

Art-to-Art Palette

By Chevalier Tony Clark

He is dancing his way up

Albert Einstein said, “Dancers are athletes of God” and I have discovered one recently added to the San Diego Ballet and in my view, a rising star to their company, **Tonatiuh Gomez**. In addition, SDB also create a new ballet, “Jungle Book” to their repertoire which stars dancer Tonatiuh in the lead role as Mowgli and eventually the Ballet chose the right prima ballerina become his partner. The ballet is a success and this is his role that he made his own as much as Sabu did in the movies.

Tonatiuh was a typical youngster, loving all the popular sports, mainly soccer and hockey which led to him been trained to represent Mexico in the Olympics. However, his first love and passion was always dance.

His mother was a ballerina of the *Nationale Ballet de Mexico*. His

father was a dancer with the *Ballets Folklore de Mexico*. So dance is in his genes. Of course, his parents encouraged Tonatiuh as it was also their joint passion and their son had that natural ability. However, Tonatiuh had a very practical side. While taking dance classes, he earned a MFA in marketing which lead to him starting a business which he later sold so he could devote himself to dance full-time.

Tonatiuh started by being coached by **Raudel Rascon** and **Sergei Sokolov** at the Special Program at the Music and Dance of Monterrey. After one year, he was accepted into Philadelphia’s the *Rock School of Dance Education*.

It was in this educational institution where he was able to study with great dancers from major companies from the entire world. Some of his stellar instructors were **Alejandro Jauregui**, **Gisela Martínez**, **Armando Pineda**, **Angel Corella**, **Daniil Simkin** and **Ivan Vasiliev**. This led him to be a semifinalist of the Intramuros Contest 2017 and he was invited to compete in the *Varna International Ballet Competition*.

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HE IS DANCING HIS WAY UP

As a former dancer myself, I can recognize the truly gifted. Tonatiuh does not dance with his feet, but with his passion.

He can hold an audience without moving because of his hypnotic presence. When he leaps there seems to be no gravity. Makes me ponder? He must be the incarnation of Mercury or Icarus with invisible wings on his feet. Vaslav Nijinsky would have been proud to know Tonatiuh is carrying on his great tradition of charisma and style of dance.

When I met him, I found him to be naturally kind and polite. In contrast as he flies onto the stage; he is on fire. Pavlova said, "*When I dance I always leave a trail of blood.*" When Tonatiuh dances, I can attest he leaves it all on the floor.



Tonatiuh's goal is to continue breaking paradigms within this profession and to be able to inspire and support the next generations of dancers. Currently, Tonatiuh Gomez is on tour with the *San Diego Ballet* as the Chevalier in the "*Nutcracker*." For further information, see: <https://sandiegoballet.org>.

Personally and professionally, I know firsthand how it feels giving back. I found these traits in Tonatiuh who is not only an extraordinary dancer, but also blessed with many humanitarian qualities. I have asked him to be on my Board of Directors of the *Tony Clark Trust*. Once I have it fully established, the Trust will help young male ballet dancers from ages 13 to 21 as well as provide aid to senior male ballet dancers between 50 and 65 years old.

More of Tonatiuh can be found in social media: Instagram @tonatiuhgomez and Facebook Tonatiuh Gomez.

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Tonatiuh Gomez with townspeople in the *Merchant of Venice* is a 16th-century play written by William Shakespeare in which a merchant in Venice (Antonio) must default on a large loan provided by a Jewish moneylender, Shylock. Though classified as a comedy in the First Folio and sharing certain aspects with Shakespeare's other romantic comedies, the play is most remembered for its dramatic scenes, and it is best known for Shylock and the famous "Hath not a Jew eyes?" speech on humanity.

Wikipedia



The *Jungle Book* (1894) is a collection of stories by the English author Rudyard Kipling. Most of the characters are animals such as Shere Khan the tiger and Baloo the bear, though a principal character is the boy or "man-cub" Mowgli, who is raised in the jungle by wolves. The stories are set in a forest in India; one place mentioned repeatedly is "Seonee" (Seoni), in the central state of Madhya Pradesh.

A major theme in the book is abandonment followed by fostering, as in the life of Mowgli, echoing Kipling's own childhood. The theme is echoed in the triumph of protagonists including Rikki-Tikki-Tavi and The White Seal over their enemies, as well as Mowgli's. Another important theme is of law and freedom; the stories are not about animal behavior, still less about the Darwinian struggle for survival, but about human archetypes in animal form. They teach respect for authority, obedience, and knowing one's place in society with "the law of the jungle", but the stories also illustrate the freedom to move between different worlds, such as when Mowgli moves between the jungle and the village. Critics have also noted the essential wildness and lawless energies in the stories, reflecting the irresponsible side of human nature.

Wikipedia