

nowhere / now here
A Performance Festival

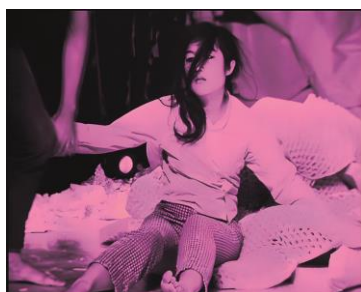
July 5 to August 11, 2024

Press conference

Thursday, July 4, 2024, 10 am

Opening

Thursday, July 4, 2024, 7 pm



Carolee Schneemann

Snows, 1967

filmstill

16mm film transferred to DVD, sound,

b/w, silent, 20 min 30 sec

mumok - Museum moderner Kunst

Stiftung Ludwig Wien, acquired in 2014

© Carolee Schneemann Foundation,

Bildrecht, Wien 2024

The live performances of eight contemporary choreographers confront performative video works by twelve artists from the 1960s and 1970s.

At the same time as the fledgling genre of performance art shattered Western ideas of the static art object in the early 1960s, video technology made a new method of recording art possible. *nowhere / now here* is dedicated to this contradiction between live art as an ephemeral, transient, unique event and its technological (re)production. Contrary to their original form, live performances become an image-based art form in the historiography of the corresponding documentary material and, as such, find their way into museum collections like that of mumok.

The title *nowhere / now here* refers to the festival's dual structure, which interweaves the live program with the historical film footage. What is created in one instance disappears in the next, only to reappear in a different medium elsewhere.

At the heart of this historical exploration are film documentaries about performances from the 1960s and 1970s that are part of the mumok collection—works that tackled various social taboos, body images, and oppressive conventions and consequently influenced contemporary art in a major way.

In her filmic assemblage *Meat Joy* (1964), Carolee Schneemann celebrates the nude body as a material and visualizes a changing social dynamic in the suspension of cultural taboos. The experimental treatment of the body as well as the examination of the relationship between individual and social bodies are elements that link Schneemann's work with that of the Vienna Actionist Günter Brus. In the existential body art of *Selbstverstümmelung* (Self-Mutilation, 1965), Brus takes a radical stance toward a rigid system shaped by conservative norms. Similarly, VALIE EXPORT in *Hyperbulie* (1973) negotiates to what extent body and mind are shaped and tamed by societal systems, by moving through a corridor of electrified wires in the nude and repeatedly breaking down as she touches them.

Performances must be viewed as documents of their time. This becomes clear in Schneemann's examination of the horrors of the Vietnam War as well as Chris Burden's "performance pieces," which show a provocatively physical reaction to the specific social and political moment in time. Burden put himself in solitary confinement, had somebody shoot at him, dragged himself across broken glass, and tried to breathe under water.

The only loan for this exhibition is Ulysses Jenkins's *Two-Zone Transfer* (1979), which points to crucial gaps within the mumok collection, reminding us that a collection can never be complete and must be renegotiated continuously. In conversation with Burden's *Documentation of Selected Works 1971-1974*, Jenkins uses a dreamscape to examine the history and development of African American stereotypes in the entertainment industry.

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nowhere / now here also delves into the politics of the gaze and editing, which are noticeable aspects of many film documentaries. Who is behind the camera? Whose angle is presented? In what ways was the footage manipulated?

In *Songdelay* (1973), Joan Jonas probes the depths of the technical possibilities of video in relation to her live performances and the spatial perception of the viewers by creating a clear temporal discrepancy between what is seen and what is heard. The representational gap between live act, photography, and video also becomes apparent in Günter Brus's *Selbstverstümmelungen* (1965) and Kurt Kren's *10/65 Selbstverstümmelung* (1965). While Kren arrives at a unique visual language through his sharp focus on Brus's face and the individual torture instruments with rapid cuts, Brus's photographic version seems to be more interested in capturing the setting and the body as such. What becomes clear is that presentation can never be truly objective, because the gaze through the camera is always representative of a specific point of view of the event at hand.

Artists: Chris Burden, Günter Brus, VALIE EXPORT, Terry Fox, Ulysses Jenkins, Joan Jonas, Kurt Kren, Hermann Nitsch, Nam June Paik, Ernst Schmidt jr., Carolee Schneemann, Hannah Wilke

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The festival of moving images sets the stage for the festival of moving bodies.

The invited performance artists from the fields of choreography and dance have always, each in their own way, pushed the boundaries of stage dance as an artform and investigated presence and performativity in the context of the museum and the white cube. Thematically and in their strategies and artistic practices, they continue the heritage of 1960s and 1970s performance art—also by differentiating themselves from it.

While more and more aspects of our lives get lost in digital spaces, Deva Schubert transposes the technical glitch—whether in a still image or a video—to the world of the human body. Since early on, it has been women who have devoted themselves to grief work—or have been forced to do so. In *Glitch Choir*, Deva Schubert in collaboration with her co-performer Chihiro Araki transforms the white cube into both a collective and an intimate acoustic and wailing body of dance.

Eszter Salamon attacks the static and objecthood of the monumental. Her long-running series *Monuments* is about forms of memory and politics of remembrance that hallucinate a non-fixed, non-naturalized relationship with un-lived pasts and possible futures. Her “monuments” are embodied, performative, and limited in time. From this series, Salamon is showing *MONUMENT 0.7: M/OTHERS*, a duet with her mother. Her solo *Dance for Nothing (revisited)* is a reminiscence of Modernism. It is a danced version of John Cage’s *Lecture on Nothing* (1949), one of the seminal texts of Western experimental literature.

Davi Pontes and Wallace Ferreira’s *Repertório N2* marked the conclusion of the ImPulsTanz performances at mumok in 2022, for which the duo received the ImPulsTanz – Young Choreographers’ Award. Their follow-up, *Repertório N3*, premiered at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion at the 35th Bienal de São Paulo. Their artistic and theoretical strategies use as their starting point the recognition of the fact that Black bodies are not spared from violence. Their dance develops tactics of self-defense in order to confront physical, imaginary, and epistemological violence. Entering *Repertório N3* are gestures and postures of sexual and queer seduction (also) as an act of resistance against a judging gaze. When Black bodies at rest are suspicious and those in motion are threatening, Pontes and Ferreira in their choreographic action find strategies and images to redesign the perception of the self and of what’s to come as well as to counter today’s world order with something different.

In her 2022 retrospective, which was part of ImPulsTanz, Geumhyung Jeong showed three of her peculiar human-nonhuman assemblages. In *Rehab Training, Spa & Beauty*, and *7ways* she breathed life into lifeless objects or let her own body traverse the white cube in an ostensibly lifeless state. In her most recent performance, *Find, Select, Copy and Paste*, she rearranges selected movements from her earlier pieces and performs the phrases without the actual objects. Jeong creates a fascinating, uncanny space of bodily presence, which investigates, suspends, and shakes up the phenomenology of our human-nonhuman relationships in the constant dialog with the absent partner objects.

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“If we cannot be ourselves at work, where we spend most of our lives—what kind of lives are we living?” Dana Michel, who received the ImPulsTanz Director’s Award in 2014 and the Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale in 2017, is known for the uniquely transformative way in which she approaches spaces and objects. Her works draw from a wide range of improvisation, sculpture, hip hop, comedy, film, dub, and social criticism, thus creating opportunities for diverse existences and lifestyles. In her three-hour durational solo about the work culture in which we trap ourselves, she explores the mumok’s white cube. *MIKE* sets out, breaks off, and challenges every step of its search for the unforeseen in the habitual routine.

Trajal Harrell is one of the most important contemporary choreographers. He attained international renown with a series of works that confront the history of voguing with early postmodern dance. His new solo *Sister or He Buried The Body* is a daring meeting of Butoh legend Tatsumi Hijikata and Katherine Dunham, one of the pioneers of African American dance. In his speculative reappraisal of the history of contemporary dance and in his composition, Harrell places the body at center stage and examines how it becomes a vessel for memory, past, and imaginations of other social designs.

Simultaneously with the world premiere of the new stage piece, mumok is screening Ian Kaler’s film installation *Sentient Beings: The Growing Edge*, which investigates the sensory and emotional perception of living creatures in moments of being together or alone. It revolves around falling as an in/voluntary gesture of devotion to coexistence. Embedded in the uncanny, riveting soundtrack by music producer rRoxymore, the video piece creates multilayered, subtle dramatic suspense, blurring the lines between choreography and nonverbal storytelling. Joining Kaler as the film’s main character is a horse—a reference to the original function of the MuseumsQuartier buildings as the imperial horse stables.

As a kick-off and preparatory event for Nikima Jagudajev’s performance project *Basically*, which will open on August 29 on the same level, Nikima Jagudajev and her musical companion Lester St. Louis invite visitors to their field project *The pleasure at being the cause* as part of ImPulsTanz. There’s something messy about their method – hence, together with the participants in the research project, mumok visitors may also join in as players in creating and reimagining their compositional games.

nowhere / now here. A Performance Festival culminates in the performative exhibition *Basically*, an ongoing, ever-evolving live project whose exhibition format is a hybrid production space. The performance itself is intended as a choreographic game for multiple actors with interactive and gaming rules. It includes nonlinear dance choreography, live music, food, daily I Ching tosses, art class criticism, and unplanned time that leaves room for accidents. Visitors are invited to engage in the changing situations and thus get involved in the creation and redesign of their environment.

Artists: Trajal Harrell, Nikima Jagudajev, Geumhyung Jeong, Ian Kaler, Dana Michel, Davi Pontes & Wallace Ferreira, Eszter Salamon and Deva Schubert

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A Performance Festival

Performances July/August

[8:tension] Young Choreographers' Series

Deva Schubert

Glitch Choir

July 12, 2024, 7pm

July 14, 2024, 9pm

Duration: 50'

Austrian premiere

Eszter Salamon

MONUMENT 0.7: M/OTHERS

July 15, 2024, 6pm

July 17, 2024, 6pm

Duration: 70'

ImPulsTanz Classic

Eszter Salamon

Dance for Nothing (revisited)

July 16, 2024, 5pm

Duration: 60'

ImPulsTanz Classic

Davi Pontes & Wallace Ferreira

Repertório N2

July 19, 2024, 7pm

Duration: 35'

Davi Pontes & Wallace Ferreira

Repertório N3

July 20, 2024, 6pm

July 22, 2024, 6pm

Duration: 35'

Austrian premiere

Geumhyung Jeong

Find, Select, Copy and Paste

July 24, 2024, 6pm

July 26, 2024, 6pm

Duration: 70'

Austrian premiere

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Ian Kaler

Sentient Beings: The Growing Edge

July 25, 2024, 3pm

August 3, 2024, 4pm

August 4, 2024, 4pm

August 9, 2024, 4pm

August 10, 2024, 4pm

Dana Michel

MIKE

July 28, 2024, 4pm

July 29, 7pm

July 30, 2024, 5pm

Duration: 180'

Trajal Harrell

Sister or He Buried The Body

August 6, 2024, 5pm & 8pm

August 8, 2024, 6pm & 8pm

Duration: 30'

Austrian premiere