

Lugano Dance Project

1st Edition

25–29 May 2022

Press Release

Lugano, Monday 25th March

From Wednesday to Sunday, May 25-29 Lugano will transform into the city of the dance during the first edition of Lugano Dance Project: an entirely new festival and an international platform for professionals. Venues for the festival will be in the LAC and in unconventional sites around the city and performances will include never before seen works, world and Swiss premieres, site-specific performances, Tanzfaktor – devoted to young Swiss choreographers, video installations, screenings, discussion panels and meetings.

LAC
Lugano Arte e Cultura
Piazza Bernardino Luini 6
CH-6901 Lugano

+41(0)58 866 4200
www.luganolac.ch

Since its foundation the cultural centre has been known for its keen devotion to the dance, playing host to renowned international companies, producing world class artists and fostering promising local talent, all of which has earned it a warm following among the public and professionals in the sector. This premise ultimately led to the idea of creating a special festival dedicated to the modern dance in a special setting focusing on contemporary forms, a theme dear to the LAC.

Warmly encouraged by Michel Gagnon and Carmelo Rifici, who took advantage of the collaboration of Lorenzo Conti, *Lugano Dance Project* is a strong expression of the LAC's cultural policy and will make an important contribution to the center becoming a cultural hub and venue for dialogue and exchange between the art forms, increasingly oriented towards active production. This vision is supported by the City of Lugano's Cultural Division and a shared strategy is being implemented that aims to involve the entire community and extend the programme to unconventional sites like the marina of the Società Navigazione del Lago di Lugano and the Skatepark.

"The project – according to Michel Gagnon – is definite proof of the maturity of the LAC's human and artistic capital which only six years after its foundation is now putting on a world class festival. It is an expression of growth and quality as attested by the support of private financial sponsors. In fact, Lugano Dance Project has been made possible thanks to the generous contribution by a patron of the arts, a concrete and virtuous example of how a private individual can help foster the growth of a cultural organization. I am confident that *Lugano Dance Project* will represent an example of good practice and will serve to encourage a fruitful exchange between arts patronage and culture while at the same time becoming an important showcase that will help position Lugano as a reference center for the global community of professionals."

The Festival of contemporary dance *Lugano Dance Project* aims to lay the foundations for a cultural bridge linking Switzerland, Europe and North America. In its first edition the project aims to focus attention on the relationship between art, the human body and movement, drawing inspiration from an intuition that emerged in Ticino during the historic experience of the Monte Verità, an arts laboratory that flourished in Ascona during the early twentieth century and which later spread around the world through the practices of Rudolf Laban.

From year to year, *Lugano Dance Project* will promote the creation and debut of new choreographic creations. Canadian Virginie Brunelle, Anglo-American Annie Hanauer, Lea Moro from Switzerland have created productions for the first edition, the result of a period of residence in the Canton of Ticino and realized with national and international Partners, such as Danse Danse, Centre National



des Arts d'Ottawa, Harbourfront Centre, not to mention those of the territory such as Teatro Danzabile.

Brunelle, Hanauer and Moro have accepted the task of finding inspiration in our present age so rich in change and transformation but also in potential challenges; an age that echoes the period in which the utopian community of Monte Verità was founded on a hill not far from Ascona, which today is the site of the foundation that preserves and passes on its myth and memory, a community that piqued the curiosity and interest of people like the writer Herman Hesse, the revolutionary Bakunin, the psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung, the dancer Isadora Duncan, painter Paul Klee and artists of the movements Dada and Bauhaus.

In the words of Carmelo Rifici: "*Lugano Dance Project* is betting on young artists who have already shown their talent on a national and international level and I hope for them and for us that the festival will be an opportunity to introduce them fully into the world of the arts, a festival that features the presence of many women in which we will see completely new works alongside a programme that includes dozens of others."

During the five days of the festival we will see new choreographies by Virginie Brunelle, Annie Hanauer and Lea Moro, along with works by Simona Bertozzi, Lorena Dozio, Muhammed Kaltuk/Company MEK, Caroline Laurin-Baucage/Lorganisme, Ana Pi, Cristina Kristal Rizzo & Megumi Eda, Cindy Van Acker and selected works by Tanzfaktor made up of Alba Castillo, Company Snorkel Rabbit, Lucas Del Rio, Lisa Laurent & Mattéo Trutat, Luca Signoretti Dance Company.

Three new productions

Friday, May 27 at 8:30pm in the Theater Hall will mark the premiere of *Fables* by Canadian Virginie Brunelle. An artist endowed with a rigorous, physical style, Brunelle is one of the emerging personalities in the Canadian dance scene. Able to convey powerful emotions to audiences, in *Fables* she is directing an ensemble of twelve interpreters, accompanied by Laurier Rajotte on the piano. Brunelle starts out from the notion that between the Greek word for fable (Mythos) and the word for choreography (in Greek Khoreaia) there lies an entire scenic universe to explore and – drawing on the dramaturgical consultancy of Nicolas Berzi – she invites us to watch the unfolding of a choreographic tale in which characters display disenchantment, ecstasy, insights, fragility, revealing hidden sides but also light and hope.

Saturday the 28th at 8:30pm the stage of the Teatro Foce will host *A space for all our tomorrows* by Annie Hanauer who is also an interpreter along with Laila White and Giuseppe Comuniello accompanied by the live music of Deborah Lennie. The work comes to Lugano just a few days after the premiere of *Steps*, the dance festival of Migros Culture Percentage. An artist with a disability, in *A space for all our tomorrows* – a production also supported by the Ticinese organization Teatro Danzabile – Hanauer explores the properties of the body, pleasure and power and relates these to the themes of utopia and disability. On the stage three bodies resist, persevere, refuse to give up and engender an intense, powerful performance that creates a space in which to imagine our utopias.

Sunday the 29th at 3pm the stage of the LAC will feature *Another Breath* by Lea Moro, choreographer of performances that examine the social and emotional layers of connections between people. Moro conceived and directs this project which she co-choreographed with Sharon Mercado Nogales, Samuel Draper, Ana Laura Lozza, Malika Lamsersiek. The Swiss artist's choreography concentrates on the act of breathing which becomes semi-choral. At a time when our lives have been strongly affected by masks and air filters, sharing our breaths and air is a choice that has strong and clear political meaning.

Premiere: Tanzfaktor

Wednesday the 25th starting from 8:30pm, the Teatro Foce will be the venue for the premiere of Lugano Dance Project's Tanzfaktor a biennial event that Reso – Rete Danza Svizzera is devoting to the dissemination and support of young choreographers; with the cooperation of nine cultural institutions that are sponsoring the project, Reso is backing a national tour that will feature twelve performances.



At the Teatro Foce we will see, in sequence, the four works selected by the jury: the first will be *Pas de deux* by Genevans Lisa Laurent & Mattéo Trutat, a homage to classical dance in a contemporary vein; *Remember me, like this* by the company Snorkel Rabbit with choreography by Alba Castillo, an exploration of themes like fear and courage; *Back Home* by Luca Signoretti who also interprets the piece with the company the bears his name, and *Search* by Lucas del Rio, in which four performers question each other without finding any answers.

Site-specific performances and artists' workshops

A large-scale festival that includes not only new productions and the premiere of Tanzfaktor, but dozens of other performances as well.

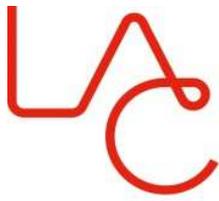
Thursday, the 26th at 7:30pm and Friday the 27th at 7pm the LAC's Agora will be the site of the Swiss premiere of *Suite Zero*, a musical and choreographic project created by dancer and performer Simona Bertozzi and cellist Claudio Pasceri. The piece is an anthology of excerpts punctuated by a dialogue between cello and solo bodies that follows the classical structure of the suite: prelude, allemande, courante, sarabande, minuet, jigüe while constructing a new landscape of presences, references and interactions. Choreographer, dancer and performer, Bertozzi already has created and interpreted *This is my last dance* together with Tabea Martin, a work that inaugurated the 27th edition of the FIT festival in 2018. *Zero Suite* develops a dialogue between the body and solo cello.

On Friday the 27th between 11am and 1pm and on Saturday the 28th between 10:30am and 12:30pm the Museo d'arte della svizzera italiana will become for the first time a venue for a dance performance which will be held in the LAC's exhibition rooms for the work Cristina Kristal Rizzo created specially for these spaces. Rizzo's *VN Serenade*, was already produced by the LAC in 2017 and she's back again in Lugano with *MONUMENTUM the second sleep* a work in the form of a solo dancer in which Rizzo has created the concept, choreography, set design and costumes. The interpreter will be Megumi Eda, once a historical dancer of Karole Armitage. *MONUMENTUM the second sleep* is a tribute to the power of life expressed in a place where art and philosophy merge.

Friday the 27th at 5pm the LAC's Teatrustudio will host the Swiss premiere of *The Divine Cypher*, with Ana Pi as protagonist and main interpreter. Pi is a young dancer and choreographer from Brazil. The work takes the form of a road movie in which Ani Pi encounters Maya Deren, an experimental film director originally from Ukraine who in the 1940s studied the culture of Haiti, its dances and voodoo religion. Her experiences are recorded in the book *The Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti* and in a documentary of the same name filmed in the 1950s and released posthumously. Winner of a study grant from the MoMA's Cisneros Research Institute in New York, Ana Pi, inspired by the dreams and gestures filmed by Maya Deren, explores the history of these dances and their role in the present day.

On Thursday the 26th at 5:30pm in Palazzo dei Congressi, Ana Pi is also protagonist of *Le tour du monde des danses urbaines en dix villes*, a danced conference for a public over the age of 10 and which Pi conceived and created together with Cecilia Bengolea and François Chaignaud. The artist brings to life a genuine work of pedagogical performance on urban dance, often simplistically associated with street dance and hip hop. Using evocative videos and photos taken in ten large cities around the world, Pi showcases the variety of dance styles that were born "in the street" and from city to city she tells a tale in which the geographic, social and cultural context is different for each style.

Friday the 27th and Saturday the 28th at 7pm (repeat at 5pm reserved for operators), the marina of the Società Navigazione del Lago di Lugano is the site of four of the ten solos that make up *Shadowpieces* which Cindy Van Acker has devoted herself to since 2018. In *Shadowpieces* the celebrated Swiss choreographer returns to a format that marked her debut on the international stage. Listening, empathy, attunement: Cindy Van Acker uses these to develop a choreography that dialogues which each of the dancers' individual qualities, expressing their energy, color and expressiveness. Four solos in which the connecting thread is the intense relationship with the music chosen by the interpreters from a musical selection proposed by Van Acker.



From Wednesday the 25th to Friday 27th between 10am and 1pm Van Acker will lead a workshop for professionals which will introduce the participants to the poetics and aesthetics of the Swiss artist.

Saturday the 28th from 10:45pm, thanks to Muhammed Kaltuk, Piazza Luini will become the backdrop for *Ta Fête. A Cypher ritual*, a unique and original event to the rhythm of hip-hop. Born and raised in Switzerland, from an ultra-conservative Turkish family, Kaltuk sought redemption in the world of hip-hop. Author of creations aimed at a wide and varied public, Kaltuk invites us to be protagonists in a live set in which the dancers from his company MEK improvise to a mash-up of his most recent creations.

The next morning, Sunday the 29th, between 11am and 1pm, Kaltuk will be at Lugano's Skatepark to lead a workshop on hip-hop dedicated to the dance schools.

Sunday, the 29th between 10:30am and 2pm (entry in three shifts 10:30am, 12pm and 1:30pm) the Teatrustudio will host *Audiodanza. Come un salto immobile trattenigo il respiro* by Ticinese choreographer Lorena Dozio. During the first lockdown the LAC proposed an audio version of this in which the physicality of the dance distilled into a mental image. Alone on the stage Dozio questions the relationship between what we see and what we hear in an interior dialogue that takes place in real time between her body on the stage, the voice of Stéphane Bouquet, the sound and music of Kerwin Rolland.

Videomapping and projection

One work in the lineup of Lugano Dance Project is *Rebo(u)nd* by Canadian director and choreographer Caroline Laurin-Beaucage from the collective Lorganisme. This work of videomapping reveals and exalts human bodies caught in the moment they escape gravity. *Rebo(u)nd* will be visible to everyone passing by Piazza Luini every evening starting from Wednesday May 25th, from 9pm until midnight.

Saturday the 28th at 11am and Sunday the 29th at 11am and 6pm the LAC's Hall 4 will turn into a movie theatre for the showing of *Freak Out!*, a documentary film on the history of the Monte Verità by Swedish director Carl Javér. The film is halfway between animation and historical reconstruction, and introduces us to the pioneers of Ascona, young people who at the beginning of the last century revolted against their time and gave birth to an alternative community.

Meetings and Round Tables

The festival will also feature three *caffès d'artistes* and two discussion panels.

Conducted by Marisa C. Hayes, Lorenzo Conti and Katia Vaghi, the *caffès d'artiste* are a special opportunity to meet the choreographers featured at the festival: Saturday the 28th from 9:30am Virginie Brunelle is in conversation with Marisa Hayes, Sunday the 29th at 10am Annie Hanauer dialogues with Lorenzo Conti, and on Sunday the 29th at the end of the session Lea Moro meets Katia Vaghi.

Thursday the 26th at 2pm, the elegant venue of Villa Ciani will host *Auditores, Spectatores, Communitas: caring for people in the dance world*. Organized in collaboration with Reso – Rete Danza Svizzera and curated by Lorenzo Conti and Simona Travaglianti, the discussion panel will feature experts from the sector including: Monica Gillette (Dramaturge and Artistic Curator Theater Freiburg and Freiburg University), Mara Loro (Research curator, cultural project manager) and Tiziana Conte (Festa Danzante Ticino). An afternoon devoted to discussing and sharing practices and tools involved in the world of the dance, art and culture of our age.

Friday, May 27th the LAC's Hall 1 will be the venue for *Notes on Choreography and Women work. How we have changed*, a discussion panel whose aim is to reflect on the role of women in the dance. Accompanied by the scholars Marisa C. Hayes and Katja Vaghi the encounter will include: Nicoletta Mongini, head of culture Fondazione Monte Verità, Chlotilde Cardinal, director of artistic programming Place des Arts Quebec, Catja Loepfe, artistic director Tanzhaus Zurich, Monica Gillette, dramaturge and artistic curator Theater Freiburg and Freiburg University, Joanna Leńnierowska,



dramaturge, author and director of Arts Station Foundation della Engadina, Elisabetta Neumann Waterhouse, researcher at the Universität Berne.

Dancing Free, a documentary about the first edition

Following the various phases of the festival's preparation and the work of creating new performances, Elettra Fiumi directed *Dancing Free*, a feature documentary that captures the making of Lugano Dance Project. *Dancing Free* uses images to talk about the creative processes of the festival's protagonists, Lea Moro, Virginie Brunelle and Annie Hanauer. Structured circularly with a narrative approach the documentary brings us closer to the three artists and explores the creative process of each of them, listening to their motivations, observing their dreams, their bodies and their movements.

Partners and collaborations

In addition to being an important platform for artists and professionals in the world of the dance, *Lugano Dance Project* represents an opportunity for new collaborations to emerge with other cultural institutions and places.

Effective cooperation with the City of Lugano's Cultural Division will continue to intensify, thanks to which the festival is embracing sites that are not usually intended for performances, thus allowing the LAC to offer non-conventional works. In order to play host to Cindy Van Acker's performance, the Società Navigazione del Lago di Lugano is modifying its spaces to meet the artist's requirements.

Franklin University Switzerland, an international university present in Switzerland for over fifty years will be the residence of the guest artists; the festival will be an occasion for students enrolled in three university courses to learn more about the artistic and historical aspects of the Monte Verità (Master of Arts in Responsible Arts Management and Cultural Heritage), those specializing in management will prepare a model Social Impact Report (Business and Management), and those in the creative fields a communication video (Communication). Finally, students of the Master of Arts in Art Management and Cultural Heritage will also be involved in curating and managing the artists' stay on the Franklin campus.

Note: Lugano Dance Project would like to announce the birth of an important new relationship with the Manitou Fund, a U.S. foundation also devoted to the world of the arts and education. Kevin and Rosemary McNeely's generous contribution have made this project become a reality. The Fondazione Lugano per il Polo Culturale confirms its increased support for the project.

Infos & Tickets

From Wednesday, March 9 is open the Online-Presale for the shows *Fables* by Virginie Brunelle, *A space for all our tomorrows* by Annie Hanauer and *Another Breath* by Lea Moro, also in the Pass formula.

The Online-Presale of site-specific performances, round tables and meetings will open soon.

For more information and updates on the program, please consult the website

www.luganodanceproject.ch

Press Contact

LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura
Ufficio Comunicazione
+41 (0)58 866 42 16
comunicazione@luganolac.ch



Project by

Michel Gagnon and Carmelo Rifici

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LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura

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