by dressing her with necklaces. The dance develops its own vision and the carnival puts down the souls of the dead within the bosom of the living. The set changes constantly with the variations of the light and the dead tree that casts its shadow over the world of spirits is brought back to life. The show reminds us that life and death belong to each other and love is their engine. Like in a long languid dream scattered with accidents we let ourselves sink in a world where beauty doesn't follow any ordinary canon, where old age is not an illness and where the recent isolation and detention flow into eternity. It happens rarely to find oneself imprisoned in someone else's universe and in their words without feeling like a prisoner. "Love" is one such singularity and offers the imagination a unique and precious place to soar from.

**LE MOND DU CINE – Aurélien Corneglio – 07/09/2022**

**“LOVE” BY PIPPO DELBONO**

Pippo Delbono comes back to the Théâtre du Rond-Point in Paris, as a white dressed MC to offer us a chant of love made of spellbinding tableaux. (...) "Love" celebrates love in all of its phases. The word and its extensions are dissected in this outstanding show and at the same time we are bewildered by the unexpected and brilliant definition of this term. Love is put under the sign of reflection. It is put at the core of everything. The result is so dense it becomes dizzying. All the most precious and dark things that love embraces are contained in this truthful show. The sound and light design are key elements to give beauty to it. We witness a play of shadows on stage in which the perspectives become incredible. The result is magic. The music, but mainly the voices, become shadows themselves as expand they expand across the theater.

If on one hand the text has been translated on the other hand this did not happen to the songs that have been sung in Italian, Portuguese and Kimbundu - the long-forbidden language of Angola. Some may find questionable this deliberate decision not to show any surtitle - therefore not to translate - the songs. Instead it is a precise choice that entitles us to the personal interpretation of the sounds that run through us in a comfortable warmth or, sometimes, like a whiplash that snaps us out of our slumber. A beautiful way for each one of us to get hold of the text and the story. (...)

Breathtaking, impressive, disturbing, obscene, gross, esthetic, dreamlike and even violent: each individual will respond in their own way to the show but what is certain is that "Love" will not leave anyone indifferent. A mind-blowing piece of theater! (...)

A barren tree let itself be bent by the wind in a corner of the stage marked by dark red walls. It will bloom again soon thanks to the Portuguese fado, the dance of the broken souls, the words of poets. Here we are building the premises of a new beauty, celebrating an incandescent love. A response to the pandemic and to every possible grief, "Love" celebrates Portugal, its contradictions, its nostalgia and its joy, life itself.

**CRITIQUES THÉÂTRES – Philippe Charvernac – 07/09/2022**

**“LOVE” IN PARIS**

“Love” celebrates Portugal, its contradictions, its nostalgia and its joy, life itself”. Life with the capital L, with its adversities, its tears - certainly - and with its beauty and in the midst of life: love - always love through sublime fado music, dance, the expression of moving bodies. A beautiful set on a red backdrop delicately lit. Through a sequence of pictures, the director leads us into his universe that revolves around the love of human beings. He interacts with the stage, while sitting among the audience, to tell us that it is necessary to love without accounting. But just like the song says: love stories end badly, as usual.

What is better than music, singing and dancing to forget our own pain or bring it back to life? An hour long very beautiful show, an hour of nostalgia. We want more of it. A beautiful welcome back to the theater to everyone!

**I/O GAZETTE – Mathias Daval – 02/12/2021**

**A LOVER’S DISCOURSE - FRAGMENTS**

In front of the anguish and the isolation of this “covidique” time that coincides with a historical moment of fear and folding Pippo Delbono feels the urge to go back to the essential.

It is by staging a sequence of musical and poetical images inspired by Portugal that he begins a search for love through a nostalgic fado cabaret of great elegance. A barren tree on a naked stage: as opposed to Godot, the set of “Love” is an invitation to the fearful wait of the remaking of broken souls. Portugal is not the subject but the medium of a poetic- alchemical laboratory: Delbono selects some pieces whose core is the realm of fado, alternatively played, sung or danced by magnificent artists. The dramaturgy refuses any sequence of logical arguments which is instead replaced by a series of pieces, tiles of a recital performed with equal talent by traditional figures of the Portuguese-speaking culture like the guitarist Pedro Jòia - who has composed part of the score - and archetypical or fantastic characters that Pippo Delbono usually gathers together in his works. (...)

It is love without accounting then - to the point of loving even our own lack of love.

Within the text of a conference entitled “One always fails in speaking of what one loves” that was found still stuck in his typing machine upon his death, Roland Barthes speaks about Stendhal’s passion for Italy and of his incapability to express in words the feelings it was causing him. (...)

**DUELS - Matteo Columbo - 14/06/2022**

**FERTILE WOUNDS: LOVE, FINGER IN A ROOM BROUGHT ABOUT BY PIPPO DELBONO**

Like a wound. Like passion. The red stage, played, severed, messed out by the shadows (Orlando Bolognesi is the light designer) is the space for a kammerspiel (at the age of lockdown) aching and alive. Pippo Delbono’s voice is true and vibrant expression, magnified texture, dense lecture of disenchantment, intimate and universal, which picks from poetry to draw a collection of tableaux vivants and chantants. (...)

The ritual, with his persistent simplicity and consistency, is the form of dedication that leads to miracles. In an hour dense with splendor, the suspended space reveals the pain and beauty of the world, the misery and perfection of the human being, the connection between the opposites, and the dream of a community that dances and blooms.

**IL GIORNALE - Stefania Vitulli - 11/06/2022**

**PIPPO DELBONO ASKS FOR LOVE AND GIVES IT BACK ON THE NOTES OF FADO**

Spreading seeds on stage so that some time and somehow, they can bloom inside of us: this has always been the style of Pippo Delbono. But this time it goes all the way to the extreme compared to the past, maybe because yearning is more resolute if the feeling of death diverts the thoughts from their usual trail. (...)

“Love” becomes the password to access intensity and “to love” is the code to decipher both art and madness and to give back to nostalgia the command bridge in order to drive our focus and our heart. (...)

Dense quotes, true choir in a tragedy and a comedy of an hour of love.

**HYSTRIO - Giuseppe Liotta - March 2022**

**THE POWER OF POETRY AND THE FREEDOM OF FADO IN THE THOUSAND SHADES OF THE WORD: “LOVE”**

Love that unites. That is the kind of love Pippo Delbono speaks about. Love with a capital “L”. Love that is stronger than death, that keeps the living alive, that you can lose yourself into after having searched for it everywhere, maybe in a shred of continent that you chose as your homeland, as an active, laboring refuge. A new habitat for the soul, a new landing to start again after the wounds of an overwhelmingly fruitful and tearing existence have been cured but not healed. You can sense its presence even in the dazzling structure of a show that is nothing like the previous creations by the same artist, and yet it seems to contain them all in a broken, joyful kaleidoscope of memories, of lost and newly found harmonies ready for a fresh start.

**KRAPP'S LAST POST 28/02/2022**

**PLEASE, TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT LOVE**

A musical and poetic journey from Portugal to Angola all the way to Cape Verde.

Pippo Delbono's last show is a ride through the unfathomable lands of "Love" - "real gear of the human organism" that filters, runs and is run through by everything we face and collide with. (...)

A journey within love that manages to meet even with death, as it happens in Mexico. A testimony of this is an extraordinary picture in which white dressed women, performing a rhythmic dance, appear on stage like the vestals of Eros and Thanatos. In the end Delbono comes on stage and lies beneath the tree to sleep. Lights fade out; what comes next is a triumph of applause

**IL MANIFESTO - Gianfranco Capitta - 30/10/2021**

**THE GEOGRAPHY OF FEELINGS ON THE NOTES OF PORTUGUESE FADO**

**A great coming back to the stage for Pippo Delbono**

He tells that himself to the audience as the curtain goes up. (...) This time the show shifts almost naturally into a "chant", that sings about the subject that gives it its title, obviously, with an emotional rapture that's really consistent. (...) This is the reason why (thanks to the splendid instrumental and vocal solo acts) the fado can interweave the words on the bodies of the performers. (...)

The show goes on with visions and lunges, with the heart breaking melodies and the sparkling images produced by the wild performers, dressed in either showily smart suits or in spectral and stretched clothes, as for a voodoo ritual.(...)

What predominates is a shared emotion, a message that the show bottles and throws at the audience, wrapped in the heart rending Portuguese feelings delivered by the music, with its own contradictions, that are also its strength: the shores beaten by the Atlantic Ocean, a history of millenia and the ability to recover and restart after the darkness faced during the past century.(...)

**CONTROSCENA - Enrico Fiore - 29/10/2021**

**PIPPO DELBONO. FROM PORTUGAL WITH LOVE"**

(...) At a certain point we hear Delbono's voice from the backstage that says: "I come from a very tragic moment of my life. A mourning for love. A huge pain of which I am still unable to talk. And so the show has become a song that walks constantly between love and pain, between life and death." (...)

And the miracle that "Love" makes is that its aching and brave "song", which was born from a private drama, finds a perfect response in the Portuguese soul and culture.

Portugal is an oxymoron, just like life: it mixes love and pain, just to begin with, then individualism and pluralism, bashfulness and sociability, passion and despondency, momentum and waiting, speed and slowness, commitment and nostalgia.

After all it is not by chance that fado is its greatest musical means of expression. (...)

Yes, it is indeed the "brotherhood" sung by José Afonso.

And that "Compassion" that jumps in one leap every barrier either geographical, linguistic, and physical, manifests itself beside the withered tree that makes the only "piece of furniture" within the red box that is the set design.

The cornerstone of Pippo's directing stays in a never tiring tension of each sequence of the show towards the word tree.

It is in fact the constant reaffirmation of life despite the steady dripping of death's occurrences.

Because- as stated by the verses of "Urgently" by Eugenio De Andrade, one of the poems that Delbono recites without showing himself-

"It's urgent — love. It's urgent a boat upon the sea. It's urgent to destroy certain words, hate, solitude, and cruelty, some laments, many many swords." (...)

In the end, the coexistence of life and death reaches its peak when the Mexican festivity is mentioned, the one in which the living and the dead are reunited.

And then, at last, Pippo shows up. Completely dressed in white, the color of death in many popular cultures, he crosses the stalls extremely slowly until he lies under the withered tree that meanwhile somebody has covered with flowery festoons.

I will stop here. I won't say anything about the talent of Frazao, of the guitarist Pedro Joia, of the fado singer Miguel Ramos, the set designer Joana Villaverde and of the other performers, the travel companions who've always been at Pippo Delbono's side: not only Ballarè, but Dolly Albertin, Margherita Clemente, Ilaria Distante, Mario Intruglio, Nelson Lariccia, Gianni Parenti, Pepe Robledo, Grazia Spinella.

**REPUBBLICA ONLINE - Anna Bandettini – 17/11/2021**

**PIPPO DELBONO, IT'S TRUE LOVE**

Do not miss the new show by Pippo Delbono: Love. It's a beautiful show, one of the most intense and important of this season: dedicated to love, to loss, to life, to abandonment, it is pure poetry, as you will rarely see it on stage.

The set is empty, there are neither characters, nor a plot. Only the music, the Portuguese Fado, narrates the beauty and the pain, that state of the soul that goes under the name of love that includes miseries and delights with the songs of extraordinary musicians like Pedro Joia, Miguel Ramos and the amazing Angolan-Portuguese singer Aline Frazao. Alternating Fado there are the words of poets recited by the heartrending voice-over of Pippo Delbono, while the silent choir of figures brought in by the actors of his company gives us the pictures of a human comedy(...). Those who see this show will come out enriched with many emotions and images, some of them personal, some more evident, some other secret, as if for the entire show Pippo were narrating himself, a self-loaded with loves lost and found, with passions and farewells(...).

**ART'O - Gianni Manzella – 01/11/2021**

**LOVE, PORTUGAL ACCORDING TO PIPPO DELBONO**

Portugal, my regret, that is what the verses of the poet said, in those long-gone years when one would fall in love with the far away country sitting at the gates of Europe. Last stripe of land before the ocean. Where the earth ends and the sea begins (...). In the new show by Pippo Delbono - entitled *Love*, and bravely so – there's the immediacy of Eugénio de Andrade's poetry, carnal and familiar with its noises of water, earth, wind and the urgent shouted need

of love matched with the parallel urgent need to shatter the words hate, loneliness, cruelty (...).

Music is the thread that leads through the show, so that the song can be the emotional equivalent of the poetic word, within the forest of memory. And music takes the stage immediately, from the beginning, where for the first time we don't see the Ligurian performer introducing the core of his work with a personal note. Music takes centre stage with the voice of the Angolan singer Aline Frazão, who recalls her country. With the music of Pedro Joia accompanied by the guitar. With the Fado sung by Miguel Ramos at the top of his voice. But there is also a time for the notes of *St. Matthew Passion* (...). Why this pain?

Asked Delbono at some point during his previous show, *The Joy*. Finding himself before something that could seem incomprehensible. More than three years have passed since that. Nonetheless it is impossible not to perceive a sense of continuity in this work, as if *Love* were a long-term sequel of the previous one. A journey to the end of pain. An open gash on something different (...).

That little tree standing on a side, all bent by the wind, could be the picture of a condition.

Framed between the barren dark red walls that the lights can paint with light blue for a moment, before they go back to that omen of fire and blood. If there wasn't the parable of the master who asked the disciple to climb the mountain every day in order to water that little withered tree. And there they are, one day, on the little tree some miraculous sprouting blossoms. Can a pointless gesture obstinately repeated for years change the world?

On the stage, in a whirlwind of sounds and dances, the visionary images that have always populated the Ligurian artist's theatre are multiplying. Poetic, grotesque, vaguely threatening (...).

**MODULAZIONI TEMPORALI - Marianna Zito – 02/11/2021**

**PIPPO DELBONO'S URGENCY OF LOVE**

It is Pippo Delbono's voice-over that's narrating. It narrates "Love". And while it narrates, it carries the voices and the dances of Portugal, going back to that bitter and surreal time we were all involved in, that made us all suddenly human, and forced us to think about distance, illness, wait and loss (...).

He narrates in a passionate ode to Portugal (...) and he does it with the help of his Company that has that way of being on stage that is "unique and unrepeatable" even though with some new entries, like the Portuguese artists (...) and he does it on an empty stage (...). There is only a tree at first bent by the wind- which, by the end, time will cover in white- and then shadows on a love-red, blood-red, passion-red background. A painting of light and darkness, sounds and silence, movements and stillness (...).

**LIMINA TEATRI - Titti Danese – 17/11/2021**

**PIPPO DELBONO: A COMEBACK WITH LOVE**

Pippo Delbono is a very special artist who's been living on the world stages for years with an overwhelming vitality. His shows are tales and reminders and his popular and humane theatre combines brutality and visionary lightness in an ensemble of desperate beauty (...). Love is celebrated to take us back to where we were, to another time, a suspended time, to a kind of lost humanity possessed by a constant feeling of frustration and bewilderment. To start from those saddest days in order to strengthen hope and defeat death.

His theatre is "necessary" and, like in all of his shows, Delbono tells about real life with sensitivity and passion (...). The staged fiction is run through by a sudden revelation, a vision that compels and changes you.



**TEATRO E CRITICA - Angela Forti – 18/11/2021**

**JUST LOVE. A DELICATE GIFT FROM PIPPO DELBONO**

Love. This is the title of the new show by Pippo Delbono. Just Love. A show that could be about anything, could be the adaptation of a great classic or the staging of the everyday reality of an average life. Instead it is really about love, in all its shapes, and it's all the other things too (...).

Within the intimacy of a microphone the common words mix up with those of poets, from Carlos Drummond De Andrade to Sophia de Mello Breyner Andersen, to Jacques Prévert to Rainer Maria Rilke. Before us the pictures of this show take shape, the sometimes statuesque and sometimes hectic images, the likely images of love that mesmerizes the eye. One pure, white love tight in a silent hug. A trembling body that dances on the notes of an ancient music. One bare and majestic love, covered with gold in a parade of hearts. One aggressive love that tears clothes and skin apart.

One mourning love, shaken by the wind. A masquerade where people can stop recognizing each other. On the background Portugal and its contradictions. A welcoming port that thrives within the diversity of its people, a crossroad, an escape route, a land of discovery, a refuge. But at the same time a merciless land, a land of traders and conquerors. Like the one narrated by the writer and musician Aline Frazão, who, with her dense voice, brings us the dominated and then forgotten Angola; just like love often does when, taken by passion, it conquers but doesn't always remember to take care of what has subjugated.

And once again that title surprises us. The surprising aspect of the show being its total simplicity, combined with the difficulty of telling it. It's a direct speech, spoken as it is, without a riddle and anything to hide (...).

A simple show, but perfectly inserted within the artistic path of this company, for the elegance and solemnity of its images, for its thick colour, for the accuracy and refinement of its stage movements, and the sequence of the pictures that make it. A bewildering and captivating show, that invades with all its frailty. A white man at the foot of a white tree. A new path to tread, a newly found love, a gift. This is what *Love* has left us.

**LA PROVINCIA DI CREMONA - Nicola Arrigoni - 26/11/2021**

**DELBONO'S CRY OF LOVE**

(...) "Love" by Pippo Delbono is the staging of a failure, but it is also the whispered cry of the artist need to question love in order to relieve death and pain (...) it's a present, a gift, a show birthed by yearning and pain. Is the actor-director himself who confirms he wanted to make a show about love, a show he collected the pieces for: images, thoughts, but that ended up to be an unfinished work. It hasn't just become a show about love but something else. (...). "Love" is a juxtaposition of images, it gives music what mere words are unable and unwilling to express, it shows a bewildered humanity, in search for an impossible happiness, the only festive moment being the one dedicated to the souls of the dead and the Ring a Ring-o-Roses around the tree that will bloom again, like in Tarkovsky's movie. But suddenly that tree becomes the tree from "Waiting for Godot". (...)

Pippo's entrance in his white suit – like the white souls of the dead - is slow and sudden at the same time, he climbs on stage and lies down at the foot of the tree. "Love" is the notes from the soul of an artist who brings life on stage and who's always brought himself and his poetic world on stage. Right, "Love" is maybe a desperate cry for help, but like in Munch's painting that cry is voiceless, silent. Curtain down.

