

HAU

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MAGAZIN ^{IM} AUGUST

Tanz im August | 32. Internationales Festival Berlin | 21.-30.8.2020 | Online & Outdoor | Special Edition

A Fine Line

Robyn Orlin on the question of humanity

The Chameleon Contingency

Reflections on Chance, Culture, and Coping

Escape from reality

Marcos Morau's Homage to Luis Buñuel

Love, Labor, Loop

(Objects) Life according to Gaumhyung Jeong

We will dance again

As we write this, the world is precariously seeking a balance between allowing for social contact while restricting freedom of movement; cities, regions, and whole countries are shut down and reopened on rotation, while societies fight against the pandemic. In early spring, artists from faraway countries began to cancel their European tours. Soon our programming was cut short and the festival line-up was never finalized as the crisis quickly escalated.

At the end of April, it was clear that Tanz im August would not take place in Berlin as planned. Our first concern was for the artists. Most dance artists are freelancers in the independent (free) scene, and their livelihood depends on touring and the support offered by commissions, co-productions, grants and subsidies. Therefore, HAU Hebbel am Ufer and our festival Tanz im August are extremely grateful to our public funders, the Capital Cultural Fund and the Senate Department for Culture and Europe, who allowed us to compensate our artists and move forward with plans for an alternative festival.

Cancelling the live performances was simply heartbreaking for everyone involved. Luckily, we could in the same breath begin discussing how to remain true to our mission of bringing international artists and audiences together. As we didn't want to take any risks with our audiences' or our artists' health and safety, live performances in closed spaces were out of the question at that time. Instead, the Tanz im August team took up the challenge of piecing together an entirely new festival composed of new – mostly online – proposals by the artists from the original line-up as well as new commissions.

One of our first decisions was to continue with the publication of the Magazin im August – especially on paper – and turn it into a 2020 yearbook, capturing moments of these unusual times even if we cannot yet grasp the whole picture. Why, you might ask? Because we would like to afford these artists all the visibility we can offer and we believe that engagement and outreach beyond the intended programme engenders hope, especially in times of social isolation.

Here, Jaamil Olawale Kosoko reminds us in Brenda Dixon Gottschild's essay of the foresight that artists have: "The work that we do is to create futures and invite people into them." Meanwhile, Stephanie Thiersch talks to Thomas Hahn about how to place fundamental critiques of patriarchy, colonialism, anthropocentrism and speciesism on stage. Thiago Granato points out the political power in listening and calls for alternative modes of perception. Arkadi Zaides talks with Sandra Noeth about his year-long research into the graves of migrants and undocumented asylum-seekers. And as Robyn Orlin looks back at her roots in South Africa, and "how it shaped or did not shape" her consciousness, William Forsythe offers short choreogra-

phic instructions for the urban space that inspire passers-by to explore and become aware of physical movements.

The performing arts sector is only beginning to understand the long-term impact and consequences of the pandemic. The recovery process may take a long time as theatres were the first to close their doors, and will most likely be the last to reopen them. Ongoing conversations and collegial support have been vital in the last months. We have, alongside other dance and summer festivals across Europe, been sharing our experiences and concerns, and discussing different perspectives on our international collaborations and exchange. The future might be unknown and uncertainties will prevail for quite some time, but the call for solidarity and fairness, and the strong sense of collective responsibility in the performing arts sector, are positive outcomes to hold on to. This will be further brought to the table during the three-day conference, "How to Be Together?" organized in collaboration with Zürcher Theater Spektakel.

We would like to welcome you to the Tanz im August Special Edition 2020. You can follow the programme online and in public space with contributions by Faye Driscoll, William Forsythe, Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, Louise Lecavalier, Ayelen Parolin, Stephanie Thiersch, Jacob Wren and Arkadi Zaides from the original line-up. We look forward to also presenting the media- and performance art collective LIGNA, who have been working on a new radio ballet with 12 international artists: Alejandro Ahmed, Bhenji Ra, Dana Yahalomi (Public Movement), Edna Jaime, Eisa Jocson, Geumhyung Jeong, Bebe Miller, Mamela Nyamza, Maryam Bagheri Nesami & Mitra Ziaee Kia, Melati Suryodarmo, Raquel Meseguer, and Yuya Tsukahara + contact Gonzo.

In collaboration with the new online performance space, "1000 Scores – Pieces for Here, Now & Later" initiated by Helgard Haug, David Helbich and Cornelius Puschke, which collates instructive mini-pieces by artists from various practices, scores by Chiara Bersani, Maija Hirvanen, Victoria Hunt, Choy Ka Fai and Kettly Noël will be published as a part of the festival programme.

The portraits, interviews, reports and artistic contributions of the following pages offer an insight into different works and artistic visions, while also shedding light on the ways in which the pandemic has affected communities around the world and the stark historical, social and political inequalities it has exposed. In the opening article, Lia Rodrigues calls for "projects that discover our differences, search for possibilities of sharing, invent resistance and imagine new forms of dialogue and exchange." This topic will be explored further in the Special Edition 2020 as in one of the online discussion series "Happy to Listen". Within this format we will present the video works of Alice Ripoll, Princesa Ricardo Marinelli, Zahy Guajajara and Victoria Hunt amongst others.

Tanz im August Special Edition 2020 is the collective effort of many people: artists, managers, producers and curators, whose

commitment made it possible to present an alternative festival online and outdoors, and writers, thinkers, panelists and moderators, who inspired and challenged us to modify our practices.

We truly miss the excitement of live performances, real meetings and intimacy, and hope we will soon meet again. Stay safe!

Virve Sutinen
Artistic Director | Tanz im August

Annemie Vanackere
Artistic & Managing Director | HAU Hebbel am Ufer

Magazin im August is published both in print, mixing English and German, and online in both languages.



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Dana Michel



The Change is Here

How Covid-19 has affected dance professionals around the world

How will we remember the time of the Covid-19 pandemic? How to go forward despite the restrictions and isolation orders? What does the future look like?

We certainly have more questions than answers at this point! And we are only slowly coming to terms with the fact that we might have to live with present insecurities, with the not-knowing, for quite some time. One thing is for sure: we are not returning to the same old world.

The virus has impacted different countries in wholly different ways. Many have suffered great losses, sometimes far worse than in the Western hemisphere. Magazin im August asked artists around the world how their work and life has been affected by the pandemic and how they imagine the future. Their stories are proof of the strength, resilience and hope that arises from their commitment and passion for art and their support of their local and global communities. What they share is the determination to rebound despite feelings of loss.



**Panaibra Gabriel Canda,
Maputo, Mozambique**

Dancer and Choreographer

Living in Mozambique, where we are in the middle of a crisis most of the time, figuring out how to stand and keep on standing has become a practice. What makes the coronavirus so peculiar, is that it is an invisible enemy. We find ourselves struggling to trust the political system which is corrupted and has failed us before. Professionally, the situation has affected our entire programme which has taken months and even years to plan: the loss of all expected work and income definitely drove us into a corner.

I never imagined a scenario like this could happen. It's a process of adaptation as we are used to working as a community. Our daily routine of taking class together and engaging in movement practices has been affected so that we cannot hug, touch or dance together. But we can also take this time as a moment to stop, reflect and re-encounter oneself, which is impossible in "normal" times as the system forces us to keep on running without stopping.

The best practice we can follow is to put our feet firmly on the ground and trust that relationship. We are here now, the soil can produce enough to feed us. We can be creative in sharing and feeding our audiences despite the distance. The absence of our practices can corrode the brain, and the brain corrodes the body.

Let's stay alive and trust them. This is just a wave to remind us that we are a human family, and the earth is our home.

Even if we cannot see big changes at the moment, besides social distancing and the use of masks, I think it will never be the same again. The newfound unity and brotherhood we have developed will act as our weapons to eradicate the past that has segregated us. Just like the world's momentous solidarity with George Floyd! I believe in a global discourse based on different points of view and aesthetics, freedom of speech and tolerance towards differences.

After this rupture, I want to believe that my work can still be shown worldwide, and I definitely would like to come back to Berlin. More than ever, a festival like Tanz im August can take this crisis as an opportunity to sustain a vision of diversity in international approaches and views, in which I am a strong believer. I trust the festival will continue to bring together contemporary voices from different parts of the globe to improve our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.



**Karima Mansour,
Cairo, Egypt**

**Founder and Artistic Director of
MAAT Dance Company and
Cairo Contemporary Dance Center**

Our work at MAATICDC has had to stop. The company was scheduled to perform repertoire from ALIAS company,

Switzerland in March 2020, but that has been postponed to an unknown date. The festivals that had booked several of our productions were cancelled. Aside from our planned performances, all classes and activities have been suspended and the professional training programme is also on hold.

Just like elsewhere in the world, online platforms took the forefront here too. We had no other option except to use the internet to stay connected, visible and sane. This forced us to think differently in terms of time and space. We started offering online classes for free, and I shared a lot of my choreographic work from 1999 onwards via our Vimeo channel. But I don't think this is sustainable. Training, rehearsing and attending live performances at the theatre are experiences that the internet simply cannot replicate. The sharing of sweat, moving in space, dancing with others, hands-on teaching and learning, the rush that comes from that immediate, palpable connection that is instantly created between performer and audience – none of this can be recreated digitally. Many artists have chosen to exist only online as a way to deal with the challenge of finding space. In a context like ours this can be of great help and support. But I think it is rather a question of having the option, as opposed to moving online out of necessity. Having said that, where I come from it is a daily practice to constantly find new ways to deal with situations we haven't chosen to be in.

The future holds many possibilities. We can use this time as an opportunity to look back, evaluate, plan and reprioritize, both on a professional and a personal level. We need to start thinking of new ways to keep dance as an art form alive, relevant and functional. Especially as the importance of dance and the arts in general has come into question; these past few months have subjected us to much searching and to new discoveries. I don't think we have the answers just yet, it will take time.



**Lia Rodrigues,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

**Choreographer and Artistic Director of
Lia Rodrigues Companhia de Danças**

In Brazil, there has been no public investment in the arts for a long time. In Rio de Janeiro, where I live and work, the state and municipality are completely bankrupt. The situation is catastrophic. I think it's too early to be able to say anything about the positive and negative effects as we have not yet even reached the peak of the pandemic. We are living through one of the most terrible and darkest moments in our recent history. Fascist President Bolsonaro, with hateful speeches, fake news and disrespectful attitudes towards democratic values, set up a government based on violence and destruction. What to make of a democratic state in which every 25 minutes a young black man is killed? Many lives and bodies were, are and will always be in a state of fragility and under constant threat: black lives, trans lives, female lives, poor lives. I do not believe that this pandemic will bring more awareness or a major change in the habits and attitudes of most people. The neoliberal capitalist system remains more active than ever.

My dance company and dance school is based at the Maré Arts Center in the favela of Maré. Living in overcrowded environments and unable to follow recommendations like buying alcohol gel, storing food or working at home, favela residents are the main victims of the

coronavirus in Brazil. Inequality clearly shows us that, in all circumstances, the worst consequences will always affect the poorest. During quarantine we started the Redes da Maré campaign to raise funds and distribute essential items to the most needy populations in the favela of Maré. In Brazil, it is the mobilization of civil society by non-profit associations and activists that guarantee assistance to people in need. It is so good to see that the Maré Arts Center remains necessary, alive and that it continues to reinvent its function.

The future of live arts in Europe is completely different to the future of live arts in Brazil, for all the reasons I wrote above. But our futures are hopelessly linked, whether we like it or not. We live on the same planet and our actions are in some way connected. More than ever, North-South dialogue is essential. At a time when all over the world ever more walls and fences are built, territories are fiercely demarcated, and borders are imposed and rigorously defended, we need projects that propose the opposite movement. Projects that discover our differences, search for possibilities of sharing, invent resistance and imagine new forms of dialogue and exchange.

I have read that some European artists no longer travel by plane. They can choose not to fly because they have already built their careers in the privileged, Eurocentric West. They never suffered from the inequalities resulting from colonialism, one of the main causes of devastation on our planet. So indeed, refraining from flying is the least they can do. But I was extremely shocked when some of them proposed to boycott artists who use air transportation. This stance is known as 'strategic ignorance': one only wants to know what is convenient, and by keeping away from the most complex issues they are highlighting their privileged positions. We know that many artists from the South need to fly to be able to show their work in Europe, which is where the financial resources for the arts are concentrated. Proposing a boycott once again lays claim to how the position of male, white and European supremacy

dictates the rules for the rest of the world. For not flying does not change the comfortable status Western artists enjoy with all the privileges that the capitalist system offers, and dictating who can or cannot fly further exposes the authoritarian mechanism that prevails in North-South relations. Those who use air travel are labelled environmental enemies and inequality remains intact.



**Jayachandran Palazhy,
Bengaluru, India**

**Artistic Director of Attakkalari Center
for Movement Arts**

The contemporary dance scene in India is largely led by artists and organisations who work very hard to make ends meet. This is evident from the passion and commitment of many artists, especially many young people, who see the art form as a medium that embodies the pulse of their life experiences and concerns. In recent years, the drive of these artists is what led to the emerging, vibrant contemporary dance scene in India. And as there is very little public funding available in South Asia, and what does exist is very difficult to access or receive, most artists and organisations survive with the income they earn from their shows, classes and other services they provide. When the Covid-19 pandemic started, the country was given four hours of notice for a two-month long, severe lockdown. This created immense difficulties for many artists who were stranded, away from their homes, without any source of in-

come. Some artists resorted to offering online classes but many of those who were teaching in schools and elsewhere lost their jobs.

Attakkalari is the leading organisation for contemporary dance in India and employs 30 people directly and many more indirectly. We have a rented four-storey building, a guesthouse and an array of technical stage equipment to maintain. We obtain most of our income from the dance classes we offer at our studios, schools and colleges, both for professionals and as part of our community outreach programme, and from performances, technical services and other engagements. As all our revenue streams were fully disrupted, the staff collectively decided to draw only 30% of their salaries in order to sustain the organization. We are in the process of developing online initiatives to meet this financial emergency. The good news is, we are making baby steps and slowly climbing back up from the deep depths into which the contemporary dance sector has fallen in our country.

Dance is a time-based art form which thrives on its very notion of presence and the celebration of the here and now. In this situation, many dancers are desperate for social contact and the ability to physically communicate and share ideas among themselves and with their audiences. The social distancing norms have disrupted the possibility of being in touch with different traditions and contexts. On a positive note, many people who otherwise would not have tried dance, are now taking part in our online classes. Attakkalari has launched a programme called Attakkalari Connect, which offers classes in various disciplines to children and adults. Online classes remove the hurdle of long-distance travel and the hazard of navigating city traffic. People from different cities are now joining these classes.

For some time at least the dance sector might migrate to digital and outdoor arenas. Like many existing folk art forms, we should consider promenade and site-specific shows. As there are plenty of peo-

ple milling about in the streets and open spaces already, there are many possibilities for performance. And maybe there are ways in which the ideas and imagination of dance can be transferred into other mediums without a physical body, such as through screen-based digital platforms and internet channels. Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts is currently launching an initiative with this approach and is open to interested collaborators – both individuals and organisations.



LIGNA, Hamburg, Germany

Media- and Performance-Art-Collective

Our approach has always been dealing with dispersed groups and collective agency. The pandemic brought with

it the need to nonetheless reorganise, relate to and rethink solidarity, also within our working process. Ironically, we have never worked in a way that was this interconnected with other artists as we have in the last few months. We collaborated with 12 choreographers from all over the world for “Dissemination Everywhere”, which will now be presented at Tanz im August. During lockdown, we enjoyed the unusual experience of empty, quiet city spaces. Although it may have been temporary and we don’t know what will follow, the lockdown revealed that a general strike is still possible if not probable. The rupture in our everyday lives, which the virus brought along, reminded us that our everyday realities are no law of nature and that it will not go on “in this way” forever, which, according to Walter Benjamin is “the catastrophe”. So we strongly oppose the Benjamin-reader Giorgio Agamben, who claimed that by temporarily giving up close physical contact, the Western world gives up itself. Rather, we think the opposite is true: by showcasing our ability to act in solidarity across distance, the cynical capitalist state of normality, according to which every body has to be available and disposable, is called into question. Our global future will be more open, vulnerable, emphatic and mimetic. It is time to surrender and give up many things, such as our nation, money and land. As Bhenji Ra states in “Dissemination Everywhere”, we must “surrender ability, so we can move into potentiality”. 🗡️

“How to Be Together? – Conversations on International Exchange and Collaboration in the Performing Arts” | Digital Conference

27.+28.8., 14:00–17:00 | 29.8., 14:00–18:00 | Online

“Brazil Hijacked” | #4 Happy to Listen | talk

29.8., 20:30 | ca. 90min | Online

LIGNA | Meet the Artist

“Dissemination Everywhere! An international radio ballet” | performance | 60min

22.+23.8., 16:00 | Uferstudios | 29.+30.8., 14:00 | former Postbank highrise, upper parking deck

→ With contributions by Alejandro Ahmed, Edna Jaime, Geumhyung Jeong, Eisa Jacson, Raquel Meseguer, Bebe Miller, Maryam Bagheri Nesami & Mitra Ziaee Kia, Mamelata Nyamza, Bhenji Ra, Melati Suryodarmo, Yuya Tsukahara + contact Gonzo, Dana Yahalomi | Public Movement



The Chameleon Contingency

Reflections on Chance, Culture, and Coping

Text: Brenda Dixon-Gottschild

In response to the postponements of his live performances, dancer and choreographer Jaamil Olawale Kosoko has been re-imagining his practice. The result is the multimedia artwork “American Chameleon (The Living Installments)”, a series of events that hold on to grief while also bringing beauty, humor, care, and joy into play. Brenda Dixon-Gottschild, cultural historian, performer and anti-racist cultural worker, reflects on Kosoko’s work and its resonance in light of the Black Lives Matter movement.

“...the near intolerable burden of memory, a Muse for the poetry of identity...” Wole Soyinka¹

Circumstance. Chance. Or simply Fact. The fact of Coronavirus that precipitated global catapult into a wrinkled warp in time. Crisis. Crossroads. Cataclysm. Contingency. “Cruxed.” The words beginning with sharp C – sounding like K, as in CRACK goes the world as we knew it.

And then there is the word chameleon, which somewhat softens the bite of the crack, the cutting edge of the situation. But Jaamil Olawale Kosoko’s work, “Chameleon”, doesn’t blunt the blow. It leans on us to enter the fray and bear witness to this artist’s dig into another virus – namely, the plague of his personal history and memory that frame the past and predicate the future.

The Chameleon Contingency: “There’s always as much below ground as above..... . That’s life. The dead keep the living alive.”² Kosoko’s “Chameleon” reifies these thoughts that open and close the novel “The Overstory” by Richard Powers (a prescient read during this pandemic). Seek and you shall find. A chameleon is “a small slow-moving Old World lizard with a prehensile tail, long extensible tongue, protruding eyes that rotate independently, and a highly developed ability to change color.”³ Kosoko’s eyes look inward to the database of his mind, reshuffling memories and repurposing their impact on him. His performance? His life! He ‘entertains’ us in order to entertain the possibility of liberation. As a Black man, how does he change color? Metaphorically by wrapping his luscious, smoothly muscular, mahogany body in equally luscious, silken, cocoa-colored fabric, which can be a second skin or a tender trap. Textiles touch us in more ways than physical. Metamorphosis. A Black man changes color by positioning himself in the European world, being unapologetically Black for predominantly Euro- and Euro-American audiences on two continents. How far can he lead them? How far can they follow? Black. Male. Queer. Kosoko’s ‘chameleonizing’ is a survival mechanism. In his code-switching format – in the 2020 Plague Year – perfor-

mances shape-shift on different virtual platforms, rather than the live events of his earlier works.

“Deliver us from memory.” Tracy K. Smith⁴

“The past will always leave a footprint.” Kosoko’s uncle⁵

Kosoko is the quintessential embodiment of James Baldwin’s description: “All art is a kind of confession, more or less oblique. All artists, if they are to survive, are forced, at last, to tell the whole story”; to vomit the anguish up.”⁶ Building on two of his previous works, “Séancers” and “#negrophobia”, he harnesses the power of family and ancestral spirit. He is both priest and novice. Mining his Nigerian and African American heritage to deploy cultural energies of trickster, conjurer, magician, healer, he is the conduit, negotiating the channel at the juncture between living and dead, between now, before, and hence. Freedom fighter Harriet Tubman⁷ ‘conducted’ runaways escaping slavery on a journey fashioned by the force of the Ancestors’ stories. Tubman could shrink time and space into a wrinkle leading to freedom. Her miraculous, psychic power, shared by select others of African lineage, is central to Ta-Nehisi Coates’ novel “The Water Dancer”⁸ and to recent stage plays and biographies about her. Kosoko’s calling forth of memories and ghosts is a metaphorical site of ‘conduction’, a transliteration of Tubman’s special gift, in the context of his own ugly-beautiful past, with the ‘stank’ (‘stinking’, ‘smelly’) stories of childhood trauma still pounding his senses, yet existing in the same place as the mystic elegance of his melanated metaphysical experience. He is always in collaboration with the Ancestors.

“I am performing myself into being, in an attempt to communicate my interiority...” Jaamil Olawale Kosoko⁹

“Chameleon” is a sense stimulator, with soundscape, voice(s), music, motion, dance, costume. Beyond the lurking shadows of grief, there’s a wicked wit at work. Throughout, Kosoko moves slowly, deliberately, navigating the thick air of his memories and fantasies. In some versions we see a short glimpse of his perfectly shaped brown buttocks, where the words Black Power are spray-painted in gold glitter. Elsewhere, he transforms into a soul singer, and later a pop icon. In a section called “The Hold”, as he emerges from his brown silken chrysalis, for a moment the fabric clings to his face, outlining his features – like Veronica’s cloth with the face of Jesus imprinted on it. Frequently he wears visors or sunglasses, which are known in Haitian Vodun to be necessary accoutrements for Guède, the deity of the crossroads between life and the hereafter. Indeed, Kosoko is performing multiple cultures and sides of his ‘interiority’, as both the knower and the seeker. His stage landscapes are cluttered with the stuff of ritual play. He balances on the limen, creating a liminal world and daring us to cross over and join him. To balance, but maybe to teeter and fall. He inhabits death (of his uncle, brother, mother) through a futuristic schema that leads back to himself. He embraces the transformative

power of performance to speak the unspeakable, to liberate the psyche. Each iteration of Chameleon changes the 'color' of perceptions around performance: the who, what, when, where, why, and how are more up for grabs, more than ever before, given the way our world has changed with Covid-19. What is shown in a performance event will not be the same the next time around, nor necessarily offered on the same platform. "I think all artists have foresight. The work that we do is to create futures and invite people into them."¹⁰ Kosoko is onto something. His term 'interiority' is echoed by these words from African American poet Elizabeth Alexander: "The Black interior is a metaphysical space beyond the Black public everyday toward power and wild Chameleon imagination that Black people ourselves know we possess but need to be reminded of."¹¹ Kosoko reminds us, all of us, beyond the cultural, social, racial barriers of our particular comfort zone that who we are is more than skin deep.

As Danez Smith's poem, "Don't Call Us Dead" tells us, "every day you wake you raise the dead everything you do is a miracle."¹²

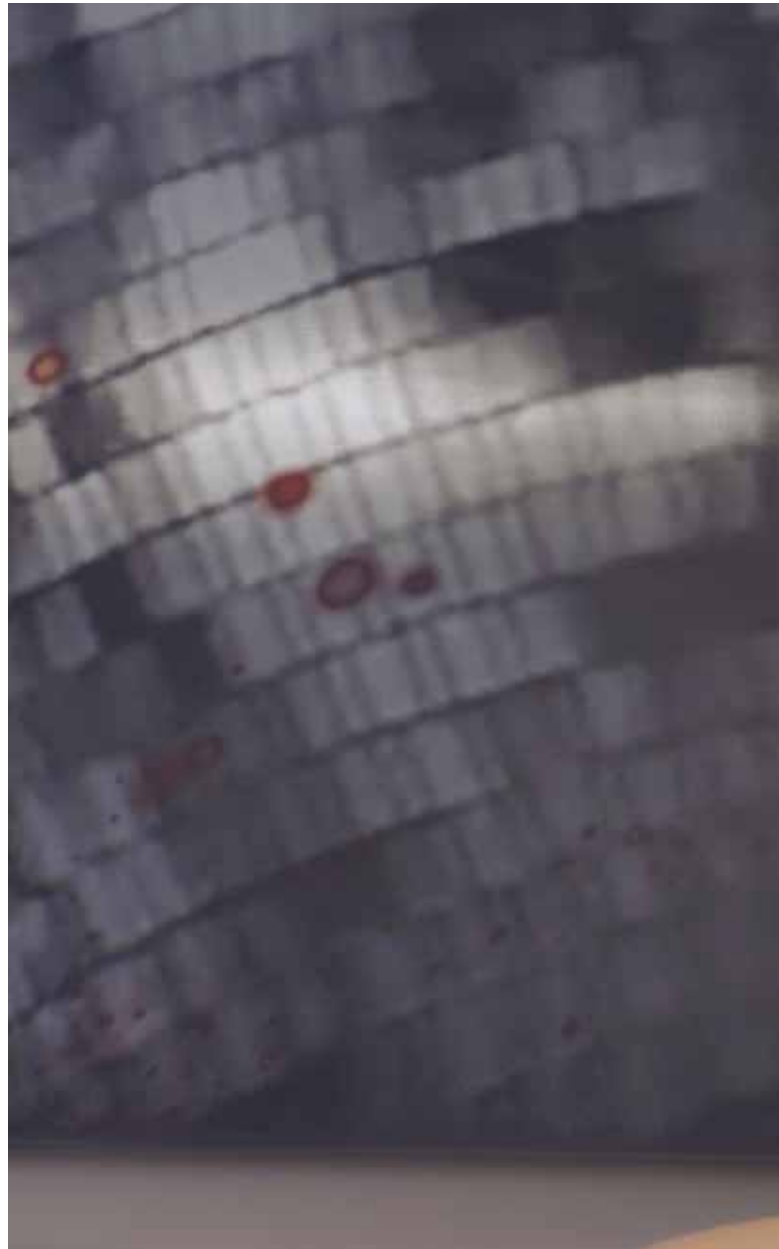
Epilogue – From Pandemic to Protest

"I can't breathe!!! ... Mama!!!" (The final words of George Floyd)¹³

Afro-Pessimism¹⁴ is a theme running through Jaamil Olawale Kosoko's work, and here it is, once again on view for the whole world to see why. Death and Black annihilation are not nihilistic conceits but the stuff of daily life for Black Americans shackled by racism – the plague that's as old and lethal as any viral pandemic. More than ever we need the breath, spirit, wind and air of change. We. Need. To. Breathe.

"I am aware that we are living in the middle ring of terrorism. The trouble of scars bleeding through new maps."¹⁵

I wrote "The Chameleon Contingency" in April 2020. I write this coda two months later to acknowledge breath lost, blood shed, lives wiped out and the widening CRACK in the fabric of America's social contract. African Americans inhabit a 'ring of terrorism', mapped by the martyred Black bodies of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery¹⁶. It was the brutal savagery of Mr. Floyd's murder by police – on a busy city street in a midwestern American metropolis in broad daylight – that sent the world into waves of shock, anger and bitter protest. Mr. Floyd's final utterances chilled the blood and shook the bones: "I can't breathe!" and, finally, "Mama!" – calling for his deceased mother with his last breath. Anyone who saw the virally-spread video of Floyd's actual demise is marked forever by witnessing his life breath physically pressed from his body by the force of a white policeman's knee bearing down on his neck for a full eight minutes and forty-six seconds. That meme is stamped for-



ever in our history and memory. That image, alone, explains Afro-Pessimism. Enough said.

Young and old alike took to the streets across continents demanding justice – a beautiful rising up. The Covid-19 pandemic and the protests will ultimately end, but life can never return to the former status quo.

Pessimism can be cathartic. There is life in death as surely as there is death in life. 🗡️

Jaamil Olawale Kosoko | Meet the Artist American Chameleon: The Living Installments (2.0)

interactive performance
23.8., 18:00 | ca. 210min | Participation with prior registration on DISCORD
or viewing via live stream



“American Chameleon [The Living Installments]” © Jaamil Olawale Kosoko and EMPAC

1 Wole Soyinka, “The Burden of Memory, The Muse of Forgiveness”, New York, Oxford University Press 1999, p.194.
2 Richard Powers, “The Overstory”, New York, W.W. Norton & Co. 2018, p.3/ p.425.
3 Oxford Online Dictionaries.
4 Tracy K. Smith, Duende: “Minister of Saudade,” Minneapolis, Graywolf Press 2007, p.33.
5 Statement repeated by Kosoko’s ailing uncle.
6 James Baldwin, “Nobody Knows My Name: More Notes of A Native Son”, 1961.
7 Harriet Tubman, born Araminta Ross, escaped from slavery in 1835 in the South to become a leading abolitionist before the American Civil War. She led hundreds of bondmen to freedom in the North along the route of the Underground Railroad—an elaborate secret network of safe houses organized for that purpose.
8 Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Water Dancer”, New York, One World, Penguin Random House, 2019.
9 Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, Artist Statement, Séancers, programme notes, FringeArts Philadelphia 2018, p.3.
10 Siobhan Burke, “This Artist Proposes A Community Space ‘to Dream, to Imagine’”: NY Times online interview with Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, 19 April 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/arts/dance/jaamil-olawale-kosoko-chameleon.html>
11 Elizabeth Alexander, “The Black Interior”, YouTube WGBH Online Forum, uploaded 31 March 2014.
12 Danez Smith, “Don’t Call Us Dead”: “a note on the body” Minneapolis, Graywolf Press 2017.
13 Final words of George Floyd, unarmed African American murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, 25 May 2020 by policemen.
14 See Afro-Pessimism, Wikipedia: “...afro-pessimists across disciplines have argued that Black people are constitutively excluded from the category of the self-possessing, rights-bearing human being of modernity.”
15 Rachel Eliza Griffiths, “Whipping Tree”. www.slowdownshow.org/episode/slowdown/2019/05/122-whipping-tree
16 Breonna Taylor: murdered while sleeping, by plainclothes policemen who broke into her apartment (without a warrant) in pursuit of a suspect who had already been arrested. March 2020, Louisville, Kentucky. Ahmaud Arbery: murdered by two white vigilantes who saw him jogging in a white neighborhood and assumed without evidence that he must be a criminal. February 2020, Glynn County, Georgia.

A Fine Line

**The choreographer Robyn Orlin on theatre as
a question of humanity.**

Text: Esther Boldt

Her works are visually powerful yet unpretentious. They are both playful and questioning, but always with a touch of irony. Robyn Orlin's output oscillates between film and dance, visual art and music. She is motivated by questions of power relationships, the primacy of the West, post-colonialism. A meeting with an exceptional artist.

I reach Robyn Orlin in Berlin, where she has lived for over twenty years. She should actually be in Johannesburg to rehearse her new piece, which has one of her typically long titles: "We wear our wheels with pride and slap your streets with color – we said 'bonjour' to satan in 1820 ...". Her singers, a ten-strong Zulu choir, have already made the journey. As with many of her previous works, the starting point for "We wear our wheels with pride ..." is a personal memory.

"At the moment, I keep on going back to memories about where I come from, and how it shaped or did not shape my consciousness," says Robyn Orlin. In "We wear our wheels with pride ..." she remembers the rickshaw pullers of her childhood. Orlin grew up in Johannesburg, the daughter of Jewish emigrants who had fled from Europe to South Africa between the two world wars. "We were never accepted there, because we were Jews," she says. The question of belonging has preoccupied her to this day, and it keeps coming up in conversation. "I have never found a place for myself," she says at some point, simply. She left South Africa when she no longer saw an artistic future for herself there, and came to Berlin in a roundabout way. But spending the rest of her life in Germany or elsewhere in Europe isn't something the 65-year-old can imagine.

Even as a child Orlin couldn't get used to apartheid. "I found it very difficult. I never understood the separation. Luckily, my mother explained a lot to me when I was very young." The cityscape then was characterised by rickshaws – vehicles pulled by black men to transport both goods and people – usually white people. "A transport system, that came pretty much out of the colonial system. It became an important structure for the unemployed," says Orlin. The Zulu pullers decorated their rickshaws and wore splendid clothes and lavish headgear of feathers, buttons and seeds, and endowed with two, four or even six cow horns. The horns were interpreted as a sign of the dignity and strength of those who wore them – and also of course indicated their status as human beasts of burden, in Orlin's view. Today, after the motorisation of South Africa, the colourful rickshaws are primarily tourist attractions.

Robyn Orlin has been thinking about the dance forms that inspired her: "There are two very distinct and important things, and they both come from traditional African dance, one from the mine dancers, one from the rickshaws. Watching these dances, the beauty and the energy of these dances, I was in

awe." Her mother, also a professional choreographer, took her along to the mine dances on Sundays. These were organised as competitions so as to prevent the workers from drinking and fighting on their day off. Attending these dances, says Orlin, influenced her politically from a very young age. Now she would like to create a memorial to these unknown heroes – but without glorifying the colonial era: "I have to take care; I have no intention of glorifying colonization which I feel could be a trap", she says. "It's a very fine line."

Today Robyn Orlin is one of Africa's most important choreographers. She studied dance at the London Contemporary Dance School and visual art in Chicago. She became well known for politically committed, trans-disciplinary work that frequently examines social issues such as apartheid and post-colonialism. At



Tanz im August two years ago she presented "Oh Louis ... We move from the ballroom to hell while we have to tell ourselves stories at night so that we can sleep ...", which looked at the Sun King, Louis XIV, art-lover and inventor of the classical ballet. But in 1685, as Orlin reminds us in her piece, Louis also passed the Code Noir, a decree to regulate the treatment of slaves. Orlin's stage is covered with a sea of crackling gold



foil, a powerful image that playfully jumps from the 17th century to the present, recalling the rescue blankets used to protect refugees and others against hypothermia. The evening opens with the fabulous Benjamin Pech, danseur étoile of the Paris Opera Ballet, greeting the audience with jokes and banter for minutes on end as they take their seats in the front rows, making comments on their clothing and drawing them directly into the show.

I try to break down the border between stage and public.

Orlin's pieces often begin in the audience, as she aims to invalidate hierarchies – or at least to question them. "I try to break down the border between stage and public. It's a point of humanity to find a way to get the audience to participate more freely in the piece." Her audience shouldn't adopt the role of passive consumers, and neither should her performers become mere objects on view. This can lead to the audience dissolving into a dancing crowd – as in "although I live inside ... my hair will always reach towards the sun ..." (2004), an outdoor performance in which the charismatic dancer Sophiatou Kossoko beguiled the audience into removing their shoes, washing their feet in a river of paddling pools and dancing.

The creative process itself also frequently becomes the subject matter of Robyn Orlin's works – when the performers bring up her wishes and ideas on stage, for example, or even make jokes at her expense. "I've taken this approach for a long time," she explains. "The point is to reveal who has the power, who makes the decisions, why decisions are important – those things. It's important to me that the audience understands how we made the piece." This is often associated with a raw quality, with improvised moments, a certain provisionality. The works refuse to be completed, and insist on a fundamental openness. Yet they are still always entertaining, full of wit and irony and a lightness rare in contemporary dance. "It is important to be with, to entertain and laugh with the public. I still have this old-fashioned, almost camp notion of entertainment. I am drawn to that kind of work because it has humanity and vitality."

It's a point of humanity to find a way to get the audience to participate more freely in the piece.

Perhaps this lively wit is also a part of Orlin's artistic aspiration. For aside from the question of belonging and not belonging, our conversation is pervaded by another issue: that of humanity. For Robyn Orlin this is the most important aspect of dance and theatre in general: "I think we have one theme we have to hold onto, and it's humanity." A humanity that determines the relationship between choreographer and performers, between performers and audience, between the work and the world.

The current situation isn't easy for Robyn Orlin. She's worried about the artists and companies in South Africa without government funding: "I'm afraid that a lot of companies will break up." And at the same time she can do nothing but wait. She's wondering whether to commence rehearsal via video chat, but the internet connection in Johannesburg isn't always stable enough. For her, as for many others, when and if she can continue her artistic work (also on "We wear our wheels with pride and slap your streets with color ... we said 'bonjour' to satan in 1820 ...") is currently uncertain. She's thinking about adapting existing choreographies to the corona regulations on distancing and hygiene. But it won't be easy. ■

Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.



Battles and Blending

Stephanie Thiersch and Brigitta Muntendorf stage dance
and music as a counter-model to anthropocentrism

Text: Thomas Hahn

Collage, fusion and empathy: “Bilderschlachten / Batailles d’images” is the zero hour of an ecosystem of artistic languages that does without hierarchies. Musicians and dancers, space and time, merge in a whirl of images. On two artists, and our relationship to nature.

“How are things?” “So, so...” The choreographer Stephanie Thiersch seems pretty despondent at the moment, which is understandable. When I speak to her in April 2020, the Ruhrtriennale has just been cancelled. She had conceived a particularly ambitious project for the festival with the composer Brigitta Muntendorf and the star architect Sou Fujimoto, but then the coronavirus swept through the country and four years’ planning had to go on hold¹, leaving almost a hundred creative artists in limbo. “Do you think the politicians know? Culture is ‘system-relevant’, but it comes last in corona times,” Thiersch observes. And she’s right: the virus is a culture-killer, because the weakest are always its first victims. But whose fault is it that it could come to this? The virus’s or people’s?

When Thiersch and Muntendorf were getting the epic “Bilderschlachten” off the ground, purely artistic considerations were primary. But ultimately their approach is closely connected to the question of humankind’s responsibility for the planet and its own future. “Bilderschlachten” is a complex but very free and freeing stage work that practically dissolves the hierarchy between dancers, musicians and audience, a hurricane of images that satirically inflates our civilisation and its madly proliferating puzzle pictures. Choreographer and composer battle

with the structures that partition life into dominating and dominated. So the four musicians of the Asasello Quartet become performers. So the members of the orchestra “Les Siècles” open the evening in the auditorium, above and behind the audience, depending on the theatre. And so everyone (except the audience) mingles in a grand tragic finale.

Kinship

The question isn’t whether Thiersch is an actual or would-be iconoclast, for in this dance images aren’t taken down but take over the stage themselves. What drives the Cologne-based choreographer is more the desire to question the dominance of human beings on our planet. In this endeavour, Thiersch and Muntendorf chose the American biologist and gender philosopher Donna Haraway for their intellectual accomplice. Haraway’s book “Staying with the Trouble”, which conceives of our planet as a dwelling shared between different species with equal rights, appeared in 2016. “One of Haraway’s provocative proposals is ‘make kin, not babies’. This means that we humans have to start building up new kinships with the animal and plant worlds, with the air, etc. We have to rediscover our appreciation of them. It’s the only way we can survive.”

Thiersch also sees Haraway’s book as a work of art, as it isn’t written linearly, but dynamically, with lots of jumps. It had a moderate influence on “Bilderschlachten”, she says, and then the project for the Ruhrtriennale, “Archipelago – A Spectacle of Blending”, clearly bore the stamp of the American eco-feminist. But how do you put fundamental criticism of patriarchy, colonialism, anthropocentrism and speciesism on the dance stage?



Draft by Sou Fujimoto for “Archipelago – A Spectacle of Blending.” © Sou Fujimoto



“Bilderschichten | Batailles d’Images” © Alain Scherer

Ecosystems

Staged metaphorical images and messages aren’t enough for choreographer and composer. What counts is praxis, and that starts with their joint artistic direction. Every conceptual step in the work’s development was based on close concertation from the start, resulting not only in a synthesis but a veritable synaesthesia of disciplines extending from sound and movement to the relationship between space, tempo and atmosphere.

Spatially we’re on a sort of utopian island, where we go through the possible relationships between the elements in a kind of experimental story-telling. This is a statement against the anthropocentric world view and the dominance of human beings.

The integration of the musicians into the choreography, above all in the opening and final images of “Bilderschichten”, is another sign of the will to create an artistic ecosystem that does without hierarchies. In this respect “Archipelago – A Spectacle of Blending”, intended to be shown at the Ruhrtriennale, promised some particularly exciting invention of spectacular metaphors. “We wanted to ask what happens when the ground to which we cling also generates the sound. This produced a sculpture that is both stage and body, like a large instrument on which sounds with organic structures develop.” This rhizome-like approach

corresponds formally and substantially to Haraway’s work, and to the principle of treating everything around us as equal.” In ‘Archipelago’ Brigitta Muntendorf and I wanted to take the idea of kinship further and not portray it through physical contact but through other forms of collectivisation, through ideas of aggregation and synchronisation and biological and physical systems such as magnetism. Spatially we’re on a sort of utopian island, where we go through the possible relationships between the elements in a kind of experimental story-telling, and this is also a statement against the anthropocentric world view and the dominance of human beings.” The idea came about, of course, several years before the Covid-19-necessitated lockdown cancelled the performance. And if you look at the theory that human intervention in the ecosystem and the reduction in species diversity this has caused have a direct connection with the viral catastrophe, you will understand the necessity to reinvent our relationships to other species and the ecosystem of our planet, and the close connection this has to creations like “Archipelago – A Spectacle of Blending” or “Bilderschichten”.

Collages

“Bilderschichten” is pervaded both musically and in its staging by the idea of the collage as a non-hierarchical form of expression, and it lives from the dynamic transdisciplinarity of its performers – the dancers are also singers, not only in chorus but also even as soloists – and in the choice of music. “Musique pour les soupers du Roi Ubu”, by Bernd Alois Zimmermann (1918–1970) reads like a dash through the history of music, full of allusions to Henze, Stockhausen, Bach,

Beethoven, Berlioz and Wagner, to Renaissance dances, the polka and more.

With her own composition “Six moods to stand kings up” Muntendorf links Zimmermann’s work to the present and integrates his collage into her own. And she says: “It was only logical to take the Zimmermann apart a little. He only quotes composers who are members of the Berlin Academy of Arts. I wanted to swing it towards popular culture.” So she quotes a song by the punk group Anti-Flag. “In the original they just yell. I pretty much made a ballad out of it.”

The idea of the collage is part of Muntendorf’s artistic identity in any case. She has created operas for social media and composed a series of pieces for solo instrument, YouTubers and electronics. ‘She calls this social composing’. Echoing this, the composer, conductor and essayist Hans Zender² sees a reflection on authorship and the relationship between an artist and his or her predecessors in Zimmermann’s merry-go-round of stylistic quotation. So the idea of a kinship New Deal seems to exist in Zimmermann already. Carried by his fondness for Ubu-inventor Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), Zimmermann imagined a wide spectrum of symphonic instruments and beyond, from tuba to mandolin to electric guitar. Plus a jazz combo or, in Brigitta Muntendorf’s version, the Asasello Quartet. To deconstruct the orchestra and, as far as possible, its inherent hierarchy, she thought up a special game: “I divided the musicians into symmetrical groups facing each other, creating a spatial dimension. Sounds are passed on or continue as echoes. And the conductor has to work with parallel scores. It was a challenge, but it was fun.” The orchestra “Les Siècles”, conducted by Benjamin Shwartz, is well suited to Zimmermann’s “ballet noir en sept parties et une entrée”. Shwartz’s credo is to play all music on the instruments of its epoch, so the idea of non-colonial and non-hierarchical relationships is also experienced on a diachronic level.

Mourning

Stephanie Thiersch is currently developing a new project for 2021. This piece will deal with mourning rituals and Greek lamentation, and again has to do with human self-definition in relation to nature: “Occidental societies have forgotten how to mourn, so the ground isn’t laid for an appreciation of the dying species and nature in general. We have to redevelop and further cultivate our empathetic relationship to the environment. That was why I then wanted to end ‘Bilderschlachten’ with a very long scene of mourning.” Forwards into the past: “The ancient mourners didn’t just lament the dead; they entered into a dialogue with the bereaved and communicated with nature, which was necessary in order to return the body to the earth.”

Thiersch’s research in Greece has now extended her working coordinates beyond Germany and France – she is the only dance repre-

sentative on the Franco-German Cultural Council, of which the former minister of culture Catherine Trautmann and the director Thomas Ostermeier are also members. Thiersch’s company is called Mouvoir, and the French name wasn’t chosen by accident. Thiersch studied dance in Montpellier in southern France, where she built up a network of contacts. And so the premiere of “Bilderschlachten” took place as “Batailles d’images” in the Théâtre de Nîmes, where a dance audience used to almost everything received this monumental, disturbing, sublime panorama with astonished enthusiasm. 🖤

Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.

- 1 Stephanie Thiersch and Brigitta Muntendorf are now working on the possibility of realising the production in 2021 in the frame of Theater der Welt Festival in Düsseldorf. The architectural landscape was constructed in the halls of Studio Hamburg and followed by a short intensive test and rehearsal period on the stage sculpture mid July. (23.07.20).
- 2 Hans Zender, Martin Kaltenecker, et al., *Essais sur la musique, (Écrits, entretiens ou correspondances)*, Éditions Contrechamps 2016.

Stephanie Thiersch | Meet the Artist Spectacles of Blending | film

30.8., 20:30 | 15min | Online

→ Followed by Artist Talk



Stephanie Thiersch (l) and Brigitta Muntendorf © Martin Rottenkolber

A photograph of two men standing behind a large, ornate wooden harp. The man on the left is leaning on the harp, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt. The man on the right is standing with one hand on his hip, wearing a dark blue t-shirt and light-colored jeans. The harp is made of dark wood and has many strings. The background is dark, suggesting an indoor setting. A Sabian cymbal is visible on the right side of the frame.

Melancholy and Utopia

Flamenco that goes far beyond the familiar.
Israel Galvan and Niño de Elche.

Text: Pedro G. Romero

“Coplas Mecánicas”, a dialogue between singer Niño de Elche and dancer Israel Galván, is an intense encounter between the artists that transports them to the frontiers of Flamenco.

I.

Niño de Elche sings. Israel Galván dances. Normally the flamenco experience feels human, all too human. Nevertheless, when the stage catches fire and skin and flesh are consumed by flames, we glimpse beyond the skeleton of two machines. There are precedents: the ‘máquina de trovar’ invented by the young Meneses¹, the dance with engines by Vicente Escudero², the concrete images of Val del Omar³. In fact, flamenco was a child of the Machine Age, born together with the steam engine, textile factories and railways, a petulant companion to the Industrial Revolution. Hence some of the confusion about its lyrics and action: the audience see spontaneity, but the language is rigorous and regulated. Only a machine can produce emotion like that. And that is the idea, making the audience dance is to include them, to make them part of the concert machinery. In open competition with technology, just like Escudero was with the two electric dynamos. That is the point, to show that even blood, sweat and tears are a cyborg experience, affects shared by humans and machines.

II.

Israel Galván and Niño de Elche. Niño de Elche and Israel Galván. It isn’t just flamenco, contemporary dance or popular music. The two men whose names herald these lines are surely two of the most singular, and at the same time significant, artists anyone can meet in Spain. Each has a symbolic universe with the power to engender a language of his very own, to create and project his own world. It would be “as daft as a flamencologist”, to quote Marcelo del Campo, to reduce that to the incredible compass of Galván’s feet and the melismatic range of De Elche’s throat. These two carry the hallmark tools of flamenco further, away into the virtuosity of the negative: by denying it, flamenco expands its terrain by the day.

They have come together again [“Coplas Mecánicas”, ed.] and this encounter is a collision. Almost a combat, a battle of giants, a titanic struggle, and there are just the two of them. Nothing more. I mean: no plot, no template, no score. This pair with their powers, which they unleash to interact and to probe boundaries. One thing they both owe flamenco is an ability to capture expression, to convey unbridled subjectivity which, thanks to the flamenco camp, as I say, they can exploit without colonisation, free of the mechanical filters imposed by this capitalism where it is our lot to exist, and which converts any singularity in life into a commodity, a spectacle. Not here, this is something else.

Israel Galván. Niño de Elche. Two names that have become two brands. Two approaches forced to conquer the stages, festivals, recording companies, social networks, instagrams and facebook where art circulates in our times. As Guy Debord used to say of gitanos⁴, these are lives that do not resist capitalism but let it waft through them without allowing the death machine to alter their way of life. We see it, hear it, feel it in the sweat those two provoke. No wonder, then, that the jeers and cheers mingle in a soundtrack for their work, their careers, their lives. Their battle is also, of course, a conversation. These two are talking to each other and watching their chat is a privilege.

You sit there in your seat and you see two monsters talking. How odd that genre slang, the language of flamenco uses the word monster in a double sense, positive or negative depending. A monster is an artist so great that no adjective can suffice. Start applying attributes, praise and flattery and what emerges is the fate of Frankenstein, a statue that provokes fear and wonder. Two sides to the same coin. “Monster theory” permits opposites within the same figure without contradiction. But this is another merit in what these two do. What repels us, in their hands, gains appeal, and what enchants us they decide to trivialise. The sublime and the sinister in an endless exchange. Up and down, right and left. All this for a little over an hour, fluctuating before our eyes.

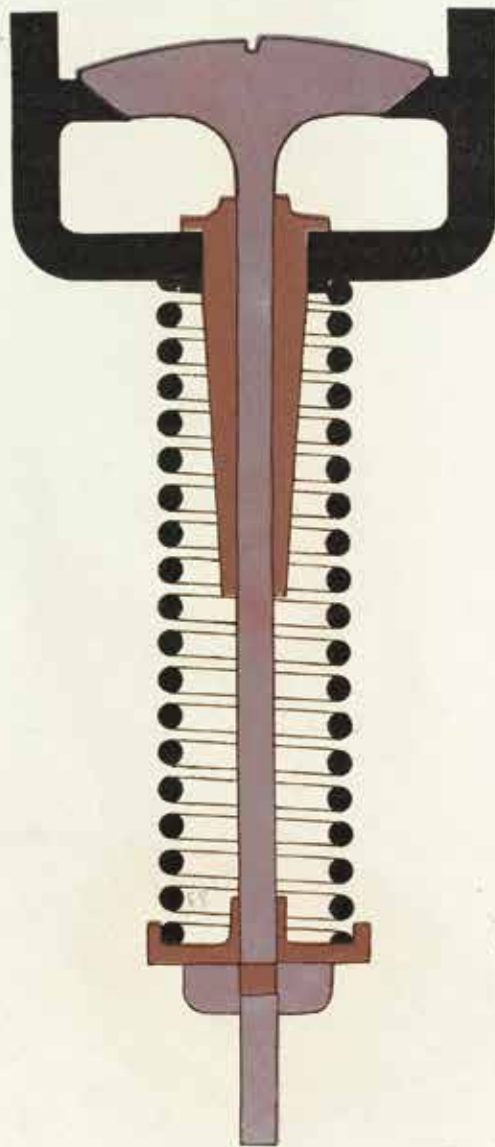
Imagine a kind of cross-dressing. Because at any given moment and before our very eyes, Niño de Elche becomes Israel Galván while Galván turns into De Elche. There is no disguise about it; this is cannibalism, anthropophagy. De Elche grabs Galván by the legs and gobbles him up like a bear with a rat. And out of his entrails Galván literally galvanizes the beast that swallowed him and the bile fluids turn solid in his intestines. And the stone is a weapon, morphing into a fulcrum so the lever can lift the planet. Yes, there is something hyperbolic about this encounter. Yet these are also two friends out for a stroll, telling jokes, affectionate in their amiable banter.

III.

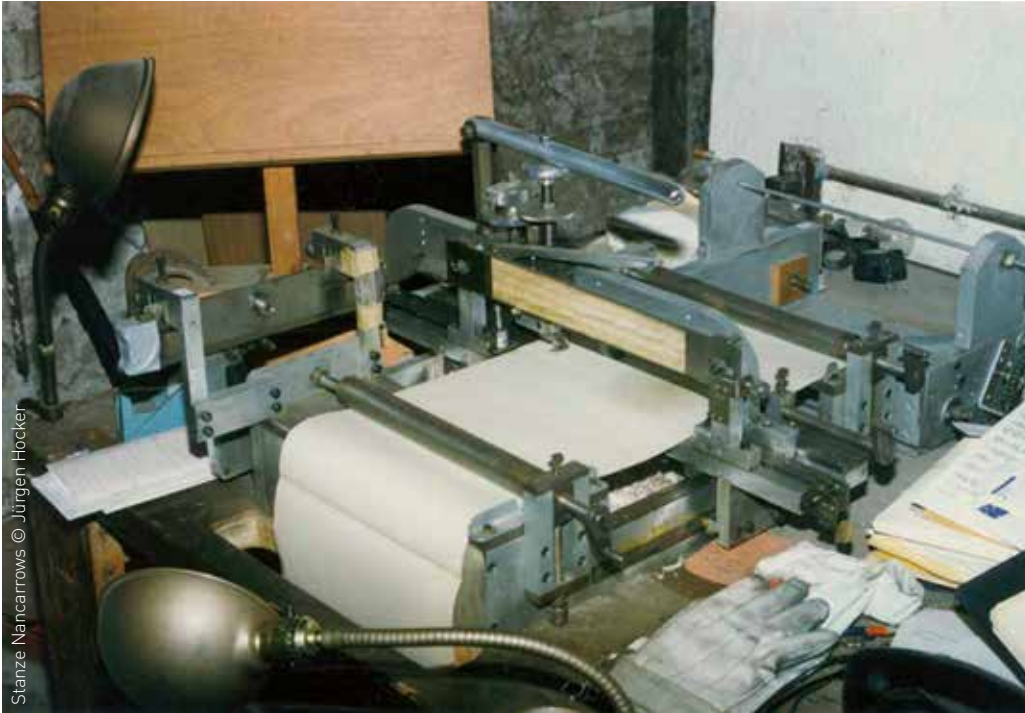
The problem with machines is that people always associate them with steel, circuits, data networks, but strictly speaking machines are us. If we accept, for example, that we are bodies without organs, as Deleuze and Guattari would have it, then we are, intensely, pieces of a bigger machinery, components, loose parts in the social machine. The thing about machines is relationships, and that is because all those cogs link one part to another, one body to another, our community. Just imagine those two, Niño de Galván and Israel de Elche, under lockdown, with face masks, terrified by and terrifying the virus. Anyway, there is a great desire to make history. History with a capital H. And hysterically, sure, multiple voices turning apocalyptic, seeking publicity, Hey, look at me! This thing happening to us is unique! Well, yes and no, several generations of us have never witnessed a war or an epidemic but these things were common

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FLAMENCA



Picabia.



Stanze Nancarrow © Jürgen Hocker

in the lives of our grandparents, in the life of the world. Si acaso me muero/pago con la vida/y no sabía ningún cirujano/del mal que moría (If I should die/I will pay with my life/and no surgeon ever cured/the sickness that killed me) or Eran tan grades mis penas/que no caben más/porque me veo malito de muerte/en el hospital (So great are my sorrows/I can no longer bear them/for I am sick with death/in hospital) or Nadie se arrime a mi cama/que estoy etico de pena,/y el que de mi mal se muere/hasta la ropita le quema. (No one visits my bedside/I am wasted by anguish/and when this disease takes a life/they even burn the clothes.) These are old *seguriya* lyrics and, yes, they speak of cholera epidemics, Spanish influenza, plague, typhus and tuberculosis. Some of those texts were even updated to talk about AIDS. The flamenco machine has a memory, pathos is revived to speak of life and death. I tell you, those

two in lockdown, each in his own room, sure, bodies without organs, and yet connected, subterraneously connected. I'm not just talking about whatsapp or telegram or some other social network, I can't keep up. I'm talking about what really links up in the flamenco machine. When it works, we are bewildered into thinking Niño is Galván and Israel is De Elche. Something recombines and transforms them, something is going on there, at the fiesta, up on stage. The genetic material of both artists recombines, and I'm not talking about biotechnology or cybernetics. I mean something ancient and yet to come. Flamenco is a deeply anachronistic art that denies the 'here and now' and speaks in the past and future

tense, jumbled up, all at once. That is why it is melancholy and utopian, all at once. José Bergamín used to say that 'paradox' was a word invented by stupid people for reality. This machine, there is no doubt, keeps us alive. Even in these times, when almost all of us are dead, this machine revives. A true story that will make your blood curdle. Galván de Elche in two little capsules, dead but alive. The living corpse! The zombie! Risen again! As Alexander Kluge says: "Es ist ein Irrtum, dass die Toten tot sind" ("Indeed, it is a misconception that the dead are dead.")

Pedro G. Romero, Sevilla-Barcelona, 9 June 2020

Translated from Spanish by Kate Vanovitch .

- 1 An apparatus that generates a poem from collective contributions, which has several authors.
- 2 The flamenco dancer and choreographer Vicente Escudero created his "Danza a los motores" in the 1920s to the sound of two electric motors.
- 3 José Val del Omar was a documentary and avant-garde filmmaker, photographer and inventor.
- 4 The Roma people in Spain generally refer to themselves with the term "gitano" [male, singular; "gitana" female, singular], derived from "Egytano". Source: <https://www.romarchive.eu/de/terms/gitano-gitana/>, retrieved on: 25.06.2020.

The One and the Many

Milla Koistinen on the vibrant energy of the crowd

Interview: Beatrix Joyce

Milla Koistinen has worked on children's dreams ("A Cloud of Milk") and – in collaboration with the musician Paul Valikoski – on the reinvention of life through love ("Constructing Love"). In her latest piece "One Next To Me", around twenty performers of different ages and backgrounds explore group dynamics and how shifting states of tenderness and violence manifest in the body. As the social distancing measures loosened in Berlin in May, Milla Koistinen and Beatrix Joyce met for a walk in the park.

Beatrix Joyce: *What triggered your interest in the themes of tenderness and violence?*

Milla Koistinen: A few years ago, when I started working on this piece, I felt surrounded by violence and terror. Many incidents, such as the attacks in Paris, Brussels, Nice and Berlin were on the news, and the sheer amount they were featured, especially in comparison to events outside of Europe, had an effect on me. I started to ask myself, what is my relationship to violence? We all have layers of violence and tenderness within us, and by peeling away one layer you can reach another, and another... And these layers aren't separate, rather, they coexist.

BJ: *How did you bring out these different layers in the choreography?*

MK: We collected images from news reports, political speeches and documentaries and accumulated a pool of movements. I gave my performers the task to perform the images, not by acting them out, but by reconstructing them. It was important to find a way to move which

would represent violence and tenderness, without being too illustrative. Also, I was inspired by Elias Cannetti's research on crowd dynamics and by how behaviours can proliferate in a crowd. We explored this by letting the movements travel in the group and engaging in brief encounters, such as children's games.

BJ: *For this piece, you worked with a mix of professional dancers and non-professionals. Was it challenging to work with such a diverse group of people with varying levels of stage experience?*

MK: We had to find a way for the non-professionals to be on an equal plain with the dancers. We achieved this by keeping it simple: the score was semi-set, semi-improvised, which allowed for spontaneity as well as form. The non-professionals were given relatively strict instructions, while the dancers were given more space. The main challenge was in their stage presence: the non-professionals were very much themselves, especially the children. The dancers, on the other hand, had to chip away at their trained performance mode and adopt a casual stance. With these alterations the



performers were unified, as it allowed the audience to encounter them in the same way.

BJ: *I found the moments of stillness, in which the performers simply watched other performers, very striking. It felt like the whole piece had emerged out of the act of watching.*

MK: With the gaze you can direct the audience from the inside: by focusing on something, the performers invite the spectators to focus on that thing too. This creates space. And in this work, as there are so many people on stage, the performers need to actively direct the attention to each other. For the dancers this was challenging, because they had to resist their desire to move. They had to learn how to continue their sense of flow even when they'd stopped moving. The suspense of them holding back created an interesting tension in the image. And then there were the moments where they could let go, but only very shortly.

BJ: *The same movements are recycled and placed in different constellations, which each time allows for new interpretations. In what way did you prompt these variations?*

MK: We worked with creating images, giving them time to unravel and then attending to the details. We were constantly renewing the gestures with subtle shifts, such as a slight change of direction or a turn of the head. A tiny change can transform the whole image! And a new image, a new situation, tells a completely different story. It's so rich! Also, it turned out that performing these variations, even when the movement was so minimal, was actually very intense for the performers. Their actions became emotionally loaded, especially as I asked them to shift between the emotive states of violence and tenderness. At any given moment, they could hint towards something else, and demonstrate that what they were doing could transform completely, very fast. This allowed for an ambiguity that gave the audience access to several different readings.

BJ: *How did you work with the tension between the individual and the collective?*

MK: Every action, be it individual or shared, affected the group. Whatever the performers chose to do had an impact on the rest. It was their task to keep

this in mind, and to maintain the knowledge that everybody was responsible for the group. Nobody could go off on their own trip.

BJ: *I find the concepts of individual freedom and collective responsibility especially relevant now, during these times of isolation. In the context of our current situation, has this piece taken on a different meaning for you?*

MK: Well, when I think of our rehearsals, I am still amazed by how quickly the performers warmed to each other. At the beginning, they were strangers, and I was touched by their willingness to connect. In the space of two weeks, or sometimes even only four days, they built a deep sense of trust, and then they performed without hesitation. Now, I wouldn't dare ask them to get together, roll around, hug and do all the things they did. Touch has become dangerous. What was once beautiful, has now become a fear. I've started asking myself: what is considered safe these days? And will we ever be able to go back? 🖤

Musings on the Outdoors

Following his direction of Musée de la danse in Rennes (2009–2018), Boris Charmatz launches [terrain] in January 2019, in order to pursue his vision of a new space for art, a green urban choreographic terrain, radically ecological with no need for a permanent building. Last year, Boris Charmatz initiated the symposium “An Architecture of Bodies” for Zürcher Theater Spektakel as part of the first prototype of [terrain]. For this occasion Tim Etchells wrote and performed the text

“Giving Voice to the Wind” which he situates around the artist Tehching Hsieh’s one-year-long performance, “Outdoor Piece” (1981–82). Hsieh spent a full year outdoors in New York, during which time he did not enter buildings or shelters of any sort, including cars, trains, airplanes, boats, or tents. For Magazin im August, Boris Charmatz invited Tim Etchells to, in the context of the current pandemic, take a look at his text again and revisit the notion of the ‘outside’.



On Giving Voice

*"a voice in a landscape, without the enclosure or focus that a building provides.
a voice in a boundless space, mixed with the elements,
no surface to contain or reflect it*

*a place where the voice is the wind
and the wind a voice"*

from "Giving Voice to the Wind", Tim Etchells, 2019

We gathered in Zurich, at the Landiwiese, for the Symposium organized by Boris Charmatz | terrain as part of Zürcher Theater Spektakel¹. It was August 23rd 2019 and in any case a different world than the Corona one we inhabit now; the old world, where people crammed onto underground trains, pushed through crowded airports, sat together at departure gates and got onto airplanes filled with strangers, not even thinking once about their proximity or about face masks or about breathing or about washing hands.

Preparing for the symposium I'd been in Sheffield, often sitting at the 4th floor window of a city centre apartment, watching the coming and going of people and traffic down below as I wrote, observing the tidal rhythms and demographic layers of the city reveal themselves as waves of workers and floods of shoppers and occasional schoolkids, as well as via the strange micro ebbs and flows of the street homeless.

Living in the centre temporarily it was these last that grabbed my attention, vastly outnumbered by the other inhabitants and

moving in a rhythm slower than the rest, it took me some time to tune precisely to the presence of the homeless. Paradoxical perhaps, because whilst the shoppers and workers came and went, the homeless were there the whole time – 'invisible' in the normal course of things, their figures camouflaged by virtue of their scattered positions in the city and their relative stasis in doorways and on benches. But as time passed, and especially in the times that the city centre was emptied – early morning and evening, as well as late night – they were more and more visible to me, the streets emptying around them, exposed like beach detritus at low tide, their figures in relief against the 1990s mall kitsch and refurbished older buildings now facaded and repurposed as shops.

Before long I'd got to know the specific locations and rhythms of the homeless around the place I stayed; the old guy always sat at this bench or that, or those two whose patch was by the cashpoints/ATMS, or the ones in the scrawny park by the department store. I was there to witness the drink-fuelled disputes about who knows what as well as the occasional changing of the guard at certain spots deemed most suitable for begging and the infrequent enforced or voluntary migrations from one base to another – the transportation of cardboard mattresses or sleeping bags to some new doorway resting place.

I was thinking about the precariousness of this outside existence, a faint abject thread drawn through the city's official quotidian, and I was thinking about the Taiwanese American artist Tehching Hsieh, whose singular, ephemeral yet monumental year-long performances in the early 1980s have long been an

inspiration and a touchstone for me. In particular I was thinking about Hsieh's extraordinary 1981 "One Year Performance" often referred to as the "Outdoor" performance. Here is his statement announcing the performance that year:

Statement

"I, Tehching Hsieh, plan to do a one-year performance piece. I shall stay OUTDOORS for one year, never go inside. I shall not go into a building, subway, train, car, airplane, ship, cave, tent. I shall have a sleeping bag. The performance shall begin on September 26 1981 at 2pm and shall continue until September 26 1982 at 2pm."

Tehching Hsieh, New York

What interested me was the way that Hsieh's work propelled him, on a voluntary basis, into the kind of precarity that typically comes to others without choice. Hsieh's material and philosophical commitment to outside-ness existed in one sense as a kind of fragile and perilous performative counter weight to the city of New York, with its dedicated and relentless growth and maximal production of indoor (and therefore monetizable) space.

The voluntary abjection of Hsieh's one-year "Outdoor Piece" (1981–82), like the turn at the heart of his other seminal one-year duration works of more or less the same period – the elective incarceration of the "Cage Piece" (1978–79), the self imposed extreme temporal subjugation of the "Time-Clock Piece" (1980–81), and the voluntary heightened reliance on/entanglement with another in the "Rope Piece" (collaboration with Linda Montano 1983–84) – each performing and amplifying an existing set of tensions or possibilities in human culture, and in the process making visible fault lines and dynamics already present and deeply at play. To live without shelter, outside of built space and the aspects of culture it organises, placed Hsieh – in any case an immigrant outsider, living in the first place without a US visa – in a state of elemental fragility, exposure and vulnerability.


Watching the short black and white film which documents Hsieh's "Outdoor Piece" and looking at the archive maps on which he recorded his daily pedestrian journeys alongside an itemization of food expenditure and bowel movements, I was looping back to think again about the trajectories of the Sheffield homeless and the critique offered implicitly by these acts (involuntary and voluntary) of existence outside – about counterpoint and negation, about the distorted reflection on the shelter, privilege and security of the majority that is offered by the presence of the minority, outside.

Of course, in Charmatz's terrain project the notion of 'outside' comes with a raft of other very different inflections – some distance perhaps from the plunge to precarious scavenging and abjection in urban space there is instead a utopian aspect

imagined in this other outside – a promise of a greater, more sustainable connection to nature and natural forces, and an enhanced sensitivity to the modes and rhythms of nature itself; a call for a human existence pursued in balance with the natural world and against the breakneck escalation of building and material culture.

And of course, from these Corona times, Hsieh's work looks different again, the blankness of its key documents (maps, traces, photographs and other singular evidences) presenting it, as ever, as a kind of Rorschach test, generating new interpretations and associations as the context around it changes. In the new reality of Corona the outside that Hsieh chose to inhabit is after all sometimes the safest space; the place where air blows, circulates breath and disperses the virus, minimizing the possibility of infection, the place where the sun shines, killing the virus as it rests on surfaces. Hsieh's isolated figure in the outdoor piece is a doubly distanced one too, existing at edges of the networks of the social/industrial economy and more-or-less outside the networks of viral transmission.

Nonetheless, outside always opens the human body as vulnerable and fragile. Indeed even as the urban outside has changed between 1980 and now – less rough or unclaimed space, more gentrified, more weaponised against illegitimate occupation – it still always contains the possibility of abjection. But at the same time it also throws a question – as Hsieh did – to the orthodoxies of our interactions with the outdoor environment, refocusing attention on the elemental struggles and possibilities of body in landscape, the human and radical potential of one-to-one scale relation and the opportunities for existence and relation pursued outside the theatrical frames of architecture, the machineries of labour and the constructions of the domestic social.

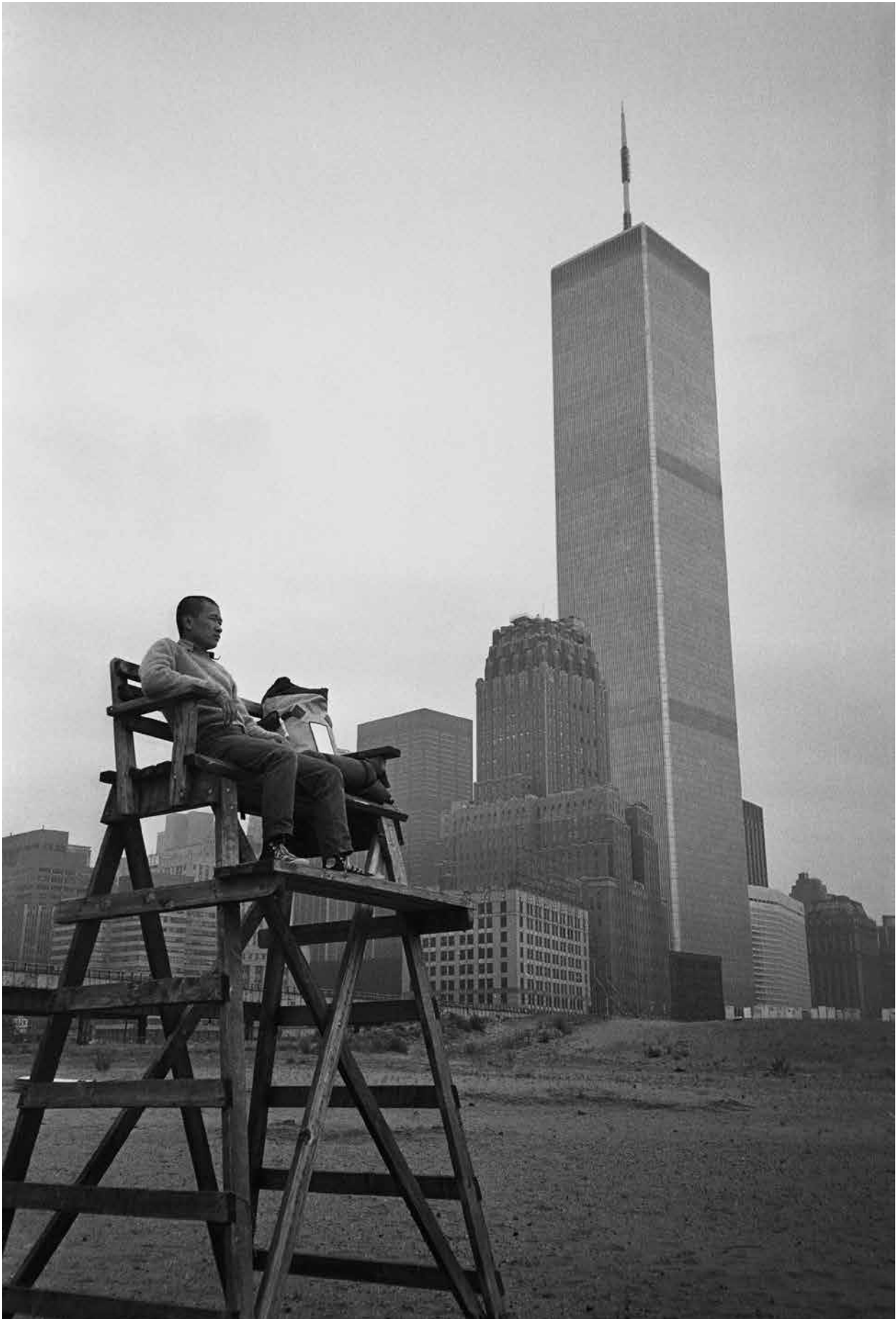
What might another way be? 

Tim Etchells, London (in lockdown isolation), 2020.

1 **Boris Charmatz | terrain**
Un essai à ciel ouvert. Ein Tanzgrund für Zürich.
Symposium: An Architecture of Bodies
 With Germaine Acogny & Helmut Vogt, Boris Charmatz, Françoise Crémel, Tim Etchells, Malika Khatir, Boris Ondrejčka, Richard Sennett and Philip Ursprung.
 Moderation Meret Ernst, Murielle Perritaz and Matthias von Hartz.

Zürcher Theater Spektakel, August 23, 2019
<http://2019.theaterspektakel.ch/programm19/produktion/terrain-boris-charmatz/>

Tehching Hsieh, One Year Performance 1981-1982, Life Image © 1982 Tehching Hsieh





So Much Life

**The dancer and choreographer
Louise Lecavalier in conversation**

Text: Melanie Suchy

What this world-famous Canadian dance artist does on stage is impossible to categorise within the genre of contemporary dance. It's her. It's like a mixture of entirely present, entirely real, and yet the ghost of another reality. Lecavalier's career as a dancer goes back to the 1980s, when she was a member of Édouard Lock's company La La La Human Steps. Today she's her own boss.

It's true: she speaks as fast as she dances. With emphasis, clear sentences, sometimes a slight hesitancy, new starts, lots of 'because's. For the interview she appears on the screen with windswept hair, wide awake. It's morning in Montréal, afternoon in Europe. The cancellation of all performances because of the pandemic came at precisely the wrong moment, she says. Being compelled to stay at home wouldn't have been so bad a year ago, when she was working on her new piece. But "Stations" had just been completed. It premiered in Düsseldorf, then showed in Münster and Dresden. The rest of the tour, into the summer, including Berlin, is off. But she can't simply begin the next piece early, because the dancer she plans to work with can't travel. Louise Lecavalier sighs, but doesn't complain.

"It was like an addiction, having to carry on dancing!"

So she went to the studio every day and rehearsed the solo. "It was like an addiction, having to carry on dancing!" After a while all the rehearsing didn't seem to make sense any more, so she just trained.

Louise Lecavalier was born in 1958 and grew up in Montréal. Like many girls she was taken to ballet school at the age of four or five. But having to wear a black leotard and submit to being tugged at to see if she was suitable put little Louise off so much that without having danced a single step she never wanted to go back. Only at aged fifteen did a sign on a bus stop draw her back to ballet class. The friend she went with found everything easy: standing at the barre, leg forward, leg back. Yet in the more experienced dancers Louise saw "these fascinating possibilities of the human body", the extraordinary complexity in even apparently simple exercises. "I knew that I knew nothing at all." But she wanted to know, absolutely.

"Dedicated"

During the CEGEP, which precedes university, she joined a small dance group in which guest teachers choreographed contemporary dance. Its way of thinking, says Louise, excited her more than that of ballet, which she primarily appreciated

for its 'technique for intelligent bodies'. Her first professional appearance took place as a substitute dancer in a new company. Because she wanted to become a sports teacher, she enrolled at the university, went for one day and then never again. Instead she signed a one-year contract with the dance company. She went to study in New York, "then Édouard Lock called me". One thing led to another. "I always thought, I'll dance for a year, then I'll do something else." A dance career? No, "I wasn't at all convinced of myself." She laughs..

Never enough

The fascination with dance technique remained. She wanted to work on it all the time. Because, as she felt, it was neglected by the typically contemporary research into 'ideas'. There was the expectation that a dancer would at some point be able simply to be "their own beautiful self" on stage, and that would be enough. It wasn't enough for Louise. But now: "At this point in my life I think, aha, there's something else." The discipline of hard training is perhaps so ingrained in her body that she doesn't need to worry about it or have to put continual movement on stage.

She never wanted to stick to any one thing she had learned. And she wanted to trust. "To learn, you need to trust and be less fearful." Though she isn't totally serene: "I can become very dramatic, and I have my own personal fears. I work on them all the time." She's less affected by dangers from outside.

Her movement vocabulary avoids the chic, elegant or everyday. It's more like fighting: thrusting, lunging, evading, coaxing.

This one can see in her dance pieces. At first she had other people to choreograph for her, including Crystal Pite and Benoît Lachambre, whose double bill of "Lone Epic" and "I is memory" was shown in Berlin in 2006. Since 2012 she has created her own choreographies, solos and duets. They can't easily be decoded, which is one of their qualities. Her movement vocabulary avoids the chic, elegant or everyday. It's more like fighting: thrusting, lunging, evading, coaxing. At times you can place it, but never anticipate where it goes. Something is always shifting, along with the recognisability (or not) of an opponent. Tension is release in the fluttering of a hand, the wobble of a lower leg, but never completely, so the drive never dies away. This dancer-choreographer doesn't put exhaustion on show, like many others. She uses light to mark out lines or areas, a back panel or chromatically changing columns to provide orientation or confine energy like cutting or calming rocks against the dance wave.

Tumult

During her first few years as a dancer Louise Lecavalier felt she lacked "the right body and the necessary beauty". None of

her efforts to attain these and to “be like the others” had any success. Until she realised that “I have to trust the dance I feel within me. With this I can also speak to other people.” The same way as building up any other relationship. And so she left the security of her company contract.

In 1999 she again resigned from a company, after eighteen years with La La La Human Steps. The ensemble had expanded and gone in the direction of ballet. Lecavalier felt “incomplete” in what had become a very organised apparatus. Enough. “I was naive enough to believe I could start over. Like a child.” She loved Édouard Lock’s work, she says. What she doesn’t say is that she was loved for her contribution to it, for her performances, energy, punkiness, tempo, for throwing her body into the air and her horizontal spin. “She was my heroine”, raves one of her fans from the mid-80s, Stefan Schwarz. As programme director of the Tanzhaus NRW he has made sure that Lecavalier has been able to premiere her pieces in Düsseldorf since “So Blue” in 2012.

Not least among her achievements has been to extend the reach of contemporary dance, as her projects with Lock were seen by audiences in the thousands: the performances with David Bowie in 1988 and on his world tour in 1990, and in Frank Zappa’s orchestral concert “The Yellow Shark”, with the Ensemble Modern, which went to Frankfurt am Main, Berlin and Vienna in 1992.

Beautiful demons

Louise Lecavalier has won many awards. At one ceremony, in 2017, she described herself as a dance worker. Then, she says today, she thought it was only “hard, hard work” in the studio that made her what she was. In the meantime she sees herself as a performer and feels hardly any different in the studio than she does on stage. This state, in which she tries to link or refine

movement phrases in rehearsal, is very similar to that of a performance.

“Dance is my thinking. My thoughts are in my head, but also in my fingers.”

And then she dances these incredibly quick small steps, arms in the air – blink and you’ll miss them – crossing, vibrating, touching, releasing, like a live wire, charged with energy that’s both familiar and eerie, that makes her crawl and then hover. So where does the movement come from? “I’m a mind dancer. Dance is my thinking. My thoughts are in my head, but also in my fingers. I hope that after all these years of dancing my thoughts and my impressions of the world move quite freely in my body.” It’s like speaking. “Every part of the body will speak, not just the hands but everything.”

Between holding on and flying free

Louise Lecavalier says she always wanted to call a piece “Stations” [which is now the name of her latest solo –ed.] for a long time. But “So Blue” (2012), her first choreography, was too blue and melancholic. Then “Battleground” (2016) was a struggle. With every creation she finds an idea to work through, and after five minutes, “boom”, there’s the next. They should actually be stations: here, then there and there. “But it never works out that way! Because things connect. One dance brings me to the next station, so it becomes a journey.” This time she didn’t want to have nine or ten sections, as in the previous pieces, but only four longer ones. But she got into the connection trap again, although, as she observes, the worlds her choreography explores need ends.

The term ‘station’, she says, also reminds her of the Stations of the Cross, each one of which has a certain aura and stands for a particular moment in a story. Or of space stations: “There’s movement there.”

“Death is very present in my life”

If bearing a child is one of life’s important stations – Lecavalier had twins – then what about death? Louise pauses. “I don’t know yet.” She laughs. “Death has always been close, since my birth. Perhaps that’s why I’m so alive. She expresses surprise about a recent interviewer who had never lost a relative. “You can get to fifty without losing parents, a brother, lover, best friend or teacher?”

And age? She’s only really noticing it now, during lockdown. “Oh, I’m sixty-one. Okay, that’s not so old. Nothing dramatic. But I’m not twenty-five.” She won’t be ab-



“Stations” © Dieter Wuschanski, 2020



Louise Lecavalier | Michael Dolan, Choreography: Édouard Lock, La La La Human Steps © Wolfgang Kirchner, 1995

le to go on dancing like this for ever. “For me it’s a gift to be able to physically get through a performance.” Her next piece might be different. But perhaps not. “I do what I have to do. I follow my inner movement”, is how Louise Lecavalier describes her studio work. So this new piece became quite different from its predecessor, much more exhausting than “So Blue” before it. From the necessity of movement, and what had to be said.

What remains to be said

She was always a keen reader: books with philosophical depth and “intellectual intensity”, such as those of Italo Calvino. Sylvain Tesson and the anthropologist Serge Bouchard echoed her worries about the environment and people’s treatment of one another. Which is why she made a solo, “Stations”. Not about a relationship to anyone, but about one’s own place in the world. 🗡️

Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.

Louise Lecavalier | Meet the Artist
Louise Lecavalier – In Motion | film
28.8., 22:00 | 102min | Online



Love, Labor, Loop

(Objects) Life according to Geumhyung Jeong

Text: Eylül Fidan Akıncı

The history of puppetry is full of supernatural bodies that represent their quest of coming to life and gaining autonomy from their masters. The performance of a puppet often reflects on its condition of existence. How does a random object become a lively body on stage? This question invigorates South Korean artist Geumhyung Jeong's body of work.

Geumhyung Jeong extends the possibilities of puppetry by choreographing her entire body as her animation technique. In Jeong's exploration of animacy, this stage life of the object always already involves intimacy and sensuality. She crafts and manipulates her performing objects that range from simple masks to dummies to machines, embraced carnally with them in the double entendre of playing with control. Reflecting on the six performances Jeong created between 2008 and 2019, I am repeatedly reminded that there is no anima, no life, and no agency devoid of sexual being.

Love

In her first evening-length work "7ways" [presented at Tanz im August in 2014 --Ed.], Jeong creates makeshift puppet forms with simple objects and household items on stage. She attaches masks, mannequin parts, and large pieces of fabric on her body or on machines to bring to life a series of supernatural figures with distinct anatomies and characteristic movements. In a series of assemblages that consist of Jeong's body parts with objects, we see vignettes of sensual encounters between these

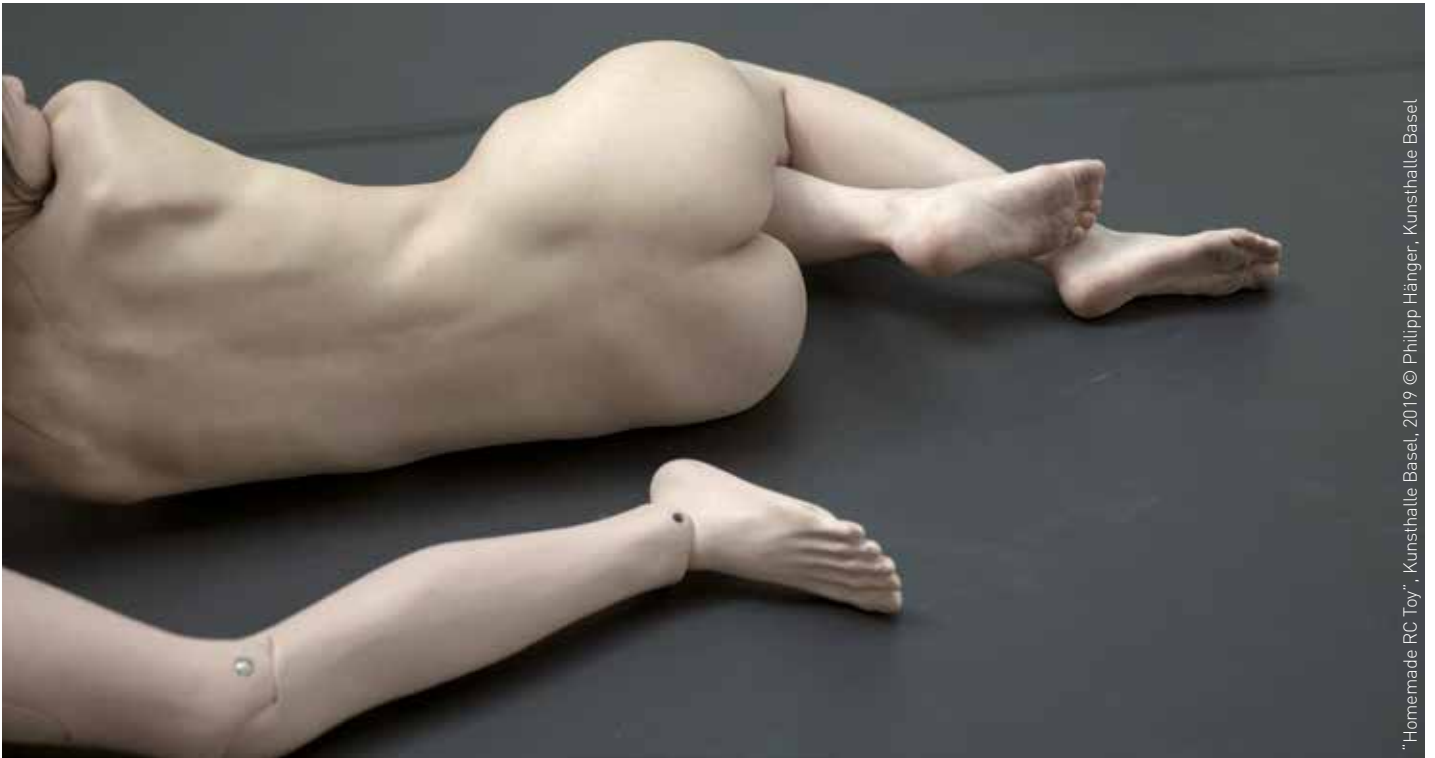
unearthly creatures and Jeong, who at times appears inert or utterly distant herself. Without ventriloquism or any other story line, what makes these multifarious characters come to being convincingly is the choreographic expression of their sexual appetites, delivered by the unique movement quality Jeong explores with them.

Some of these horny figures make an appearance in the videos of "Oil Pressure Vibrator" (2008), Jeong's subsequent stage work. In this lecture-performance, Jeong recounts her quest for sexual independence, which culminates in a love affair with a hydraulic excavator. Her lecture is entirely supported by the video clips she plays on her laptop, and with no performing object on stage except for a toy excavator. However, the performance does double duty as Jeong's manifesto of puppetry: The videos show her backstage process of making and animating the materials from "7ways", presented in her narrative as her sexual partners before the excavator. Next, in the challenging path to consummate her love with a real excavator, her certification process to operate the engine is chronicled as a choreographic mission for her body to become one with the machine. Despite this apparently personal narrative, the way Jeong conducts her video clips in her lecture is as precise and depersonalized as classical puppetry.

Jeong irreverently reformulates what sexuality, or being sexual subject-object, could mean and look like.

"7ways" and "Oil Pressure Vibrator" lay out how objects can move to conjure their incarnation, which translates to their expression of an alien kind of sexuality. Jeong's collaborators





“Homemade FC Toy”, Kunsthalle Basel, 2019 © Philipp Hänger, Kunsthalle Basel

on stage do not represent or move in human or animal likeness. Indeed, her later work “Fitness Guide” (2011) follows with her investigation on how to pervert the contradictions of human embodiment through machines. Exemplified in her swaying rhythm on an elliptical trainer, Jeong’s work-out with the exercise machines, some of which are modified with human heads, seems more like making out. But the choreographic assemblages Jeong generates with objects or machines always manage to mock human anatomy, genitality, or gender roles, sometimes all at once. Jeong irreverently reformulates what sexuality, or being sexual subject-object, could mean and look like. Over and over again, in the most reserved aesthetics of obsession possible.

Labor

Or maybe, the obsession is ours, in the audience’s ways of seeing. If in her early works Jeong’s fantastical assemblages of machines, objects, and body parts explore sexual autonomy, in her later and more ‘medically oriented’ pieces “CPR Practice” (2013) and “Rehab Training” (2015) she troubles the heteronormative politics of sexuality by playing with the audience’s sense of reality and illusion. “CPR Practice” opens with the foreplay between a woman and a male dummy, soon disrupted when the former realizes that her flaccid partner’s lack of response to her advances is due to not his apathy, but lack of breathing. Unfazed, Jeong employs a huge repertoire of tools and techniques to resuscitate the dummy—an automated external defibrillator, an electrocardiogram, numerous tubes for artificial ventilation. The choreographic programming of this singular objective, the practice of bringing back to life, demands Jeong to rerun the steps with an increasing number of gadgets,

actions, and cacophonous signals. Bordering on physical comedy, the sense of failure builds up with each machine introduced to the resuscitation process, both on the lifesaver’s part in her breathless fatigue, and on the dummy’s part in his unrecoverable loss of desire/life.

Her score of commanding over another body increasingly appears to be a demanding choreography of taking-care.

“Rehab Training” takes these ambiguities between performing a drill, an adventurous masturbation, and an adrenalized sexual fantasy between two partners, and expands them over the detailed structure of a 160-minute-long rehabilitation operation. Jeong takes off from the acceptance that the animation of an object is an insurmountable problem, and explores what emerges when the perfect illusion of autonomous movement is abandoned. The physical therapy equipment and mobility aids that fill the performance space look like a super-sized string puppet theatre. The first two hours of the piece unfold as the slow process of getting the dummy on its feet to walk and making it use its upper body to solve simple manual tasks. What we actually see, however, is Jeong establishing the material conditions of these exercises, tying the dummy in harnesses, placing it in walking lifts, attaching rods and strings to its limbs one by one. While the dummy waits still, this extensive and exhaustingly elaborate labor of care imposes its own choreography on Jeong’s body. But the dummy gets more and more mobile, and its successful efforts get rewarded with Jeong’s lingering stares. For when life enters the dummy, as per Jeong’s performative theorizing of animation, so does sexual desire.

Jeong admits that once the animation is posited as a difficulty rather than a skilful execution, her task becomes precisely to create the performance of an imperfect movement. Throughout this complex choreographic task, the spectator's gaze oscillates between Jeong and the dummy. Her score of commanding over another body increasingly appears to be a demanding choreography of taking-care. The introduction of sexuality does not render the object into a fetish, since Jeong allows her labor of care to transform into the dummy's labor of love with Jeong as its object. Complicating our perception of life as the projection of desire and transference of consent onto things, "Rehab Training" locates sexual and corporeal agency somewhere in between objectification and labor for all parties involved, object or human, female or male. It demonstrates what animacy has in common with pleasure and power: it is truly in the middle, hanging at the center of that oscillating gaze and never landing on one singular, hegemonic entity.

Loop

Jeong's performance-installation "Homemade RC Toy" makes this understanding even more explicit. Commissioned by Kunsthalle Basel in 2019, "Homemade RC Toy" foregrounds Jeong as the maker of remote-controlled anthropomorphic machines. The eponymous toys are five quadruped assemblages of dummy parts, a basic computer, and an aluminum frame on wheels. Even without moving, their arms and legs over the floor evoke the sense that they are ready to get up or surge forward at any time. Nearby, their nuts and bolts are displayed on a splash view, accompanied by six single-channel videos that show Jeong working on a different step in their construction. The object and video installations of "Home-

made RC Toy" prime the viewer with the labor that goes into these DIY delights.

The live performance reveals the full range of how these dummy-machine hybrids move as Jeong, naked and lying on the floor like her toys, operates their controller buttons with her soft caresses. What looks like an odd foreplay between Jeong and the machines carries on while each toy is controlled by the signals of another. As these mutant automatons crawl closing down on her and move their limbs quite haphazardly, Jeong's play turns into a choreographic task of finding room for herself. Controller and controlled at the same time, all the bodies on the floor are overwhelmed in what could be the climax of this programmed orgy. In this single loop, the complexity of interactions between human and nonhuman is pared down, as are the chances of establishing a hierarchy.

Across the black box and the white cube, Jeong always takes time and layers her objects and practices through repetitions. Her collections – of dummies, sex toys, organ-like machine parts, home utensils, medical appliances, and grooming products that anticipate the fetishistic celebration of body and health – have been showcased in exhibitions across the world. Hybridizing installation and performance, Jeong's oeuvre is a self-reflexive and methodic investigation of moving-towards-movement, undertaken by her stage persona and her partners evenly, in rapture and on repeat. 🖱️

The full version of this essay appeared in the december 2019 issue of Belgian performing arts magazine Etcetera <https://e-tcetera.be/love-labor-loop/>



"Rehab Training", 2015 © Mingu Jeong

TAPPING THE THUMB AND INDEX FINGER OF THE RIGHT HAND TOGETHER,
SAY "POINT" ALOUD.

ALLOW THOSE FINGERTIPS TO REMAIN TOUCHING WHILE YOU REPEAT THE
ACTION WITH THE LEFT HAND,
AGAIN SAYING "POINT" ALOUD.

HOLDING BOTH SETS OF FINGERTIPS CLOSED,
SAY "LINE" ALOUD,
WHILE
MOVING THE TWO POINTS IN ANY DIRECTION DESIRED
AT ANY DISTANCE FROM EACH OTHER
IN ORDER TO
RE-POSITION OR RE-SCALE THE IMMATERIAL LINE.

RYBG

(MAY BE DONE WHILE WALKING / MAY BE DONE WHILE SITTING)

BEGIN WITH ONE SINGLE TAP ON THE LEFT HIP
WITH THE RIGHT HAND, WHILE
SIMULTANEOUSLY
SAYING THE WORD "RED" ALOUD.

FOLLOWED BY ONE SINGLE TAP ON THE RIGHT HIP
WITH THE LEFT HAND, WHILE
SIMULTANEOUSLY
SAYING THE WORD "YELLOW" ALOUD.

FOLLOWED BY ONE SINGLE TAP ON THE LEFT SHOULDER
WITH THE RIGHT HAND, WHILE
SIMULTANEOUSLY
SAYING THE WORD "BLUE" ALOUD.

FOLLOWED BY ONE SINGLE TAP ON THE RIGHT SHOULDER
WITH THE LEFT HAND, WHILE
SIMULTANEOUSLY
SAYING THE WORD "GREEN" ALOUD.

REPEAT THIS CYCLE OF TAPPING AND SPEAKING
FOUR TIMES

EXCEPT

THE SPOKEN COLORS
WILL ROTATE

ONE POSITION

WITH EACH NEW CYCLE

CYCLE ONE BEGINS WITH LEFT HIP / "RED" ...
CYCLE TWO BEGINS WITH LEFT HIP / "YELLOW" ...
ETC

WITHOUT THE USE OF THE ARMS LIE FLAT ON YOUR BACK

WITHOUT THE USE OF THE ARMS SIT UPRIGHT IN THIRTEEN COUNTS

WITHOUT THE USE OF THE ARMS DROP THE LEFT SHOULDER TO THE FLOOR
IN THIRTEEN COUNTS

KEEPING THE LEFT SHOULDER AND HIP STATIONARY ON THE FLOOR,
INCREASE THE ANGLE OF THE LEG TO TORSO TO ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DEGREES
IN THIRTY-ONE COUNTS WITHOUT THE USE OF THE ARMS

ARMS HELD AT THE SIDES

LOWER THE RIGHT SHOULDER FORWARD TO THE FLOOR IN THIRTEEN COUNTS

KEEPING THE ELBOWS BY THE RIBS, MOVE THE HANDS UNDER THE SHOULDERS
COUNTING ALOUD TO THIRTEEN

SLIDE THE KNEES TO THE ELBOWS WITHOUT THE USE OF THE ARMS AND THEN,
SLIDE THE HANDS ABOVE THE HEAD AS FAR AS POSSIBLE
UNTIL THE ANGLE OF FOOT TO THIGH TO TORSO TO WRIST
IS ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DEGREES
WHILE BARELY AUDIBLY COUNTING DOWN FROM THIRTY

FROM THIS POSITION

STAND UP IN THREE SECONDS

WITHOUT THE USE OF THE ARMS



Always Partici- patin

Faye Driscoll's "Thank You For Coming" Series

Text: Miriam Felton-Dansky

Any choreographer's work could offer an occasion for contemplating the strangeness of dance in summer 2020. For considering the agony – for anyone whose pre-Covid-19 life centered around live performance – of having artistic work available in every streaming and digital format, but unavailable in real, collective time and space. Yet not every choreographer could make a work that is both insistently itself and also a profound inquiry into the nature of all live performance. American choreographer Faye Driscoll already has.

Faye Driscoll's "Thank You For Coming" series, whose three performance works premiered between 2014 and 2019 (followed by a retrospective installation in spring 2020), make a case for the continued need to gather in space, watching live art together. They do this without essentializing performance: without suggesting dance or theater are always one way or never another, without romantically proposing that liveness is inherently more magical than screens, or that communal action in society necessarily follows from communal experience in live art. "Thank You For Coming" is political without superficial topicality, participatory without being coercive, and ritualistic without demanding spiritual allegiances of its audiences. Its component parts get audience members to move their bodies – in fact, they train us to do it.

Driscoll, who studied at New York University Tisch School of the Arts, came of age in a late-1990s American dance world where the artistic legacy of Judson Dance still dominated Yvonne Rainer's "No Manifesto", well-known for its rejection of emotion, spectacle, and the commodification of the dancer's pose, is one of the best-known articulations of the often-spare, utilitarian Judson aesthetic. Rainer was responding to a heritage of emotional, sensationalizing, and sometimes essentializing modern dance, and – as the scholar Carrie Lambert-Beatty has argued – was protesting the spectacularizing effects of Vietnam war photography and television footage¹. Rainer invited audience members to watch her, but not to sensationalize her body or its movement.

Driscoll's work doesn't sensationalize either, but it is highly interested in sensation and in exploring a wide and sometimes maximalist emotional palette. As a young artist, she loved the work of theatermakers like director Richard Foreman, famous for his sensory-overload design, fracturing of performance time, and his use of emotion to investigate consciousness rather than tell conventional stories. Driscoll's dance works often revel in the intersection of old-fashioned theatrical elements and queer aesthetics – wigs, costume changes, exaggerated poses – in combination with precise movement and more open-ended explorations that gesture to the history of performance art (in her 2012 duet "You're Me", for instance, she and her dance partner smear messy, multicolored paint on their bodies)². Driscoll's engagement with theater has also taken the form of choreographing movement for theatrical work: she has choreographed for the writer/performer Taylor Mac and has a longstanding collaboration with playwright/director Young Jean Lee, both on and off Broadway. The last two decades of New York-based performance have witnessed a flourishing of interdisciplinary dance/theater work, and Driscoll is a leader in merging and mediating these disciplines, speaking eloquently to and within both.

"Thank You For Coming" (TYFC) is a masterwork that searches deeply for the nature and necessity of live interaction between performers and their audiences. Its first installment, "TYFC: Attendance", is an assessment of what cooperation between performers and spectators can look like, and – as Driscoll expressed to me in a conversation – asks whether collective joy can still be acceptable, even desirable, in radical and progressive politics and spaces that are often focused on critique. The performance begins with a careful accounting of each audience member, as box office staff write down our first names. I assumed this was an administrative necessity, until the dancers



"Thank You For Coming: Attendance" © Maria Baranova



"Thank You For Coming: Space" © Maria Baranova

began singing our names as part of a song celebrating our attendance – a song that is joyful, appreciative, and necessarily different every night.

"TYFC: Attendance" testifies to Driscoll's accomplished merging of abstraction with clearly representational form. Standing on a central platform with spectators sprawled on the floor, the dancers hold each other's bodies, mutating as an amorphous mass. Arms and legs tangle together, the collection of bodies stretch and lean precipitously towards the audience, then into us. We find dancers on our laps, rolling comfortably on our legs. Then, having left the platform, the dancers strip off its canvas top to expose a collection of benches, which they push apart, revealing Driscoll herself beneath. Is her presence under the platform a metaphor for her role in the performance: holding structure for the dancers' mutating shapes, then dispersing them into the more theatrically recognizable interactions that follow? (Maybe – Driscoll offers meaning in multiple dimensions, and always as an invitation, not a command.) Eventually, spectators are invited to join a joyous maypole-style dance, holding ribbons that stream and tangle in the air.

*"Do you know who I am?" inquires a portion of the audience in unison.
"No, but I'm glad we met!"*

"Thank You For Coming: Play" interrogates the process and structures of theatrical dialogue and story, freed from long-

form narrative and celebrated on their own terms. The piece begins with micro-exchanges in the form of audience call-and-response led by Driscoll and her performers. "Do you know who I am?" inquires a portion of the audience in unison. "No, but I'm glad we met!" choruses another group good-naturedly. Other exchanges, filled with feeling and free of backstory, follow. Later, the white flats behind the performers are reconfigured into a kind of miniature theater set, with two wings and an upstage wall, framing a series of tiny dramas that are exaggerated dialogues with wry, deliberate incongruity between choreography, costume, and story. The work is deceptively casual; it would be easy to mistake Driscoll's precisely arranged words, their lack of literal correspondence to the dancers' movements, and the profusion of brightly-colored fringe, wigs, and bikini tops, for undisciplined improvisation or rehearsal-style play. It is play – but the most highly disciplined kind, because it is play that interrogates why we engage with one another, what participation in live performance requires and means. ("TYFC: Play" had its New York premiere shortly after Donald Trump was elected president in 2016, at a moment when rethinking participation and engagement had suddenly become urgently necessary.)

"Thank You for Coming: Space", which premiered in 2019 at Montclair State University's Alexander Kasser Theater, is a solo of sorts, performed by Driscoll with the assistance of audience members. A pulley system threads its way through the upper reaches of the white playing space, and an assortment of props dangle from ropes – a lemon, a sheaf of branches, small sandbags. (Artists Nick Vaughan and Jake Margolin did the visual

design for the entire trilogy, as well as for “Come On In”, the installation that followed.) “TYFC: Space”, like “Attendance” and “Play”, is a secular ritual, focused this time on absence and death, both the collective and abstract experience of grief (a contrast to the ecstatic “Attendance”), and, as we learn in the last portion of the piece, an expression of personal loss. Spectators assist Driscoll in creating rhythms – hands patter on thighs, sandbags smack the floor, Driscoll roars and keens into a microphone, then reiterates the sounds using a loop pedal. She eases her body into positions of death, suggested by art-historical imagery pinned to the floor and walls along the theater entrance. Finally, she enters a sort of shrine to a dead parent, holding up a hairbrush, a medicine bottle, memorializing the smallest and most personal detritus of a life.

As Driscoll pointed out to me, the series narrows down the number of people in the room until, in the final portion – the installation mounted at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis this spring – the spectator is left alone. “Come On In” is a true retrospective that demands somatic as well as aesthetic memory, even if it’s the memory of an event that the gallery-goer never attended. The visitor enters a softly-lit, plush-carpeted gallery fitted with boxes the size of beds, upholstered in soft white canvas. Fitting headphones over her ears, she hears Driscoll’s voice inviting her to slow down, to assume gentle poses, moving her body as she hears phrases and incantations from all three performance pieces in the trilogy. The installation (now partially available as a digital experience through the Walker’s website) uses the visitor’s body as the primary exhibit: something to experience, and something for other visitors to see. In a recent interview filmed by the Walker, Driscoll sug-

gests that participants might appear to one another like “glimmers of live sculptures.”³

All three installments of the trilogy begin by celebrating what is often obvious and invisible in live performance: that we’ve come together, in a space, to look and perhaps even touch. (“We are always participating in this world, whether we acknowledge that or feel that or want that,” Driscoll says in the Walker interview.)⁴ “Attendance” begins with a sung-through curtain speech, fire exit information and other practicalities set to gorgeous melody. “Play” opens with the acknowledgment, by performers, that spectators might not know them personally, but have come to see them all the same. And “Space” begins with a long benediction, a curtain speech in which Driscoll welcomes us to the theater and imagines all that it might have taken us to arrive there: how we might have planned our evening, purchased a ticket, boarded a bus or parked in a parking lot. These long introductions remind us that we are witnessing a live event, ask us not to take for granted our access to transportation, to the chair we sit on and the lights illuminating the space. Now that we have no access to such experiences, perhaps we’ll experience gratitude for them afresh. In the meantime, we have Driscoll’s work to remind us why they matter, the memory of her performances, and the promise of performances to come. 📌

Faye Driscoll | Meet the Artist
Guided Choreography for the Living and the Dead #7
 audio choreography | 28.8., 20:30 | 13min | Online
 → Followed by Artist Talk

- 1 Carrie Lambert-Beatty, “Moving Still: Mediating Yvonne Rainer’s Trio A,” October, Vol. 89 (Summer 1999), 87–112.
- 2 I am grateful to Driscoll for offering this context in conversation and over email to me.
- 3 Faye Driscoll in Miriam Felton-Dansky, “Thank You for Coming: Faye Driscoll on Participation, Performance, and Community,” Walker Reader, <https://walkerart.org/magazine/watch-faye-driscoll-artspeaks>, accessed June 21, 2020.
- 4 Faye Driscoll in Miriam Felton-Dansky, “Thank You for Coming: Faye Driscoll on Participation, Performance, and Community.”



View of the exhibition “Faye Driscoll: Come On In”, Walker Art Center, 2020 © Bobby Rogers, Walker Art Center

Bodies as Evidence

Arkadi Zaides on his research, people on the move, and brutally closed borders

Interview: Sandra Noeth



“NECROPOLIS”, city of the dead, is the title of Arkadi Zaides' new work. With this research-based performance, the Belarus-born Israeli choreographer once again looks at the role played by bodies in current crises – from the movements of migrants and borders to debates around state violence. Between artistic, activist and deeply personal perspectives, Zaides deals with the blind spots and gaps in our own and collective narratives, and with how choreography can be effective outside the theatre as a documentary and symbolic practice.

Sandra Noeth: *You often work in networks with artists and experts from different fields. How was this with “NECROPOLIS”?*

Arkadi Zaides: Many of my projects start without an already fixed group and develop over an extended period of time. A friend brings a friend, as a Hebrew saying goes. I initiated “NECROPOLIS”, and the first person I invited to collaborate with me was the dramaturge Igor Dobricic, who then invited the choreographer and researcher Emma Gioia. The working process continually throws up new aspects, and together we think about who to bring in next. This way of working is also a critical response to the field of art itself, where funding applications sometimes expect anticipated results. I have a lot of resistance to this kind of approach, especially when we're dealing with a subject matter in which a large role is played by indications and assumptions, in which you immerse yourself in the material and gradually develop a specific kind of experience.

SN: *“NECROPOLIS” is both an artistic and a political, activist project. Why is it important*

to continue to locate the work in the field of contemporary dance and choreography?

AZ: That's an important question, and it's a challenge that was also there in “Talos”. Movement is the primary starting point of the research – movements of people who are systematically and brutally stopped by border policies. This is about thousands of bodies that are absent, silenced, drowned. It's about a collective body, haunting us. Another aspect lies in the material itself, in a gesture performed by all of us involved in the project “NECROPOLIS”, and I'd like to call this a choreographic gesture. Wherever we are, we scroll through the list put out by UNITED for Intercultural Action – a network of hundreds of anti-racist organisations in Europe, and one of our central sources of data – and there or nearby, like now in Berlin, we try to find the burial places of migrants and undocumented asylum-seekers who couldn't reach Europe alive.

Once we have found out where the bodies were disposed of, we visit the graves and perform a ritual according to a fixed choreographic protocol.

It's a long and demanding process, as this information is usually difficult to access. Once we have found out where the bodies were disposed of, we visit the graves and perform a ritual according to a fixed choreographic protocol. This is documented and becomes part of a virtual map that is coming about as a part of “NECROPOLIS”. So various levels come together here: the idea of a ‘danse macabre’, a dance of the dead; the choreography of the researchers, who seek and walk, sometimes carrying out very personal rituals; and that of the audience in the theatre, whose gaze is choreographed and who themselves become part of a tragedy by looking at it. It's also about influencing the field of choreography itself, bringing in concepts and ways of thinking and working from other areas. And other kinds of perception, and also a

certain vulnerability that emerges when you're involved with ritual. It also raises questions too: who has the privilege of doing this kind of work, and who has the opportunity to see it?

How can I work with such material without being completely overwhelmed by its complexity?

SN: *A complex field of tension between art, human-rights activism and the culture of remembrance is opened up in the attempt to achieve a social aim from within the field of art. In your earlier works – “Archive”, for example – embodiment and empathy played an important role in actively involving the audience in your research, and also as a challenge.*

AZ: At the moment we're thinking a lot about the role of the audience, particularly because the choreographic aspect of “NECROPOLIS” can perhaps only be experienced through participation in the project. The credits already contain a long list of names – people who have carried out the ritual themselves and have therefore extended our archive and started to think along with the project and act. The aim is to make a symbolic protocol available to the audience, without being moralistic or judgmental – as Igor was always saying. The crucial moment is the decision to carry out a symbolic gesture. Of course, this doesn't bring the dead back to life, but it's a movement towards the ones who lost their lives. But the question of empathy also concerns me very directly: how can I work with such material without being completely overwhelmed by its complexity? And at the same time: ‘how can I leave it as it is?’

SN: *This form of jointly dealing with questions of responsibility recalls the Greek theatre as a public forum where politics were discussed and formed. And central to your earlier projects, such as “Talos” or “Violence of Inscriptions”, was the question of how marginalised and structurally excluded bodies and voices*

could be seen and experienced through artistic practice.

AZ: In those projects I looked at the real experiences of violence and borders, and brought it into the field of art. In "NECROPOLIS" we're extending that and trying to give something back to reality: to the audience, perhaps to families looking for relatives. The question is how artistic work can be effective outside the economy of the theatre.

SN: *What are we going to see at Tanz im August 2020?*

AZ: In this performance we activate and share our archive – the various materials we have collected and compiled – live and online: data, maps, videos, gestures, film and satellite photographs, documentation of the walks to the graves and other performance elements that all affect one another and perhaps break conventions. They express the horror of the missing bodies. Bodies that were lost at sea for weeks, dead bodies, body parts...

SN: *Where does the role of the artist and research reach its limits?*

AZ: The question of the value of a symbolic gesture is always coming up. And the question of the temporality of "NECROPOLIS". The project has no clear beginning or end. There are always local cases in the various places we visit and work. Every performance will be different and will update the research and the archive. It doesn't stop, because this kind of killing doesn't stop and will probably escalate. 🗡️

Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.

Arkadi Zaides | Meet the Artist
NECROPOLIS | performance | work in progress
26.8., 20:30 | 60min | Online
→ Followed by Artist Talk







A SURREAL STORM

Marcos Morau's Escape from Reality

Text: Carmina Sanchis

The twentieth-century revolutionary and avant-garde filmmaker Luis Buñuel has always been a great inspiration for Spanish choreographer Marcos Morau. With “Sonoma”, for his company La Veronal, he continues to pay tribute to the iconic surrealist. Carmina Sanchis, Morau's dramaturge, author, adviser and friend on their collective artistic process and Buñuel's vision.

Imagine that reality is not enough, its forms weary you, its rigidity crushes you and its boundaries pen you in. And one day a light begins to grow inside you, a murmur, a language you still do not understand but that is trying all it can to be heard. Imagine that this voice is joined by other voices, other sounds, intensifying until they become shouts, screams, a resounding roar, an endless storm.

“Sonoma” always began with a shout. And although it started growing years ago, as a short piece intended for Ballet de Lorraine entitled *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, it persisted in the imagination of director Marcos Morau, expanding in the background while other pieces were being composed, between many journeys, cities, hotel rooms and sleepless nights. Perhaps because he carried on listening to the shout and needed to give it shape. “The figure of Buñuel kept coming back to mind. I never entirely understand it. It seemed to be walking a step ahead of everything else. Perhaps it’s my way of looking for rootstock, searching for examples, groping around – even if it’s only a bit of me – for things to create.”

When Marcos mentioned “Sonoma” to me just a few months ago, Buñuel and his universe were still at work. The piece has been fermenting in his head all that time, but it was only when we sat down to describe its true character that we realised the different dimensions and readings it could end up with. “Sonoma” was going to be a hard place to reach, a site accessed through the imagination, a space where every convention would have to be stripped away and everything resignified, a battle to escape reality. It was a chance to talk about creativity and at the same time a way of being in the world, of surviving the world.

The project took off in circumstances I could never have foreseen. If “Sonoma” was about escaping reality, the reality that was unfolding in the streets was way more powerful than our role as creators. You feel a bit expendable shut up at home when a struggle with death is literally raging outside your comfortable walls. We had to chip away at creating under lockdown without being sure the piece could ever be staged. “We are in a new situation that forces us to keep creating, so we can carry on believing the world will still need us when all this is over.”

Confined but communicating via email, WhatsApp or Zoom, Marcos coordinated the team’s work while all his jottings, sketches and ideas for “Sonoma” started to materialise. Those of us who know Marcos and have worked with him before are aware that everything can change overnight but also that every detail, every movement, every word and every colour are there for a reason.

Two months before the premiere, Barcelona went into phase 1 of lifting restrictions, and that meant we could start rehearsing. “Sonoma” also entered a new phase, now we had direct contact between the performers. That is the moment when it all comes together and you can see how the parts relate to each other. The movement, the words, the music, the costumes, the lighting and the props are no longer isolated components. Now each influences the other and that is when the skill and artistry of the director stand out.

“Sonoma” began as a shout and ended as a furious storm.

“Sonoma” began as a shout and ended as a furious storm. Amid it all, in a landscape somewhere between reality and fiction, a group of women try to cast off the shackles of the familiar, to transcend boundaries by drawing on their intuition and instinct. When they come together, that inner cry they share is amplified and grows until it spills out, and they celebrate it with rituals and offerings, with hypnotic song and dance. They enter an unknown, dizzying state, a state that frees their minds but at the same time reminds them of their human condition. Sonoma is the place where the storm originates, where the drums never stop beating with a force that causes the earth to tremble and carves a deep gash in the ground beneath our feet. 🗡️

Translated from Spanish by Lilian-Astrid Geese.

"Sonoma"

by Celso Giménez (La Tristura) and Carmina Sanchis

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven shall be theirs.

Blessed are those who weep, for they shall find solace.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be sated.

Blessed are the shipwrecked who believed in another world worth discovering.

Blessed are the blind, for they shall never see themselves grow old.

Blessed is the fruit of your belly.

Blessed are those who disappear, for wherever you are someone will be searching for you.

Blessed are those who survive war.

Those whose speeches change the course of history.

Blessed the one who drank from the right cup.

Those who believed we could fly to the moon.

The sounds of night in a forest.

The Galaxy, the planets and all the stars in the firmament.

Blessed are those who take strength from the sky, for the Earth takes strength from them.

Blessed are those who fear their birthplace, for only there can they hurt us.

Blessed is the beginning and all that begins.

Blessed be love and hate.

The ash of the battlefields.

And those who minted a new coin.

Those who were told no, then knew they were on the right path.

Blessed are those who could live in another time without falling apart.

Those who can light a fire.

And in it will burn their house and flag.

Blessed are you who left.

And those who turned around for a moment as you were going.

And those who came back to say one last thing.

Blessed are those who shine and those who explode.

Blessed the one who burst into life.

Blessed the one who feels righteous before the end.

And blessed the end.

And the clothes in which we dress the dead.

Blessed those who came to save the world.

And the creature hit by the bullet, hunted by the dog, devoured by the vulture.

Blessed are Sarajevo, Leningrad, Aleppo, Okinawa.

Blessed the weapons if they are words.

Blessed is hope.

Blessed are those who do not look away.

The sick, the mad, the blind, for they make a virtue of necessity.

Blessed the nobles who walk in the gardens of the kingdom hoping to see them burn.

Astronauts, science and religion.

Devotion, faith, blood and the laboratory.

The gorilla, the meteorite.

Adam and Eve.

Blessed are those of us who did not make the world like this.

Blessed be their name.

Those who see God in a speck of dust and in the immensity of the universe.

Those who lay flowers on the dead on whom no one lays flowers.

Those who will one day discover a cure for cancer.

The women forgotten by history books.

Those who taught a slave's child to read.

Blessed be the empty city.

Blessed the animals who came to the empty city thinking we were extinct.

Blessed be infinite time and life that draws to an end.

Blessed are those who do not find you but keep looking for you.

Blessed the animals of the Great Flood.

And dinosaurs.

And plagues.

And the wonders of the world that we destroyed.

And the wonders of the world that we will build again.

Blessed be only daughters.

Blessed those who wait at the edge of the cliff to stop children falling off.

Blessed the fall that will carry us to death.

And the fall that will restore us to life.

Blessed be the time we have left to live.



Listening In

**Brazilian choreographer Thiago Granato on the
politics of what we hear**

Interview: Beatrix Joyce

Before the pandemic hit, Thiago Granato was about to start working on a new piece, “The Sound They Make When No One Listens” to be premiered at Tanz im August this year. Beatrix Joyce talked with him about where he left off and how, in these times of physical distancing, his research into the act of listening has become ever more relevant.

Beatrix Joyce: *Thiago, for your new work you are focusing on different modes of listening. What triggered you to explore this topic?*

Thiago Granato: I consider listening to be a political act. As a Brazilian artist, I have seen Brazil undergo many positive democratic developments over the past 15 years, and then with Bolsonaro, everything changed. Now, the extreme right is a celebration of stupidity. The government loudly promotes hate speech and misinformation, which consequently results in a deterioration of the democratic system. In order to resist this catastrophic reality, I wish to create a choreography drawn from a more precise listening to the narratives of those minorities that, despite having a voice and political representation, are not usually taken into consideration when crucial decisions are made.

BJ: *Listening as a form of political representation?*

TG: Yes. In the West, we place a great deal of emphasis on speaking and on being heard but we don't learn to listen in the same way. The kind of listening that I'm talking about is mainly an act of recognition. It creates a space in which people expose themselves and recognise the existence of the other. And when one person claims this space, another cannot. But those who are talked over, those invisible people, or spaces, or movements, still exist. They are there, nurturing the system

as well. I am interested in exploring how the act of listening could support those not heard, how it could agitate social and political formations. It's about the agency of listening, and how it can transform situations and gather people. Instead of taking hearing as a passive action, what about taking it as an active practice? It can be a way to reach what's not in the field of visibility and to subvert the mechanisms of power that are already in place.

BJ: *The experience of listening implies the use of sound. In what way will you be working with sound?*

TG: My focus shifted to sound with my latest solo “Trrrr” (2018), where listening guided the experience of the audience. Now, I am again working with musician David Kiers and instead of making a sound design, we want to develop a ‘listening design’. That's what will guide the dramaturgy of the piece. And then together with the dancers, Arantxa Martinez and Roger Sala Reyner, and the light designer Claes Schwennen, we will work both with sounds produced by the body and sounds produced by the environment. We will experiment with different kinds of material, such as movement and text, singing and whispering... We will use sound combined with dance and lighting as a means to question how we connect and disconnect what we see from what we hear.

What would it be like to produce silence in noise?

BJ: *Will you also be working with silence?*

TG: When I first thought of listening, the first image that came to my mind was that of being in a state of reception, like when quietly contemplating a landscape. But how about we try to listen in an environment in which we are surrounded by images and interrupted all the time. So what would it be like to produce silence in noise? Or noise in silence? It's not about stopping all actions and listening in solitude, but rather about finding different modes of listening in the chaotic world we live in.

BJ: *Do you think that this deepened sense of awareness and active mode of listening can incite empathy?*

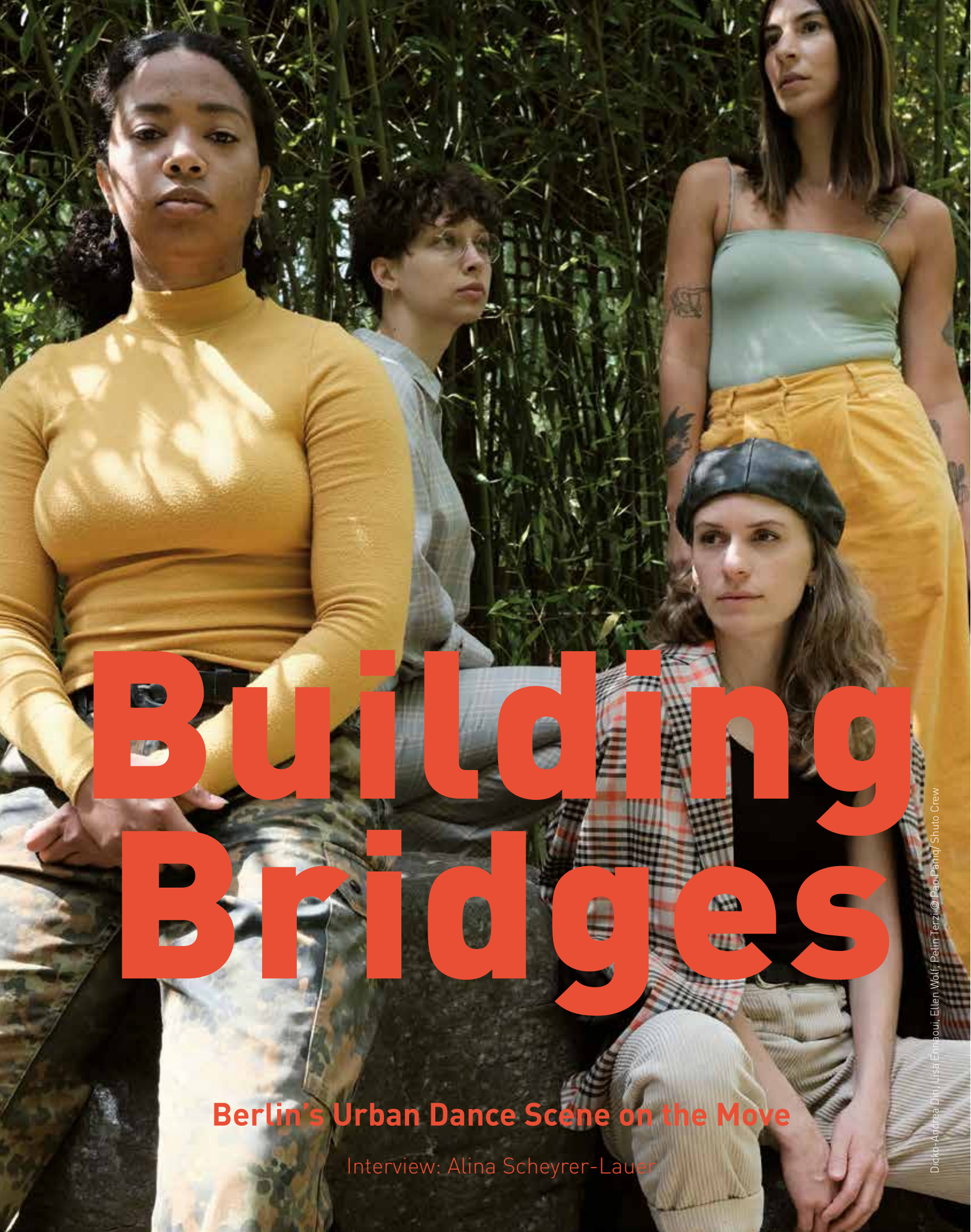
TG: The work is about making it possible to see from another's perspective, it's about trying to put yourself in someone else's position. And it's not only about empathising with other humans, but also other beings, which I consider to be a revolutionary attitude. What would happen if, in this age in which we place so much value on communication, listening would replace speaking? What if talk shows would become ‘listening shows’? What would our day-to-day look like?

BJ: *Like a kind of utopia?*

TG: Utopia implies a world that does not yet exist, an imaginary reality. But I think that the act of listening could be a way to expand our perception and direct our attention towards worlds that already coexist. It's not about delivering a product, a preconceived idea of utopia, but rather about asking what kind of worlds we could connect with if we simply paid attention to them differently.

BJ: *In your trilogy “CHOREOVERSATIONS”, you created a series of solos based on imaginary collaborations with dead and living choreographers as well as those not yet born. As you were working with different kinds of presence then, in what way will you be working with presence now?*

TG: I am interested in asking what lies beyond physical presence and questioning the surface of what we see. Especially now, in our digitalised world, everything is not what it seems. We are always decoding what we read in the media and on our timelines, trying to understand what is fake, what is not fake. The images that we see are like the tip of the iceberg, and we need to be asking ourselves what lies beyond them. The same counts for the images I create with my choreographies. I wish to engender a curiosity in my audience to engage their attention further than just the bodily movement, in this case, towards the act of listening. 🖤



Building Bridges

Berlin's Urban Dance Scene on the Move

Interview: Alina Scheyrer-Lauer

Berlin-born Nasrin Torabi is the founder of the battle “Outbox Me”, which takes place regularly in Berlin and has been able to establish itself as a central interface of the city’s urban dance scene. “Outbox Me” welcomes dancers from all styles to a knock-out after the preliminary round. A cooperation with “Outbox Me” had been planned for Tanz im August 2020 as part of the three-year special project “URBAN FEMINISM, which supports female urban choreographers from Berlin and accompanies their artistic development. Ten Berlin dancers and choreographers were invited, and they will now realise an online programme for the Tanz im August Special Edition 2020. In the following interview Nasrin Torabi opens a window onto Berlin’s urban dance scene.

Alina Scheyrer-Lauer: *How should an outside person imagine Berlin’s urban dance scene?*

Nasrin Torabi: Just up front: I speak from personal experience here, not from an academic context or similar. And I’m not living in Berlin any more, because of my social science studies, so I can only describe what I know from before and from visits.

Berlin’s urban dance scene is firstly a subculture that’s strongly oriented to the social movements that have emerged in the United States. It’s organised in open training sessions, jams and battles (local to international), where people

come together and interchange. Urban dance can be subdivided into various styles, such as house, funk, hip-hop, popping, krump, etc. The different styles are often associated with particular lifestyles, types of music, social attitudes and of course with dancing itself. Urban dance is an outlet for emotion and a place of creative interchange, but it’s also a possibility to gain the recognition you lack and to realise yourself.

ASL: *We all know urban dance moves from commercial music videos and films. How does the urban dance culture differ from these, and what do they have in common? Does this have to do with a particular style?*

NT: The urban dance scene distinguishes between commercial dancers and freestylers, who mainly improvise. Commercial dance is familiar from video clips, films or concerts. It’s often choreography that uses existing movements and has a majority appeal. The urban freestyle scene marks itself off from this, and doesn’t want to be mainstream. I’ve seen a lot of freestyle dancers who don’t want their dance to be seen as a commodity. For them it’s more a means of expression, a way of communicating without words, and they often keep it to themselves. What you call commercial dance is only a small part of what constitutes urban dance.

ASL: *What values does urban dance represent?*

NT: It’s difficult to generalise, but the following are often named: Everyone is equal as human being, and you compete on the dance level. Everyone has access, and what basically counts is dancing ability. There are individual crews that have earned their reputations through this – by winning battles, for example. It’s a complex culture, which you need to understand from scratch. You have to look at how the different strands came about, as every style has its own historical background and the designation ‘urban dance’ has just been applied from today’s point of view. The origin was

frequently a social movement that expressed its lifestyle through dance. The emphasis is on community, solidarity, support, exchange and artistic expression. For many dancers their crew is a kind of ersatz family.

ASL: *What led to the founding of “Outbox Me”?*

NT: The first “Outbox Me” took place in February 2015 as the final project of my training as an event organiser. I’ve been active in a lot of areas, mainly urban and modern dance, but also in tricking, acrobatics and martial arts. If you break it down simply, dance is movement to music – the way you express music physically. This can take an incredible number of forms. “Outbox Me” came about from my desire to make dance and the battle culture more open and accessible to artists of all kinds and to widen the interchange.

ASL: *What do you need to win a battle?*

NT: Seen quite objectively, the ability to dance, a good understanding of music and a certain kind of charisma. Exciting and innovative ‘moves’ geared to the music are also an advantage. Every category and each urban style has its own rules and patterns of movement. But people also talk a lot about ‘politics’ on the battle scene. This means that someone has the advantage of certain ‘connections’. If you know one of the members of the jury well, for example, or the crew you dance in is well respected. So sometimes people who are very strong dancers but haven’t stood out previously or don’t belong to a crew are overlooked.

AS: *How important is music in battle culture?*

NT: Very. Music is the dancers’ matrix. They draw their inspiration from it and embody what they hear. Dancers often study a beat from beginning to end and learn it almost by heart, so that they can react to every element in the music. The lyrics are often also a source of inspiration.



Ellen Wolf © Pao Panig | Shuto Crew

AS: Are gender roles important on Berlin's urban dance scene?

NT: In general I would say so. In Germany the hip-hop scene is dominated by men and the 'male' way of dancing. This includes gestures and movements that men are often seen doing. Most of the jurors, organisers and winners are men. It's time to make more space.

AS: Are there many women in Berlin's urban dance scene?

The big challenge is to unite the scene's different parts and get something off the ground together.

NT: There are lots of young women and girls who are enthusiastic dancers. But they're often put off or timid, unfortunately – it's difficult for them to gain access. It's also my experience that behind closed doors, in dance schools, for example, there are more women than men in the courses. But male dancers are more represented in public.

AS: What challenges does Berlin's urban dance scene have to face up to?

NT: In recent years Berlin's urban dance scene has taken a huge leap. Lots of dancers have raised their voices and tried to collaborate. I think there's a need for more dialogue to find out what the dancers' concerns are. The idea of community has to be strengthened, and everyone should be included. The Reinickendorfers are just as much a part of the scene as the people who train in Neukölln. The big challenge is to unite the scene's different parts and get something off the ground together. We should move away from the idea of competition that now pervades the European urban dance culture. We should remind ourselves that the roots of urban dance lie in the social movements of marginalised minorities, that they grew from the need for solidarity and community. 🗣️

Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.

URBAN FEMINISM | Shuto Crew

Meet the Artist

URBAN FEMINISM | film

27.8., 20:00 | 3min | Online

→ Followed by Artist Talk



Tracing beautiful flaws

Ayelen Parolin and her rejection of a linear logic

Text: Olivier Hespel

Ayelen Parolin talks about her path from a dancer to a choreographer, creating organized chaos on stage and remembering her native Argentina.

On an immaculate white stage are nine colourful spots. Nine creatures whose whimsical appearance relies as much on the fabric covering them as on the gestures that break free from them, which are neither hesitant nor determined, neither fluid nor staccato. Nine figures, each of whom seems to follow their own path and their own individual dance, although none of these dances is actually 'one dance,' but rather a patchwork of diverse grammars... A surprising tumult emanates from this joyful bustle of bodies, both disparate and firmly connected to each other.

How does one make a group? How does one exist in the plural without erasing the singular? How are black and white to be mixed without arriving at grey? These are some of the questions that served as a point of departure for the creation of "WEG", whose central challenge was "the composition of chaos out of nine individualities," says Ayelen Parolin, "to draw a 'landscape': a complex harmony/disharmony. [...] Before I began working on the piece, I met with physicist Pierre C. Dauby from the University of Liège, who guided and accompanied me toward an understanding of chaos theory. I was fascinated by the invisible links that exist in nature, how everything is interconnected... I also knew that I wanted to trace these paths, these individual paths, which intersect and coincide almost imperceptibly; to create an unstable balance, a tension between individual singularity and common abstraction."

What I find beautiful and what attracts me to people are all their flaws, their imperfections, their illogicalities, their incongruities.

The desire to play with unstable equilibria, to juggle opposites, contradictions, is one of the great recurrences in Parolin's writing. Not as a result of her taste for contradiction, but for what it reveals us to be: always more complex than we would like to believe. "What I find beautiful and what attracts me to people are all their flaws, their imperfections, their illogicalities, their incongruities. This is the material I want to work with, and what my starting point has always been: not smoothing things out; rather, on the contrary, emphasising the roughness, the bumps, the holes..." Accepting complexity. Rejecting cleavages, making them collide. There is an eminently queer state of mind in this approach, even if she doesn't proclaim it and even if, formally, aesthetically, this qualifier is not the one we would impulsively bestow upon her at first glance.

Escaping formats, formatting, is another question that has occupied her for a long time. Here again, the attempt is not the fruits of a penchant for contradiction, nor of a futile search to

be different from an undefined mass, but rather, of a resolve to be oneself, fully, in acceptance of all of one's paradoxes, strengths, and weaknesses. In short, it is a reaction to the imperatives of efficiency and performance defended by ultra-liberal logic, advocacy for the complexity of the self in order to make the plurality of a 'we' more possible, a more or less fluid set of resolutely polymorphic 'Is.'

This rejection of a linear logic, ironed out, as well as this affirmation of the multiplicity of all identities, are both already found at the heart of the writing of her first solo piece, "25.06.76" (her date of birth): a rough collage between fragments of her past dance experiences, an autobiographical narrative delivered into the microphone, and a finale that invokes a 'monster' and its primal cry... "It was La Ribot (who taught at the exercise training programme in Montpellier) who advised me to do a solo piece. At the time [2003], it had been three years since I had left Argentina for Europe. I had gone through a whole series of workshops, internships, projects without money, and then I'd completed the exercise training programme, but I hadn't really managed to integrate myself into the dance world and, although I would reach the final stages of selection in auditions, I was never accepted. It drove me mad. With all these introspective questions in mind, I immersed myself in this solo piece without trying to do anything pretty or to show how well I can dance, but rather, to say, 'Look, I'm doing all this, I am all this,' even if it meant showing sides of myself that I didn't like at all..." The solo piece was seen and noticed. Following Brussels, she performed in Bergen, Paris, Madrid, Rome... But still Parolin did not see herself as a choreographer. But as La Ribot



Ayelen Parolin © Floris Van Cauwelaert

had predicted, her solo piece released something in her. A series of engagements followed: Mathilde Monnier, Mossoux-Bonté, Jean-François Peyret, Alexandra Bachzetsis, Anne Lopez, Riina Saastamoinen...

I felt that vibration, that motor that whirs into motion when you dance.

For it is dancing that lets Parolin breathe. A pleasure she discovered as a child, when she would dance for hours in front of the mirror in her room. So much so that her mother enrolled her in various classes: classical, jazz, and Spanish dance. That said, at the age of 6, Parolin is far from wanting to play ballerina. Rather, she dreams of Raffaella Carrà... "My first memories in the dance studio are not very pleasant: I went from facing the mirror in my room, where I was completely free to do what I wanted, to a space where it was all about discipline, instructions to follow, repeating steps to perfection..." And the ordeal continued, until her eleventh year of life, when there occurred "a turning point: my teacher got pregnant. Her replacement was harsh with me. 'You're skinny for nothing!' she kept shouting at me. Instead of being crushed by her attitude, it pushed me to make more of an effort, to prove to myself that I could do it. And I rediscovered a form of pleasure: I felt that vibration, that motor that whirs into motion when you dance. It was a huge boost for me. Prior to that, I would reject everything that was linked to learning, to the notion of perfection; it was too abstract for me, I didn't see the point."

During this same period, the young girl decided that she would go by Parolin (pronounced [ɑjɛlɛn]), her middle name. Exit Vanina: "When I went back to secondary school, I wanted to start a new life. In the Mapuche language [one of Argentina's indigenous peoples], ayelen means joy, lightness, to be carefree..." A means of striving towards a different self-image. It's also a means of asserting the Amerindian blood that flows through her: "My maternal grandmother was indigenous, but my mother spoke about it very little. The rest of my family came from Italy (Venetia, Calabria) and recounted many more memories. This lack of 'memory' on my mother's side always made me curious. I even had the fantasy of going to live with an indigenous people to learn a dance, a ritual, to experience another way of life, outside of 'society'..." Nature and culture, another dichotomy to which she regularly makes reference. It also holds resonance with her own experience. But not only that: "The conflict I have between accessing something more natural and having to juggle learning codes and values (which I am not sure correspond to me/us) is also linked, I think, to the very history of Argentina, a country of colonists who



sought to exterminate indigenous peoples, to "cleanse" the country..."

Today – after almost twenty years in dance and now the choreographer of more than a dozen pieces – when asked why she should continue, Ayelen Parolin answers without much hesitation: "For empathy. To be able to nearly step out of yourself and create a channel of communication that is not transmitted through words, through which you make others feel sensations that they are not experiencing themselves. [...] For pleasure, too. I think that over the years (with pieces such as 'David', 'Heretics' and 'Autóctonos II'), the choreographer who has taken shape has become increasingly distant from the performer I have always been – 'wild, animal, spontaneous,' to use terms that have often been used to describe me... I demanded from the performers things that attracted me, but which I was incapable of doing myself: rigour, precision, following a thread, timing... With 'WEG', I consciously sought to (re)concile these two parts of myself: to create a piece that corresponds more to me and that I would enjoy performing in the here and now while respecting the requirements of the structure of writing, in space and in time." 🗨️

Translated from French by Emily Pollak.

Ayelen Parolin | RUDA asbl | Meet the Artist
After "WEG". Memories of a creation | film

21.8., 21:00 | 10min | Online
 → Followed by Artist Talk

Diverse Imagi- native Worlds

A photograph of three dancers in a studio setting. The dancer in the center is wearing a blue, quilted, full-body costume with a grey horizontal band across the middle and green gloves. The two dancers on either side are wearing pink, quilted, full-body costumes. They are all barefoot and appear to be in the middle of a dance performance or rehearsal. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**How do you make dance for a young audience?
Lea Moro is trying it out.**

Interview: Irmela Kästner

The Berlin-based Swiss choreographer Lea Moro is developing her first piece for a young audience of eight years old and over: “All Our Eyes Believe” / “Alle Augen Staunen”. Its first performance and its German premiere at Tanz im August have been cancelled because of coronavirus, but rehearsals are continuing after an interruption of two and a half months. By phone, Lea Moro tells the Hamburg author Irmela Kästner about the creative process.

Irmela Kästner: You’ve just been able to start rehearsing again. How’s it going?

Lea Moro: In March we had to interrupt the rehearsals for two and a half months. We had already been working for five weeks. Now we’ve started again – six people are allowed to work together observing the hygiene and distancing regulations. But during the break I was working continually on the content, concept and organisation. With Héléne Philippot (producer/manager) we devised a plan B to produce the piece despite the limitations. The performances planned for this year at Tanz im August and the Zürcher Theater Spektakel have been cancelled, but we have performances in September and December. This means we have to finish the piece this summer.

IK: It’s your first piece for a young audience. How did this come about?

LM: Around three years ago there was the chance to develop a choreographic work at the Fabrik Potsdam as part of the “Explore Dance” network for young audiences. I thought, okay, it isn’t exactly my area. But I had always been interested in developing work for a mixed audience, so that different people could watch my pieces, which wouldn’t just be meant

for a particular scene. There were always children in the audiences. Through this opportunity I began to think about the target group more intensively. So, independently of “Explore Dance”, we’re now making my first piece for children, but it should appeal to adults too.

IK: So you’re wondering about the audience you can expect?

LM: We did some preparatory workshops with children. And we’ve found a partner class in Pankow with a fantastically committed teacher. Before COVID-19 the children in her class came to rehearsals and developed pieces with us, giving us feedback. This enabled us to find out more about children’s specific ways of watching. How do they perceive things? How do they describe what they see? We also had contact with dance schools in Zurich and with DOCK 11 in Berlin. But because of the school closures and now the summer holidays, our work can’t be accompanied by children any more.

IK: The piece is described as ‘a fantastical world in red and blue’. Can you explain this in more detail?

LM: We’re working with a completely textile set (designed in collaboration

with Martin Bergström and Nina Krainer) and a whole range of fabrics used by the three performers Jorge De Hoyos, Daniella Eriksson and Michelle Moura. A red world is formed from a topographical stage landscape with associations of volcanos or coral reefs. We move within three ‘ecological systems’, in the air, on the earth and under water, which are constituted through choreographic-spatial compositions, performative processes, sound and light. The performers continually disappear as human figures, becoming more like animal forms, sometimes even turning into the landscape itself. There is a transformation from a red to a blue world. At the moment we’re working dramaturgically on how to make this happen and what kind of character the blue world should have. To sum up I could say that in “All Our Eyes Believe” assemblages of organic and inorganic material come about in the interplay of human bodies and non-human objects. This interconnection generates hybrids; dichotomies of nature and culture are dissolved; diverse imaginative worlds are opened up for the audience.

IK: You’re planning outreach and online formats for the piece. What’s the idea behind this?



LM: As a short explanation: among other things, "All Our Eyes Believe" explores what outreach can be as a part of my artistic practice and specifically within a dance piece for a young audience. How can outreach form an integral part of a dance piece and not introduce prospectively nor explain retrospectively? By allowing the performers to be touched and the stage to be entered, for example, I'd like to make the world that comes about on stage accessible to the audience in a haptic, sensory way. Part of our research at the moment is how to do this in the current situation, with the distancing and hygiene regulations. Opening up the stage creation is supposed to carry forward what has been seen and experienced, and to make space for individual narration. The transition to this opening happens via an interactive poster. It comprises questions and writing, painting and moving exercises on the ecosystems in the air, on land and under water.

After looking at and thinking about online formats we decided to set up an Instagram account where the illustrations on the poster are linked to interactive elements (exercises, questions, information) and clips of the creative process. This idea didn't come from some compulsion to do something digital because of the current situation. I just think it's interesting to see what kind of formats other media offer, and what forms of mo-

dification they suggest – how can I make them useful for creation and research?

In contact with the children we noticed that they were very preoccupied with the climate crisis, pollution, the call for a sustainable ecology.

IK: *How did the environmental and ecological themes get into the piece? Tying in to Fridays for Future? Because that's what children and young people can relate to at the moment?*

LM: I want to address different perceptual and sensory levels with "All Our Eyes Believe". The piece is an invitation to see the 'world' with new eyes. I generally ask myself what perceptual mechanisms we use in our individual and shared construction of the world/environment? What realities do we assume, and what imaginative possibilities do they result in? I'm interested in the interdependency of living organisms and their surroundings, visible and invisible environmental phenomena and ecology: what form do fine particles take? How do I imagine the ozone hole? And I want to evoke moments of wonder, accompanied by a humorously eye-opening process that's both incredible and carefully gentle – hence the title "All Our Eyes Believe/Alle Augen Staunen".

When we started researching the piece around two years ago, Fridays for Future wasn't yet so prominent. But of course we examined the issues when the movement moved more into the media discourse and people's awareness. And in contact with the children we noticed that they were very preoccupied with the climate crisis, pollution, the call for a sustainable ecology. These aren't explicit in "All Our Eyes Believe", that is, they aren't dealt with narratively but rather through props, lighting, sound collage and a continually transforming scenography. The stage events bring up associations of a dystopian underwater world or weather phenomena like thunder and rain. Moments of destruction reveal blue plastic rubbish and suggest the pollution of the seas and rivers. Current ecological themes are indicated through gestures of taking care, looking after and looking around.

There's something important I'd like to add: apart from two student works, this is the first choreography of mine that I don't perform in.

IK: *And how does that feel?*

LM: Great. I'm very much enjoying the view from outside while knowing how it feels from within. 🖱️

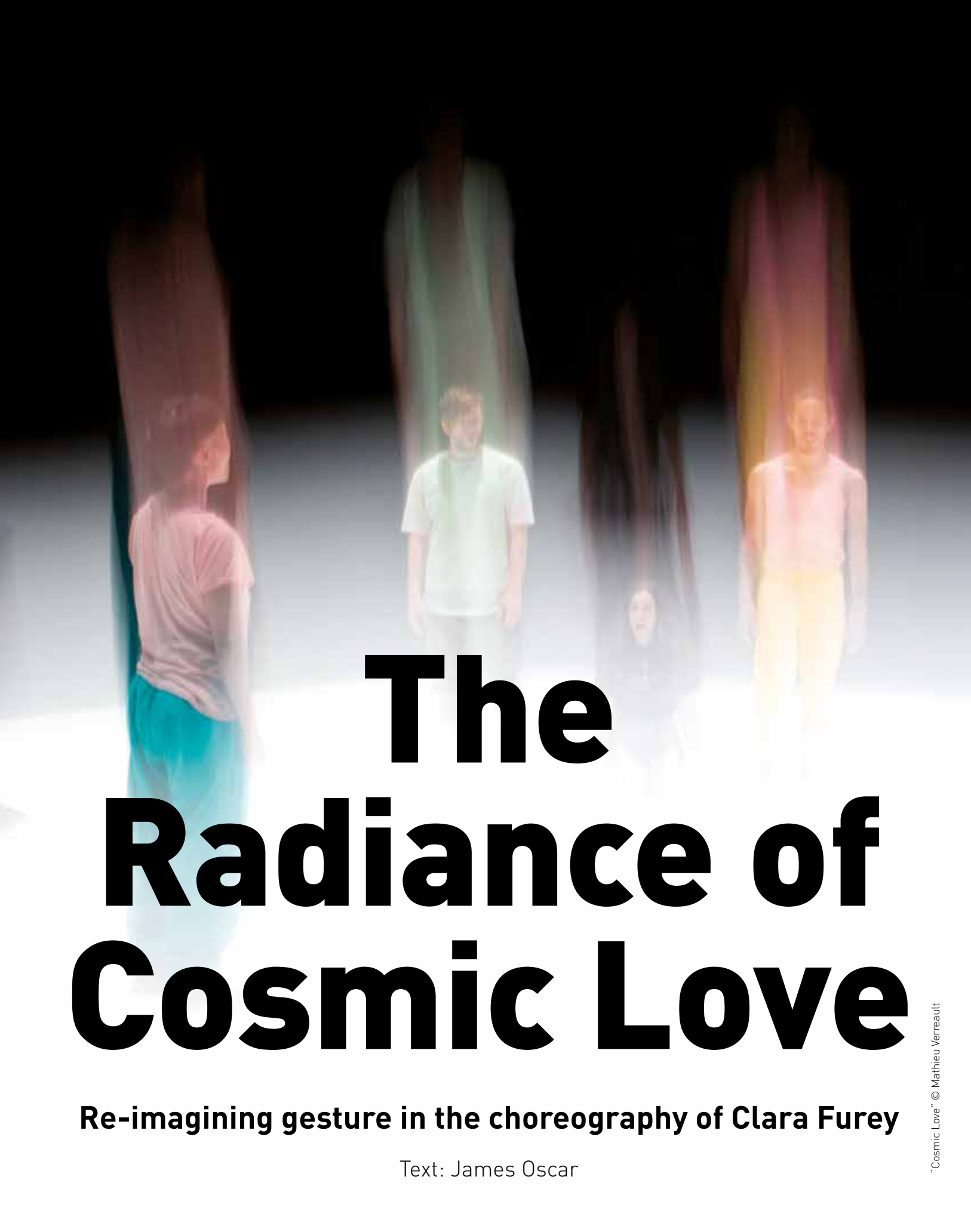
Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.

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 alloureyesbelieve





The Radiance of Cosmic Love

Re-imagining gesture in the choreography of Clara Furey

Text: James Oscar

Working closely with lighting designer Alexandre Pilon-Guay and composer Tomas Furey, Canadian choreographer Clara Furey approaches choreography as a multi-sensory experience. Her first group piece for seven dancers, “Cosmic Love”, is a whirlwind of colours, bodies and movements that continuously transmute and transform in a vibrant energy field.

Choreographer Clara Furey is also a Paris Conservatory trained musician, who understands the notion of getting ‘plugged into’ and ‘getting lost in’ in the sound – and on stage. In her performances, she utilizes sound to enable the excavation of muted interior landscapes of gestures. Assured with such a concentrated ecology of waiting and tuning, Furey approaches the stage as a tabula rasa where she herself, just as the viewer, is encouraged to dwell in a ‘room of one’s own’. There, the feeling of falling in a hole or deep-diving into the depths of the particular quadrants of the room are met with lingering and ritual bidding that might render the unexpected.

Her six dancers explore not how to become one, but rather experiment with how we might find some form of cooperation, community, and refuge in ‘the multitude’.

Furey’s dance practice is equally composed of explorations of sound, deep sensory explorations and blank canvasses for her audience to dive into. What occurs is a total cosmology that can at once be constructed and easily ripped apart. She accomplishes this neither via dreamworld or nightmare, but rather via living waking reveries that we can fully identify with and immerse ourselves in. In this sense, presenting ‘the immersive’ is Furey’s greatest gift as a choreographer: she enables us to share and to immerse ourselves fully into ‘her world’, which always feels like a non-world.

“Cosmic Love” can be taken as a study on the possibility of multiple individualities. Her six dancers explore not how to become one, but rather experiment with how we might find some form of cooperation, community, and refuge in ‘the multitude’. There can be a great comfort in ‘not having to know’ exactly what is washing over our bodies and minds as spectators. Their gestural sculpting of (slow then fast) time could be that of past

or future ‘bodies’, culling us into hallucinations or commons we might have once known but cannot name. In looking at Furey’s oeuvre, there is often this feeling of plenitude: we are witnessing, awestruck, the generosity of movement, no matter how minimalistic the movement might appear. The gestures cut air whilst the ground on which the performances are built evaporates into nothingness, then back into something and then back into the black box we first sat down in. These are not dreams or hallucinations, even when her and her dancer’s technical sophistication often make us feel as if they are. Rather, Furey’s works resemble chiaroscuro paintings that are slowly melting, or orchestrations that implode into unsolidified matter.

In “Cosmic Love”, solidarity is being re-figured out and reconsidered.

Furey ventures into explorations of the primordial and into future tense. She is testing those future bodies that could engender a body-knowledge that could inform our present world. Thus, in exploring those lost hieroglyphs of language-movement in itself and between ‘us’, we might again find ways to reconstitute the basic motor of life, energy, and its sway. In “Cosmic Love”, Furey does not mimic the political order of the day that defines ‘community’ and ‘collaboration’ through various instrumental lenses. Instead, here, solidarity is being reconfigured and reconsidered. Furey’s entities – like celestial planets – seem to be renegotiating the ‘us’, and how we can even be an ‘us’. “Cosmic Love” is a performance, which goes beyond the boundaries of entertainment to produce the most basic of human principles and explorations. The actions on stage explore manners and ways to create energy, to test fate and to produce new human fuels. There is a critical attempt at rethinking the methods of production and at reconsidering our relationship to others, human and non-human, who we must begin to consider as part of our everyday world of gesture, movement, thought, and living. 🗨



“Cosmic Love” © Mathieu Verreault





Balance with Differences

“Des gestes blancs”, by Sylvain und Charlie Bouillet, is an authentic, moving encounter between father and son

Text: Christine Matschke

It's not unusual for fathers and children to spend time together. But to do so in order to make a dance duet certainly is. Sylvain Bouillet, acrobat and co-founder of the collective Naïf Production, went on just this adventure with his now nine-year-old son Charlie. The result was the piece "Des gestes blancs".

When he had the idea to develop a duo with his son, Sylvain Bouillet had two children already and was finding it difficult to combine family life with his work as an artist: "In my job you travel a lot. I wanted to carry on working as a choreographer, but I had increased family duties." Les Hivernales – Centre de Développement Chorégraphique National, of which he is an associated artist, gave him carte blanche. So he suggested to his son Charlie that they spend half a day per week on the project and see what they could come up with.

Watching Sylvain and Charlie Bouillet moving across the stage together in "Des gestes blancs" is deeply affecting. Not only because they are so wonderfully in tune with one another, but also because their casual togetherness also gives rise to conflicts. When the son doesn't let up and provokingly drives the father to his limits, (family) life finally enters art: while Sylvain is sucked into an emotional whirl of anger and despair, Charlie accepts the situation as it is.

Interviewed on Skype, the self-taught acrobat and trained primary-school teacher describes parenthood as a very physical experience: "Every day I try to adjust to it, and it challenges me both emotionally and physically. I don't want to be too close to my children and smother them with love, nor to be too distant; I want to give them the right amount of encouragement. These thoughts animated me to think of the father-child relationship as a kind of dance." Almost for professional reasons he asked himself how two so different bodies attain a shared balance.

The practical basis of these lab-like meetings was the same concrete question, both physical and metaphorical: "What does it mean to carry a child?"

Sylvain Bouillet prepared his creation with ten public father-and-child workshops in 2017–18. The practical basis of these lab-like meetings was the same concrete question, both physical and metaphorical: "What does it mean to carry a child?" It was an advantage that the participating children were used to being carried, says Bouillet. Precondition for this experiment shared by unequal pairs was a flat hierarchy. Duos were supposed to be created on equal terms without leadership. "Fathers don't usually have many opportunities to develop a deep connection to their children, although it's important for many of them", Sylvain Bouillet explains.

Adapting to the children's tempo – not conversely subordinating them to one's own tempo – is the name of the game in a successful parent-child relationship. Once the guiding principle of the Hungarian doctor and educator Emmi Pikler in the 1930s, this approach is reflected not only in much contemporary advice for parents but also in the concept of "Des gestes blancs". Sylvain Bouillet remains open to every decision his son takes on stage. Charlie is the one who determines the tempo of the piece. The physical-mental parental formula in both cases? Staying present.

I wanted to create a physical dialogue that didn't become psychological – balance, space, rhythm, all that was important, and that Charlie could be himself.

So it's no surprise that the basic structure of this 45-minute performance isn't a fixed choreography. The playful setting of clear rules and restrictions prevents a mere reproduction of narrative gestures: "I wanted to create a physical dialogue that didn't become psychological – balance, space, rhythm, all that was important, and that Charlie could be himself." Generating this kind of movement also recalls methods used by the Judson Dance Theater in the 1960s.

The aesthetic of the pure that ensues in "Des gestes blancs" and opens up an intimate space for the audience is further underlined by a minimal artistic decision: just as in a workshop, Charlie says when something is too much for him. And he also expresses his feelings – in reactions that can turn into a spontaneously summersaulting togetherness or shouts of excitement and delight. Nothing seems rehearsed, at most familiar; much arises from the situation itself, which is why Sylvain and Charlie make such an impression of authenticity.

Dramaturgically, the relationship between father and son becomes more distant, in a positive sense, in the course of the piece. At the end Charlie stands on a stool, wearing headphones, both hands beating a percussive rhythm – as if he were conducting his own orchestra, as Sylvain Bouillet puts it, fully aware that he wouldn't have come so far with a child who wasn't his son. The existing closeness and trust were important preconditions for this unusual collaboration.

Today, two years after the first performance of "Des gestes blancs" at the festival Les Hivernales in Avignon, the world has been turned upside down. I speak with Sylvain, who now has a third child, about his experience in lockdown. Like many parents, he has mixed feelings. The main difficulty of the confinement had been to bring together his children's very different rhythms and needs.

Currently on leave from his job as a primary-school teacher so as to pursue his artistic work, Sylvain Bouillet found creative solutions to childcare and home schooling: "We tried to work



"Des gestes blancs" © Mirabel White

outside and looked at other ways of learning. You can count and tell stories, for example, by observing nature and animals." And it all benefited from the artistic process he had gone through with his son. But – after the initial holiday feeling – the difficulty of coordinating with the family and being available for his team was a worry.

Sylvain Bouillet's team are Lucien Reynès and Mathieu Dessaigne-Ravel. Under the name of Naïf Production the three acrobats at the interface of circus and dance pool their complementary qualities and collective intelligence. Participative audience formats with amateurs are as much a part of their concept as the decision to assign the position of artistic director flexible according to the project.

At the end of our conversation it comes into play after all, the answer to the offside question: If "Des gestes blanc" goes on tour again, Sylvain Bouillet ponders, after the unexpected corona break, then it won't be very extensive, because of the lost gigs, and so as to keep it playful – but it's clear that hope will be on the programme more than ever. 🖤

Translated from German by Michael Turnbull.



© Marie Claire Forté

Authenticity is a Feeling

Jacob Wren looks back on where it all started

I'm trying to remember but I remember almost nothing, though it was one of the most important first meetings of my life. The way Sylvie was talking about art – I was listening, trying to follow, she had so many strong opinions and with each one I thought, or had to ask myself: this is something new, this is something I haven't heard before, or is it. I remember how many times I had been told, as a critique of my young work, that everything had been done, that there was nothing new under the sun, and if I thought I was doing something new, which I did (or maybe I didn't but certainly had the desire to create something I'd never seen before)...but if I thought I was doing something new then I was most likely wrong. Talking to Sylvie was the first time I'd heard so many ideas about theatre and performance that weren't instantly recognizable, that I couldn't immediately place. I was also having difficulty understanding her Québécois accent.

Much later, Sylvie told me that the first time she saw my work she was really not sure it was good. But as she was about to dismiss it, she thought of an observation she'd often had about presenters: that when there was something new in art, when they saw something that might be truly new, they often didn't like it at first. They would dismiss it, using an always similar series of arguments: that we had all done stuff like that, all tried our hand at failed experiments when we were younger (or that our youthful experiments were better). That it was amateur, not professional, too chaotic. That it looks like things that were done in the sixties, seventies, and eighties, and those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it. That the artists don't know what they're doing. That of course it's important for art to be provocative, it's important to be provoked, but this work isn't really doing that, fails to provoke them enough. That they of course like to be disturbed, but this work isn't really all that disturbing. And yet they would make all of these points with a lot of anger in their voices, with a strong surge of frustration. Saying that the work makes no impression on them but sounding angry and upset as they said it. Sylvie found herself thinking some or all of these things about "The Deafening Noise of Tupperware", and therefore wondered if she was seeing something that was in fact new.

It is flattering to my artistic ego to think I was, or am, doing something new. When I was starting out that was still definitely my overwhelming goal, and in many ways it still is, though it is now a goal I treat with the utmost suspicion. The idea of an avant-garde, of a modernist break, now seems to me connected to notions of progress that from, for example, an environmental perspective, are extremely misguided, perhaps even suicidal. I now also see there is something settler colonialist about it all, about saying this is new territory and, in doing so, implicitly erasing everything already there. Things do not move only forward. They go in circles, like the seasons. In art, when you feel you have made a breakthrough, when you feel you are making something new, you are most likely also coming around again to things that have been done before. At the same time, one cannot step in the same river twice, and

doing something that has been done before, but doing it now, with a different emphasis, in a different historical moment, with somewhat different questions, assumptions, desires, and hopes – can also (in some sense) be said to be new. Of course, capitalism thrives on novelty – the bright sticker saying "New and Improved" – and I continue to have such a strong desire to be and become anticapitalist. Though I am also constantly aware of just how close innovation in art is to innovation in capitalism.

It all seems so strange to me – in one sense every time we begin a process I am aiming for a breakthrough, hoping to surprise myself and make something that doesn't particularly remind me of anything I've seen, or if it does remind me of something else, if it does remind me of some other work, or some particular aspect of my own previous work, I still want it to do so in a surprising way. And yet on the other hand I no longer believe in any of these things, they seem to me only like some youthful fantasies that my current understanding of the world can no longer support. What's important, it now seems to me, must be something else: to make work that doesn't feel empty, that raises striking questions, where the content and form are inseparable. But also to deal with the collaborative process in an honest and human way, and for the integrity with which the work has been made to come across as we perform it.

I am still working on all of the same artistic questions I started with, and often wonder if they are now only bad habits, or if the fact that I'm still working on them displays a certain degree of necessary commitment and fidelity to my earliest artistic impulses. At the same time, I'm also working on a more recent set of questions, many of which almost completely contradict the earlier ones, and most often I make no attempt to resolve these contradictions. Everything I do brings me into paradox, and the paradoxes only deepen over time.

Nonetheless, as a matter of principle, I remain fiercely against those who say that everything has been done, even if I am gradually becoming one of them. Because how do they – how do we – know. There is always a certain energy and curiosity in believing that anything might still happen. As well, saying things go in circles has a different emphasis than saying everything has been done, since every time you come around again, the things you do are both the same but also, somehow, desperately not the same at all. 🗡️

Excerpt from Jacob Wren's 2018 book "Authenticity Is a Feeling: My Life in PME-ART" (page 20–22).

PME-ART | Jacob Wren | Meet the Artist
Authenticity Was A Feeling: A conversation between
Claudia La Rocco and Jacob Wren | talk
 24.8., 20:30 | 60min | Online

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Tanz im August Publications

Every two years since 2015 Tanz im August has presented a retrospective of the life work and artistic approach of a contemporary female choreographer. Along with performances, installations and exhibitions, these retrospectives were accompanied by catalogues. Publications until now: "Rosemary Butcher. Memory in the Present Tense" (2015), "La Ribot. Occuuppation!" (2017) and "RE-Perspective Deborah Hay. Works from 1968 to the Present" (2019).



RE-Perspective Deborah Hay. Works from 1968 to the Present (2019)

Authors: Susan Leigh Foster, Deborah Hay, Kirsi Monni, Laurent Pichaud & Myrto Katsiki, Virve Sutinen | ed. HAU Hebbel am Ufer, University of the Arts Stockholm, University of the Arts Helsinki | Hatje Cantz Verlag
20 x 26 cm | 184 pages, 70 illustrations | English | €35

→ available in bookstores: ISBN 978-3-7757-4630-4

La Ribot. Occuuppation! (2017)

Texts by Estrella de Diego, Lois Keidan and interview by Stephanie Rosenthal | ed. HAU Hebbel am Ufer | soft cover | 16 x 24 cm
92 pages | English / German | €15

Rosemary Butcher. Memory in the Present Tense (2015)

Interviews with Sigrid Gareis, Susan Leigh Foster, Lucinda Childs and Virve Sutinen | ed. HAU Hebbel am Ufer | soft cover | 16 x 24 cm
82 pages | English | €15

→ available at the Bibliothek im August, the Einar & Bert Theaterbuchhandlung and at www.hebbel-am-ufer.de/service/hau-kiosk



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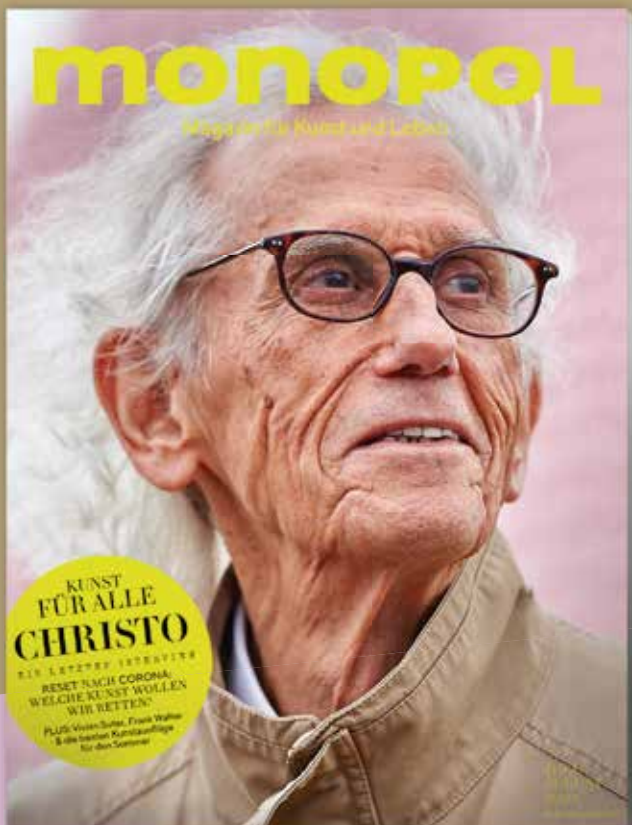
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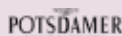
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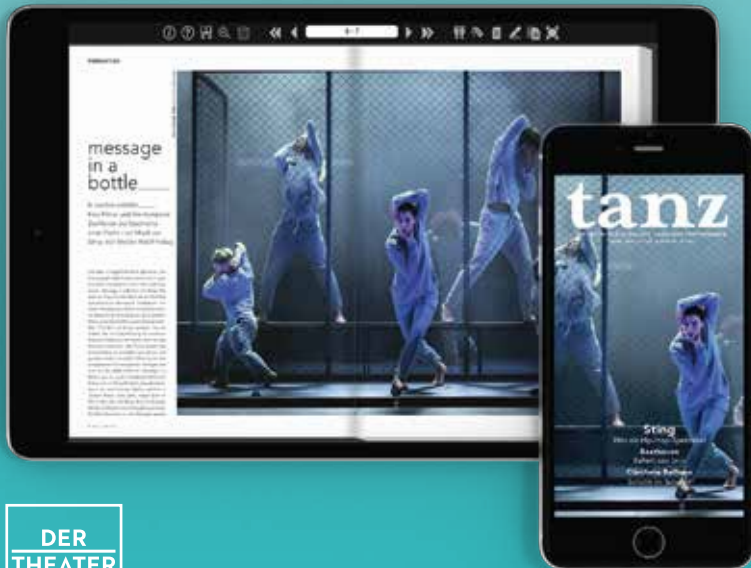
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Presented by HAU Hebbel am Ufer

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Artistic & Managing director Annemie Vanackere

Credits

Online Programme

Ayelen Parolin / RUDA asbl

After "WEG". Memories of a creation | film

A project for Tanz im August Special Edition 2020.

Jaamil Olawale Kosoko

American Chameleon: The Living Installments (2.0)

A Project for Tanz im August Special Edition 2020 in collaboration with the Zürcher Theater Spektakel. "Chameleon" is a National Performance Network (NPN) Kreation and a Development Fund Projekt. Co-commissioned by EMPAC | Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Troy NY, New York Live Arts Live Feed Residency Program, Wexner Center for the Arts an der Ohio State University.

Arkadi Zaides

NECROPOLIS | performance | work in progress

A project for Tanz im August Special Edition 2020.

URBAN FEMINISM | Shuto Crew

URBAN FEMINISM | Film

A project for Tanz im August Special Edition 2020.

Supported by the Stiftung Berliner Sparkasse.

Faye Driscoll

Guided Choreography for the Living and the Dead #7

Audio choreography

Supported by the Tanz im August Special Edition 2020.

Alice Ripoll - Cia. REC

About questions, shames and scars

Co-produced by the Grec Festival de Barcelona, Festival de la Cité Lausanne, Julidans, Tanz im August / HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Zürcher Theater Spektakel, PASSAGES TRANSFESTIVAL Metz, Kaserne Basel, Kunstenfestivaldesarts.

Stephanie Thiersch

Spectacles of Blending | film

A project for Tanz im August Special Edition 2020.

Helgard Haug, David Helbich und Cornelius Puschke

1000 Scores. Pieces for Here, Now & Later

Produced by Rimini Apparat in co-production with PACT Zollverein, Tanz im August / HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Goethe Institut / Foreign Office and KANAL – Centre Pompidou.

How to Be Together? – Conversations on International Exchange and Collaboration in the Performing Arts | digital conference

Jointly organised by the Zürcher Theater Spektakel and Tanz im August / HAU Hebbel am Ufer, supported by the Swiss cultural foundation Pro Helvetia in cooperation with the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

Outdoor Programme

William Forsythe

UNTITLED INSTRUCTIONAL SERIES (2020) | Installation

A project for Tanz im August Special Edition 2020.

LIGNA with Alejandro Ahmed, Edna Jaime, Geumhyung Jeong, Eisa Jocson, Raquel Meseguer, Bebe Miller, Maryam Bagheri Nesami & Mitra Ziaee Kia, Mamela Nyamza, Bhenji Ra, Melati Suryodarmo, Yuya Tsuhara + contact Gonzo, Dana Yahalomi | Public Movement

Dissemination everywhere! An international radio ballet

A project by LIGNA in co-production with the Künstlerhaus Mousonturm and the Hessisches Staatsballett for the Tanzplattform Rhein-Main, Zürcher Theater Spektakel, Tanz im August / HAU Hebbel am Ufer and the Theaterfestival Basel. Sponsored with two-year funding from the city of Frankfurt am Main and by the German Federal Agency for Civic Education as part of "Corponomy – Politics of the Body in Dance, Performance and Society".

SPECIAL EDITION

From 21–30 August 2020 a special edition of Tanz im August is showing events that bring together a wide range of voices from the international contemporary dance world online and in public spaces.

Instead of the international stage programme cancelled in May, on the 10 days of the festival the Tanz im August website will stream artistic productions, films, digital discussions and an international conference jointly presented with Zürcher Theater Spektakel, and two productions will be shown in public spaces.

The online programme “Meet the Artist” provides insight into various works by artists whose stage productions were cancelled in 2020. The new format “Happy to Listen” is intended as an opportunity to listen actively to those whose concerns and experiences are informed by different realities and experiences of marginalisation. Its themes and content will be determined by the presenters, so that new perspectives, critiques and resistances can emerge. “1000 Scores. Piece for Here, Now & Later”, a project by Helgard Haug, David Helbich and Cornelius Puschke, produced by Rimini Apparat, offers an online platform for scores commissioned from various artists.

The productions in public spaces focus on works by the American choreographer William Forsythe and the German company LIGNA. William Forsythe extends an invitation to his “Untitled Instructional Series”, an urban-space installation with short choreographic instructions specially developed for the special edition. LIGNA has invited 12 choreographers from around the world to take part in their radio ballet “Zerstreuung überall/Dissemination everywhere”. On four festival days the participating audience follows a polyphonic choreography on the theme of vulnerability and solidarity “at a concordant distance”. On 30.8 the radio ballet will also take place simultaneously at Zürcher Theater Spektakel and the Theaterfestival Basel.

The detailed programme with all dates and protagonists will be issued in the second week of August.

Online Programme

Fri 21.8.

19:30 | Festival Opening

21:00 | Meet the Artist

Ayelen Parolin | RUDA asbl

“After ‘WEG’. Memories of a creation”

(film | 10min)

→ Followed by Artist Talk

Sat 22.8.

20:00 | Welcome

20:30 | #1 Happy to Listen

(talk | 90min)

Sun 23.8.

17:30 | Welcome

18:00 | Meet the Artist

Jaamil Olawale Kosoko

“American Chameleon: The Living

Installments (2.0)” (interactive performance | 210min)

Participation with prior registration on DISCORD or viewing via live stream

Mon 24.8.

20:00 | Welcome

20:30 | Meet the Artist

PME-ART | Jacob Wren

“Authenticity Was A Feeling:

A conversation between Claudia La Rocco

and Jacob Wren” (talk | 60min)

Tue 25.8.

17:30 | Welcome

18:00 | #2 Happy to Listen

(talk | 90min)

Wed 26.8.

20:00 | Welcome

20:30 | Meet the Artist

Arkadi Zaides

“NECROPOLIS” (performance | work in progress | 60min)

→ Followed by Artist Talk

Thu 27.8.

14:00–17:00 | Digital Conference

“How to Be Together? – Conversations on International Exchange and Collaboration in the Performing Arts”

(in collaboration with Zürcher Theater Spektakel)

20:00 | Meet the Artist

URBAN FEMINISM | Shuto Crew

“URBAN FEMINISM” (film | 3min)

→ Followed by Artist Talk

21:00 | #3 Happy to Listen

(talk | 90min)

Fri 28.8.

14:00–17:00 | Digital Conference

“How to Be Together? – Conversations on International Exchange and Collaboration in the Performing Arts”

(in collaboration with Zürcher Theater Spektakel)

20:00 | Welcome

20:30 | Meet the Artist

Faye Driscoll

“Guided Choreography for the Living and the Dead #7”

(audio choreography | 13min)

→ Followed by Artist Talk

22:00 | Meet the Artist

Louise Lecavalier

“Louise Lecavalier – In Motion” (film | 102min)

Sat 29.8.

14:00–18:00 | Digital Conference

“How to Be Together? – Conversations on International Exchange and

Collaboration in the Performing Arts”

(in collaboration with Zürcher Theater Spektakel)

20:00 | Welcome

20:30 | #4 Happy to Listen

“Brazil Hijacked”

(talk | 90min)

Sun 30.8.

20:00 | Welcome

20:30 | Meet the Artist

Stephanie Thiersch

“Spectacles of Blending” (film | 15min)

→ Followed by Artist Talk

22:00 | Farewell

22:30 | “It’s a Wrap” (Closing Party on DISCORD)

21.–30.8.

www.1000scores.com

www.tanzimaugust.de

Helgard Haug, David Helbich and

Cornelius Puschke “1000 Scores.

Pieces for Here, Now & Later”

by Chiara Bersani, Maija Hirvanen,

Victoria Hunt, Choy Ka Fai and

Kettly Noël

Digital Conference

How to Be Together?

Conversations on International Exchange and Collaboration in the Performing Arts

Jointly organised by the Zürcher Theater Spektakel and Tanz im August | HAU Hebbel am Ufer

Thu 27.8 | 2–5 p.m. | 2 sessions à 90 min.

Fri 28.8 | 2–5 p.m. | 2 sessions à 90 min.

Sat 29.8 | 2–6 p.m. | 2 sessions à 90 min.

In answer to the challenging situation that is preventing people from meeting physically right around the world, we have planned a series of discussions about the future of interchange and international collaboration in the performing arts. This three-day programme aims to inspire a trans-continental dialogue between artists, art organisers and cultural politicians, and to link those who are active in different geographical, cultural, political and professional areas. We would like to give space in several forums to both old and new questions that are being intensified by the current global crisis, such as structural conditions and the dependency of artistic production on international mobility and co-production. This exchange of specialist knowledge, experience and coping strategies at a time of lockdown, physical distancing and an imperative of social rethinking is being organised and presented jointly with the Zürcher Theater Spektakel and Tanz im August.

Curation Ana Letunić, Maria Rößler

Participation confirmed as of publication:

Arundhati Ghosh (India Foundation for the Arts, Bengaluru), Samara Hersch (theatre-maker, Melbourne), Kyoko Iwaki (Theatre journalist, Tokyo), Marta Keil (curator, Warsaw), Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol (theatre collective, Mexico City), Alice Ripoll (choreographer, Rio de Janeiro), Rucera Seethal (National Arts Festival, Makhanda), Sepehr Sharifzadeh (Re-connect Online Performance Festival, NH Theatre Agency, Teheran).

Supported by the Swiss cultural foundation Pro Helvetia in cooperation with the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

Active participation via Zoom after registration at www.tanzimaugust.de or live stream

Outdoor Programme

21.–30.8.

Meet the Artist

William Forsythe

“UNTITLED INSTRUCTIONAL SERIES (2020)”

(installation, choreographic instructions)

Locations tba

22. | 23. | 29. | 30.8.

Meet the Artist

LIGNA

“Dissemination Everywhere! An international radio ballet” (performance | 60min)

→ With contributions by Alejandro Ahmed, Edna Jaime, Geumhyung Jeong, Eisa Jocson, Raquel Meseguer, Bebe Miller, Maryam Bagheri Nesami & Mitra Ziaee Kia, Mamela Nyamza, Bhenji Ra, Melati Suryodarmo, Yuya Tsuhara + contact Gonzo, Dana Yahalomi | Public Movement

22. + 23.8., 16:00 | Uferstudios

29. + 30.8., 14:00 | former Postbank highrise, upper parking deck (Hallesches Ufer 60, 10963 Berlin) on 30.8. simultaneously presented in Zürich | Zürcher Theater Spektakel and in Basel | Theaterfestival Basel.

Bibliothek im August

21.–30.8., 16:00–22:00 | HAU2

Every year the festival artists select three books that are important to their work and their way of thinking. Over the last five years, the collection has grown with each edition and it now features almost 500 books. The Bibliothek im August library will be open every day in the former WAU restaurant and café. Come by and browse the shelves, meet with other festival-goers and enjoy a beverage or a snack in front of HAU2.

Special Edition Artists

Participation confirmed as of publication: Alejandro Ahmed, Chiara Bersani, Dicko-Andrea Din, Faye Driscoll, Lisa Ennaoui, Choy Ka Fai, William Forsythe, Iman Gele, Zahy Guajajara, Helgard Haug, David Helbich, Maija Hirvanen, Victoria Hunt, Edna Jaime, Geumhyung Jeong, Eisa Jocson, Laura Kassé, Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, Claudia La Rocco, Louise Lecavalier, Malika Lamwersiek, Tatjana Mahlke, Princesa Ricardo Marinelli, Raquel Meseguer, Bebe Miller, Alda Mondlane, Maryam Bagheri Nesami, Kettly Noël, Mamela Nyamza, Ayelen Parolin, Cornelius Puschke, Bhenji Ra, Alice Ripoll, Siham Refaie, Melati Suryodarmo, Shuto Crew, Pelin Terzi, Stephanie Thiersch, Yuya Tsukahara + contact Gonzo, Ellen Wolf, Jacob Wren, Dana Yahalomi, Mitra Ziaee Kia, Arkadi Zaides

Mehr Information auf www.tanzimaugust.de

More information at www.tanzimaugust.de

January 20, 2020

PS

if you don't see sex in here

if you can't see it

feel it

hmmmmm

well

it's a very very intricately woven and complicated thing isn't it this sex stuff, yes?

me too i'm trying to see find feel...

my original casting made me wanna bounce / out / scram permanently so ya, had to make a new score play script ting and see how i can wriggle around in that this

i've always had to disappear a little in order to survive the various contexts, so

nyc caribbean chef YARDY explores heritage and encourages play

brian jungen + dana michel = i refuse your desire for meaning and assimilation

(Dana Michel)

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