

## OUTLOOK NEWS

Review By Jennifer Sciantarelli

From the moment the dancers emerged from the back of the theater singing "Kyrie Liaison," the drama about to transpire was evident.

The Dance Cure's *Chant Dances* was, indeed, a kind of cure from the anticipated offerings of much contemporary dance. While so many companies search for new and innovative themes and movement ideas, Dance Cure Director Natalie Marrone looked to ancient ritual dances from Italy to create the evening-length work which premiered March 11.

*Chant Dances* was based on southern Italian chants of praise. The work depicted the hardships of an impoverished society through several group and solo vignettes, high on solemnity and gravity. The dancers were strong and deliberate in their movement, often staring just past an audience member, as if searching for something beyond their grasp. Thus, the dancers, as warriors, courageously fought to uphold their culture and improve their conditions. The movement often spiraled seemingly out of control, but there was a reason for every arm swing, every fall, every roll to the floor.

In addition to the dancers, live music was incorporated into the performance through singer Michela Musolino and guitarist Pete Carey. These talented artists helped bring an intimacy to the performance. While Carey remained in the second level of the house seats throughout, Musolino was often on stage encircled by dancers. Though she sang in the Italian language, the translation came through in her inflection and the dancers' choreography. Taking into account the extremely small space of the Riffe Center's Studio I Theater, the performance begged for audience interaction. Because of Marrone's use of the stage and the house seating, the audience became a part of the story, aware of the importance and intensity of the chant dances.

The last section of *Chant Dances* was a much needed high-spirited celebration. Marrone was the shining star, through her technical prowess and her ability to lead her ensemble into greatness.

The performance garnered a well-deserved standing ovation, and peaked this writer's curiosity to see what next emerges from Marrone and her talented group of artists.