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## BALLET BC'S FUGAZ: FEAR OF DEATH MEETS LOVE OF DANCE

Ballet BC's *Fugaz*: Fear of death meets love of dance.

Choreographer-in-residence Cayetano Soto shares his personal vision with Artslandia.

Written by Charlotte Priest.



Photo by Michael Slobodian.

The hauntingly beautiful music of Handel beckoned from the studio at the Scotiabank Dance Centre where Ballet BC dancers rehearse. Stepping out during a short 15-minute break, Artslandia caught up with the company's choreographer-in-residence Cayetano Soto.

Gracious and passionate, ambitious and empathetic, Soto's energy is infectious, like the excitement that Ballet BC is garnering in this city and around the world. Soto feels it too. When offered the position of choreographer-in-residence, he didn't hesitate. "It was like a dream come true because the first day I

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stepped into the studio ... I felt this incredible chemistry between myself, the dancers, Emily... I felt that this is the right place for me."

Though Soto was offered bigger positions by bigger companies, he credits artistic director Emily Molnar's ambition and leadership for giving him the courage to leave his home in Barcelona. "For me, the size [of a company] is not so important. It's the vision: What do we want to say? How do we make this form valid? How do we make dance better, bring it forward, and communicate with the audience and with society? Emily brought all these questions to the table that many other companies wouldn't think about."



Photo by Michael Slobodian.

Back in the studio, pairs of dancers go over choreography for Soto's new work *BEGINNING AFTER*. Whether practicing floor work or a challenging lift, their attention to detail is remarkable. Soto stands back and surveys it all, eyes darting in all directions. The respect between him and the dancers is palpable. It goes both ways. At one moment he asks a dancer to attempt a difficult position on the floor. When she adjusts the position to fit her body, Soto compliments her. The modification stays. "The dancers are not dancers," he says, "they're artists. Each one has a different body, a different background, a different interpretation...it makes the conversation more rich, actually."

In Program 1, Soto has a chance to showcase his breadth as an artist with something old, something personal, and something new. This will be the first all-Soto program at Ballet BC. His resume is impressive, (he's choreographed for companies around

the world) though his success has not changed his deep humility. An emotionality drives his work, and like other great artists, he searches for the truths of the human experience. In Program 1, he explains, "the whole program, basically, except the last number, is a fear of death."

*Fugaz* was created when Soto's father was dying of cancer. It was also the last piece Soto choreographed as a dancer. It's the only piece in his repertoire that remains unchanged from the original; his other works, like *28,000 waves*, were remounted with major alterations. It's obvious that *Fugaz* holds a special place in Soto's heart. "It's really, really personal. Every time I see it, it brings me back to my father. It's such a strong connection with him when I see it, and this is something that nobody can take away from me." In Soto's world, death is not all negative. In fact, watching the dancers move in the studio, the energy feels erotic. Though Freud separated the drive for creativity from that of destruction, in Soto's work opposites exist together, held in balance like a dancer spinning in arabesque. We are left to form our own opinion. "I never want to preach in my ballets. I always want to give a broad frame of interpretation so everyone can find something. Because maybe you and I will see the ballets in a different way."

When Artslandia left Soto and the dancers in the studio, they still had a couple hours left of their daily 7-hour rehearsal. The rigor and creativity that occur inside the four walls of the Dance Centre is truly a privilege to witness. It reflects a culture of support and collaboration that Soto believes contributes to the betterment of the whole:

"If we grow, we grow together."

## UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB  
7

Tue  
(<http://artslandiavancouver.com/calendar/act-on-one-day/execute-7-2-2017/>)

8:00 pm 42nd Street — Studio 58 @ Studio 58  
([http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/42nd-street-studio-58/?instance\\_id=6008](http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/42nd-street-studio-58/?instance_id=6008))

8:00 pm You Will Remember Me, Ruby Slipp... @ Gateway Theatre  
([http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/will-remember-ruby-slippers-theatre-gateway-theatre-2/?instance\\_id=2811](http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/will-remember-ruby-slippers-theatre-gateway-theatre-2/?instance_id=2811))

FEB  
8

Wed  
(<http://artslandiavancouver.com/calendar/act-on-one-day/execute-8-2-2017/>)

7:30 pm TheatreSports™ – Vancouver Theat... @ The Improv Centre  
([http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/theatresports-vancouver-theatresports-league/?instance\\_id=4500](http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/theatresports-vancouver-theatresports-league/?instance_id=4500))

8:00 pm 42nd Street — Studio 58 @ Studio 58  
([http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/42nd-street-studio-58/?instance\\_id=6009](http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/42nd-street-studio-58/?instance_id=6009))

8:00 pm Corleone: The Shakespearean Godf... @ Pacific Theatre  
([http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/corleone-shakespearean-godfather-pacific-theatre/?instance\\_id=3110](http://artslandiavancouver.com/event/corleone-shakespearean-godfather-pacific-theatre/?instance_id=3110))



Photo by Michael Slobodian.

**Ballet BC's Program 1** opens at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre on November 3 and runs November 3-5. Get your tickets [here](#). 🎫



Born in Barcelona and based in Munich, **Cayetano Soto** has created work for major companies worldwide. His technical, high-pitched and unpredictable choreography can be seen at international festivals in Europe, USA and Canada. Soto started his dance education in Barcelona at the Institut del Teatre and continued his studies at the Koninklijke Conservatorium in The Hague. After receiving his degree in Classical Dance, Soto danced with IT Dansa Barcelona in 1997, before joining Ballet Theater Munich a year later where he created several successful ballets and one of his first signature pieces, *Fugaz*.

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