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Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Cia. José Manuel Álvarez Captura y fuga

ImpulsTanz Festival, 04.08.2026 [ENA]

There is a small, luminous tradition of dance made in mourning for its own photographers, and Captura y fuga — José Manuel Álvarez's solo for the Vienna festival at the Kasino am Schwarzenbergplatz — joins it with unusual grace. The piece is a choreographic monument to René Robert, the Swiss-French photographer who spent fifty years documenting the great cantaores, guitarristas and bailaores of flamenco.

Álvarez — Sevillian by birth, Barcelonan by adoption, and known internationally as one of Rosalía's choreographic advisors — has spent two decades quietly rebuilding flamenco's vocabulary from the inside. Here, in a spare stage designed with co-director Marta Piñol, he becomes at once camera, darkroom and conduit: Robert's voice drifts in from offstage while Fausto Morales's Slide Media projections throw ghostly close-ups onto scrims, onto Álvarez's white shirt, onto his own moving shoulder blades. Antonio Gades, María Pagés, Israel Galván, Eva Yerbabuena — all appear in Robert's frozen frames, and all are released, one by one, back into gesture.

What could have become impersonation is instead something more delicate: a séance in which Álvarez, on the score of Josep Tutusa's trombone and Lucas Balbo's percussion, choreographs the before and after of each photograph. "Photography holds the moment," he has said; "dance lets it escape again." By the closing bulería, the stage feels crowded with absent friends. Captura y fuga is small in scale, generous in soul, and one of the most quietly moving pieces of contemporary flamenco to reach Vienna in years.

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Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:

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