

# BACKSTAGE

February 04, 2009

## Buglisi Dance Theatre

By Lisa Jo Sagolla



**Wild Mannequins & Wing Walkers: Dancers, Christina Ilisije & Mariko Kumanomido Photo by: Kristin Lodoen Linder**

They say the real test of a masterpiece is how well it holds up over time. If so, then Jacquelyn Buglisi's "Frida," a wrenching 1998 trio inspired by the life and work of Frida Kahlo, and Buglisi's monumental 2000 work "Suspended Women," an insightful homage to femininity, are indeed choreographic masterworks. As performed by Buglisi Dance Theatre on the opening night of the company's weeklong season at the Joyce, both works proved even more aesthetically arresting, emotionally entrancing, and sharply relevant than they did when first presented.

Featured in the cast of "Frida" is longtime company member and associate founder Terese Capucilli, a celebrated former principal dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company. With her gripping dramatic intensity and unparalleled expertise in Graham technique, Capucilli interprets Buglisi's fervent Graham-based choreography with spine-tingling authority. She is one of the true geniuses of modern-dance expressivity.

Completing the program are two Buglisi works: the New York City premiere of "Interplay No. 9-1," a spirited dance for nine performed to live piano music by Bach, Chopin, and Scriabin, and the world premiere of "Wild Mannequins & Wing Walkers," an ambitious dance-theatre [piece] in which historical writings about women's bodies and definitions and depictions of mannequins collide with biographies of famous American heroines such as Amelia Earhart and Eleanor Roosevelt.

*Excerpted Review*