

THE NEWS & OBSERVER

SATURDAY, JULY 10, 2010



Anna Armas, Pablo Carrizo and Viviana Finklestein hang from the ceiling for an inverted tango in Brenda Angiel Aerial Dance Company's performance during the American Dance Festival at the Durham Performing Arts Center.

CHUCK LIDDY - cliddy@newsobserver.com

Dancers deliver stunning tango

By Roy C. Dicks
CORRESPONDENT

DURHAM – When Brenda Angiel Aerial Dance Company was last at the American Dance Festival, it drew roaring gasps as dancers on ropes defied gravity in splashy, high-tech routines. This time, the company's subtler, tango-based "8CHO" may produce more ooohs and ahhs than shout-outs, but the appreciation should be no less for this Argentine company's awe-inspiring presentation.

"8CHO" is set in what seems to be a smoked-filled nightclub, complete with a five-person band and a male vocalist. In a program of 17 short numbers, Angiel explores the world of the tango, employing her aerial choreography to interpret the steps, the lyrics and the sensuality of this moody musical form from her homeland.

Dozens of beautiful and striking moments abound as Angiel varies familiar tango stances with dancers suspended by ropes and in harnesses.

Sometimes a man and woman are both attached, allowing amazing swirls and leaps, including upside-down pairings and dancing on the wall. Other times only

DETAILS

What: Brenda Angiel Aerial Dance Company at the American Dance Festival

Where: Durham Performing Arts Center, 123 Vivian St., Durham

When: 8 p.m. today; children's matinee at 1 p.m. today

Cost: \$22-\$45 (\$15.50 matinee)

Contact: 680-2787, www.dpacnc.com

ONLINE



See more photos from the American Dance Festival performance at newsobserver.com.

one is attached, keeping one dancer, male or female, connected to the floor, the other swinging, jumping and spinning in magical ways. A woman can walk up a man's body and balance on his shoulder; a man can spin on his knees while holding a woman aloft.

Some of the most arresting images, however, come from solo work: a man hanging by one hand, falling to the floor in melancholy loops; a woman tethered by

one hand and one foot, writhing and spinning to escape some magnetic force.

There's also room for humor, one number featuring just the legs of a man and two women at the top of the stage, a sexy battle of jealousy; another in which two men fling a woman back and forth as they compete for dominance. There's even a number with no ropes, in which a man and woman barely touch in a loose-limbed, anti-tango.

The pleasures here are from observing the many little ways Angiel varies the rather confining tango framework. At just under an hour and with several instrumental and vocal numbers separating the danced sections, the piece might seem a little scant. But the strenuous maneuvers by the unseen riggers, who make all the moves so smoothly lyrical, can only be sustained for so long (the riggers get justly deserved bows at the end).

The piece starts off a little low-keyed and is somewhat awkwardly structured, but it amply demonstrates why Angiel's methods have been so popular with audiences.

music_theater@lycos.com