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Bill Santiago The Funny of (Latin) Dance - Returns to San Francisco

[Alicia Dattner](#), SF Comedy Examiner

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Standup Comic Bill Santiago

The Funny of (Latin) Dance

Returns for East Bay Performance

One Night Only! La Peña Cultural Center!

Friday, May 14, 2010

Bill Santiago

Credits:

The Funny of (Latin) Dance

The funny of (Latin) Dance is coming to SF and not only that I have gotten to interview Bill Santiago for this column! Look below and find out all about him before you attend his show tomorrow night.

[How did you start doing comedy?](#)

I had friends that were interested and got me hooked. But it appealed to me right off. Say what ever you want to say. Use your wits. Get people to see things your way. Laughter. Applause. What's not to like?

[What was your motivation to write a show about dancing?](#)

Whenever I'm dancing I have this inner monologue going on, about about how well it's going or not, all the characters out there that you see and meet and dance with, whether I just nailed a move, or someone's foot, the constant frustrations and occasional moments of unparalleled joy, and the simple human interaction of being that close to someone you don't know and trying to

synchronize. Plus how obsessive people can get about their dancing, and how far it's come, the Latin dancing, from the way that my parents danced, how people are taking it now to a ridiculously Cirque du Soleil level that is frankly laughable. And the way the different people dance the different dances, and how each dance has its own tricks and personalities, salsa, versus tango, versus bachata, versus samba, versus flamenco, versus cumbia, versus merengue, and on and on. And the teachers, my God, they're all such crazy gurus! And the whole process of learning, how you have to train yourself to absorb these movements into your own being, and how thrilling it is to be learning. There's a lot there. The quest to become the dancer you'll never be and enjoy yourself as much as possible along the way. It's a comedic gold mine, really. And combining standup so closely with dance is new for me, allows me to be physical on stage, and look for the humor in the physicality as much as in the words. And I get to work with super musicians, and invite people from the audience to come up on stage and dance with me. It's very interactive. It's always a different show, you know.

[What's your favorite thing about dancing?](#)

My favorite thing about dancing is the connection that you have with where you come from, this music stirs that in you, and the escape that you have from everything else in your day, in the periphery of the present. I love that when you're dancing nothing else matters, and if you're lucky you can let go, and maybe connect with someone else in a very unique and beautiful way. But it's high stakes because there is a lot of pride on the line, that's the stuff of funny.

[What's your favorite thing about comedy?](#)

My favorite thing about comedy is whatever latest line I am working on to perfect, or idea that I am trying to get traction on. When it works, when I finally get it to gel and I hear the laughter, it's very satisfying. I like that bulls-eye feeling. It's also nice when people remind you that you are doing good work, that it has affected them, that it matters, that they want to see more and that you are appreciated.

[How would you classify what you do? Is it standup? Is it solo performance? Is it something else?](#)

It depends on the project that I am working on, the particular show. The "Funny of (Latin) Dance" show is way beyond standup, but standup is the basis of my approach, I apply that skill, those chops to this new topic, and hopefully renders an entirely new kind of show.

[Anything else you'd like to share with us?](#)

I'd love to share some of the spontaneous magic that happens on stage when I invite folks from the crowd to come up on stage and dance with me in this show, but you are just going to have to come out and experience it for yourself.