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Final pieces put into dance show jigsaw

CONTRASTING styles of dance combine for a new piece of dance theatre to be performed for the first time next month. *Vida* has been created by choreographers Diane Pickard, of Fiesta Flamenco, and Nikki McClusky, of FreeSpirit Dance Company.

Rehearsals have been underway since September, but with three different groups meeting in three different locations on different days, bringing the final piece together was a challenge.

Diane, of Wheatgrass Lane, Caythorpe, said: “It’s like putting together an enormous jigsaw, and we didn’t know if all the pieces were going to fit until the end.”

The piece will be performed at Lincoln Drill Hall on January 28 and 29. It features dancers of all ages, including Kristiina Clarke, of Newark, who joined Diane’s flamenco class a few months ago.

Vida, meaning life, is inspired by the Mexican festival *el Dia de los Muertos* — the Day of the Dead — an ancient ritual to remember dead relatives, their lives and, in this way, give meaning and continuity to human existence.

Nikki, of Lincoln, who teaches contemporary dance, said: “The two very different styles of dance lend themselves perfectly to the Day of the Dead festival, with the contemporary dancers representing the souls and the Flamenco dancers representing the living.

“We wanted to tell a story, rather than present a number of random dances and we also knew that we wanted to include as many people as possible.”

They hope to use the project to encourage more people to access the arts and, in particular, dance.

Diane said: “*Vida* has developed from a genuine desire to offer performance opportunities to those that might otherwise have never considered it a possibility and that’s why we agreed, from the outset, that participants should not have to pay to take part.”

As well as the shows, people can take part in contemporary and Flamenco workshops, which will run simultaneously on January 29 at 1pm and 2.30pm.