

THE PEAK

BROWSE



Emily Molnar talks Trace and Ballet BC's vision

The company will present works by William Forsythe, Walter Matteini, and Medhi Walerski in their latest program

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“I try to create diversity,” explained Ballet BC’s artistic director Emily Molnar. “The range of the company is quite large, and I want to demonstrate that.”

Ballet BC’s latest program, *Trace*, is a diverse collection of contemporary ballets. They will be presenting the Canadian premiere of William Forsythe’s *workwithinwork*, a world premiere by Italian choreographer Walter Matteini, and perennial audience favourite *Petite Cérémonie* by Medhi Walerski.

“Forsythe is at the forefront of contemporary ballet,” said Molnar, describing *workwithinwork* as an “intimate palette of his signature style.” The work was written for the Frankfurt Ballet and set it to Luciano Berio’s *Duo for two Violins*. With the music divided into pieces varying in length from 10 seconds to five minutes, the large group work is very episodic.

Molnar explained that Forsythe pushes the technical prowess of dancers, and this work is more theatrical than usual for his company. “It’s amazing that Forsythe came from a post-Balanchine beginning and went as far as he did. His range is astounding,” she said.

Ballet BC performed Matteini's *Parole Sospese* in 2011, and now they've invited him back to choreograph an original work for the company. "The first time we work with a choreographer, we like to do a work that is new to us but not new to them," explained Molnar. This allows the company to form a strong relationship with the choreographer.

This new work, whose Italian title loosely translates to "Let Me Weep," is "about the opposition of light and dark in our nature," said Molnar. Matteini is interested in human nature and the idea that we need an independent observer to truly understand ourselves.

Molnar describes Matteini as the type of choreographer who isn't afraid to openly portray emotions through his choreography. "It gets to your heart," she said.

After bringing it on their recent Eastern Canadian tour, Ballet BC is performing *Petite Cérémonie* one last time before putting it in the vault. "It's a goodbye to the work," said Molnar. The piece was premiered in 2011 by Ballet BC and, as Molnar described, it showcases the company well because it was made specifically for them.

"It's more in the genre of dance theatre," she said. "It's about the difference between the male and female brain. It's playful and sophisticated, and audiences love it."

They experienced plenty of this love on their eastern Canadian tour, especially in Quebec. “Quebec is an audience that appreciates dance,” said Molnar. “They were giving us ovations between pieces. The audiences were delightful and warm.” The last time Ballet BC performed in Quebec was 2002, and they are a very different company now.

Performing one day and being on a bus the next is not something the company is used to. “It was something we needed in our development,” said Molnar. “Touring bonds people. It pushes you physically.” They performed 10 shows in three weeks — more than they usually do in a normal season at home.

They have plenty of plans to take their work on the road, such as opening the Jacob’s Pillow festival this summer, a fall tour around BC, and dates in the United States next May. “We want to be relevant in Vancouver and BC, but be ambassadors as well,” said Molnar. “It’s all a part of our vision.”

Ballet BC will perform Trace from March 26 to 28 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. For more information, visit balletbc.com.

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