



GE HOW TO
(MAKE) DANCE
TO IN BERLIN

A TOOLBOX FOR A BETTER **WORK CULTURE** IN THE **INDEPENDENT DANCE SCENE**

HOW TO (MAKE) DANCE IN BERLIN

BY **AG WORK CULTURE** AND **GUESTS**

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The following material results from a collaborative process of the “Work Culture” working group - a bottom-up initiative operating within the contemporary dance association **Zeitgenössischer Tanz Berlin e.V.** Since the 1st of March 2021, a group of more than twenty cultural workers - representing freelancers and employees of art institutions connected to the local independent (German: freie = free) dance scene - has been meeting on a regular and voluntary basis online and offline to map the challenges of Berlin’s work life and to share strategies that could make workplaces in Berlin closer to what we believe in and want to be a part of. The process consisted of critical self-reflection, discussions about interdependencies within the scene (while agreeing that the power is not distributed equally), and aimed at inspecting and softening the relational gaps between artists and institutions and imagining new ways of collaboration between the **different actors** in the dance field.

We invite people from the scene to expand on the existing material, share their ideas and add further useful resources to the document. An editable Google Doc version of this booklet is available **here**.

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Berlin's independent dance scene

Berlin's independent dance scene (German: freie Tanzszene) operates via decentralized production processes. So what does that mean? Dance productions are mostly realized on a project basis with creators often acting as the producers of their own work and relying for the most part on an infrastructure of freelancers. The professional landscape consists of dancers, choreographers, producers, curators, dramaturgs, set-, light-, sound- and costume designers, as well as artists of other disciplines. Creation processes often happen in collaboration with institutions, production houses, independent theatres, festivals and art spaces. There is currently no one institution in Berlin that can be considered as the centre for dance. However, political initiatives such as the Runder Tisch Tanz further developed the interest to found a central house for dance in Berlin with their **"Haus für Tanz und Choreografie"** working group in 2018.

In the field of cultural politics, artists, theatres, production houses and organizations work together to represent the diverse interests of the

independent dance scene. Organizations such as **Tanzraum Netzwerk**, **ZTB e.V.** (Zeitgenössischer Tanz Berlin) and **Tanzbüro** are key initiatives that work to identify, collect and represent the current needs of those working in the contemporary dance field.

INTRODUCTION

Why do we need a toolbox for a better work culture in the Berlin independent dance scene?

Berlin is one of Europe's dance capitals providing a home to a variety of ways of making, thinking and experiencing dance. For decades it has been attracting different dance artists to its **scene**. This scene aspires to diversity and the protection of its unique international and decentralized character. However, it nonetheless struggles with plenty of problems and challenges of infrastructural, economic and social nature. The possibility to work in the Berlin independent dance scene and experience it as an audience originates from the long-standing and hard work of different generations of cultural workers: dancers, choreographers, collectives, teachers, organizers, producers, curators, writers and dramaturgs, among other professionals.

As a job, dancing is still a subject of societal suspicion, relegated to the sphere of hobbies and side-affairs. This is partly the reason why the

field we work in remains difficult to access and is increasingly precarious as a professional occupation. People in the field are forced to compete with each other for relatively little resources, which makes it hard, or sometimes even impossible, to access supported work processes, to be treated as equal or to simply live without the fear and frustration of freelancing. If art is meant to enrich society and help envision different worlds, it cannot remain a prisoner or servant to forces that impede our critical imagination and **practices**. Certainly, a great deal of the underlying problems of artistic labour originate from the available structures of work and lack of alternatives, as well as transparency when it comes to career progression. We wish to address the many problems, understandings about work and patterns of behavior that influence workplaces such as dance studios, art institutions and academia. We believe they can be at least partly transformed by a change of perspectives, methodologies and attitudes. The work that we propose is multidirectional, having short-term and long-term goals, proposing both future reforms and the improvement of practices in the everyday.

What needs to be emphasized both as an opportunity and as a vulnerability within dancemaking, is its dependency on physical labour that includes touch and intimacy. Working with the body brings emotions and personal histories into the workspace. It can create space for abusive, transgressive and violent behaviors that are still too often normalized or overlooked - from body shaming and forced **consent** to sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace. We consider standing against such behaviors as a way of practicing self- and collective care. Dance as a discipline has a rich and complicated history which shaped generations of dancers and made them believe that pain and self-sacrifice are desired and necessary.

We want to invite you to think with us for a moment – is dance about competition, excellence and individual success only? What are the conditions – actual and desired – for dance to be happening to the benefit of our society and the workers within the dance field? We claim that dancemaking has the capacity to reflect on the conditions and struggles of our societies at present as well as the soft power to transform them.

We are perhaps simultaneously poison and antidote: we can decide how and towards what we want to move. We can change how we work by recognizing that our struggles are shared, as is responsibility. We wish for the independent dance scene in Berlin to become a place of empowerment, hope and transformation in a troubled and tormented world.

This booklet aims to provide guidelines and offer some practical tools to be used directly in the studio, in art and dance institutions, and in all activities around dancemaking. It is a collection of our ideas and open-source materials that emerged during a collective process. With these guidelines, we propose a baseline for the healthy collaboration between different professionals in Berlin's independent dance scene and continue to strive for structural improvement. Much of our proposition is formulated as an ideal and we are aware that with some things much work and practice will be required. All in all, this booklet is less a collection of demands and more an invitation to critically reflect on what is needed for a better **work culture**. It is also an encouragement to actively seek and share knowledge about

Berlin's funding landscape, cultural policies and workers' rights, as well as to unionise and gain membership for local organizations protecting the interests of cultural workers. With this work and with these guidelines we aim to normalize what we perceive as good practice. We encourage us all to dare to dream of social change, starting from personal transformation. How can we recognize and transform both conscious and unconscious beliefs about the role and meaning of work in our lives? With this booklet, we hope to incite a process that will eventually go beyond the work of our group and will be continued – by many and for many – into the future.

Work Culture

Work Culture is a complex set of values, beliefs, habits, behaviors, social relations, ways of conduct, regulations and rules that constitute our working environment. Our work culture determines how we work, for what purpose, how we think about work and what it does to us. Many of these aspects may be predetermined, even unconscious. Yet, in order to function within a particular work field, its actors must learn how their field functions. They must acquire the knowledge and skills to “play the game” and thereby become part of a given work culture. As such, the prevailing work culture also sets limits to who can and can not play the game. It may be a “tool” for exclusion or oppression. This does not mean that such patterns and structures are eternal or unchangeable. On the contrary: by recognizing mechanisms, and by naming them, we can attempt to transform the way we work.

When we talk about a “better work culture” we primarily mean a way of working that is not based on (self-)exploitation and exhaustion, but one that empowers working people and allows them to find a healthy work-life balance and the ability to plan ahead, into the future.

**BETWEEN THE
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AND THE DANCE
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Although the activities of Berlin's dance field are largely based on public funding, it is hard to ignore the shadow of the so-called "dance market" while discussing its work culture. The dance market could be understood as a physical or figurative platform in which dance is bought and sold (produced and presented). In the context of the independent dance scene, the artist functions as an (often self-employed) entrepreneur who produces, promotes, manages and finances the artwork (by finding grants or otherwise). The existence of the market is directly bound to the prevailing economic system, namely capitalism, and follows the logics of the economy dictated by it. The artist as a creative worker is set to

compete with others of their kind (both on the local and international level) and encouraged and/or required to continue investing in self-development and education in order to raise the value of themselves (being a part of what is sold) and their work. Apart from artists, producers, curators, managers, institutions, funding bodies and audiences co-create the dance market. Luckily, **the marketisation of dance is not the only way to develop the discipline and secure its future.** We would like to point to various alternative economies and relations that occur within the making of dance. Those may take shape in non-monetary exchanges, the forming of communities that resist the commodification of dance practices, and in critical practices that play, subvert and expose the rules that govern artmaking in the contemporary world. Artmaking, and in this context, dance, has the potential to transgress the boundaries of the market and become an ally to other social struggles present in our societies. With the aforementioned definition we do not wish to exhaust the theme, nor do we succeed in articulating all the tensions and complexities of dancemaking today. Rather, we wish to point to the choices each

of us might be faced with and the production relationships we participate in. By providing an analysis and some critique of particular modes of production, we wish to contribute to strengthening alternative visions of dance and promote its role within society as a force for empowerment, creativity and autonomy.

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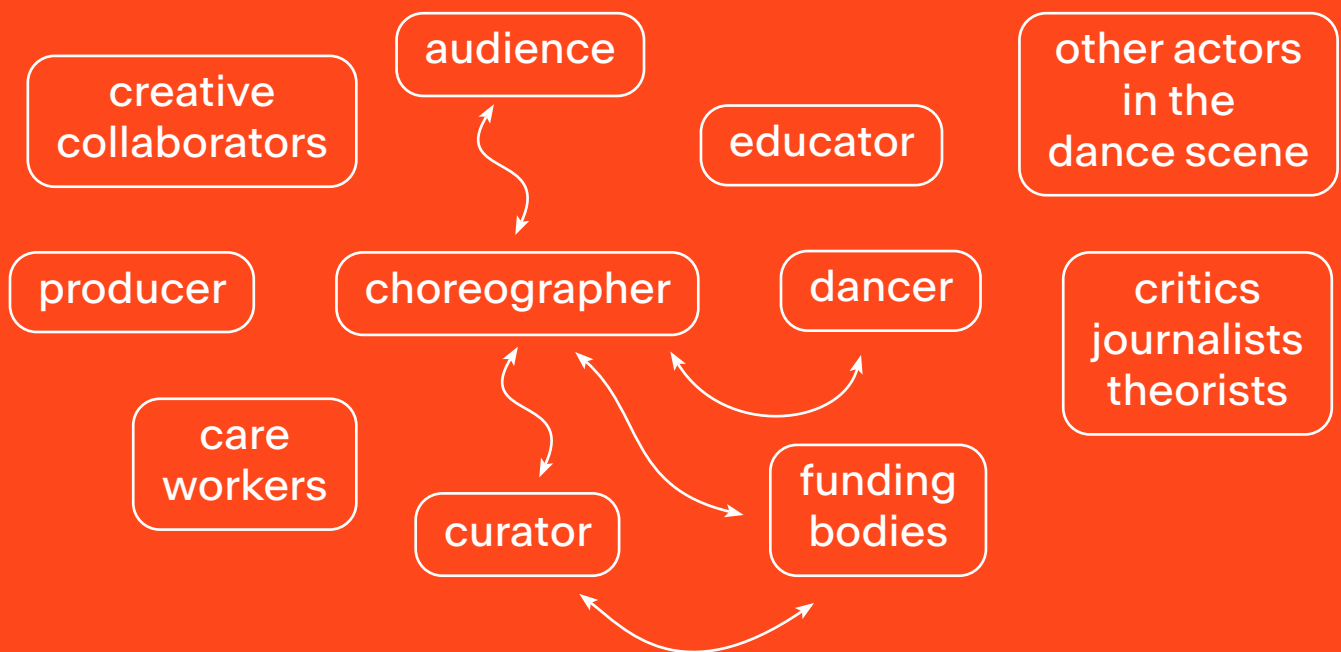
FREE, INDEPENDENT AND PRECARIOUS

Over the past years, a great deal of research has been done on precarity in the arts. The **Precariat** can be understood as the class of people in society who lack a reliable, long-term source of income, such as permanent employment. Within the Precariat, a variety of economic statuses and levels of access to resources has been observed. Precarity should be distinguished from poverty or the notion of the working class. Precarity has become a catchphrase within the contemporary art field that expresses the struggles of freelance workers. However, **freelancing has a bright side**. For many people working in the arts, it is an empowering choice of professional activity marked by relative autonomy and independence

from traditional forms of employment. Often, working in the arts is a privilege in itself: due to its precarious nature, work is only accessible to people who already possess some economic, cultural and/or social capital. Consider for example the costs of art education, or the costs of participating in festivals, symposiums, fairs, etc. We would like to think that, in fact, nobody becomes an artist out of (economic) necessity. In the context of local and global economies, a choice of such privilege is often paired with a sense of self-determination and the ability to overcome alienation. Ultimately, it is the artist who possesses the rights to their work and the financial outcomes thereof. Performing artists, therefore, often exist between privilege and dispossession. We consider this to be fertile ground for self-organizing and developing ways in which social problems can be critically addressed, and for the sake of common benefit, forms of solidarity with other workers can be nurtured. For more writings on precarity we recommend the work of [Bojana Kunst](#) and [Isabell Lorey](#).

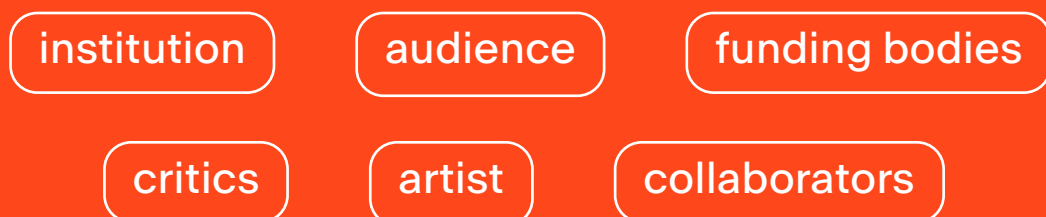
Mind Map created by the AG Work Culture to name different actors in the field and map relations between them.

ACTORS IN THE FIELD



EXEMPLARY RELATION/INTERDEPENDANCY

OR



Mind Map created by the AG Work Culture sketching the production of contemporary dance and possible source of problems in the field.



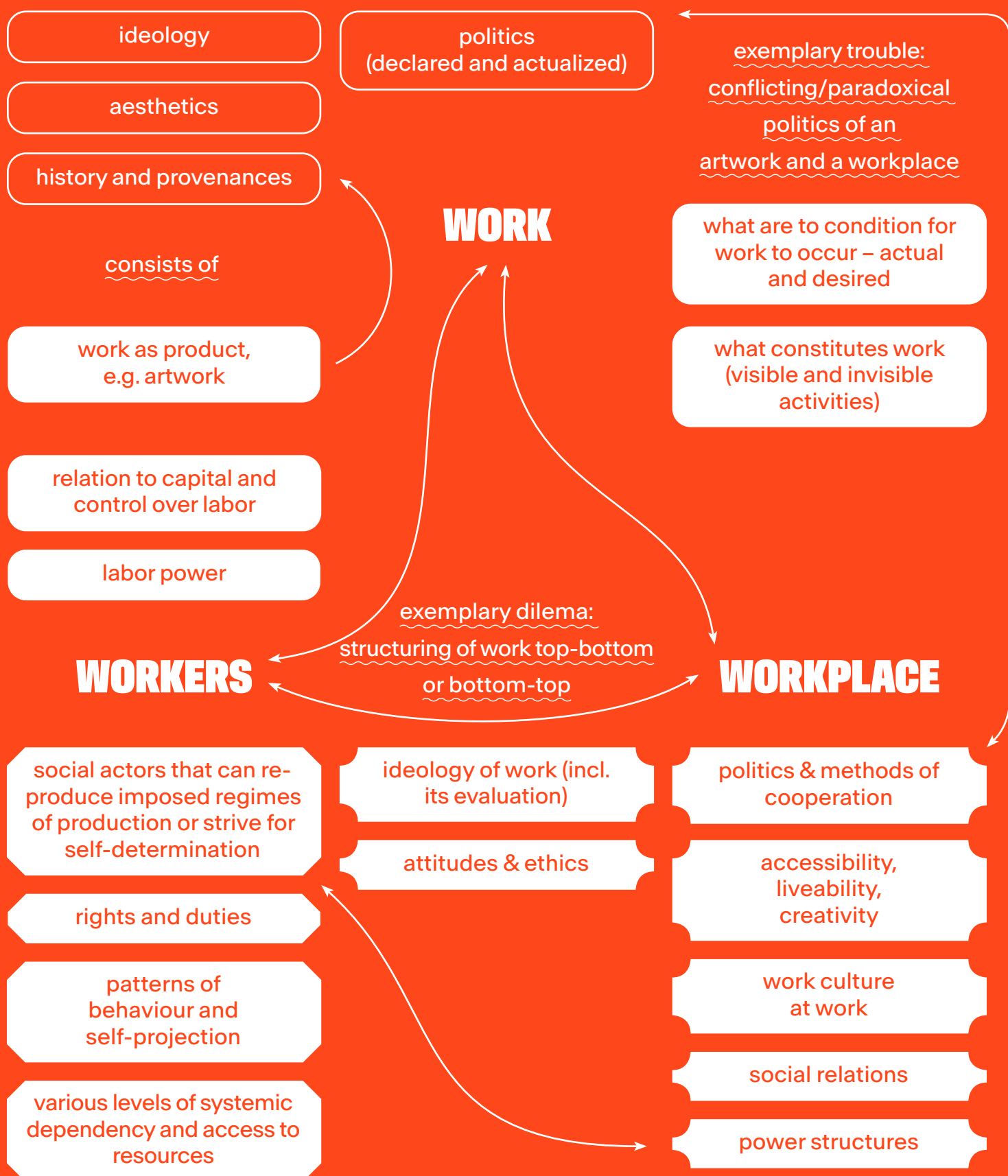
WHAT CONDITIONS THE CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTION OF DANCE?

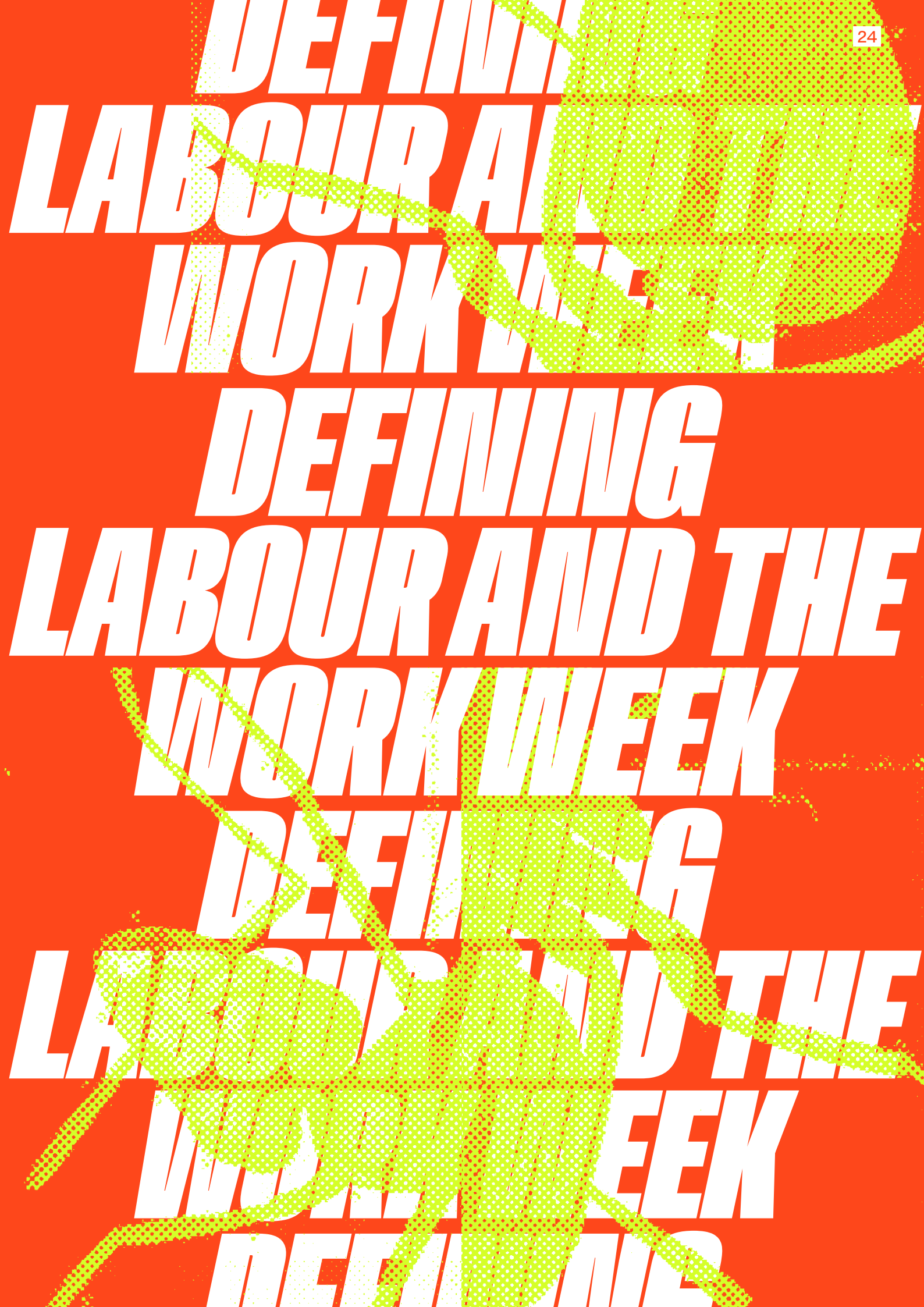
cultural politics/local and (inter)national

social structure and exclusions it produces

dance and art education

Mind Map created by AG Work Culture to analyse some basic relations between dance making and work





DEFINING LABOUR AND THE WORK WEEK

Dance makers and their collaborators, like producers or dramaturgs, work both inside and outside of the studio. It is often hard to keep track of where the work starts and where it ends. We offer the following recommendations while keeping in mind that a large amount of the labour required to produce dance works takes place outside the studio. This includes, but is not limited to: **designing a work process, attending to the needs of collaborators, preparing the project (including research), evaluating the work space and process, working on the 'product' or outcome, care work, bodywork and body-care (including warm-up), writing (both successful and unsuccessful) funding applications, looking for work opportunities (education, self-promotion, etc.), keeping oneself 'in shape' for work.**

Freelancing in the arts is not a 9 to 5 job. However, in order for dance artists to have a sustainable professional life, and the capacity to enjoy a fulfilling life outside of that, there should be hard limits set on the time we spend at work.

We recommend the following:

- Negotiations in terms of schedule should happen at the very beginning of a work process, before rehearsals start. This allows for artists with various needs and backgrounds to find compromises in a way that is workable for the entire project.
- A work week should not exceed 5 days. Regular rehearsals should ideally not take place during the weekend, unless the decision is consensual and based on the consideration of different needs of the collaborators (e.g. touring, parenthood etc.) This is a minimum requirement. A 4-day work week with no reduction in pay is considered best practice for reasons of health, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

- A work day should not exceed 8 hours. As freelance work always involves much more work than actually being in the studio/workspace, a maximum rehearsal time of 6 hours (per day) is considered best practice.
- When planning longer rehearsal periods breaks should be incorporated. 8 weeks of non-stop rehearsal is not a sustainable way to work and can lead to injuries. We therefore recommend 1 week of rest after 3 weeks of rehearsal.

BASIC WORK ETHICS

- Everyone has the right to bodily integrity. Consent cannot be assumed. Everyone has the right to withdraw consent at any given time.
- Everyone has the right to rest and to have a personal life.

- Overworking is not a solution. And not everyone can overwork. Certainly nobody should.
- No artistic vision can justify exploitation of self and others. Violence does not produce good art.
- Each artistic project, festival and institution should establish (or re-establish at regular intervals) rules of conduct at the beginning of its working period. This could, for example, take shape in together reading and discussing the following rules as practiced by choreographer Sonya Lindfors (UrbanApa).

UrbanApa SAFE SPACES GUIDELINES

RESPONSIBILITY

UrbanApa strives to be a safer place in all its events, workshops and other activities.

1. Let's not assume consent. Let's ask for it!
2. Let's respect the physical, mental and emotional boundaries of others as well as our own.
3. Let's not assume the identity, sexuality, gender, health and background of others.
4. Let's respect the opinions, beliefs and experiences of others even when they differ from ours.
5. Let's be aware of our prejudices, privileges, behaviour and the space we occupy.
6. Let's strive to act with positive intent and take care of each other.
7. No harassment or discrimination whatsoever, no homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, ableism, fatphobia etc.

Read UrbanApa's [ethical guidelines](#).

Consent

Consent occurs when one person voluntarily agrees to the proposal or desires of another. (Wikipedia)

Fees (Honorarium) should be calculated at a minimum according to the LAFT - *Minimum payment guidelines*. If the aesthetic demands of a particular production can not be fulfilled with the budget available, then the concepts should be adjusted so that collaborators are not paid below the minimum.

At its delegates' meeting on October 12, 2022, the National Association of Independent Performing Arts (BFDK) decided to adjust the recommendation of a minimum fee in the field of the independent performing arts, which had not been adjusted since 2017, in accordance with the increase of the collective agreement Normalvertrag Bühne (NV Bühne). With immediate effect, the BFDK recommends an increase of the minimum fee per month to €3.170,00 for professional groups with compulsory insurance in the Künstlersozialkasse (KSK) and to €3.660,00 for professional groups for which social security via the KSK is not possible.

This minimum should be considered as just that: an absolute minimum. Artists who have already once received funding from a public body in Berlin should apply with budgets that include fees that are above the minimum rates. It is important to remember that a freelance fee should include the equivalent of a regular wage plus provisions for sick and annual leave, as well as compensation for the lack of security offered by freelance work. We encourage cultural workers to be up-to-date about the actual minimum and average wage rates in Berlin. **Since October 1, 2022, the statutory minimum wage is 12,00€/h. The average monthly wage in Berlin in 2021 was € 4.662,00 (brutto).**

A relatively new addition to the field of the performing arts has been the rising demand for dance writing. Dance writers are often commissioned by choreographers and/or curators to write a reflective or creative piece of writing in tandem with a production or festival. **For the preparation and writing of a text by an individual writer, we suggest a minimum fee of €250,00.** If the text is to be edited, a further fee should be calculated for an editor, in accordance

with the length and type of text. We suggest the fee for dance writers and editors to be included in the project budget under “Documentation” or “Press”.

When employing artists that face discrimination based on class, race, ethnicity, language, age, sexuality, citizenship, gender or ability, choreographers and art institutions should not use this as an opportunity to pay lower fees. The active promotion of marginalized perspectives must be accompanied by the willingness to provide sustainable and fair working conditions. Unpaid internships in particular must be avoided. “Youth wages” or lower fees for younger, inexperienced, or new artists must also be avoided. **We are not paid because we are excellent, we are paid because we work and need to live.**

For examples of what may constitute unpaid work, see the list below.

WHAT CONSTITUTES UNPAID WORK

Source: whistle.one/blog

- A dancer was asked to rehearse or perform for free
- A dancer was told they would be paid, and were paid significantly outside of a reasonable timeframe
- A dancer was told they would be paid, and were paid less than the previously agreed amount or not at all
- A dancer was paid, but it was less than the amount they could live on for the amount of time invested
- A dancer was paid, but it was an unjust compensation for the time and effort invested
- A dancer had to pay to audition or be considered, often as part of a “workshop” or “class”
- A dancer had to pay for “the opportunity” to work with choreographers or companies
- A dancer had to take part in an extensive “audition process” that was in fact unpaid artistic research

When drawing up or signing a contract, there are different positions that allow for different assessments. For example, a presenter/institution usually has other **interests** than the artist. Overall, the contract should not be drafted in such a way that one side benefits more than the other. In the interest of **fair cooperation**, both sides should be sufficiently considered and, above all, **transparently** presented. Now, in reality, resources but also room for manoeuvre are often lacking on one side more than the other. All sides should therefore participate in the drafting of the contract and also be given the opportunity to intervene in order to see their own interests represented. This requires more effort than sending out prefabricated contracts but also reduces the potential for conflict in the future and costly legal disputes.

To ensure transparency, the **language chosen** should be that which both contracting parties speak sufficiently. In most cases, this is English. In addition, an attempt should be made to use simple language that is not too cryptic. Contrary

to what is often assumed, a clause can literally contain exactly what the parties want without resorting to formalistic “legal” language. Of course, the rules of fair treatment should in all cases also be extended to non-artistic collaborations.

INSTITUTION/PRESENTER - ARTIST (CHOREOGRAPHER/PRODUCER)

This means that the institution/presenter must think about the other side of the contract and its interests. This includes not only **fair wages** but also **payments in case of illness**. Especially if these can be covered by the institution through funding. Often one comes across clauses in which, in the case of failures for which neither side is responsible, such as force majeure (an extraordinary event or circumstance beyond the control of the parties), the legal consequence is that no costs are covered. While this is a legally permissible consequence, it does not reflect the imbalance in dependency of the e.g. artist/producer represented in these contracts and also ignores the time already invested by them for the specific project/performance. In fact, some funders - upon request - offer the possibility of

paying a contingency fee in these cases as well as in cases of cancellation because of illness (here mostly Covid-19). For these cases, the contract can include a clause that either directly provides for a cancellation fee in cases of (proven) illness, force majeure, etc., or at least in those cases where funders agree to pay them.

Another important subject is the liability of the artist due to damage to the property of the institution/presenter. In many European countries, it is now required that freelance artists are also insured when invited for a guest performance. In Berlin, however, they often have no **liability insurance**, but in contracts damages are nevertheless passed on to them. This represents a regular process, especially for the presenter, but many artists are not aware of it. Therefore it should be pointed out before signing the contract, which also helps to increase awareness of the different forms of insurance.

CHOREOGRAPHER - ARTIST (PERFORMER)

In contracts between choreographers and other artists, there are a number of points that should be given special attention in order to avoid conflicts later on. **Contracts should be negotiated and signed before the rehearsals start so that the conditions of the cooperation are clear to all parties involved before the work begins.**

With regard to **copyright**, care should be taken to ensure that all relevant rights of use are stipulated in the contract. The author owns the **exploitation rights** and can (usually) not assign them but decide when and in what form her/their/his work is published, reproduced or distributed. She/They/He can allow third parties to use her/their/his work by granting rights of use through a licence agreement. There are many different types of **rights of use** and in order to avoid misunderstandings later on, the contracting parties should consider exactly what the copyrighted work is to be used for. For example, should the right of use apply to all forms of use? Should the

rights of use be settled with a one-off fee or should royalties continue to be paid in the future? Should it be a simple right of use or an exclusive one?

Absences due to **illness**, force majeure and more should be dealt with and, in the best case, compensation should be provided to the (freelance) artist. The performance period should be precisely defined and days that they may not be available should be discussed in advance. In addition, the handling of absences due to other obligations during the performance period, as well as the termination of the contract, should also be contractually agreed in advance. As there is no ordinary **right of termination** in the mostly fixed-term service contracts and the parties can only terminate due to special circumstances, this should also be discussed, as it is not clear to everyone when they enter into a contract. Even though the law provides for legal consequences for these situations even without contractual agreements, the parties in the independent scene usually do not want the situation to escalate further or even go to court and should (jointly) consider in advance what consequences are desired in cases of sudden, unjustified

termination. For example, what if the choreographer has to find a new performer and incurs additional costs or wants to end the collaboration with a performer?

PRODUCER - ARTIST (CHOREOGRAPHER)

The above also applies to the relationship of the producer to the artist. This relationship is based on trust as the producer is usually given access to a lot of sensitive data, such as bank accounts, and therefore it should be treated as such. There are sometimes serious differences in the idea of **what constitutes the work of a producer**. Therefore, the individual ideas of the content should be laid down in the contract before the work begins in order to avoid surprises later on.

Most producers do not have **professional liability insurance**. Therefore, if they operate as individual entrepreneurs or GbRs they are regularly fully liable for damages caused by their own negligence. It should therefore be contractually defined exactly where the responsibilities lie within the cooperation. If the producers do not bear any responsibility and only act in an executive

capacity, this should also be contractually stipulated.

If, as is desired in most cases, a contract is to be concluded on a self-employed basis, special care should be taken to ensure that the relationship remains 'free and self-determined' on the part of the producer, otherwise there is a risk of **'false self-employment'** and the choreographer could face high additional payments such as social security contributions and taxes. If, for example, the parties want to enter into a contractual self-employed-relationship but have clearly defined tasks, working hours, binding instructions and a fixed remuneration over a longer period of time, which makes up a significant part of the producer's total income, there are many indications of an employment relationship and thus of false self-employment. If the producer seeks certainty, they can apply in advance to the German Pension Insurance for a voluntary check for false self-employment. If the specific circumstances of the planned collaboration do not qualify for a self-employed situation, the contract would need to comply with the obligations applicable for regular employment contracts.

Further resources:

Helpful link with model contracts:

touring-artists.info/en/kuenstlerstatus-und-vertraege/translate-to-englisch-vertraege

Introduction into contractual law (in German, English translation work in progress):

campus.darstellende-kuenste.de/wissen-wie/recht



It is crucial to strive for working conditions in the dance field that reduce barriers and allow people with different needs to enter its various professions and sustain a long career. Furthermore, dance should be made accessible to a broad audience of all backgrounds and needs. Thus we identify the following aspects that require attention and care in and outside of productions:

- Access needs of disabled and chronically ill artists and audiences need to be considered and planned into a project from the beginning rather than tacked on to existing concepts. If the artistic director, choreographer, or institution is unsure of how to integrate this into a funding application they are encouraged to contact the funding body to seek clarification.
- Facilitating disability access is an ongoing process that requires regular check-ins.
- Ultimately disability access models should be seen as a form of best practice that can benefit ALL collaborators. Workers whose needs are being met in

the workplace are able to work more effectively, ethically and sustainably.

- We recommend that at the beginning of each production the team comes together to write a collective **access rider**.

United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Since 2006, the annual conference of The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has taken place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States. Here a relevant excerpt from the Convention:

Article 30 – Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

1. *States Parties recognize **the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life**, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities:*
 - a) *Enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats;*

- b) *Enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats;*
 - c) *Enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.*
2. *States Parties shall take appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, **not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of society.***

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Further resources and consultation:

diversity-arts-culture.berlin/

making-a-difference-berlin.de

WHAT IS AN ACCESS RIDER?

Access riders are documents that inform about what a disabled person needs in order to equally participate at work. Disabled people use access riders to communicate their requirements and needs to their collaborators (colleagues, institutions) in order to pave the way for their equal participation in the project or cooperation. Therefore the access rider (also: access document or access doc) is an important transformative practice in ensuring equality for those with disabilities. The access rider enables a marginalized person to speak up for themselves and educates others on disability and the needs of disabled people. However, an access rider does not guarantee that its content will be read, understood and implemented. Even with an access rider, disabled people can fall prey to tokenism. The access rider can therefore be considered as a starting point, from which a dialogue on (changing) access needs ensues. We recommend the creation of your own access rider. Beyond access, the document illustrates ableist and exclusionary

structures by elaborating on the clashes that occur between a body deviating from the norm and the prevailing work culture.

What does an access rider contain?

- It provides information on the disability and/or illness of the person if that information is helpful to understand the required access needs.
- It provides information on a person's access needs and requirements in different work contexts.
- It provides information on emergency measures.

Further resources:

An informative text on access riders by Romily Walden in English, German and plain language. You will also find tips on how to create your own access rider and further resources:

diversity-arts-culture.berlin/en/magazin/access-rider

An access rider (in German) of the choreographer Angela Alves can be accessed here:

angelaalves.de/access-rider/



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DANCE AND PARENTHOOD

Based on testimonies of our peers and collaborators, parenthood within the dance field is very much bound to the question of accessibility. Many professionals resign from having children due to the precarity of their work and the lack of stable socio-economic support. Those professionals who are parents often have trouble finding and sustaining work and negotiating terms with employers who would take their needs into consideration.

Further resources:

AG Tanz und Elternschaft (Dance and Parenthood) is an association and initiative of dance professionals in Berlin with the goal of improving the working conditions of dance professionals in parenthood. Founded as part of ZTB e.V., the AG is self-organised and voluntary. Its members have been meeting online once a month since November 2020 to name and analyse existing deficits, disadvantages and barriers for dance professionals in parenthood – in the scene and in the funding system – and develop concrete proposals for solutions and approaches on how these can be remedied.

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MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

Recommendations borrowed from: Clemens, L. (2022). Equity global scoping review of factors related to poor mental health and wellbeing within the performing arts sectors.

Equity Mental Health Report

When it comes to improving mental health and more general well-being in the performing arts, the observed and lived realities ask us to step in and step up, if we aspire to establish a community of the working people and to work in a fair and inclusive environment. Here are some possible fields of action:

1. Systemically address the precarity of work, associated financial pressures, power imbalances and culture of fear

around loss of work. Support performing artists and creative workers with mental health throughout periods of work and when without work.

2. Address the specific mental health needs of underrepresented individuals including those from LGBTQIA+ and ethnically diverse communities and ensure that mental health services are made accessible to all individuals, especially those from low-income households or experiencing poverty.
3. Address mental health prevalence and associated causes within unresearched sectors within the performing arts.
4. Provide performing artists and creative workers with both early and ongoing educational support to develop skills in managing a career in the sector and managing mental health. Individuals need support with areas including:
 - a. Managing the demands of freelance working and the portfolio career.

- b. Managing the demands of performance/audition/touring
 - c. Managing the demands of injury & illness
 - d. Managing interpersonal relationships with colleagues/managers/directors
 - e. Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic
 - f. Developing effective coping skills
 - g. How to access mental health support
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- 5. Improve access to mental health services in the sectors, through steps such as:
 - a. Improving mental health literacy of all individuals training and working in the sectors, regardless of role
 - b. Normalisation of discussion/open communication about mental health and use of mental health services
 - c. Development of sector specific mental health services
 - d. Addressing financial barriers to mental health services
 - e. Working with managers/HR services to educate regarding signposting to mental health services.

The steps that are needed in the scene:

- Creating a list of associated practitioners
- Creating a list of institutions that offer mental health sos support
- Creating peer support groups
- Offering education to mental health professionals on the needs and specificities of the dance community

Further resources:

Association providing support and therapy to people with eating disorders:

dick-und-duenn-berlin.de

Support against sexual violence (specific to the cultural field):

themis-vertrauensstelle.de

lara-berlin.de/en/home

Berliner Krisendienst:

berliner-krisendienst.de

Dance Medicine Association in Germany:

tamed.eu/tanzmedizin

Anti-burnout resource:

3M Framework

An essay by choreographer Luísa Saraiva on the urgency of issues regarding mental health in the dance community:

tanzraumberlin.de/en/tanzbuero/trb-magazine/article/entrapped-in-a-web-of-vulnerabilities

Due to long recovery, prevention is key in regards to burnout. In psychology there are over 60 different definitions of burnout, in the therapeutic practice the most important is how people experiencing burnout define it themselves.

According to WHO burnout is most commonly caused by chronic stress in the workplace. Every form of work can lead to burnout, even if it is not paid or not recognised as work (e.g. housework, carework).



Dancers are performers and interpreters of a choreographer's artistic vision. They are however also collaborators and co-creators. The collaborative nature of their work is not always reflected in the distribution of a dance piece, as the choreographer is often perceived as its main author. We seek to support and further develop discursive and political practices around the role of the dancer. We identify the following points as urgent in gaining artistic and political agency for dancers and in creating workplaces that are safe and empowering to individuals and to the dance community at large. **We recommend that this section is carefully read not only by those who work as dancers and performers, but also by those who work with them, as they too play a part in the structural problems we aim to address.**

Practice(s)

Practice(s) - to do something again and again in order to become better at it/more knowledgeable/more familiar with it // to do something regularly or constantly as an ordinary part of your life/a regular occasion at which you practice something.

– Britannica

In the context of dance this could mean practicing dance techniques and/or physical exercises, developing and testing choreographic methods and approaches, conducting artistic research through for example reading and writing or investigating various ways of working with mind and body.

SPACE OF CHALLENGES

Dancers should cultivate a practice of **self-advocacy**. Dancers must become capable of articulating their needs.

Self-advocacy should be combined with a commitment to building solidarity with other dancers and artists. A united front is more effective when confronting abusive or exploitative practices in the field.

Self-advocacy is both a right and a privilege in a workfield dominated by the English language and by contemporary art discourse. A large dose of social sensitivity is needed to build solidarity, and to recognize when your voice is supporting others in struggle and when it is silencing others. Listening and conversing beyond prejudice are good starting points to contest against various forms of inequality and discrimination (e.g. ableism, westernism, racism, imperialism, patriarchy).

Learning about the world and its power structures is a tool for empowerment. Knowledge is power. Knowledge is a privilege: it can be shared.

Artists should always feel comfortable asking for written confirmation of the **conditions** that have been promised by an employer.

Dance works require **basic infrastructure**, regardless of whether the work is performed in a theatre, a gallery or in open air. Those basics consist of: a place to change, access to a toilet and water.

Dancers, just like other workers, can get sick and are often injured. In such cases, the dancer should not be pressured to work or get left behind, especially if the injury is a direct result of the work.

SPACE OF OPPORTUNITIES

If something makes me feel uncomfortable, I can say it.

If it is easy for me to voice my needs, I pay attention to my privilege and try to share it with others.

If I never voice my needs or doubts in the work process I seek support with my colleagues and try to articulate myself in the terms that seem adequate to me. I expect to be respected and listened to. I actively work with fear of rejection. I dare to be who I am in the workplace.

When it comes to community building, I seek to reach across cultural boundaries or personal prejudice and prevent isolation.

As workers in the field we have the **power to change** things from the bottom up. Old patterns can be transformed step by step (see: Choreographers).

If I don't change my attitudes and habits, why would others?

Talking about money and working conditions is not a crime. Making somebody feel bad because they exploit people is also not bad (even if they are well meaning, they are still exploitative and this doesn't make it any better).

I have the right to **rest and recover** in case of injury or illness. The choreographer, as my employer, should be able to handle this and treat me with respect. Solutions can be found through speaking about it, mediation and seeking external support (see: Choreographers).

<p>Dancers are not only open-minded and creative beings but also competitive coworkers. Competition in the dance field is a complex phenomena of ambiguous nature. It pushes the discipline forward and motivates people to develop new skills and knowledge yet it also often results in ableist self-reproductions and the pushing of one's one boundaries beyond reasonable necessity (e.g. in the context of a production, audition or class). This should be observed and not rewarded. Rather, more inclusive and solidary work relations should be encouraged.</p>	<p>Part of my self-advocacy and work hygiene is to set boundaries when my employer or coworkers put me at risk. I bear the costs of such transgressions and should be able to protect myself. Artistic vision does not justify harm or violence.</p> <p>I am responsible for my own toxic behaviours. I have a right to feel insecure and to need acknowledgment. At the same time I dare to imagine different ways of working with others and myself.</p> <p>I am enough even if the critics or juries don't confirm that. Learning and development tastes better when motivated by curiosity and not by the perpetual desire to prove oneself.</p>
<p>Saying both yes and no are part of work relations. Choreographers are not always right nor are they always your friends. You don't have to be friends or family to have an enriching work experience. Coming to work on time and sober are the basics of good collaboration.</p> <p>If asked to stay after hours, the dancer has a right to say no. It's their work and as such should be paid extra if working hours exceed what was agreed on beforehand. In such cases, a solution should be negotiated, without the use of blackmail or guilt tripping.</p>	<p>I communicate my doubts and questions with respect to my employer and I accept their decisions as long as they do not harm me.</p> <p>I can speak up when it comes to publishing material in which I am naked or engaged in transgressive practices. I can say no to that and my no should be respected.</p> <p>If I experience abuse, harassment or mistreatment in the workplace, I should look for support. If someone else experiences this, I share with them the resources I know of. In such cases, turning a blind eye is part of the problem.</p>
<p>Learning how to separate work life from personal life is essential to a balanced work culture.</p>	<p>I am mature enough to leave some emotions behind when I enter a rehearsal space. I do not treat my employer or my coworkers as therapists or punchbags.</p> <p>If a situation in my life makes it difficult or impossible to work I find ways of communicating it to the choreographer or team and we seek solutions together.</p>
<p>Dancers are often co-choreographers of the piece.</p>	<p>If I played a part in the creation of the choreography or any other aspect of the dance work, I have the right to be credited for it.</p>

Due to the very high rate of **eating disorders** and mental health issues related to **body image** in the dance field, dancers are both victims and perpetrators of the normative and harmful ways of talking and thinking about bodies. Eating disorders, such as anorexia, have the highest mortality rate amongst mental illness and often lead to the inability to continue dance training in a safe and healthy way (as they lead to e.g. hormonal problems, osteopenia, osteoporosis or heart failure).

The abovementioned challenges are also part of the experience of **depression and anxiety** and should be treated with seriousness and care.

Due to the **societal stigmas that surround mental health** we need to acknowledge that while some might be comfortable with expressing or exposing their needs/issues, it might not be the case for many. Psychiatric medication can have a big influence on sleeping patterns, energy levels and mood. This can create an impression of being unreliable or unwilling to perform tasks, and therefore reinforce symptoms.

I abstain from any form of **body shaming or judging the bodies of others**. I ask my co-workers to do the same.

I do not encourage anyone to lose or gain weight, I don't value people (or myself) on the basis of their body shape or size, nor on the basis of their (my) alleged beauty or lack thereof.

I do not underestimate eating disorders and I **seek professional help** if needed (see: Mental and Physical Health).

I seek support and professional help if I struggle with any other mental problems. I have the right to a **decent quality of life** and my dance practice should support me in that rather than perpetuate my struggles.

Learning how to **communicate about personal issues** in a way that conveys my needs without violating my right to privacy helps to create the conditions for a **more supportive work environment**.

FURTHER RESOURCES:

Dancers Handbook: an extensive guide and resource for dance artists in Germany developed by Dancers Connect. It contains information for freelancers and permanently employed dancers on topics such as professional self-image, injuries, unions and discrimination and harassment at work.

Whistle is a platform which aims to confront sexism in dance workspaces along with other forms of discrimination and abuse. Their current offerings include resources and referrals that support a holistic support system for change-making in dance culture.



CHOREOGRAPHERS

Independent choreographers are the main authors of their work and can be held accountable for their productions by their performers, their hosting institutions, their audience and other collaborating artists. In order to facilitate a healthy, accessible and sustainable work environment, we suggest the following tasks for a choreographer. These also apply to other artists collaborating with dancers and performers, such as theatre directors, film- and performance makers and visual artists.

SPACE OF CHALLENGES

The choreographer is the **direct contractor** of the dancers, producers, dramaturgs, musicians, costume designers, and all other collaborators that work on the production of a dance show. This is both a privilege and responsibility and it should be treated as such.

Therefore, they are responsible for **creating a consensual work environment** which takes care of the needs of its collaborators.

SPACE OF OPPORTUNITIES

I implement working conditions for my collaborators and myself that are **safe and fair**, respectful, and empowering for all of us.

At the beginning of a production phase, I dedicate a fixed timeframe (e.g. a kick-off day) to the **development of a common work mode**. In doing so, we **discuss the needs of the group. We openly address setting boundaries and existing power imbalances** so that they influence the exchange as little as possible. We share what we expect from each other and at the same time what we bring to the table. Are there any special requirements to ensure equal access for all participants? I invite my colleagues to share their access riders (see: Access Rider) with me. I organise a dinner or a lunch, or I choose a day in the week when we evaluate the process and adjust it if necessary.

<p>The choreographer is responsible for the safety of the workplace.</p>	<p>I take responsibility for the safety of the workplace. I do not ask dancers to do things that could lead to injury or harm of any kind. I educate myself in regards to the specificity of working with the body and if I can't provide a warm-up and cool down myself, I leave space for it within the work schedule and/or seek ways to develop warm-up practices that are adequate to my work.</p>
<p>The choreographer is responsible for a healthy/safe work flow and its management.</p>	<p>I discuss rehearsal plans with the participants at an early stage.</p> <p>When designing a work schedule I take into consideration the needs and wellbeing of my collaborators. Schedules can change (e.g. due to life circumstances) and they should not be a tool of oppression. (see: Access(ibility))</p> <p>I prioritize sufficient rehearsal time in order not to condense processes towards the end to the detriment of the participants.</p> <p>I discuss and agree with my collaborators on how they wish to be named and credited in the public communication of the piece.</p>
<p>The choreographer needs to make sure that either they or a producer prepare a realistic budget with fees that do not fall below the minimum wage. The budget should create fair financial conditions and include access costs. Ideally, the team should exchange on rehearsal time, wages and input already during the application phase.</p> <p>The choreographer is liable for the production and its management. Knowing its legal foundation is important, and if this knowledge is not available to the choreographer, it should be supplied by an external, qualified person.</p>	<p>I am transparent in regards to the budget with my team.</p> <p>If my production budget has been cut by external funding or venue decisions, I re-adjust my artistic ideas and plan accordingly, in order to still allow for a safe and healthy work environment for my team, including myself!</p> <p>I make sure the production and my collaborators are sufficiently insured and take care of all contributions legally necessary (Taxes, KSK Verwerterabgabe, Gema, Licences etc.).</p> <p>I make sure that all negotiations include agreements on eventualities, such as sick days, cancellations, postponements, injuries, replacements.</p> <p>I am responsible for setting good standards when it comes to payment, such as setting up potential instalment payments and paying on time. I will negotiate to my best knowledge with surrounding structures/institutions/funding bodies, in order to allow my collaborators and my/ourselves good and safe working conditions.</p>

The choreographer is most often the person who is in communication with the art institution and who ensures a venue for a performance. Together with the producer they **manage the communication with teams** working within art spaces and **negotiate conditions of work**.

My **collaboration with the venue** is based on mutual respect, responsibility and transparency.

I ask **my venue to meet the needs** of myself and my team. I communicate the access rider requirements to the venue.

I understand the **limits and challenges venues face** when realising my needs. This is followed by a collaborative process of finding solutions and compromises.

I demand from venues to issue **contracts that are correct and fair and that include anti-discriminatory clauses, access riders and a clear handling of exploitation rights**. I plan a feedback session with the venue after the production, in order to exchange on our mode of collaboration.

The choreographer is the **main decision maker** in the dance production and they distribute tasks and responsibilities during the work process. They carry the biggest responsibility when it comes to the communication with multiple parties involved in a production, on top of making decisions of a purely artistic nature. This might be experienced as overwhelming, especially in the context of freelance work, and may lead to frustration, exhaustion and self-exploitation if reasonable standards are not employed and practiced.

If this can be beneficial to the workplace and process, I **break up hierarchical structures** by engaging my team in decision-making: I initiate collaborative working methods.

I ask for help and support within my team and invite **external mediation** if things go wrong.

I seek professional help for tasks I cannot responsibly commit to and fulfil.

I make sure that **sufficient human resources** are planned into a production so that the need to work double roles is avoided and sufficient periods of rest are ensured.

<p>The choreographer's responsibility covers not only purely artistic matters but also how artistic decisions influence the accessibility and inclusivity of the work. As the main authors of the work, choreographers are encouraged and often expected to critically reflect on the outcomes of the artistic process and be able to transform their visions in order to find ways to include, challenge or hold their audiences.</p>	<p>I aspire to invite a diverse audience to my performance and take care that no one will be excluded by unthoughtful barriers.</p> <p>I ask the venue questions in regards to accessibility.</p> <p>I seek direct advice from people or initiatives that are marginalized in society/cultural life, and understand that this advice is also labour. I keep my own privilege in check.</p> <p>I expect my audience and my venue to remain open and sensitive to the fragility and complexity of the artistic work. I encourage them to speak to me after the performance and share their impressions.</p> <p>I have no obligation to accept insults or insensitive comments from my audience and colleagues. I grant myself the right to speak back and to defend my choices, if I feel a need to do so. I encourage a constructive feedback culture and learn from my own experiences when being an audience for the work of others.</p>
<p>Throughout the history of dance production, choreographers have been granted relatively more power than dancers. Due to scarce resources in the scene, choreographers working with public money are often in a constant mode of competition and in need of educating themselves in regards to funding systems, platforms and networks. Within their artistic communities they have the potential to function as gatekeepers or allies to other artists.</p>	<p>I know my funding instruments and can share my knowledge with others. I help others in finding support for their own artistic creations.</p> <p>I use resources responsibly and I am fair and transparent in spending money and distributing working opportunities.</p> <p>If I experienced abuse or the transgression of boundaries, I learn from these experiences and propose other modes of working and relating to my collaborators and artistic communities. I stay sensitive and open to the experiences of others and I do not compete with them.</p> <p>I join cultural-political initiatives, networks and interest groups seeking to improve the infrastructure of the dance scene.</p>

Producers are collaborators in artistic processes and productions. Their overall task is to take care of keeping the right conditions for the artistic project to come to existence and of the working conditions of everyone involved. The producer organises the labour and overlooks the artistic process and work as a whole from a very practical perspective, in relation to money. The producer may participate in the artistic development, creating a long-term strategy or vision for the artist, facilitating networking and connecting the artists to other actors in the field. The producer takes over or supports the communication on all levels (with the team, funders, partners and venues).

The producer usually works in close contact with the choreographer. As different professionals may have a different understanding of their role (administrator, producer, production manager), the scope of their responsibility within the project and their tasks should be determined before the project begins. The same refers to the time frame of the collaboration. Whereas some producers

partake in a project from the moment it receives (public) funding until fulfilling the bureaucratic tasks linked to finalising the project, other longer or more long lasting arrangements are also possible. Producers and choreographers may collaborate already in the phase of formulating concepts and preparing funding applications for future projects. At the same time, this arrangement may also include taking care of the artistic work's afterlife, eg. by developing opportunities for the work's circulation after the premiere/opening night. In each case, the choreographer and the producer should make a clear agreement on what the scope of their collaboration is regarding the producer's tasks (eg. which ones of them are shared with the choreographer) and expected results. We recognize the need to reflect upon the complex work of the producers and different shapes that their collaboration with the artists take, as well as on the power that producers have regarding the specific knowledge that is needed for the creation of the project.

Producers working in the independent dance scene in Germany are usually self-educated, they develop their knowledge and set of skills

as they work in the field and through peer to peer support.

What does a producer do in e.g. choreographic project funded by Berliner Verwaltung für Kultur und Europa:

- Grant applications
- Drafting budgets
- Communication with funding bodies
- Preparation of contracts, money transfers, supervising of the financial management
- Dealing with KSK and Gema
- Preparing the final report and accounting at the end of the project
- Studio bookings
- Team communication
- Organisation (Transport, set design, assistance with travel, hotel booking, solving legal issues, communication with tech crews/venues, guests lists, managing PR etc.

Depending on the amount of paid hours of work and competencies we recommend that the scope of task is a matter of negotiation

and mutual agreement between a producer and a choreographer.

DO'S AND DON'TS

(when working with a producer or as a producer)

YES

Inviting your producer to bow with you on stage at the premiere.

NO

Overwhelming the producer with tasks or violating them because of an artistic vision.



Art Institutions are responsible for producing and maintaining good working conditions in the dance field. We acknowledge that Berlin venues that host dance and performance range from private galleries to publicly funded festivals and public theatres. Because of that, they function under different financial circumstances, and their internal organisation and the way decisions are made may differ significantly. In the Berlin dance scene, artistic work is usually co-produced by artists. Sometimes, it is produced by the venue (usually in state theatres or visual art institutions). The program of most of the venues is largely dependent on the decisions of external juries granting project funding.

In the sense of creating organisational forms that offer a suitable platform for the working methods of Berlin's dance field, **institutionalisation** has already successfully taken place in many corners of the scene. However, there is still a need for action concerning the "institutionalized", i.e. long-term financial security. **Most venues for the independent scene are neither adequately**

funded in terms of infrastructure nor have their own program funds. As a consequence, artists have to spend part of their already scarce project funding to compensate for the infrastructural deficit of the venues in budgetary terms (space costs, personnel costs, etc.). In addition, the artistic formats of the houses can only be realised through third-party funding. On the one hand, the lack of institutionalisation of the venues puts a strain on the artistic project funding pools; on the other hand, long-term planning and the ability to act at short notice are virtually impossible. **Moreover, artists who are not considered in several funding rounds cannot be supported by the venues.** A stable and continuous relationship between artists and institutions is thus made considerably more difficult. **Artistic development formats, mediation, outreach** – ultimately, everything beyond the immediate artistic presentation is only possible with considerable additional effort and, given the available personnel resources, virtually not at all. But it is precisely these **formats that promote continuity in artistic work and social anchoring.**

We also observe how the funding system and many, sometimes contradictory expectations towards art institutions force them to fall into the **dangerous logic of achieving as much as possible in the shortest time without the previous assessment of their resources and capacities.** This way of working is also not sustainable and ultimately leads to burnout. *The sensitisation about working conditions of freelancers and employees of institutions alike and an allyship between them is crucial to the future development of the independent dance scene. We encourage art institutions to advocate for freelancers' fair working conditions and the needed changes in cultural policies and funding. Art institutions must build common fronts with artists and actively include them as allies in their endeavours in cultural politics.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

HOSTING AND COLLABORATING WITH ARTISTS

- All institutions that invite performers to present their work must provide comfortable, warm and private changing rooms with access to water and showers.
- We encourage art institutions to organise meetings with artists during the application preparation and before the realisation of the project to familiarise them with the internal structure of the institution and define the conditions of the future cooperation. We encourage institutions to transparently inform the artists about the care they can offer to the project considering their material conditions, capacities and the team's competencies. The conditions should be something that the artist can rely on while planning and realising the project.
- A document or welcome package should be offered to artists engaging with the institution that outlines its inner workings, including how disputes (e.g. related

to instances of discrimination and harassment) may be mediated (e.g. anti-discrimination clause in contracts).

- The production and presentation frames offered by institutions must consider the well-being of both their teams and the invited artists. The production processes within an institution (including internal deadlines) must consider the well-being and comfort of employees and freelancers.
- Presenting less programs equals less work and visibility for more artists in the field. Still, we encourage institutions to reflect upon the impact of the amount of hosted projects on the working conditions of their employees and the quality of care offered to the hosted projects and to implement needed changes.
- More rehearsal time at a venue and a possibility for a day off during a set of shows are crucial to the further professionalisation of the independent dance scene and making working conditions more accessible to different artists.

ACCESSIBILITY OF INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

- Institutions must be mindful of socio-economic and cultural barriers to participation in the arts. Current understandings of artistic 'quality' are impacted by these patterns of exclusion (from universities, schools, art institutions etc.). As these existing inequalities mean different milestones are achieved at different timelines, age and other arbitrary CV requirements should not be used as a barrier to accessing institutional support. (Bad practice: age limits in open calls).
- We encourage institutions (especially those with an international focus) to provide more chances for artists to speak in their native language including sign languages and use interpreters, especially when complex issues arise.

PRACTISING FAIRNESS

- Institutions must advocate for artists' free speech and commit to the fight against fascism and anti-democratic forces more

broadly, as well as forms of discrimination like racism, sexism, classism, ableism, anti-semitism, ageism, trans- & homophobia etc. (see: dievielen.de).

- We encourage art institutions to formulate a public code of conduct/code of ethics, embodying their core values and practices. In order to share knowledge and resources a network of collaborating institutions can also develop it together. An example of that in the German theatre landscape are the guidelines developed by the festival Theaterformen: theaterformen.de/en/about
- The topics and issues that the institutions include in their program must affect how they host artists and audiences: their structure, their staff, decision-making and production processes.
- We encourage institutions to include regular post-project feedback with the artists into their internal loops and reach out to artists for paid expertise when needed. Feedback sessions should be held with confidentiality as artists may experience difficulties expressing critique in fear of

damaging the future professional relationship with the institution. A solution to this could be to give artists and their teams the possibility to evaluate the project anonymously and/or for it to be analysed by third parties.

- We encourage the employees of art institutions to reflect critically on the way they communicate with the artists and provide feedback. The communication should be based on dialogue, transparency and mutual respect. Artistic directors and dramaturgical teams of institutions patronising artists and enforcing changes in artistic projects should be a relic of the past, whether the project is a production or a co-production of the venue. The employees of art institutions should be mindful of not overwhelming the artists with the communication via email with an expectation of answering immediately (google: urgency culture/hustle culture), especially during the rehearsal time. A solution to that can be discussing multiple topics in one meeting.

- Artists must be included in the decision-making considering the future of the dance scene in the city. They must be part of juries deciding about funding and selection committees deciding about nomination of artistic directors of publicly funded institutions.

FAIRSTAGE

In 2021 Diversity Arts Culture, ensemble-netzwerk and LAFT Berlin initiated a model project FAIRSTAGE funded by the Senate Department for Culture and Europe, whose goal is to work towards non-discriminatory and fair working conditions for all permanent and freelance employees at publicly funded theaters in Berlin. In the first project phase in the summer of 2021, institutionally funded theaters, concept-funded anchor institutions of the independent scene, and representatives of associations, initiatives, and civil society groups worked together in a participatory process to create a catalog of measures that clearly addresses recommendations for action in the various areas of responsibility.

The guidelines (in German) can be accessed here:

fairstage.berlin/media/fairstage-massnahmenkatalog-september-2021.pdf

More about the project in German and English:

fairstage.berlin

Resources for art institutions:

diversity-arts-culture.berlin

Fannie Sosa "A White Institution's Guide to Welcoming Artists of Color* and their Audiences"

reshape.network

kunsten.be/en/now-in-the-arts/the-fantastic-institution/

kunsten.be/en/now-in-the-arts/blogging-from-the-return-of-the-fantastic-institution-at-buda-kortrijk/

e-tcetera.be/the-jello-the-nothing-the-something-and-the-rests

dutchartinstitute.eu/page/11810/2016-sunday-september-18-roaming-assembly-7-art-struggle-and-the-city-a

Institutionalization

- process of developing or transforming rules and procedures that influence a set of human interactions. (Britannica)

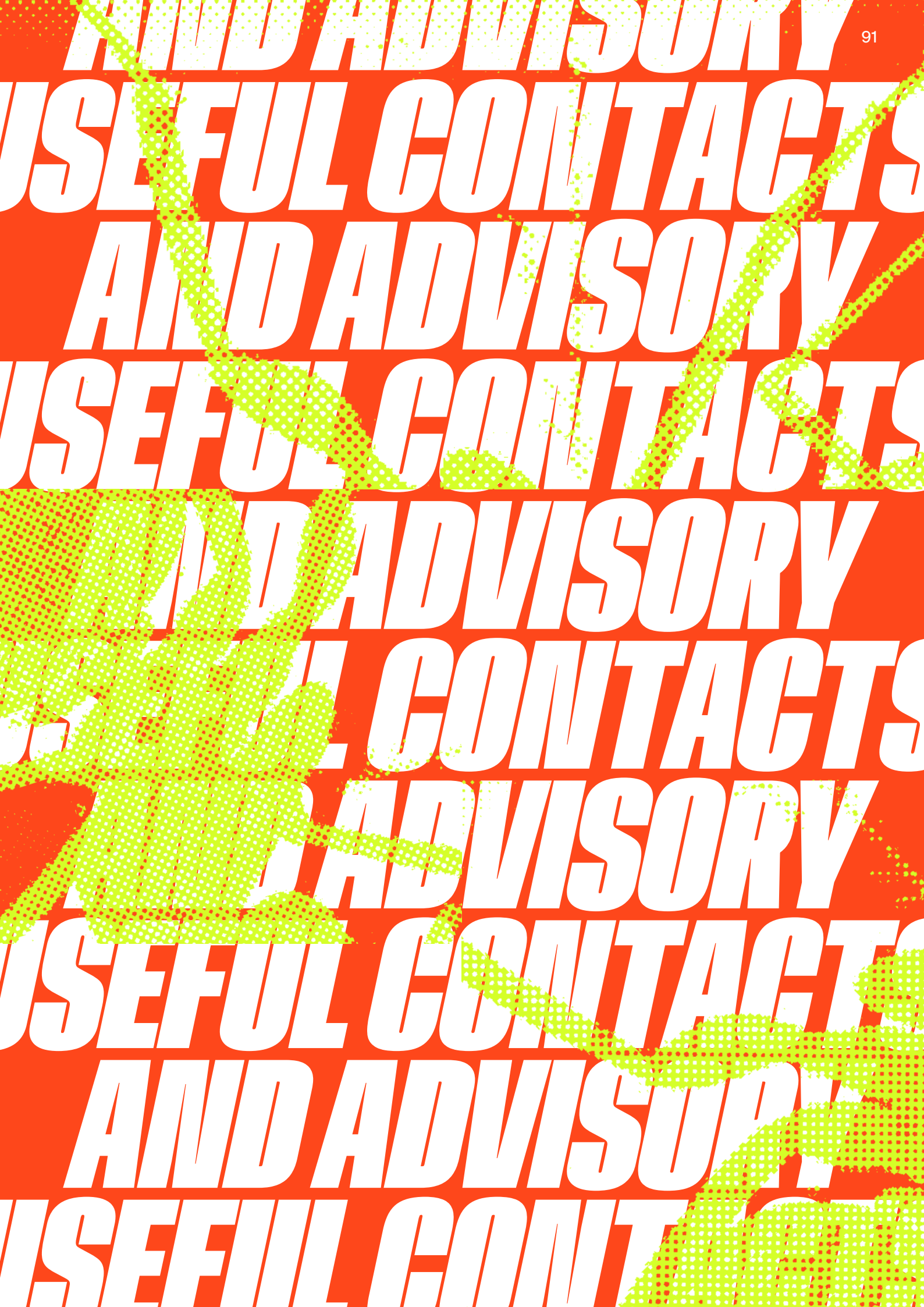
In the context of the dance production the term means primarily the process (and outcome thereof) of stabilising, regulating and defining the ways dance is being produced within venues, such as theatres but also how those processes of production are recognised and supported e.g. by the State through a stable funding instruments and infrastructural development. Institutionalisation implies also the recognition of a particular type of work or art as legitimate and requiring public and state support. This process can have downsides too, e.g. reduction of the artistic formats to what is being dictated by the established institutions and production modes, binding of dance work exclusively to the realm of institutions and marginalising further the peripheral or invisible artistic practices. There certainly exist various models for 'instituting' with some of them transforming the limitations of institutions into forms of empowerment, sharing and building of the commons. See e.g. the **Magacin** (Belgrade, Serbia)

Open Calls

- Open calls must clearly state the financial and work conditions
- Open calls must be delivered in an accessible form and transparent language that clarifies both what is expected and what can and can't be provided by the institution
- For more information regarding barriers faced by deaf, disabled and chronically sick artists while applying for public funding read the open letter published by the Network of Non-disabled and Disabled Theatre and Dance Makers in reaction to the application procedures for Neustart Kultur grants. The open letter (in German) can be accessed here:
making-a-difference-berlin.de/offener-brief-barrieren-beim-neustart-der-kultur
- We encourage institutions to organise open calls that minimise the workload of artists as writing applications continues to be unpaid labour. We also remind them to judge the applications based on the artistic quality and content and not the literary quality of the text. Translating

applications with the help of online translation services (like deepl or google translate) is a free alternative to the costs of translation and proofreading that often add up to significant sums (Depending on the funding body the project description should be between 2-10 pages. A translation of one page of a text may cost 50€ or more)

- Language of closeness and affection should not be used to mystify the selection processes or hide the unfair working conditions
- In regards to choreographers, we recommend informing dancers/performers that the works includes nudity, intimacy, etc. to assure their consent



USEFUL GOING THINGS AND ADVISORY

In case of questions or issues in regards to working conditions and/or cultural politics in Berlin's independent dance scene, send an email to the board of the ZTB e.V. at

vorstand@ztberlin.de

Tanzbüro Berlin Advisory

tanzraumberlin.de/tanzbuero/beratung

If you have questions or feedback concerning the publication, please don't hesitate to contact us: agworkculture@gmail.com