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Review: "Blinking" at FirstWorks



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Saturday, October 16, 2010

REVIEW by Tracey Minkin, GoLocalProv Features Editor

It can take a modern, technologically sophisticated performance piece to ask one of the old questions, to wit: what happens in the blink of an eye?

Jamie Jewett, the Providence-based choreographer and director of Lostwax Productions, has placed this squarely in the center of "Blinking," his new provocative and voyaging piece that combines dance, video projection and music, in a premiere run as part of the FirstWorks 2010 Festival.

Breathtaking projections

The full-length performance piece in five sections marries the movements of six female dancers with blinks of varying kinds rendered in breathtaking video projections that fill a looming screen and sometimes crawl and slide along the stage.



Visions behind the eyelid

But it's more than that. Soon Gandrud's eyes are projected downward onto a large, pliant circular scrim that dancers carry, slide, and fling around the space. The eyes of the mother, the watchful eyes, become part of the play.



There are many arresting moments like this in "Blinking," and Jewett and his musical collaborator R. Luke DuBois (who created original soundscapes for the piece) have compellingly combined movement, projection, and music to braid in a seamless plait.

Blinks

From eyes in a museum, to glancing through windows and in mirrors in a car (and the rhythm of a turn-indicator taking over) to the blinks of virtual fireflies, the piece reflects and refracts these small rhythms into large, compelling life.

And yet, perhaps the most compelling section of "Blinking" may emanate from eyes closed in sleep ("one long blink," Jewett has called it). Here, as a projected Gandrud sleeps in perfect stillness as backdrop, a dreamy duet unfolds between a live sleeper and her doppelganger.

"Blinking" finishes its run Saturday night at the Pell-Chafee Performance Center in two shows at 7:30 and 9:30pm. For more information, see the FirstWorks Web site and get tickets via ArtTix, here.

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FirstWorks Festival 2010 LA EXCELENCIA Taking salsa back to street. Sunday, October 24, 7:30pm. LUPO'S Heartbreak Hotel. ArtTixRI.com, 401-621-6123.

