

LUMINA NEWS

Unforgettable

by Marimar McNaughton
Thursday, May 8, 2008

Dance company stirs memory of Holocaust atrocities

Anyone who attended "Inertia" on Saturday, May 3, at Kenan Auditorium will not long forget to remember the Holocaust or alban elved dance company's literally and figuratively moving original performance dedicated to that atrocious act of genocide about which the mere mention of the word still resonates with worldwide humiliation and angst.

"We didn't want to do something that was pretty or nice to look at," Karola Lüttringhaus, company artistic director, said during the question-and-answer period that followed the hour-long performance.

When the Nazis came into power in the 1930s, the European Jewish population numbered more than 9 million. By 1945, they had systematically killed nearly two out of three as part of what was officially termed "the final solution to the Jewish question."

Guest dancers and their families were hosted by John Murchison in Wrightsville Beach. Lüttringhaus, assisted by Raine Kostel, and the rest hope to take "Inertia" on the road.

At the core of the process was her duet with Jennifer Raine Kostel, which began three months ago, rendered onstage as a classic Lüttringhaus clash of wills in a visceral, fiercely passionate and physical manifestation of a seductive struggle, this time between good and evil, with evil triumphing over the fragile human spirit.



Staff photo by Allison Breiner
 The alban elved dance company performed "Inertia" in the UNCW Kenan Auditorium on Saturday, May 3.

The dancers and actors, connecting and disconnecting, line up and strip down in all-too-familiar scenes ripped from books, photos and the memories of local Holocaust survivors.

Introducing innovative lighting — from rows of votive candles that were carried onstage by alban elved veteran Janelle Tatum Eggleston and placed at the lip of the proscenium, the presence and absence of light became as much a character in the dramatic dance presentation as the angel of death that appeared in the final moments.

To the Wilmington audience, the company not only introduced a powerful narrative dance documentary but many extraordinary elements, including aerial suspension and the suggestion of hanging, by death and by the brute force of incarceration.

Guest dancers and their families were hosted by John Murchison in Wrightsville Beach. Lüttringhaus, assisted by Raine Kostel, and the rest hope to take "Inertia" on the road.