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CONFERENCE FOLDER

CREATIVE THINK TANK 2023

DANCE – TOOL OF EMPOWERMENT, STRATEGY AND MOTOR FOR COPING WITH CRISIS?

May 16, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (CEST)
online on the ZOOM platform

The Covid pandemic period confronted us with massive limitations, worries and above all with the vulnerability of our bodies. But it also made us (painfully) experience our dependence on social and global contexts. No sooner does this crisis seem to have been overcome than the war of aggression on Ukraine, trouble spots in the Global South and the effects of the climate and energy crisis now dominate our political and social discourses. Against this backdrop, we ask to what extent dance - as a physical practice, as an aesthetic experience as well as a social event of assembly - contributes to dealing with experiences of violence and re-imagining the present as well as strengthening communities and solidarity.

THE FOCUS

of the one-day CREATIVE THINK TANK is on exchange, the reflection on questions about one's own work and knowledge transfer. Based on short impulses from different artistic practices, guests and participants will discuss strategies, methods, aesthetics, goals and empowering potentials of dance for artists and audiences.

THE CREATIVE THINK TANK IS DIVIDED INTO THREE THEMATIC BLOCKS.

These can be attended independently, but we welcome guests to spend the entire THINK TANK with us, pursuing, linking and rewriting thoughts throughout the day. The THINK TANK will start at 10:00 am and end at 5:30 pm. Breaks at noon and during the blocks are planned.

SCHEDULE (CEST)

10:00 am - 2:00 pm Block I Dance and Resilience

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Block II Empowerment - Strategies, Methods, Possibilities

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Block III Impulse & Listening Session & Conclusion

FILM: FRAGMENTS OF RESILIENCE

Documentary by Anna Semenova | Poland, Ukraine | 2022 | 25 min., subtitles: English.

To get into the mood for the CREATIVE THINK TANK, we recommend the documentary film FRAGMENTS OF RESILIENCE by Anna Semenova. The film shows the creation process and the personal stories of the people behind EVERY MINUTE MOTHERLAND - a performance by the Maciej Kuźmiński Company, which premiered in August 2022. The play and film were created by a team of Polish and Ukrainian artists in response to the war.

The film is available on www.tanz-bremen.com from May 15 to 17, 2023.

ADMISSION DATA

You will find the admission data on the following page 2.

CONTACT

In case of technical problems during the CREATIVE THINK TANK, please contact:

thinktank@tanz-bremen.de or tel: 01522 24 30 129 (only available during the Think Tank)

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ZOOM INFORMATION

LOG IN:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81752069726?pwd=VE9RUWxnVUc0YWUvZmhZbkV0SGFGUT09>

Meeting-ID: 817 5206 9726

Password: 294071

Quick dial-up mobile

+12532050468,,81752069726#,,,,*294071# United States

+12532158782,,81752069726#,,,,*294071# United States (Tacoma)

Dial-up by current location

+1 253 205 0468 United States

+1 253 215 8782 United States (Tacoma)

+1 301 715 8592 United States (Washington DC)

+1 305 224 1968 United States

+1 309 205 3325 United States

+1 312 626 6799 United States (Chicago)

+1 346 248 7799 United States (Houston)

+1 360 209 5623 United States

+1 386 347 5053 United States

+1 507 473 4847 United States

+1 564 217 2000 United States

+1 646 558 8656 United States (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 United States

+1 669 444 9171 United States

+1 689 278 1000 United States

+1 719 359 4580 United States

+1 720 707 2699 United States (Denver)

Meeting-ID: 817 5206 9726

Password: 294071

Search for local dial-up: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81752069726?pwd=VE9RUWxnVUc0YWUvZmhZbkV0SGFGUT09>

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PROGRAM
(CEST)

9:50 am

ADMISSION

10:00 am

WELCOME

Sabine Gehm // artistic director TANZ Bremen | Germany
Sarah Israel // dramaturg | Germany

Followed

GET TOGETHER by SPEEDNETWORKING

10:30 am

THEMATIC BLOCK 1 - DANCE AND RESILIENCE

- What possibilities does dance offer to contribute to the resistance and resilience of individuals, groups or even societies?
- What is the role of dance as a form of aesthetic expression and as a shared practice?
- Where does the search for an aesthetic formal language end and a social or therapeutic practice begin?

IMPULSES

Dr. Isabella Helmreich //

psychological psychotherapist and expert in health prevention with a focus on resilience promotion/ Leibniz Institute for Resilience Research | Germany

RESILIENCE - A BUZZWORD OR A UNIVERSAL ANSWER? - On the concept of resilience and the question of human resilience.

Serge Aimé Coulibaly //

choreographer, Faso Danse Théâtre | Burkina Faso/Belgium
On his understanding of resilience and empowerment through VEILLÉE AU SAHEL, a production with non-professional dancers dealing with effects of the ongoing threat of terrorist violence and political instability in Burkina Faso.

Viktor Ruban //

choreographer, (cultural) activist | Ukraine

On the possibilities of choreographers and dancers to continue working under war conditions and the development of tools from the practice of contemporary dance to help people with traumatic war experiences to deal with what they have experienced.

Anne Nguyen //

choreographer, dancer | France

How to understand resilience in the context of a work combining dance styles from various international urban street cultures for the stage. What can be seen in and through physical expressions in a work where dance is for numerous different communities a tool to deal with and resist violent consequences of colonialism and other forms of oppression in a globalized world.

Followed

BY QUESTIONS AND A BREAK

12:00 am

BREAKOUT ROOMS

Discussion and exchange on the impulses in parallel discussion groups with other guests and a host

BREAKOUT ROOM 1

What are the potentials and possibilities of contemporary dance productions to support processes of resilience?

Host: **Susanne Traub** // dramaturg, curator | Germany

Special Guests:

Serge Aimé Coulibaly // choreographer | Burkina Faso/Belgium

Polina Bulat // producer a.o. Cie Maciej Kuźmiński | Ukraine/Germany

Tamara Maksymenko // choreographer, dancer | Ukraine/Austria

BREAKOUT ROOM 2

To what extent can contemporary dance tools and practices be used to develop restorative and resilience-building bodywork for people who have experienced war and violence?

Host: **Simone Schulte-Aladag** //

culture manager, co-founder Festival THINK BIG! | Germany

Special Guests:

Dr. Isabella Helmreich // psychological psychotherapist | Germany

Viktor Ruban // choreographer, activist | Ukraine

Haymich Olivier // choreographer, dancer | Namibia

BREAKOUT ROOM 3

What role can platforms like festivals play in addressing socially or politically suffered violence?

Host: **Simon Dove** // executive director of CEC Arts Link | USA

Special Guests:

Zora Snake // choreographer, director Festival Modaperf | Cameroon

Yolanda Gutiérrez // choreographer | Germany, Mexico

Anton Ovchinnikov // artist, curator | Ukraine

APPROX. 1:25 pm

LUNCH BREAK

2:00 pm

OBSERVATIONS, INSIGHTS from the morning breakout rooms
Elisabeth Nehring and hosts

2:15 pm

PART II - Empowerment - Strategies, Methods, Possibilities

Empowerment - who empowers whom and through what?

- To what extent can dance generate solidarity and enable a collective, simultaneous experience of vulnerability and strength?

- Where does the search for an aesthetic language of form end, and where does a social practice begin?

- Artistic strategies and potentials, working methods and challenges in the collaboration with participating individual actors or communities

SHORT PRESENTATIONS BY THE IMPULSE SPEAKERS

and subsequent discussion in parallel breakout rooms

Ming Poon // performer, choreographer | Singapore/Germany

Be van Vark // choreographer | Germany

Galit Liss // choreographer | Israel

Followed

by discussion in parallel **BREAKOUT ROOMS**

BREAKOUT ROOM 1

Impulse: Galit Liss // choreographer | Israel

On her artistic work with older women, mostly non-professional dancers, their motivation, working approaches and effects

Host:

Monica Gillette // choreographer, dramaturg | Germany

BREAKOUT ROOM 2

Impulse: Ming Poon // choreographer, performer | Singapore/Germany

On his own understanding of empowerment and artistic approaches, discussed on the basis of the participatory performance

THE INTERVENTION OF LONELINESS

Host:

Anna Volkland // dramaturg, dance & theater critic/researcher | Germany

BREAKOUT ROOM 3

Impulse: Be van Vark // choreographer | Germany

On potentials and challenges inherent in bringing together heterogeneous groups in transdisciplinary, transnational and participatory dance projects (on stage or in public space)

Host:

Gitta Barthel // choreographer, dance facilitator, dance scholar | Germany

3:45 pm

BREAK

4:00 pm

WRAP UP

Elisabeth Nehring and hosts

4:15 pm

IMPULSE followed by a LISTENING SESSION

Siegmar Zacharias // artist, activist and Researcher | Romania/Germany

Siegmar Zacharias gives insights into the development and experiences with the concept of her Listening Sessions, which offer participants a practice of listening with the whole body. Afterwards she invites the participants to a Listening Session to conclude the THINK TANK, which enables experiencing one's own body as a collective resonance space for grief, joy and healing.

5:30 pm

FAREWELL

Sabine Gehm // artistic director TANZ Bremen

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SPECIAL GUESTS & HOSTS

GITTA BARTHEL

is active in art, mediation and research practice, creates lecture performances and works as a lecturer for contemporary dance and choreography at universities and training centers. She was a research assistant at the Institute for Movement Science/Performance Studies, University of Hamburg, where she completed her doctorate in 2017 on the topic of mediation in dance art and cultural education.

[More information](#)

POLINA BULAT

is an independent contemporary dance manager and promoter with a background in PR management, journalism and production.

She founded the Ukrainian website dedicated to ballet and dance, Balletristic.com, and produced the Balletristic Writing Course to develop the community of dance writers in Ukraine. Since March 2022, Polina has been aiding, promoting, and coordinating refugee dancers in Europe on a volunteer basis and in collaboration with other organizations and initiatives. She is currently based in Germany and working internationally as a dance artists' representative, project coordinator and producer.

She is the co-producer of the dance piece "Every Minute Motherland" from the MACIEJ KUŹMIŃSKI COMPANY as well as the producer and writer of the documentary "Fragments of Resilience."

[More Information](#)

SERGE AIMÉ COULIBALY

born in Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), he received his training at the FEEREN-Compagnie in Burkina Faso and at the Centre National Chorégraphique in Nantes. Since he founded Faso Danse Théâtre in 2002, his work has been shown in Europe and Africa and invited to various festivals. He works with various artists and regularly participates as a dancer and choreographer in international productions, among others, with Moïse Touré, the Marrukegu Company, Julie Dossavi, Alain Platel and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui at the ballets C de la B. Because he needed a place for experimentation, reflection and his concept of artistic engagement, Coulibaly founded ANKATA in Bobo-Dioulasso, a laboratory for research and production in the performing arts.

A meeting place in exchange between continents, disciplines and communities with the aim of inventing the future, it is open to all.

[More information](#)

SIMON DOVE

is currently Executive Director of CEC ArtsLink and an independent curator and educator, co-curating Crossing the Line, the annual trans-disciplinary fall festival in New York City from 2008 to 2018. He was Professor of Practice and Director of the School of Dance at Arizona State University from 2007 to 2012 and curator and Artistic Director of Springdance, the international festival of new developments in dance and performance in the Netherlands from 2000 to 2007. Prior to that he ran one of the first National Dance Agencies in the U.K., the Yorkshire Dance Centre in Leeds, was the founder and Artistic Director of Vivarta – the first contemporary South Asian performance festival in the U.K., contributed to national dance policy development with the Arts Council of Great Britain, and programmed an innovative arts center in London. Further he extensively mentors students and professional artists from many countries in developing their creative practices.

[More Information](#)

MONICA GILLETTE

is a dance dramaturg, choreographer and facilitator. After dancing professionally, she now shapes innovative projects with dance as a pathway for social engagement and multigenerational cultural exchange. As a dramaturg, she has been accompanying several European funded projects – Migrant Bodies - Moving Borders (2017-2019), Empowering Dance (2018-2023), Dancing Museums - The Democracy of Beings (2020-2021) and Dance Well (2022-2025). In each of those projects, she co-authored and edited digital publications for dissemination of the knowledge, experience and skills developed in the projects.

[More information](#)

YOLANDA GUTIÉRREZ

born in Mexico, is a Hamburg-based choreographer, video artist, curator and producer. Her projects have been shown at international festivals. She works with international artists* from Europe, Asia, Latin America, the USA and Africa. Since 2017 she has regularly choreographed decolonizing audio-walks with dance interventions, performed under the titles URBAN BODIES PROJECT and DECOLONYICITES. In 2021 she founded her artistic platform SHAPE THE FUTURE. One focus of her work is on the question of what political role the body takes on in art, and how an artistic movement can become a political one.

[More information](#)

DR. ISABELLA HELMREICH

is a licensed psychological psychotherapist (behavioral therapy) and an expert in health prevention, especially with regard to the development and implementation of interventions to promote resilience. Together with Dr. Donya Gilan, she heads the "Resilience and Society" department of the Leibniz Institute for Resilience Research in Mainz.

[More information](#)

GALIT LISS

is an independent choreographer, artistic director and founder of the GILA PROJECT - an artistic space for mature women. She's a member of the Israeli Choreographers Association. In 2022 Galit received the prestigious Rosenblum Prize for the Performing Arts of the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality. As part of her artistic and social agenda, she creates with elderly women who are non-dancers. Her performances focus on the physiological aesthetics of the mature body in contemporary dance and have been performed at festivals in Israel and abroad. Galit Liss is the creator and artistic director of the school of "Gila workshops of movement and stage art for mature women." There she teaches the GILA practice - her unique methodology for working with the elderly body that she has been developing for the last 15 years.

[More information](#)

TAMARA MAKSYMENKO

is a professional dancer, choreographer and a teacher of contact improvisation and contemporary dance. She has been teaching many workshops all over the world and is the founder of Motion Mode Dance Theatre (MMDT) and the creator of numerous dance projects. 28 years of dance experience (since the early age of 4). She received medical education in body therapy and sociology at Dnipropetrovsk National University and trained at the Physical Theatre in Intragna (Switzerland) with Thomas Mettler. Now Tamara is a member of the Ukrainian Contemporary Dance Platform Association and of the OFFTANZ Tirol Association (Austria). She is the founder of "Solo & CI Tirol Festival" and "West meets East."

[More Information](#)

ELISABETH NEHRING

works as journalist, dance critic and cultural policy moderator. Since 2019, Dr Elisabeth Nehring has held the position of dance expert for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In 2018, she moderated and steered the Round Table Dance in Berlin, a participatory process with broad involvement of cultural policy, administration and dance experts to develop a concept for dance in Berlin. Since 1999 she has worked as a freelance journalist and critic for various radio stations (including Deutschlandfunk Kultur, WDR, etc.) as well as (supra)regional print and online media, reporting on important world premieres in Germany as well as international festivals and producing radio features on cultural and political topics. Elisabeth Nehring moderates public talks and is and has been a member of several juries.

ANNE NGUYEN

learned a number of martial arts and discovered the world of breakdance and battling. Since 2005, Anne Nguyen has dedicated herself to sublimating hip-hop dance and its rebellious culture and injecting it with a certain amount of mystery. She combines a raw, virtuoso gestural vocabulary with a geometrical, pure, deconstructed choreographic expression that exalts the power of abstraction. Parallel to her choreographic works, Anne Nguyen writes, directs and choreographies theatre-dance pieces where h-hop dance becomes the support for a wider reflection upon our society: , She draws from the observation of gestures, danced as well as ordinary, individual as well as collective, to turn hip-hop dance and popular cultures into a support for a reflection on tradition, on social markers, on diversity, on cultural appropriation and on mechanisms of cultural domination.

[More information](#)

MING POON

is a Berlin-based choreographer who began his career as a professional dancer in 1993 and started to develop his choreographic practice in 2010. He creates choreographic interventions, where spectators are invited to exercise their agency to create change. His works are interactive and collaborative in design. They usually take the form of collaborative performances, public interventions and one-to-one encounters. He works with vulnerability, care, peripherality and failure as performance strategy. His practice is influenced by the Buddhist concept of interdependence and care, Judith Butler's resistance in vulnerability, Augusto Boal's theater of the oppressed and Nicolas Bourriaud's micro-utopias.

[More information](#)

HAYMICH OLIVIER

is a Namibian dancer and choreographer. He graduated from the University of Cape Town with a Diploma in Dance Teaching and an Honors Degree in Choreography. Since then Haymich has prepared numerous choreographic works for the National Theatre of Namibia, Bank Windhoek Arts Festival and College of The Arts (Windhoek, Namibia). In 2010, along with fellow Namibian dancers, he started the First Rain Dance Theatre (FRDT), while fully operational FRDT did community outreach work by training young dancers and employing them on a freelance basis. He is currently employed as a dance lecturer at the College of the Arts in Windhoek, Namibia, where he teaches Contemporary Dance, Choreography and Dance Teaching Method. Haymich is interested in the body's response to trauma, in ways to develop movement dynamics that are not based on traditional technique training as well as in the movement language developed by older, more mature dancing bodies.

[More information](#)

ANTON OVCHINNIKOV

works as choreographer, performer, composer, lecturer, and organizer of the annual international dance festival Zelyonka Space UP in Kyiv. Since 2008 he has been the artistic director of the Black O!Range dance production company. In 2015 he co-founded the All-Ukrainian Association "Contemporary Dance Platform." Since then he has been the president of the institution. The main objectives of the Association are to support young Ukrainian choreographers, integrate contemporary dance into the modern cultural life of Ukraine and establish the national center of contemporary dance. From 2016-2021 Anton Ovchinnikov presented a few solo performances and created five multidisciplinary projects. Since 2018 Anton Ovchinnikov has been a member of the expert panel of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation. Since February 2022 the UA Contemporary Dance Platform has been managing two international projects supporting Ukrainian choreographers and their work during wartime.

[More information](#)

VIKTOR RUBAN

is a performer, dancer, choreographer-researcher, educator and culture activist working on a project basis in Ukraine and abroad based in Kyiv. Director general of Ruban Production ITP Ltd., program director and co-founder of "Impulse of Transformation" independent international dance platform, program and artistic director of the venue #KyivDanceResidency – platform for international studies in somatic, dance and performative practices, movement-based art and research. Initiator and ambassador of Ukrainian Emergency Performing Arts Fund initiative. Representative of Ukraine in the European Culture Parliament.

[More Information](#)

SIMONE SCHULTE-ALADAG

has worked as a dramaturge and production manager for festivals, theater and film productions in Munich, New York and Vienna since 1994. In 2006 co-founded FOKUS TANZ, where she is largely responsible for artistic developments and project management. She is the co-curator of the international biennial festival THINK BIG! - Dance, Music Theatre and Performances for Young Audiences, which has been organized by FOKUS Tanz in cooperation with Schauburg since 2018. She is active in various advisory boards and on juries. In 2014, together with Tina Meß and Miria Wurm, she founded Tanzbüro München, which serves to network and advise independent dance professionals.

[More Information](#)

ZORA SNAKE

Zora Snake is a dancer, choreographer and performance artist, founder of the Zora Snake Company and the international festival Modaperf in Cameroon. He travels internationally, mixing artistic creation in public space, performance and political-poetic ritual, art and society. The development of civil society through performances in Cameroon's neighborhoods are particularly important to him. He has won numerous prizes and works with renowned artists such as Serge Aimé Coulibalys and Fabrice Murgia. He has been a guest at the Cité internationale des arts, the Palais de Tokyo and the Centre Beaubourg in Paris. His production Shadow Survivors premiered in Nancy in 2023.

[More information](#)

SUSANNE TRAUB

works as a dramaturge, curator and author. She studied theater studies, philosophy and musicology in Munich from 1988 to 1993. She then worked as a freelance and employed dramaturge for various festivals, theater/dance productions and performance projects. From 2001 to 2008, she was a permanent dramaturg at schauspielFrankfurt. She has taught regularly at various colleges and universities (Munich, Bochum, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Arnhem, Salzburg, etc.) and curated, among others, the interdisciplinary event series Begehrte Körper (1999) and Moving Thoughts (2000) in Leipzig and the exhibition Open the Curtain (2003) on the interplay of art and dance at the Kunsthalle Kiel. From 2009 onwards, she worked as a freelance curator. Since 2012 she has been working as a consultant for dance, theater and music at the Goethe Institute.

[More information](#)

BE VAN VARK

works as a choreographer and teacher. The range of her choreographic work is characterized by a passion for realizing participatory projects, on stage, in museums, for public spaces as well as in nature. In 2018 she was awarded the Cross of Merit on Ribbon for her work. In 1994 she founded the company van Vark (until 2002). Since 2002, she has been working with the concept she developed, "tanztheater-global," which brings together amateurs with professional performers. To date, numerous projects have been realized internationally within this framework. Since 2011, she has been chairperson of the association "Tänzer* ohne Grenzen e.V." (Dancers without Borders). She is currently staging "Das Fest-Tanz auf dem Plateau" (The Festival-Dance on the Plateau) with people from 33 villages in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg and Poland.

[More information](#)

ANNA VOLKLAND

studied dramaturgy in Leipzig and dance studies in Berlin, worked as a dramaturge for drama, dance and more open theatrical formats and has been writing about theatre and dance since 2010. From 2014 to 2020, she was a research assistant at the Berlin University of the Arts, where she began researching the history of institutional critique and attempts at democratization in the municipal theater of the FRG and GDR since the late 1960s. At the UdK, she and others initiated the biennial symposium "Performances of [Femininity] in the Performing Arts" (2016 - 2022 ff.) and taught, among other things, critical theater history, extended performance analysis and experimental artistic theory and practice. She is also active as a lecturer at other universities, since 2019 regularly at the HfS "Ernst Busch" Berlin.

[More information](#)

SIEGMAR ZACHARIAS

is a transdisciplinary artist, activist, researcher and death doula. She learns ancient plant medicine. She develops queer feminist collective practices of transformation as training for unknown futures in art, radical pedagogy and social justice. Siegmarr collaborated with uncontrollable materials such as smoke, mucus as well as the human nervous system. She explores sound as a material force of vibration that connects people and more-than-human existence. During the pandemic, the series of online listening sessions WAVES - Listening Towards Social Bodies emerged as a collective mourning and enabling touch.

[More information](#)

// TEAM CREATIVE THINK TANK

Concept and dramaturgy // Sabine Gehm, Sarah Israel
Organization // Sarah Israel, Sabine Beyer
Participant management // Anna Blahaut
Technical moderation // Sophia Herzog
Documentation // Elisabeth Nehring
PR // Anja Michalke
Technical support // stage & plan

Special Thanks to Simon Dove

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