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African & Irish Step Collaboration of Dance & Story Premieres in NYC

By evelinec

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Member Blogger of the Week - Eveline

This weekend, I had the opportunity to experience a unique collaboration between two dance companies, NYC-based Soul Steps (SS) and Dance Theatre of Ireland (DTI), in [Every Little Step...the Rhythm of Hope](#). Seeing Soul Steps perform on US Embassy supported tour in the Ireland in 2009, DTI Co-Artistic Directors Robert Connor and Loretta Yurick approached DD Artistic Director Maxine Lyle about creating a dance production together, fusing elements of each others' companies, both which pull from rhythmical and storytelling traditions.

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JPQhlyESEc]

This year-long process included several visits between continents and a final intensive completion of the project, leading up to the premiere at Joyce Soho, Nov 17-20, 2011. Combining African-American Stepping, Irish and modern dance, and personal accounts, the performers created several vignettes all playing on percussive and cultural affinities they shared.

The evening was playful, energetic, and highlighted themes of hope and perseverance. It was evident from the dancers' ebullient performances and choreography which both showcased and integrated the companies' talents, that all had grown from the process of working together.

You can learn more about the project [here](#), including additional videos, photos, and bios. The premiere of *Every Little Step* is supported by [Culture Ireland's Imagine Ireland](#), a year-long season of Irish arts in America.

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