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Carmageddon Cannot Crush Communist Caper-Ballet

Debra Levine · Thursday, July 21st, 2011

Despite best efforts, California authorities (the people who brought you Ronald “Tear down this wall, Mr. Gorbachev!” Reagan) could not put the kibosh on American Ballet Theatre’s “The Bright Stream,” choreographed by their new in-house guy, Alexei Ratmansky. Clearly controlled by Soviet agents, ABT foisted a clever piece of communist propaganda on our sunny climes. Drat! Just when we thought the Cold War was over!

Even the three-day closure of the mighty 405 freeway proved ineffectual against the strong arm of ABT. A huge, ballet-besotted audience showed up anyway. Filing into the indoctrination chamber (aka the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, named for the capitalist roader), they were submerged in a tale about happy peasants living communally — on a collective farm. “Bright Stream” goes on to portray how a troupe of visiting dancers engages their agrarian comrades in that most subversive of Marxist tactics — state-funded art.

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