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### Meet Symposium Panelist Christopher Rogicki!

By Will Noling

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Adelante Studios

The Symposium is just one week away, and we can't wait for our Panel Discussion on NYC Nightlife and Social Dance! Today we're introducing one of our panelists, Christopher Rogicki!

Christopher Rogicki was born in New Jersey, and during college, he was first exposed to Cuban-style Salsa, Son, Rueda de Casino, and Timba. He has studied with prominent Casino schools and teachers throughout the US and abroad, from Havana and Santiago de Cuba to Miami, Washington D.C., California, México, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland. Chris is the former director of MEZCLA, the Latino Performing Arts group at Brown University, where he taught and performed at various expos and televised events throughout New England. Upon returning to NYC, Chris designed and implemented an extensively progressive Casino and Rueda curriculum and founded Fuákata - Cuban Salsa NY Dance Company.

A group of us from JComm actually attended Chris's Wednesday Night Absolute Beginner Salsa Class at Adelante Studios on Valentine's Day, and we can say first-hand that it was a blast!

I was definitely an "Absolute Beginner" at Salsa dancing, and as I hurried toward Adelante Studios through Herald Square (running just a tad late, as usual), I felt the familiar sensation of beginner's nerves. As I double checked the map on my phone, I noticed a stream of people filing into a simple small lobby and up a gray flight of stairs. I heard laughter and voices above me and soon came upon a large studio full of people: young people, older people, men, women, comfortable-looking "regulars" and nervous-looking newcomers. I even ran into a few old friends I was not expecting to see! I quickly registered, and before I knew it, I was learning basic vocabulary and steps, repeating these new movements over and over as the steps gradually got more and more complicated. Soon the room organized into pairs, and we quickly learned various steps to switch partners. After many new partners and many mumbled introductions, I felt the room settle into a relaxed, focused atmosphere of all moving together. The instructors would introduce a new step, and I would marvel at how complicated it looked before realizing how easily we were all able to accomplish it. By the time the class ended, I was having fun and feeling confident, dancing with strangers and enjoying sharing the space. All in all, a great Valentine's Day date.

We are thrilled to have Chris with us for our panel discussion on Nightlife and Social Dance, and to hear him share his exhaustive knowledge of the Salsa community in NYC. If you're looking to take a Salsa Class, please check out Chris's class and the rest of the offerings at [Fuákata Cuban Salsa NY](#)! They offer classes at a variety of levels, and we can personally attest to how thrilling a time you will have with them! And look out for more information about the rest of our panelists soon, as we prepare for our Panel Discussion at the [Dance/NYC Symposium](#) on Social Dance, Nightlife, and the Underground.

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