

steirischer herbst 2017

Biographies

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Mette Ingvartsen (DK)

Mette Ingvartsen, born in 1980 in Århus/Denmark, works as a choreographer and dancer. By the mid-1990s she was already taking part in several dance collaborations, subsequently studying at the Hogeschool voor der Kunsten in Amsterdam and the Performing Arts Research and Training Studios (P.A.R.T.S.) in Brussels from 1999 to 2004. In 2002 Ingvartsen presented her first independently conceived performance, "Solo Negatives"; fifteen more were to follow over the years, three of which also billed at steirischer herbst. In 2009, her pieces "GIANT CITY" and "evaporated landscapes" premièred at the festival, returning in 2014 with "7 Pleasures". Apart from her solo pieces the Danish artist also works regularly with other choreographers, including Boris Charmatz ("Expo Zero", 2010) and Xavier Le Roy ("Floor Pieces", 2010) and is also a member of the artistic team of Chris Dercon, director of Volksbühne Berlin.

//metteingvartsen.net

Simon Mayer (AT/BE)

Simon Mayer, born in 1984, works as a dancer and choreographer and as a musician and performance artist. After studying at Vienna's State Opera Ballet School and the Performing Arts, Research and Training Studios (P.A.R.T.S.) in Brussels, Mayer was a member of the State Ballet. However, his choreographic repertoire extends beyond the boundaries of classical ballet: among others, he has been involved in contemporary productions by Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, Wim Vandekeybus and Zita Swoon. Mayer also conceives and presents his own performances; his latest – "Oh Magic" – will be on show at steirischer herbst 2017. He is also a singer and song-writer for the band Rising Halfmoon, artistic director of the SPIEL festival, and a dance teacher and lecturer.

//simonmayer.at

Florentina Holzinger (AT)

Florentina Holzinger, born in Vienna in 1986, works as a dancer and theatre-maker. After studying architecture, she first moved to Ghent/Belgium to work at the Kopergieterij youth theatre before beginning to study choreography at the Amsterdam University of the Arts. Her final project "Silk" was awarded the Prix Jardin d'Europe at the ImPulsTanz festival in 2012. Holzinger's second solo piece premièred in 2015, "Recovery"; like the first, this was again a tour de force of dance and experimental art. Between 2011 and 2013 she also worked with Vincent Riebeek on a joint trilogy ("Kein Applaus für Scheiße", "Spirit", "Wellness"), a series that continued with "Schönheitsabend" in 2015. With her latest piece, "Apollon Musagète", Holzinger is now presenting her first ballet, that will be premièred in Austria at steirischer herbst.

//flohlozinger.wordpress.com

Gunilla Heilborn (SE) / Theater im Bahnhof (AT)

Gunilla Heilborn, born in Ljungby in Sweden in 1964, lives and works as a choreographer and film-maker in Stockholm. Heilborn studied film and radio studies before shifting the focus of her artistic work to dance and performance. In 2002, after graduating in choreography from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm, Heilborn

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finally presented her début piece "The Ocean is Blue". This was followed by fourteen stage works and six short films, all using elements of film, dance and theatre and set in the realm between dry humour and cinematic realism. Two of her performances – "Potato Country" (2007) and "Gorkij Park 2" (2014) – also billed at steirischer herbst; Gunilla Heilborn is returning to Graz in 2017 with her latest piece "The Wonderful and the Ordinary".

//gunillaheilborn.se

Founded in Graz, Theater im Bahnhof is the largest professional free theatre ensemble in Austria: around 20 artists work continuously on its reinvention, evoking hitherto unseen sides of the theatre concept and thus constantly redefining it. According to its own description, TiB – the ensemble's well-known abbreviation – sees itself as "contemporary folk theatre" that has located itself at the intersection between tradition and pop culture. Theater im Bahnhof has already demonstrated its diversity many times at steirischer herbst; most recently with "Black Moonshine" which was commissioned by steirischer herbst and presented in the Upper Styrian town of Vordernberg in 2015.

//theater-im-bahnhof.com

Marlene Monteiro Freitas (CV/PT)

Marlene Monteiro Freitas, born on the island of Sal/Cap Verde in 1979, works as a dancer and performance artist. Freitas studied at the Escola Superior de Dança and the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian in Lisbon and at the Performing Arts, Research and Training Studios (P.A.R.T.S.) in Brussels and has worked with Boris Charmatz, Tânia Carvalho and Emmanuelle Huynn, among others, in the course of her career. In 2005 she presented "Primeira Impressão", the first creation of her own, with ten more following over the years – including "Bacchae – Prelude to a Purge" that will be on show for the first time in Austria at steirischer herbst and which, like all of Freitas' works, is characterised by a combination of rhythmic music, mysticism and intense dance. Marlene Monteiro Freitas is also a member of the Lisbon-based P.OR.K. performance collective that she co-founded.

//cargocollective.com/marlenefreitas

Berlin (BE)

Together with light designer and film-maker Bart Baele the actors Yves Degryse and Caroline Rochlitz founded the multimedia collective Berlin in 2003. The same year, the company based in Antwerp, Belgium, began work on their "Holocene" series: choosing a city as the starting point of each performance, they go on to span a documentary network that combines elements of film, theatre and visual arts. "Jerusalem", the first instalment of "Holocene" premièred in 2004; five more followed over the years – including "Zvizdal", that is set to première in Austria at steirischer herbst.

//berlinberlin.be

Tianzhuo Chen (CN)

Tianzhuo Chen, born in Beijing in 1985, is a multidisciplinary artist who lives in Shanghai and Beijing. While still studying graphic design and fine arts in London, his works were already on show in group exhibitions in New York, Berlin and Shanghai. In 2011 he joined Xinyi Liu to present his first solo show "The Great Exhibition". Since then, his oeuvre has been constantly widening and meanwhile includes performance and video works (among others, in cooperation with Aisha Devi, who performed at steirischer herbst in 2016). These works also feature the key elements of Chen's artistic work: a colourful and grotesque aesthetic replete with references to religious, traditional practices and LGBT imagery. The latest work by Tianzhuo Chen, "An Atypical Brain Damage", is set to première at steirischer herbst.

//tianzhuochen.com

EnKnapGroup (SI)

Choreographer and dancer Iztok Kovač, born in Trbovlje/Slovenia in 1962, founded the international dance company En-Knap in 1993. One year later, the group moved from Belgium to the Slovenian capital Ljubljana, where Kovač

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launched the production firm En-Knap Productions. In 2007, finally, Kovač and En-Knap Productions presented their latest project: the EnKnapGroup. In the ten years since its foundation, the company – the only permanent ensemble for contemporary dance in Slovenia – has worked with more than thirty authors, creating twenty-five productions and also gaining fame beyond the borders of Slovenia. In 2017 the EnKnapGroup are also performing at steirischer herbst in cooperation with the Nature Theater of Oklahoma.

//en-knap.com

Yoko Shimizu (JP)

Yoko Shimizu, born in Kyoto, lives and works as a visual artist and biochemist in Tokyo. Having grown up in the United States, Shimizu was inspired by the New York art scene to mingle elements of science and art. Since studying biology and chemistry at the University of Kobe, she operates in the realm between design and nature, exhibition space and lab setting with her installations. Shimizu has presented the results of these prize-winning forays between different genres in several solo and group exhibitions – including at Ars Electronica in Linz – and will also be featuring for the first time at steirischer herbst in 2017 in the guise of her “BioDesign Lab”.

//yokoshimizu.com

Isabel Lewis (DE/US/DO)

Isabel Lewis, born in Santo Domingo/Dominican Republic in 1981, works as an interdisciplinary performance artist and cultural theorist. Lewis, who grew up in Florida, studied dance and choreography and literary studies at the Hollins University in Virginia. After graduating, she founded the New York-based performance collective Labor Union in 2004 together with Erika Hand and also began devising and staging her own pieces – including at the ImPulsTanz festival, the Frieze Art Fair London, and HAU Hebbel am Ufer Berlin. The all-round talent, who has been based in Berlin since 2009, has also worked as editor for the Movement Research Performance Journal and was curator at New York’s Dixon Place from 2005 to 2008.

Augustin Rebetez (CH) & Louis Jucker (CH)

Augustin Rebetez, born in Delémont/Switzerland in 1986, is a multidisciplinary artist who lives in the western Swiss municipality of Mervelier. In 2009 Rebetez graduated from the École de Photographie in Vevey and has been constantly widening his artistic repertory ever since: in addition to his work as a photographer, he also works as an installation and video artist and musician, also presenting his first stage production “Rentrer au volcan” in 2015. Rebetez is set to perform his latest project “The Grain Show” at steirischer herbst, his first appearance in Austria.

//augustinrebetez.com

Louis Jucker, born in La Chaux-de-Fonds/Switzerland in 1987, works as a musician and producer and as a performance and installation artist. In his role as singer, songwriter and instrumentalist, the qualified architect has given more than 500 concerts on four continents, publishing “Chinese Sketches”, his first of meanwhile seven solo recordings, in 2012. In addition to working as a musician, Jucker also regularly collaborates with visual artists including Noé Cauderay, Giona Bierens de Haan and Augustin Rebetez, developing “The Grain Show” with the latter.

//louisjucker.ch

monochrom / SHIFZ / Bureau für Philosophie (AT/DE)

Johannes Grenzfurthner and Franz Ablinger launched monochrom magazine in 1993. Just two years later, monochrom was no longer a fanzine but a multidisciplinary art and theory collective, its activities ranging from visual and stage art to programming computer games and robots. The artist association SHIFZ founded in 1996 also operates in the field of robotics, exploring the man-machine relationship. Members Magnus Wurzer and Chris Veigl founded the “Roboexotica” festival in 1999. monochrome also featured in the very first edition; since 2002 the group have been organising the festival together with SHIFZ and the Bureau für Philosophie – a joint platform of philosophers from Vienna University.

//monochrom.at //shifz.org //roboexotica.org

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Tortuga & Risograd (AT/DE)

Founded in Graz in 2013, Tortuga sees itself as a cultural association for transdisciplinary exchange and as an open, independent medium. In addition to publishing magazines – the third and most recent was launched in spring 2017, with two issues dealing with the theme of “Body” – the collective’s activities also extend to the sphere of performance and organising events. Together with the self-managed printing workshop Risograd, also founded in Graz in 2017, Tortuga is also set to feature at steirischer herbst for the first time with the workshop “Druck[t]raum”.
[//tortuga-zine.net](http://tortuga-zine.net)

J&J (CH/GB)

Jessica Huber, born in 1978, is a Zurich-based performance and installation artist. She studied choreography and dance at the Laban Centre London and City University of London before shifting the focus of her artistic work to performance art. In 2005 she co-founded the mercimax collective which won the 2012 City of Zurich Cultural Award for Theatre for its “Die Gegenüberstellung” series (2011). In 2016 Huber joined forces with British performance artist and activist James Leadbitter (alias the vacuum cleaner) to launch “The Art of a Culture of Hope” project. Under the pseudonym J&J the duo has been creating a network of performances, lectures, and workshops which will be premièring in Austria in the form of the “Tender Provocations of Hope and Fear” project.
[//jessicahuber.ch](http://jessicahuber.ch)
[//thevacuumcleaner.co.uk](http://thevacuumcleaner.co.uk)

Begüm Erciyas (BE/DE) & Matthias Meppelink (DE)

Begüm Erciyas, born in Ankara in 1982, lives and works as a choreographer in Berlin. While still studying molecular biology and genetics in Ankara Erciyas took part in several dance projects and became a member of the [laboratuar] performance collective. She subsequently studied at the Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance and won the ImPulsTanz danceWEB scholarship in 2006. The following year she presented “sites”, the first of meanwhile eight performances. Her latest work, “Voicing Pieces”, will have its Austrian première at steirischer herbst. Apart from her work as a solo artist Erciyas is also a member of the Sweet & Tender Collaborations artist collective.
[//begumerciyas.com](http://begumerciyas.com)

Matthias Meppelink, born in 1982, is a Berlin-based performance artist, dramaturg, musician and light designer. In 2005 he co-founded the Monster Truck performance collective while still studying applied theatre studies at the Justus Liebig University Gießen. As of 2007 he has collaborated regularly with Boris Nikitin (most recently in 2017 on “Hamlet”), Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt and Susanne Zaun in addition to his work with Monster Truck. “Voicing pieces” is Meppelink’s first collaboration with choreographer Begüm Erciyas.

Jaha Koo (KR/BE/NL)

Jaha Koo, born in Junjoo/South Korea in 1984, is an Amsterdam-based multimedia artist and musician. He studied theatre studies at the Korea National University of Arts in Seoul and at DasArts in Amsterdam and had his début performance in 2010 with “Topsy-turvy Ensemble”. Since then Koo has conceived and mounted five more pieces, all of which oscillate between multimedia art and performance art, including “Cuckoo” which is set to première in Austria at the steirischer herbst festival. In addition, he works as an electronic musician and has released four albums under the pseudonym GuJAHA, most recently in 2015 (“Copper and Oyster”). Koo has also conceived an exhibition (“Temporary Object Theatre”, 2011) and collaborated on the film “Gunsan” (2012) as director, editor, and sound designer.
[//gujaha.com](http://gujaha.com)

Laia Fabre (ES/AT) & Thomas Kasebacher (AT)

Laia Fabre, born in Barcelona, works as a choreographer and visual artist in Vienna. She studied art and design at the University of Barcelona as well as fine arts and education in the arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Her artistic

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work focuses on dance in combination with installation art. In 2007, after collaborations with Anne Juren, nadaproductions and Krzysztof Kaczmarek, among others, Fabre founded the notfoundyet collective together with Thomas Kasebacher. 2007 also saw the première of the duo's first joint piece ("Second Life"). During steirischer herbst, they will organise one of their "Social Muscle Clubs" for the first time.

Thomas Kasebacher is a performance artist, video artist, choreographer, and visual artist who lives and works in Vienna. He studied comparative literature in Innsbruck and performing arts in Liverpool before relocating to Vienna. Collaborations with Kate McIntosh and The Loose Collective, among others. In 2007 he joined forces with Laia Fabre to launch the multidisciplinary performance collective notfoundyet with which he has been producing numerous pieces both in Austria and abroad. Kasebacher, who has also lectured at Yale University, is currently completing a master's degree at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm.

//notfoundyet.net

Benjamin Verdonck (BE)

Benjamin Verdonck, born in Antwerp/Belgium in 1972, lives and works as a performance artist, theatre maker and visual artist in his native town. He studied drama at the Koninklijk Conservatorium in Antwerp and began to shift the emphasis of his artistic work from drama to performance art and into public space in the early 2000s. His most well-known public pieces include "Bara/ke 2000" (2000) and "Hirondelle/Dooi Vogeltje/The Great Swallow" (2004) as well as "KALENDER 09 (365 dagen actie in Antwerpen)" (2009). The latter was initiated by the artist and consisted of a series of public artistic performances mounted in the City of Antwerp for 365 successive days. However, Verdonck has also staged his pieces in traditional theatre settings, including "notallwhowanderarelost" for the 2014 steirischer herbst festival.

//benjamin-verdonck.be

Nature Theater of Oklahoma (US)

In 2006 Pavol Liska and Kelly Copper founded the Nature Theater of Oklahoma which has grown into one of the United States' most famous Off-Off-Broadway groups. The 'OK Theater' swiftly evolved into a multimedia ensemble, effortlessly oscillating between traditional theatre, comics and animation art as well as film and winning the Obie Award in 2008 and 2013. All these elements coalesced in the group's monumental work "Life and Times", its nine episodes shattering the boundaries between fiction and real life. Unsettling and intimate, the group's artistic work seeks to fully absorb the visitors' attention, thus challenging their perception of reality. Nature Theater of Oklahoma have been part of the steirischer herbst festival four times – and they are returning for a fifth time in 2017 with their adaption of Elfriede Jelinek's "Die Kinder der Toten" (The Children of the Dead).

//oktheater.org

Elfriede Jelinek (AT)

Elfriede Jelinek, born in Mürzzuschlag in 1946, lives and works in Munich. She counts among the most eminent authors of her time and was the first Austrian writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2004. Jelinek began her career as a writer in the 1960s: starting out as a poet she completed her debut novel "Bukolit" in 1968 (which would, however, not be published until 1979). Since then she has written ten more novels, including "Die Kinder der Toten" (The Children of the Dead, 1995) which is deemed to be her magnum opus. All novels are characterised by Jelinek's powerful style of writing and their political and socio-critical focus. In addition to her prose work, she has authored numerous essays, scripts, and radio plays as well as more than thirty plays, including the "Prinzessinnendramen" which billed at the steirischer herbst festival in 2002.

//elfriedejelinek.com

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Wolfgang Mitterer (AT)

Wolfgang Mitterer, born in Lienz in 1958, is a Vienna-based composer and sound artist. He studied at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna (organ, composition) and the Elektronmusikstudion/EMS in Stockholm (electroacoustics). Since then Mitterer has been regarded as one of Austria's most significant contemporary musicians. Focusing on electronic music and improvised music, he has already collaborated with outstanding figures of the genre, including David Liebman and Christian Fennesz. In addition to his work as a composer and session musician Mitterer has also created a number of sound installations, collages and soundtracks. Several of his pieces have been presented at the steirischer herbst festival, most recently in 2002 as part of the "Ground Zero" project.
[//wolfgangmitterer.com](http://wolfgangmitterer.com)

Marko Lulić (AT)

Marko Lulić was born in Vienna in 1972 and lives and works as a multidisciplinary artist in the Austrian capital. Lulić grew up in Austria and Croatia and studied at the University of Applied Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Since then he has dedicated his artistic practice to the deconstruction of forms, signs and monuments and to modernism's ideological legacy in Eastern and Western Europe, with presentations of his works in New York, Sydney and Zagreb, among other places. In addition to his work as a visual artist, which has gained him such prizes as the Kardinal König Art Prize in 2009, Lulić works as a teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Vajiko Chachkhiani (GE/DE)

Vajiko Chachkhiani, born in Tbilisi/Georgia in 1985, is a Berlin-based visual artist. Chachkhiani initially studied mathematics and information science at the Technical University in Tbilisi before relocating to the audiovisual department at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam in 2008. The following year he had his first solo exhibition ("Trap") and took up his studies at Berlin University of the Arts, graduating in 2013 with the piece "The Gift". Since then he has presented his work in six more solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group exhibitions. Chachkhiani, who designed the Georgian pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale, is set to show one of his works for the first time in Austria as part of steirischer herbst.

Walid Raad (US/LB)

Walid Raad, born in Chbanieh/Lebanon in 1967, is a visual artist based in New York City where he works, among other things, as a teacher at the Cooper Union School of Art. Raad left his home country in the early 1980s and studied photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology as well as cultural and visual studies at the University of Rochester. In 1999 he founded the Atlas Group, a multimedia archive which examines the contemporary history of Lebanon from a non-traditionalist perspective and combines elements of photography, video art and installation art, the latter a characteristic feature of the multimedia artist's practice. In addition to solo exhibitions at MoMA and the Louvre, Raad has participated, inter alia, in the Venice Biennale and the documenta in Kassel, receiving the Camera Austria Award in 2005 and the Hasselblad Award in 2011.

Dorit Chrysler (AT/US)

Dorit Chrysler, born in Graz in 1966, is a musician, producer and composer who lives in New York City, Graz, and Copenhagen. Chrysler started her musical career at the age of seven as a member of the Graz Opera children's choir. When she was eighteen she moved to New York City where she founded, among other things, the Halcion band and collaborated with Dinosaur Jr., Lee Hazelwood and Trentemøller. A multi-instrumentalist, she co-founded the New York Theremin Society and established the KidCoolThereminSchool, the first Theremin school for children in the United States. Dorit Chrysler has presented several of her pieces at steirischer herbst, most recently in 2016 when she joined forces with Incesticide for the festival's opening concert.

[//doritchrysler.com](http://doritchrysler.com)

[//kidcoolthereminschool.com](http://kidcoolthereminschool.com)

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