



On Stage

by Mark Stuart

Artistic Director - Mark Stuart Dance Theater

It was truly an honor to participate in this year's Gala and lend our support to CTFD at the legendary and newly rebuilt City Center. There's an energy on stage and in that house that very few theaters possess. It's almost palpable.

I don't think many people truly comprehend the army of people and teamwork it takes to put on such a spectacular show. From the Producer and Director, lighting and sound designers, stage managers, deck crew, and all of the performers and honorees, it is amazing to watch such an enormous amount of information and logistics pull together out of thin air to create such a fantastic evening. It is a testament not only to all of their talent and experience, but also to their dedication for their art and to CTFD.

For Mark Stuart Dance Theatre, choosing to do a new piece is a scary thing with the very few hours of rehearsal we have available, but the challenge of creating a World Premiere for this year's Halloween Spooktacular really intrigued me. I wasn't quite sure how we were going to tell a powerful story that the audience could relate to while staying within a Halloween theme.

We settled on the timeless story of boy meets girl, boy and girl are torn apart and then struggle to find their way back to each other. Once we made that decision it was easy to layer a vampire/zombie army in to serve as our antagonists.

We actually finished choreographing the piece the morning of the Gala during tech rehearsal, which was also the first time that we had the entire cast together in one room. Watching my incredible artists come together to create this piece of art just served as a microcosm of the entire event. Thank you CTFD!

[Photos: Richard Tremine]