

sasha waltz & guests



»In C«, Sasha Waltz & Guests, Terry Riley, Ensemble ©Jo Glinka 2021

Press Kit

In C
Sasha Waltz & Guests
Terry Riley

World premiere on a live stream Livestream from the Radialsystem, Berlin
March 6th 2021

In 2021, the dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests began an innovative artistic process that results in the continuous production of both digital and live formats. Terry Riley's »In C« (1964) forms the musical foundation of this, an open composition that was revolutionary at the time and is generally considered the first piece of minimalist music. Based on this milestone of music history, Sasha Waltz and her dancers developed choreographic material that follows a similarly variable structure and is deliberately designed not to be a finished stage piece. In March 2021 »In C« was performed for the first time on a livestream from the Radialsystem in Berlin to the sound of a recording from 2001 (Cantaloupe Music) by »Bang on a Can« using amplified instruments from all over the world.

»The score of »In C« consists of fifty-three musical phrases and reads like stage directions for musicians. The thought of translating these detailed instructions into dance through a choreographic exploration of the music appealed to me. The result is an experimental system of fifty-three choreographic figures for a structured improvisation with clear rules and laws. The length of the piece remains variable, as does the number of musicians and dancers. »In C« is also a very democratic score, because it gives freedom to the individual dancer within the ensemble: It is a piece about being part of a group as an individual rather than being an individual within a group. »In C« is a dynamic, modular system that remains adaptable in times of pandemic. It is an exciting challenge to be able to develop so many different variations and formats from it in the future, both for professional dancers and, in the long term, for children and amateurs.«

Sasha Waltz

»In C« is an experimental, constantly evolving process that once again reconceives and refines Sasha Waltz & Guests' long-standing approach as well as the dialogue between dance, music and space, both digitally and in real life. At the same time, it explores the potential of flexible artistic production in times of pandemic and of artistic exchange, even across national borders. F.e. the individual movement phrases have been recorded as video tutorials, which allows dancers to learn the choreographic material digitally and remotely.

Cast

Concept / Light / Choreography

Sasha Waltz

Costum

Jasmin Lepore

Light

Olaf Danilsen

Concept / Dramaturgy

Jochen Sandig

Dance / Choreography

Sasha Waltz & Guests

Biographien

Sasha Waltz

Konzept / Licht / Choreographie

Sasha Waltz is a choreographer, dancer and director. After her first studies at the School of New Dance Development in Amsterdam she joined the postmodern oriented New York City dance scene that worked in interdisciplinary exchange with the other arts. In 1986 and 1987 she danced in the New York based companies of Pooh Kaye, Yoshiko Chumo & School of Hard Knocks and Lisa Kraus & Dancers. Following her return to Europe in 1988 she began an intensive phase of collaborations with choreographers, artists and musicians. In 1992 she came to Berlin with a grant by the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, where she developed the improvisational format »Dialogue« driven by the spirit of her interdisciplinary and international work. She chose the young German capital as the center of her activities where she practiced new choreographic approaches in self-developed infrastructures. Together with Jochen Sandig she founded the dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests in 1993 and in 1996 the Sophiensaele as a venue for dance and more, nowadays a center of the independent dance and theatre scene not only in Germany. From 2000-2004 she was one of the directors of the Schaubühne at Lehniner Platz. In the season 2019/20 Sasha Waltz was director of the Berlin State Ballet together with Johannes Öhman.

During her first decade in Berlin she created internationally renowned and influential dance pieces such as the trilogies »Travelogue« and »Körper« as well as the immersive dance installation »insideout«. In the following years she applied the language and strategies of contemporary dance to vitalize and explore historical and new operas and ballets. With »Dido & Aeneas« (2005), »Medea« (2007) and »Matsukaze« (2011) she realized three pieces about women and at the same time established the genre of the choreographic opera. In 2007 she directed »Romeo et Juliette«, interpreting the dramatic symphony of Hector Berlioz, for the Opéra national de Paris. From this followed »Sacre« in 2013 set to the Music of Stravinsky commissioned by the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, and in 2014 »Tannhäuser« at the Staatsoper Berlin conducted by Daniel Barenboim. Simultaneously Sasha Waltz has been pursuing the sharing and teaching of dance knowledge and promoting dance as a medium of social and sociopolitical communication. As part of this endeavor, she founded the Berlin based »Kindertanzcompany« (Children's Dance Company) in 2007 and, following an invitation from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, developed a choreography with over 100 pupils to dance Schtschedrin's Carmen-Suite. In 2016 she founded the event format »ZUHÖREN« with which she opened a »third space« for art and politics. She expanded the »Dialogue«-concept to incorporate danced responses to architecture wherein the audience is invited to act as an equal part of the choreographic happening. Examples of this are »Dialogue 99/II« in the new construction of the Jewish Museum in Berlin by Daniel Libeskind, »Dialogue 09« performed in the still vacant interior of the Neues Museum in Berlin after the renovation by David Chipperfield (2009) and the choreographic installation »Figure humaine« for the inauguration of the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie (2017). In her present choreographic work, Waltz is focusing on the intensification of collaborative processes, such as the synchronic development of choreography and music. In collaboration with Soundwalk Collective and the costume designer Iris van Herpen (among others) she created the choreography »Kreatur« (2017) followed by the work »Exodos« (August 2018), both premiered at Radialsystem in Berlin. In early 2019 the project »rauschen« received its world premiere at the Volksbühne Berlin. On March 13th, 2022 »SYM-PHONIE MMXX«, a piece for dance, light and orchestra by Sasha Waltz and Georg Friedrich Haas, received its world premiere at Staatsoper Unter den Linden.

In 2020 Sasha Waltz reacted to the challenges of the Corona pandemic with different projects on- and offline. From March to June 2020 she published an online »dance diary«, developed the open air project »Dialogue 2020 – Relevante Systeme« in August premiering a choreography to Maurice Ravel's »Boléro« as well as solos to Georg Friedrich Haas' »I can't breathe« and in December streamed a series of improvisations with the title »Dialogue 2020 – Relevante Systeme II« live from the Radialsystem in Berlin. In 2021 Sasha Waltz' latest choreographic work »In C« to the composition by the same name of Terry Riley received its online premiere on a livestream from the Radialsystem Berlin before it was performed in front of an audience for the first time during the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiel. In June 2021 a choreography by Sasha Waltz to Beethoven's Symphony no. 7 received its world premiere in the frame of ARTE's Beethoven day, broadcast live from the ancient Apollo temple in Delphi together with musicAeterna under the baton of Teodor Currentzis.

In 2011, Sasha Waltz was awarded the Bundesverdienstkreuz am Bande for her special services to the cultural field. Since 2013, she is a member of the Akademie der Künste Berlin. In 2021, Sasha Waltz was awarded a »Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres« by France, and in 2024 she received the German Dance Award. In May 2025, Sasha Waltz will be awarded the Helmut Schmidt Prize; this award honours international personalities who, through their significant work, stand for democracy and the common good.

Sasha Waltz & Guests

Tanz / Choreographie

The dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests was founded by Sasha Waltz and Jochen Sandig in Berlin in 1993 and in 2023 celebrated its 30th anniversary. To date, numerous artists and ensembles from the fields of architecture, visual arts, choreography, film, design, literature, fashion and music from more than 60 countries have collaborated as »Guests« on over 100 productions, »Dialogue« projects and films. Sasha Waltz & Guests works in a constantly evolving international and national network of production and guest performance partners, and since its foundation in 1993 has performed at over 300 venues and festivals in more than 50 countries and 180 cities. Today, the company is showing its current repertoire of 12 active pieces in about 80 performances each year. In Berlin, the company cooperates with a wide range of municipal theatres, opera houses and museums and has contributed to establishing new cultural institutions, such as Sophiensæle (1996), St. Elisabeth-Kirche (2004) and Radialsystem (2006). In 2013, the company was named »European Cultural Ambassador« by the European Union. In 2014, Sasha Waltz & Guests was awarded the »Tabori Ehrenpreis« by the Fonds Darstellende Künste. Apart from Berlin stagings, national and international guest performances and the continual work on the repertoire, Sasha Waltz & Guests has been increasingly committed to educational and social projects. In 2006, the »Kinder- und Jugendtanzcompany« (Children and Youth Dance Company) was founded and since 2016 the interdisciplinary and open exchange platform titled »ZUHÖREN« has served as a »third space for art and politics«. Alongside these initiatives, the company continues to propose diverse offers in the field of knowledge transfer. For almost 20 years now, in the »Kinder- und Jugendtanzcompany« young people have been taught dance and movement in a playful manner by dancers from Sasha Waltz & Guests – there are now around 100 children and young people attending each week. The young dancers regularly develop their own dance pieces together with their trainers, which are performed in an annual showing at Berlin's Radialsystem in front of a paying audience and under professional conditions. Three of these productions have already been honoured with invitations to the Tanztreffen der Jugend at the Berliner Festspiele and other children's and youth festivals such as Rampenlichter in Munich. Since 2015, Sasha Waltz & Guests has regularly opened its studio at the Radialsystem and its morning dance training sessions to Berlin's independent dance scene in various formats.

A workshop programme for professional dancers and, since 2025, the »Open Studio: Stage« format, in which performers from the independent scene can present their work to an audience, complement the programme offered in our studio.

With the work »In C«, based on Terry Riley's open composition of the same name, a system with an internationally growing community has been developing since spring 2021: the choreographic material was recorded in video tutorials to enable the easy transfer of knowledge. As a result, participatory, diverse, international and sustainable »In C« projects, workshop formats and ever-new structures have emerged worldwide.



A Production by Sasha Waltz & Guests. Made in Radialsystem.

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