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Dancing with Chairs -“Dancing to Connect”: 150 students and twelve New York Dancers took over the Freiburg Theatre.

What a sight! 150 Freiburg Students and twelve New York Dancers showed their stuff on the big stage in a delightful public performance. The connection worked, and then some. The project “Dancing to Connect” could have collapsed, but no one thought about that, after the magnificent experiences of previous years. As the choreographers, Aviva Geismar and Jonathan recreated a scene from “Dancing for the Blue House” in Breisach. The theme was a difficult one: the deportation of the Jews from Breisach, to whom Aviva Geismar’s Grandmother belonged. That dance could be a media, through which the past could be re-enacted, no one could have imagined before this performance. The almost heart wrenching and unrepeatably intensity of the Breisach Performance made the Freiburg one a happy, exuberant and poetically easy performance. Five schools, six “Young Dance-Makers Creations”: What one could imagine to result from six days of workshops working on this performance, was only a sliver of the performance the audience saw. As it is so often in dance, the movements stand alone, without a concrete meaning.

The youngsters of the Pestalozzi-Realschool stood out from the crowd with chairs. The chairs and the young dancers, were a spectacular sight, a spectacle all their own. There is no one way to sit in them. The dancers with their chairs, every acrobatic move applauded, acted amazingly professionally on the giant stage.

The “Dance Makers” of Emil-Goett School decided on a hip hop performance. Beautiful how the five boys of the group at the start moved their bodies as one, how they made a circle around the one who could balance the soccerball on his forehead, how the girls made a connection with the boys, and everything was deeply meaningful.

The Kepler-Gymnasium was represented by two groups: By the “Newcomers,” a collection of children 12-14 years old, in a very delicate, poetic, and charming unfinished piece done to dainty music (unfortunately the programm didn’t give the title) shown by changing dancer formations. What’s likely is that they can build off of earlier workshops,

as the Kepler-“Veterans” lead them on with precise movements, and the ingenious choreography was breath taking.

The only all girl group came from Berthold Gymnasium, the harmony and look of the dancing figures was quite noteworthy. Then came the fresh presentation of the Staudinger Gesamtschule, which began with, the students in darkness on stage, giving out their names, to form a personal connection between the chorus line and the audience -- at the end a lesson: everyone stays, even in a group, themselves.

One doesn't often see dance so casual and funny.

“Dancing to Connect”: That means a connection between laymen and professionals. Aviva Geismar gave a glimpse of her dance company “Drastic Action” 2006 original choreography of “There’s Many A Slip”: In one part she danced alone alternating between two clownish figures, one comic, the other despondent, who danced with each other bound together by a gesture, followed by a trio of women, that was reminiscent of the fatal combination of Mom-Dad-Child. Two against one, the one who can’t fight back. With “I’ll Take You There” Jonathan Hollander and the Battery Dance Company brings New York to Freiburg: one doesn’t often see dancing so relaxed, so fun, so goofy here. The cartoon inspired Video-Design and projection of comic-panels from times gone by. Here there is no calming fear with the U-Culture. Simply gorgeous!
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