



March 21, 2009

Drama and Dance

Jane Franklin Dance performed at the historic Athenaeum in Old Town Alexandria in collaboration with the Washington Saxophone Quartet (WSaxQ). It was a rare treat to witness modern dance while listening to the full woodwind range that soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophones can deliver. The evening's all female company members were joined by WSaxQ on three of the pieces (one musical solo) while they performed a pair to recordings. Dancers and musicians were in sync. The opening number of this one-hour program featured children followed by a work that included adjunct dancers. Ms. Franklin, the artistic director, together with performers, choreographed the works. The program theme might be one of human interactions, its many vicissitudes explored affirmatively through the passage of time and space. The highlight of the evening was "Incidence", the name playing on both coincidences and the roulette wheel of life, with an emphasis on the visual. They've shown it around town in the past. Company members danced around and on rotating "installation art" (by Howard Connelly) with 2 vertical and 2 horizontal bars whose elements were periodically repositioned like a minimalist totemic LEGO. Also interesting were "In Passing" and "Tango". Company members were assured and fluid in their movements, but especially impressive were the supple Brianne Barrow Little and expressive Whitney Crawford. Program notes could use strengthening to include some description of the dances and all of the music which was incomplete. For clarity and identification, they might introduce the company members. See them perform excerpts of their work for free at the Torpedo Factory (4/22) and to reprise their compelling "Incidence" outdoors at the the King Street Garden Park (5/31). (Reviewed by John F. Glass)