

MONDAY JANUARY 31, 2011

## **YOU LOOKIN' AT ME?** **Heidi Latsky's provocative** **Gimp Project.**

BY: PAUL KOSIDOWSKI

When Lawrence Carter-Long walks across the stage in Heidi Latsky's *The Gimp Project*, it's with a remarkable density of purpose. The gravity of every step seems to originate in his skull and travel visibly down the length of his frame, arriving at the meeting of foot and floor with a righteous intent. Carter-Long has Cerebral Palsy, and he's one of four dancers in Latsky's eight-person company who moves in ways you probably haven't seen before. At least on stage.

Latsky's fascinating 70-minute dance, which Alverno Presents brought to Marquette University's Helfaer Theatre this weekend, seems to build on Carter-Long's gait. It's fierce, stubborn and even a little pushy. After a rapturous prologue, featuring an aerial act that glows from behind a gauzy scrim, the company's six dancers walk to the edge of the stage and freeze, Chorus Line-style. "Look at us," they say without speaking. And we do — comparing, observing, cataloguing and even judging. Latsky wants us to understand and acknowledge our own charged voyeurism from the beginning, and her in-your-face style permeates the entire piece.

It's her style as well. She dances in the piece, and her small stature doesn't affect the gutsy physicality of her movement. Sometimes, she seems like she's experimenting with the limits of the body's control — arms swing out from the shoulders like a tap-dancers roundhouse, and the move becomes obsessive and more frenetic and wild.

Latsky is used to eclectic groups of dancers (she co-directed a company with the 300-plus pound Lawrence Goldhuber for a time), and here she succeeds to challenge conventional notions of beauty and dance. The opening duet — featuring Jennifer Bricker, who was born without legs, and Nate Crawford — is rapturous and elegant, subverting the circus tradition that informs it. We're fascinated by the physical demands of the routine, as both performers float over the stage by wrapping themselves in a suspended drape of fabric. But also by the sheer beauty of it. Like the rest of *The Gimp Project* it seduces our vision on the most elemental level, but also makes us question our desire, which sits uneasily at the intersection of fascination and beauty.



## **GIMP** **Heidi Latsky Dance**

**CONTACT:**

Ivan Sygoda  
Director of Pentacle  
(DanceWorks, Inc.)  
ivans@pentacle.org  
T: 212-278-8111 EXT. 300  
www.pentacle.org

**INFO & VIDEO TRAILER:**  
[thegimpproject.com](http://thegimpproject.com)