

# Berlin Performing Arts Festival

May 25 – 30, 2021



Press Release, March 30, 2021

## A Digital-Hybrid Reunion with the Independent Performing Arts Community

From May 25 to 30, 2021, the citywide Berlin Performing Arts Festival will present over 60 productions ranging across all genres of the independent performing arts. For one week, the sixth edition of the festival, which is organized by LAFT Berlin – Berlin State Association for the Independent Performing Arts e.V. each year, will showcase the diversity of the independent performing arts community with artistic work from the fields of performance, dance, music theater, figure and object theater, contemporary circus, children's and youth theater and much more. Digital and hybrid formats, audio walks and open-air events invite the audience to explore the city and, in the light of the pandemic, have safe encounters in digital space.

In *Contributions from the Community*, a vibrant independent performing arts community presents itself as it conquers new artistic spaces. With *Introducing...*, the festival offers selected newcomers a platform, while *PAF Campus* invites students at a variety of institutions of higher education in Berlin to discover works whose integral component is digital. The *PAF & Friends Visit* allows an exchange to be conducted with artists from six partner festivals from other German states and the European festival network *Bridging the Scenes* will also come together to discuss current questions regarding international mobility. With the *Audio Tour of the Performance Venues* and on *PAF Radio*, interested parties can immerse themselves deeply into the backgrounds of the independent performing arts community despite the pandemic.

The *opening* of the week-long festival will be digitally transmitted live from Chamäleon Theater. Depending upon the state of the pandemic, an *open-air festival garden* is planned for guests and the audience in Circus Schatzinsel. Each day, selected events will be put on here as public viewings or as programming for visiting industry professionals.

The heart of the festival is formed by *Contributions from the Community*, where a vital and solidary independent performing arts community presents itself as it discovers, tests out and conquers new artistic spaces. The tremendous diversity of the community is clearly evident in the submissions made by the independent performance venues together with the artists and groups. The spatial separation from the audience and the continuously streaming digital contact provoke other spaces for negotiation. Seldom has the collective body yearned so much for contact and touch. This yearning is reflected in the variability, vibrancy and fragility of a schedule of programming that asks: what does the space we live in look like?

With *Introducing...*, the festival provides a platform for newcomers to Berlin's independent performing arts community. Productions will be presented that work creatively with the conditions of the pandemic and find new artistic methods for safely bringing audience and artists into contact. Together with Ballhaus Ost, HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Sophiensæle and TD Berlin, selected productions will be presented, and artistic newcomers will be accompanied in their work with advice and exchanges. The selection made from the 94 applications will be announced in April 2021.

On the *Audio Tour of the Performance Venues*, interested members of the audience can become acquainted with the diverse locations of the independent performing arts community. The audio tour will give an impression of how it feels to work behind closed doors without an audience. The individual contributions that make up the tour

### Dates

May 25-30, 2021

### Location

Berlin, various performance venues

### Website

[www.performingarts-festival.de/en](http://www.performingarts-festival.de/en)

### PR

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### Press Downloads

[www.artefakt-berlin.de/pressecenter](http://www.artefakt-berlin.de/pressecenter)

### Organizer

**LAFT BERLIN** Landesverband freie darstellende Künste Berlin e.V.

### Funded by

Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa | **berlin** Berlin



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can be listened to directly on location at the performance venues, while walking between venues or online on the festival website. With **PAF Radio**, the festival offers exciting audio experiences each morning with reports, anecdotes and a preview of the coming day of the festival.

Students from Bard College Berlin, the Free University of Berlin, the Inter-University Centre for Dance (HZT) Berlin, the Berlin University of Technology and the Berlin University of the Arts have the opportunity to explore the festival, its schedule of programming and the various performance venues of the independent performing arts community during **PAF Campus**. In doing so, the focus will be placed on projects that have made digitalism an explicit part of their aesthetic and in which the digital is an essential part of how the respective project functions.

During **PAF & Friends Visit**, artists from the regions of the six partner festivals will be invited. *Festival Friends* is an initiative of the association of regional performing arts festivals, consisting of the Berlin Performing Arts Festival, 6 Tage frei (Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg), Hauptsache Frei (Hamburg), RODEO (Munich), FAVORITEN (Dortmund, North Rhine-Westphalia) and IMPLANTIEREN (Frankfurt am Main, Rhein-Main area).

The European festival network **Bridging the Scenes** connects PAF in Berlin with the ACT Festival for Independent Theater in Sofia, the Malá Inventura festival in Prague and the Selected Works Festival in Copenhagen. The network meeting will be focused on questions of international mobility, the visibility of artists and attracting an audience.

In the publication **Andere Räume (Other Spaces)**, which will be available from the publisher Verlag Theater der Zeit beginning in mid-April, 33 of Berlin's independent performing arts venues are profiled. With this, the editorial is making a first attempt to depict the independent spaces for the performing arts in all of their variety.

All plans can be realized under all possible conditions that could be put in place to fight the pandemic, ranging from analog with changed protective measures to purely digital events as well as hybrids in between. After all, the form does not determine the content.

**All tickets will be sold by the performance venues.**

**The complete schedule of programming as well as additional information will be available from the end of April or beginning of May 2021 at:**  
[www.performingarts-festival.de](http://www.performingarts-festival.de)

**We are happy to coordinate interviews and background discussions with:**

**Leoni Grützmaker, Anne Hirth, Nora Wagner**  
PAF Festival Team

**Janina Benduski**  
LAFT Program Director

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