16 BIT

Paula Rosolen / Haptic Hide

DOSSIER

Paula Rosolen/Haptic Hide presents a contemporary dance project exploring techno as a rhythmic code and a cultural phenomenon

CAST AND CREW

Idea, Choreography, Direction:
Paula Rosolen

Concept:
Paula Rosolen, J.M. Fiebelkorn

Music:
Nicolas Fehr, featuring excerpts
of the track „Where Are You?"
by 16 BIT

Created with and danced by:
Daniel Conant, Felipe Faria,
Steven Fast, Kyle Patrick,
Steph Quinci,
Capucine Schattleitner

Lighting design and Technical
Management:
Tanja Rühl

Costumes:
Anika Alischewski, J.M. Fiebelkorn

Choreographic Assistant:
Christopher Matthews

Research:
Oli Warwick

Sound Engineer:
Mauro Zannoli

Graphic Design & Visuals:
Yukako Sano, J.M. Fiebelkorn

PR:
Ronja Merkel, Kathrin Schäfer

Production Management:
Dominga Ortuzar Bullemore

Company Management &
Fundraising:
Paula Rosolen

Distribution:
Otto Productions

ABOUT THE PIECE

16 BIT is a new contemporary dance production exploring the unique circumstances that allowed techno to become an artform and social phenomenon.

Emerging from a decades-deep transatlantic cultural exchange, techno has given voice and purpose to marginalised communities, incubated scientific experimentation and courted the avant-garde through technological and cultural revolutions. It's an Afrofuturist expression for the Black community in Detroit, and it embodied liberation and reunification as the Berlin wall fell.

16 BIT absorbs these ideas and examines the evolution of techno from the ill-defined, DIY landscape of 1980s electronic music through to the globally recognised genre that heralded the early 90s. As a performance, 16 BIT expresses the inherent energy of techno's progressive arc in movement, embodying the music's physicality and depicting the perseverance and exhaustion of the collective body as their symbolic, socially-charged dancefloor virtuosity takes on a hypnotic dimension.

16 BIT

POWER ● — ON

PERFORMANCES

13 MAY 2022 | PREMIERE | Künstlerhaus Mousonturm | Frankfurt, DE
14 MAY 2022 | Künstlerhaus Mousonturm | Frankfurt, DE
15 MAY 2022 | Künstlerhaus Mousonturm
17 MAY 2022 | MUNICH PREMIERE | Schwere Reiter | Munich, DE
18 MAY 2022 | Schwere Reiter | Munich, DE
19 JUN 2022 | OPEN AIR VERSION | Familie Montez e.V | Frankfurt, DE
21 JUN 2022 | OPEN AIR VERSION | MOMEM – Museum of Modern Electronic Music |
Frankfurt, DE
-- FEB 2023 | Tanzhaus NRW | Düsseldorf, DE (TBC)

DOCUMENTATION

DURATION: 60 min

TEASER OF THE SHOW: https://vimeo.com/724393855

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Haptic Hide (Frankfurt/ Munich) was founded in 2015 by Paula Rosolen and functions as a flexible, mobile, open structure to promote, produce and coordinate collaborations with various artists and institutions. Haptic Hide works nationally in Germany and internationally with theatres, mainly in Europe, South America and Asia.
www.haptic-hide.com

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHER & DIRECTOR

In her choreographic pieces, Paula Rosolen explores the intersection of dance, performance, music and theatre, drawing a line between the arts and a more universal vision of dance inherent in popular culture and everyday life.

Her subjects are always approached from a distinct point of view and intentionally placed in a foreign context. In Aerobics! – A Ballet in 3 Acts (2015), for example, she examined the unique phenomenon around fitness training developed for the U.S. Air Force which became a worldwide form of exercise. For this work, she was awarded first prize at international competition Danse Élargie, organized by the Théâtre de la Ville in Paris and the Musée de la Danse in Rennes. She was also invited to the 2016 German Dance Platform. In Puppets (2016), PUNK (2018) and FLAGS (2020) she continued to set her focus on peripheral topics in dance with a universal relatability.

Rosolen studied dance at Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts and completed a master's degree in choreography at Justus Liebig University in Giessen. As an author, choreographer and director she has created original work and staged performances at several theatre houses and festivals. Her work has been shown at deSingel Arts Campus in Antwerp, Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, Theaterfestival Basel, Musée de la Danse in Rennes, European Festival for Contemporary Dance in Poland, Centro Cultural de la Cooperación in Buenos Aires, DPAC Kuala Lumpur, BE Festival in Birmingham, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm in Frankfurt, HELLERAU – European Center for the Arts, TD Berlin, the Sophiensæle in Berlin, ZKM Karlsruhe, Museum Wiesbaden, Kampnagel in Hamburg, at the Cologne Opera and at Dance New Air Festival in Tokyo.

In addition to these performances, Rosolen has also held residencies at K3 Center for Choreography in Hamburg, Workspace Brussels, Hessian State Ballet, Goethe-Institute's Villa Kamogawa in Kyoto and at Saison Foundation in Tokyo.

ABOUT 16 BIT

16 BIT explores techno as a social, political, and cultural phenomenon, and the unique circumstances that allowed it to happen. The project focuses on techno music and its subculture – its implicit rules, its aesthetics, minimal movements, and the relationship between techno dance traditions and contemporary dance and choreography.

As well as referring to the technology which democratized music production in the 1980s, 16 BIT's name is a reference to the dance music project formed by producer duo Luca Anzilotti and Michael Münzig, creators of the 1986 hit single "Where Are You?", recorded with Sven Väth, which reached number 11 in the German charts.

16 BIT is an energetic performance for six dancers. Its basis is a combination of movements that are likely to hold particular resonance for people with their own experiences of techno and dance music culture. However, these movements are not exclusively the minimalist and repetitive techno dance patterns commonly found on the dancefloor. In this piece, the original mechanisms of techno – the rhythms, motifs and creative intentions of the musical pioneers – are the object of investigation. They are analyzed and brought to the stage, and ultimately presented as a choral, tension-filled and groovy movement that emerged from this core idea during the research and rehearsal process.

In contrast to previous productions of Paula Rosolen/Haptic Hide, the choreographic work began for the first time with an already existing piece of music. During the music composition process, the song "Where Are You?" was analyzed, varied and remixed to reflect the developments in music that have taken place since it was released. The new original musical score developed by Nicolas Fehr, uses fragments from "Where Are You?", evolving from early proto-techno music production from the mid-1980s to the more established sound of the mid-1990s.

During the musical development of the piece, references were used from genres and scenes intrinsic to the evolution of what we know as techno; industrial, synth pop and EBM, Belgian new beat, early Chicago house, acid house, Detroit techno, Frankfurt and Berlin's early interpretations of techno, Trance, happy hardcore and Dutch gabber to create a new, original soundtrack, which transforms but never stops and which is intrinsic to the dance.

The music of "Where Are You?" was not only remixed, but Sven Väth's movement vocabulary in the track's music video was used as a starting point for developing new movement material.

Rosolen, in close collaboration with electronic music journalist and researcher Oli Warwick, conducted interviews with people engaged in the early developments of techno culture in different parts of the world. These interviews served the overall development of the work, and certain elements from these interviews also became part of the soundtrack of the performance. For the choreographic work Rosolen also drew on archive video footage from raves, TV programmes, and also on verbal descriptions from the interviewees.

During the whole performance the audience has the opportunity to be an active observer and embody the music's physicality and groove. With this in mind, the makers considered scientific studies which show that techno music is associated with a significant increase in heart rate and systolic blood pressure, with substantial changes in emotional states. In this sense, theatre also becomes a laboratory to examine the emotional and physiological impact of techno.

THE FORMAT OF 16 BIT

The piece was created for a black box with naked walls. As with most previous Haptic Hide works – Puppets, Aerobics!, FLAGS – there are characteristics in the choreography that have a kaleidoscopic, hypnotic effect. These pieces are designed with a bird's eye view in mind, allowing the audience to see the dancers' floor pattern. Beyond these similarities in approach, each Haptic Hide production has its own distinctive style and physicality.

Music and fashion are intrinsically linked as subculture codes. Techno has had a unique, sometimes vague, aesthetic over the years. The costumes in 16 BIT stylize the essence of the 80s, including large and wide shoulder pads inspired from sports, fashion and science fiction. The color pallet reflects the common associations with technology of the time: blue, red, gold, black and shiny textures. It also comments on the transient nature of music signifiers, avoiding specific dress codes from modern nightclubs. The sense of liberation and lack of inhibition common in rave environments in the 90s encouraged the use of synthetic fabrics.

16 BIT is the third collaboration between Tanja Rühl and Haptic Hide after Aerobics! - A Ballet in 3 Acts (2015) and FLAGS (2020). Rühl's lighting concept serves as an abstraction which evokes the dynamics of club lighting in comparison to the more static lighting typically found in theatre settings. The stage itself is set as a sterile environment with just a shiny dance floor, offering a neutral space for her visual production to become a pictorial chiaroscuro.

THE THEMES OF 16 BIT

Although techno is a movement originating in the 80s, as a global musical culture it's still very much alive and continuing to progress. Our goal is to take a closer look at techno as a fluid, ever-evolving form, and also reinterpret it. This continues the traditionally experimental nature of techno, whereby the formative tropes of the music are used as a starting point for myriad interpretations and expressions by successive generations of artists. By focusing on the communal dance experience, the social relevance of techno today becomes visible.

One clear example is that techno functions as „social glue." East German DJ Paul van Dyk paid attention to this aspect with his statement that the techno-based rave scene was a significant force in restoring social ties between East and West Germany during the period of reunification. Across all kinds of fabled scenes in different parts of the world, raves were seen as groundbreaking, neutral spaces where different classes, races and creeds could interact freely and without judgement. The act of freeform dancing in this context can be viewed as a great surrendering of the ego, where there were no rules by which to judge the quality of the movement and so every person was free to move as they pleased without fear of reprisal or rejection.

Techno emerged as a global music and youth culture that left all borders behind. Across multiple generations, many people have personal experiences related to electronic dance music, and have their own idea of what techno is. It creates a special kind of connection for members of the audience who already know the subject. Sven Väth, who has written himself into dance music history thanks to his craftsmanship and charisma, said;

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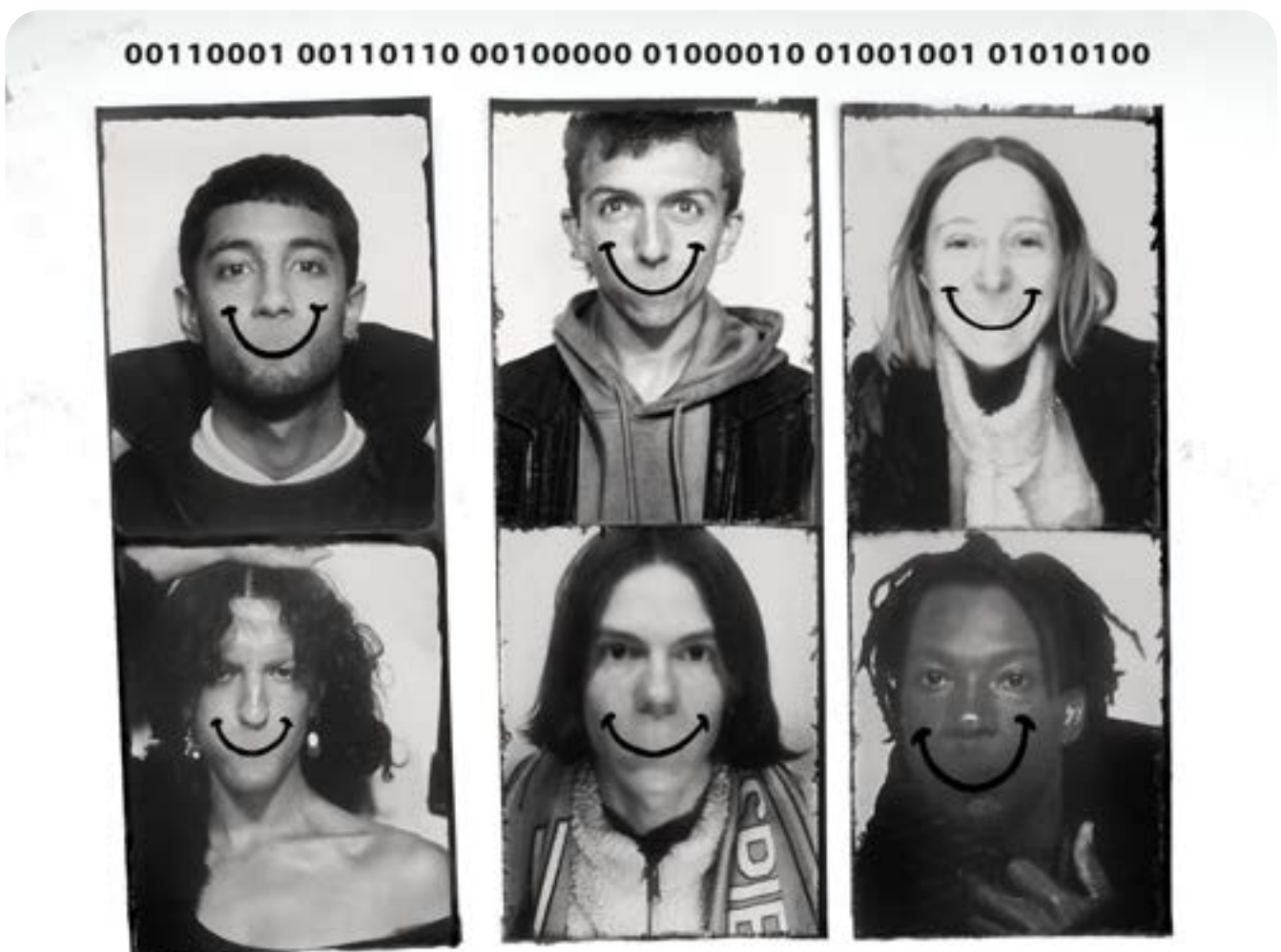
"I go everywhere - Tokyo, Paris, Helsinki. And everywhere I go, people understand my music. I try to give them something, and they give me something back - it's a kind of reflection. And together we create a very special atmosphere."

The different possible readings of the music and choreography make the piece attractive to both general audiences and specialized dance and theatre audiences. The aim is to encourage a diversified, less elitist audience. The topic of techno is increasingly universal as, generationally, more and more people can relate to the dancefloor experience of electronic music, which creates the potential for a deeper, more meaningful connection from the audience to the piece.

In the true spirit of techno, pop culture and the avant-garde are not at odds with each other in 16 BIT. Rather, they form a synthesis. The goal is to develop a new concept that is relevant to the current zeitgeist and also has a specific meaning for the individual.

Past Haptic Hide productions Aerobics! - A Ballet in 3 Acts, Puppets, Punk? and FLAGS have a similar approach to understanding choreography as 16 BIT. By deconstructing and reconstructing something that already exists to analyze the essential inherent structure, we create an entirely new work that recognizably retains that structure.

COOPERATING PARTNERS / INSTITUTIONS

Haptic Hide gUG | Frankfurt and Munich, DE
Künstlerhaus Mousonturm | Frankfurt, DE
Tanzplattform Rhein Main | RM Region, DE
Ballet national de Marseille | Marseille, FR
Cultural Department of the City of Munich | Munich, DE
Hessian Ministry of Science and the Arts | Hessen, DE
Tanzbüro Munich | Munich, DE
Tanztendenz München e.V.| Munich, DE
schwere reiter tanz | Munich, DE
Cultural Office Frankfurt | Frankfurt, DE
DIEHL+RITTER, TANZPAKT RECONNECT| DE

CONTACT

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