

Cultural Daily

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Six Solos

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, November 1st, 2017

I recently returned from my first time attending the San Francisco Dance Film Festival where my own screen dance work, “Ghost Story” was presented as one of the official selections. Besides being exposed to a cornucopia of wonderful films and a beautifully organized festival, one of the great highlights was meeting fellow dance filmmakers, all eager to share stories about their process, struggles, and aspirations. My first afternoon there I walked straight in to sit on a panel with three other filmmakers. Amongst them, I was delighted to meet a man whose work I have long admired, the wonderful Simon Fildes, whom I have written about previously and who works frequently with Katrina McPherson.

Over the years, in which I have watched literally thousands of works of dance on film, Fildes’ “There is a Place” is one of the gold standards. Featuring a remarkably moving solo by the phenomenal Sang Jijia, it is sadly not now viewable for free on the web, but it is well worth the price of rent or purchase. This year Fildes presented another fine work also choreographed (however not danced) by Sang Jijia entitled **Six Solos**.



The film begins softly, with six dancers walking out to present themselves, initially simply standing against the backdrop of a gray blue cyclorama. They are captured full-bodied looking expressionless and straight into camera at the viewer, and then fade as each new dancer walks in and replaces the next until all six have been seen. One by one they dance alone, with Jijia’s bold, signature arm and upper body combinations that are at once abstract and remarkably human and full of feeling. The film builds slowly until the wide shots become medium and close up shots with only parts of bodies emerging up into or disappearing out of frame. By the end the film, the music and editing build together in a thrilling crescendo, with all six dancers now intertwined and moving together to create one powerful, yet abstract piece about the human condition.

Simon Fildes’ work stands in a class of its own, and **Six Solos** is no exception.

Watch it. You won’t regret it.

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