

# (Un)domesticated bodies: *live feed*

conception / direction / choreographic practice Rosalind Crisp

with

Céline Debyser  
Sunniva Egenes  
Max Fossati  
Anna Nowicka

and...

Elise Brewer  
Rosalind Crisp  
Maya Dalinsky  
Daniella Eriksson  
Naïma Ferra  
Katharina Greimel  
Naama Ityel  
Ana Jelusic  
Adriana Josipovic  
Nikolina Komljenovic  
Martyna Lorenc  
Susanne Martin  
Diethild Meier  
Andreas Müller  
Rhiannon Newton  
Lisa Nilsson  
Benjamin Pohlig  
Rain Saukas  
Alexis Steeves  
Ute Vetter  
Kasia Wolinska



photos Dieter Hartwig

lights & technical direction Marco Wehrspann / artistic assistants Andrew Morrish, Alexis Steeves / commissioned by Tanzfabrik Berlin (director Ludger Orlok) for their 40th anniversary celebrations 2018.

*A performance with deliberately frayed edges. The working process is allowed to spill over into the 'show' and the messy bits that may have preferred to be discarded are invited in, to tug and heckle and throw light on the pristine heart of the piece. For Live feed Rosalind Crisp invited a core group of four dancers who have many years of experience with her method, and twenty dancers from Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, France and Australia who are familiar with her work, to join them on stage. Live feed celebrates Crisp's long association with Tanzfabrik and her ongoing engagement with many Berlin-based dancers.*

**(Un)domesticated Bodies** has two parts: the first called *Two Gal(ah)s* is a duo practice between Rosalind Crisp and Susan Leigh Foster, performed in Tanzfabrik's Open Spaces festival Berlin 2017. It explores two quite different dance histories. The second part, *Live feed*, also acknowledges other dances (Trisha Brown's) and other bodies (the fifteen or more teachers who fed the foundations of Rosalind's practice) and the hundreds of contemporary dancers who feed off her practice. *Live feed* in turn feeds off this history. It is both arts practice and social experiment.

**production** Tanzfabrik Berlin, director Ludger Orlok / production manager Juan Gabriel Harcha / organisational support Vincenz Kokot / **assisted by** Hauptstadtkulturfonds, Germany / Australian Embassy Berlin / the Australian Government through the Ministry for Communication and the Arts' Catalyst – *Australian Arts and Culture Fund* in the framework of Platform East – Berlin & Eastern Europe. Management Auspicious Arts Projects (Australia).

<https://vimeo.com/268536981>  
(1.5 min)

<https://vimeo.com/266669027>  
(10 min)

videos Andrea Keiz



*Der Ärger mit Tanz besteht darin, dass Bewegungen ihren eigenen Weg suchen und mit dem Tänzer entkommen wollen. Der Tänzer, verführt von dem Versprechen wie ein Baby getragen zu werden, erliegt, und gibt sofort seine künstlerische Kraft preis. Das geschieht in Milliarden von kaum wahrnehmbaren Momenten. In ihnen allen vollkommen wach zu sein würde den Tänzer wahrscheinlich unter einer Lawine von Eindrücken und Möglichkeiten begraben und alles behindern, ausser das nackte Minimum der Bewegung. Vielleicht bewegen sich Tänzer deswegen so viel: um ihren Körpern zu entkommen. Wie auch immer, in der Unmöglichkeit seine Aufmerksamkeit auf alles zu lenken, das sich ständig im Körper ändert, in diesem Scheitern, diesem Durcheinander, etwas Kunst mag geboren werden.*



Rosalind Crisp (übersetzt durch Andreas Müller)

**Rosalind Crisp** first showed work in Berlin at Tanzfabrik in 2001. An Australian artist, regularly teaching, collaborating and performing in Berlin for 20 years, enjoys the artistic stimulus and relief from her intense engagement with the unfolding environmental crisis in Australia. Her art work arises from dancing, from her consistent solo studio practice and her long term collaborations with, amongst others, French dancers Céline Debyser and Max Fossati, Australian performer Andrew Morrish, Swiss/German musician Bo Wiget, American dance scholar Susan Leigh Foster and Australian writer/ecologist Louise Crisp.



photo Anna Solé

In 1996 Rosalind established the Omeo Dance studio - home to the Sydney experimental dance community for over ten years. She has received numerous awards and fellowships for her work, holds a Masters by Research from the University of Western Sydney and is an honorary fellow of the University of Melbourne. From 2004 to 2012 Rosalind was the choreographic associate of the Atelier de Paris-Carolyn Carlson in Paris where she collaborated extensively with dance scholar, Isabelle Ginot. In 2016 the French Ministry of Culture awarded her a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres.

Her formative influences include Mary Fulkerson, Lise Nelson, Eva Karczag, Jennifer Monson, George Sparks, Wendell Beavers, Susan Leigh Foster, Val Plumwood, and 30 years of studio practice through which she has developed an original body of performance work and a field of choreographic principles and tools that assist dancers to interrogate their embodied movement histories.

**Céline Debyser** began performing at 8 years old. She studied contemporary dance at the prestigious Conservatoire Supérieur de Musique et de Danse in Paris, graduating in 1995. She has worked for many European choreographers including Hervé Diasnas, Jean-François Duroure, Bruno Pradet, Richard Mouradian, Françoise Murcia, Mié Coquempot, Odile Duboc, Erika Zueneli, Kataline Patkaï, Lionel Hoche, Miriam Gourfink. Through these encounters, her interest has grown in working with the body. Her long term and ongoing collaboration with Rosalind Crisp, as both dancer and collaborative assistant since 2007, has been highly influential to her creative process.

**Sunniva Vikør Egenes** is a performer based in Berlin. She has worked in collaboration with Martin Nachbar, Anne-Mareike Hess & Isabelle Schad, amongst others. Sunniva first met Rosalind Crisp when she was a student performing in Rosalind's work at Trinity Laban in London in 2009. Since then she has followed her work in workshops and labs, and it has had and continues to have a big influence on her own artistic work and dancing. She is excited to see "Live feed" come to life, understanding further how the practice is lodged in her own body.



**Max Fossati**, after having obtained the official French government teaching diploma, studied at the National Choreographic Centre (CCN) Angers and then at the school of the CCN Montpellier. Since 2002 he participates in the projects of Alban Richard as principal dancer and assistant. (Since September 2015 Richard is director of CCN Caen). Other choreographers he has worked with include: Camille Cau, Lionel Hoche, Olivia Granville, Gabriel Hernández, Osman Khelili, Odile Duboc, Virginie Mirbeau, Françoise Tartinville and most recently Christine Gaigg in Vienna. Since 2008 Max has been engaged with Rosalind Crisp's practice, performing in many of her works and touring with her company throughout France and Australia.

**Anna Nowicka** is a dance maker and a Sapphire® practitioner, weaving her artistic research out of imagery work, dreaming principles, and attentive embodiment. She is expanding this kaleidoscopic approach during her PhD studies at the Polish Film School in Łódź. Anna's work has been recognized with the DAAD Prize, Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes, and Tanzstipendium from the city of Berlin. This is only possible through the continuous production support from the Art Stations Foundation in Poznań. Anna taught a.o. for Meg Stuart, at Tanzfabrik, SMASH Berlin, HZT Berlin and at the Alternative Academy of Dance in the Art Stations Foundation in Poznań.

**Marco Wehrspann** studied theater technology in Berlin, worked, inter alia, for Berliner Festspiele, documenta, as technical director of brut /Wien, as project manager for EXPO2000, Bochum Jahrhunderthalle, Ruhrtriennale and Tanzmesse NRW. In 1994 he started working in Tanzfabrik Berlin, responsible for the technique between 1997-2001. He has been designing lighting since 1996 and has been supporting dance companies on tour worldwide since then (e.g. for Fabrik Potsdam, Germaine Acogny/ Jant-Bi, Jeremy Wade, NEUER TANZ..) Marco met Rosalind Crisp in 2001 when she first showed work at Tanzfabrik Berlin. Marco Wehrspann has been working as a lighting designer and technical director for Rosalind Crisp / Omeo Dance since 2002.

Eine Produktion der Tanzfabrik Berlin, gefördert durch den Hauptstadtkulturfonds, im Rahmen von Platform East – Berlin & Eastern Europe, eine Plattform für australische Künstler und australisch/europäische Kooperationen, unterstützt durch die Australische Regierung mit Hilfe des Ministeriums für Künste Catalyst – Australian Arts and Culture Fund und die Australische Botschaft.





**Katarzyna Słoboda writes:**

**How to cultivate watching the dancing body? Rosalind Crisp and the *(Un)domesticated Bodies: Live Feed***

The process of writing this essay began with a score and a structure built up around carefully selected verbs in the present continuous tense: feeding, watching, supporting, reading, writing, undoing, practicing, dancing. Please do keep them in mind while reading the text, as most of these verbs are recurrent in Rosalind Crisp's own vocabulary, while all of them are CRUCIAL to the practice of watching her choreographic improvisation tools in action. Inspired by Susan Leigh Foster and her discussion with Rosalind Crisp and Deborah Hay (during *Time to Meet / HZT Open Lecture*, an event that took place on December 6, 2016 in Studio 11, Uferstudios Berlin shared by HZT and Tanzfabrik) about how the practice of cultivating the dancing body can be conceptualised and how it can reach and engage with the audience,<sup>1</sup> I would like to give an account of my own practice of watching dancing bodies during *(Un)domesticated Bodies: Live Feed*.

***feeding, watching, supporting***

*(Un)domesticated Bodies: Live Feed* took form as a performance piece four times between February 22 and 24, 2018 at Tanzfabrik Berlin. The choreographic method was directed by Rosalind Crisp with the participation of dancers Sunniva Egenes, Anna Nowicka, Céline Debyser, Max Fossati, Maya Dalinsky, Elise Brewer, Naïma Ferré, Daniella Eriksson, Käthe Kopf, Naama Ityel, Ana Jelušić, Adriana Josipovic, Rhiannon Newton, Nikolina Komljenovic, Martyna Lorenc, Susanne Martin, Diethild Meier, Andreas Müller, Lisa Nilsson, Benjamin Pohlig, Rain Saukas, Alexis Steeves, Ute Vetter, Katarzyna Wolinska as well as with the help of Marco Wehrspann (technical management, lights) and Andrew Morrish (artistic assistant). I was a witness to all four performances as well as two rehearsals on February 20 and 21, and it gave me an opportunity to feel at home with the intriguing mixture of chaos and order that characterised the piece. The set structure was shaped by the change of light which responded to the dancers actions. As we the viewers entered the space, we were welcomed by Andrew Morrish, who guided us to take seats that were arranged in five sets, two rows each along the two walls of Studio 14. We went around the open space (half of it was occupied by a discrete, diagonally placed, low stage) where circa thirteen dancers were casually moving and talking, while Rosalind Crisp herself was circulating between us and the dancers. When almost all of us were seated, Rosalind approached the viewers, starting at the far corner of the studio, reflecting on the situation of performing as well as appealing to us with words and phrases that were initiated by the attention revolving from and around her body. Her remarks left traces for our thoughts to follow through the performance. She moved from one set of viewers to the next as this intimate message built up into a statement that she read into the microphone. By the time her speech marked the end of the first part of the performance, four main dancers, Anna Nowicka, Céline Debyser, Sunniva Egenes and Max Fossati had paired up to conduct "unfinished interviews" with each other (Anna with Céline and Sunniva with Max) while moving around the space. The questions were different every evening, improvised in response to the dance. Some of the questions were: "How is it different when people are watching?" "Is this the middle?" "How do you make room for small things?" "Does it sometimes look like a wave?" "Is your voice connected to what you're doing?" "Does it always have a good appetite?" "What makes it suspend?" "Where are you in the body?"

The talk given by Rosalind Crisp opened a flickering space of possible readings, reflecting upon – but primarily being with – the dancing bodies that were about to emerge in the sections of the performance, as follows: solo, solo, solo, trio, group, solo. The structure supported the dancers while the viewers also felt as if they too were a support structure to those improvised choreographies, simply by watching and following the paths of bodies and imaginations with their attention.

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<sup>1</sup> HZT OPEN LECTURE / 06.12.2016 / Deborah Hay, Rosalind Crisp, Susan Foster, <https://vimeo.com/200198459>

### ***watching, reading, writing***

The light started to fade slowly, and we were immersed in Anna Nowicka's solo. As she decomposed habitual structures of bodily patterns, her body seemed haunted by what is mechanical and animal, material and virtual, moving our imagination with the flickering images from the past and the future appearing on the verge of unconsciousness.

Max Fossati in his solo was decomposing poses and gestures that are inscribed in the historical and the cultural body. By re-reading and re-writing those inscriptions he gave an account of an at times playful and at times exalted battle that hides away under the skin, in the bones and joints of each and every one of us.

Sunniva Egenes's solo was characterised by the fragility of her presence, with a hint of detachment as if the body were an uncharted territory that is examined by the dancer in front of our eyes.

As Max Fossati finished his solo, he stayed in the space, watching Sunniva. After her solo part, Céline Debyser joined him, and they started a dialogue which after a while was multiplied as a score by the flowing emergence of trios composed of all of the other participating dancers. Our perception was fired up by the simultaneity of those assemblages as we followed their bodily discussions. They were dancing, moving, breathing, talking, laughing, gasping, sighing, rumbling, stamping, changing the pace, tone, and plane of their interactions. They were feeding on each other. Self-organised chaos. Those spontaneous exchanges happening in front of our eyes formed the fluid and uncontrollable composition that was hard to grasp as it disappeared as soon as it appeared, leaving us with dimmed light and the last solo.

Céline Debyser in her solo manifested a pure awareness of every single inch of her body, which shaped space, time, and our attention. The dance, which she composed in an instant, left a very precise trail in space and memory, it related to the inner and outer environment. It was precise in tone with the changes of dynamics balanced, well-defined, and witty. As she decided to finish the performance and then walked away, we were left with the flickering images and sensations as the light slowly faded out.

This shared experience was composed by the act of watching, not only of the performance by the viewers, but also as one of the key elements of the practice of each performer. Watching is crafted as another important choreographic tool. The dancers are aiming at watching and perceiving themselves as well as the others as if *reading* what they are *writing* in a given moment<sup>2</sup>.

### ***undoing, practicing, dancing***

While writing about what I saw within the performance I have allowed myself to follow my sensations and imagination, at the same time feeding on the vocabulary of Rosalind Crisp's practice. But the main question while practicing choreographic improvisation as proposed by Rosalind Crisp is the question about the beginning or, in other words, the threshold of movement, and not its final moment as grasped by the eye and pinned down with a description. She is asking from where, when and how the movement is initiated by waking the attention around the body and keeping it in constant mobility. It is both to follow the attention as well as to guide it, noticing the beginnings, changes, pleasures, curiosities, qualities within the body. *The movement is therefore not a goal, but serves here as a stimulus to keep the mind/body awake*<sup>3</sup>. The work within this practice is focused on the experience of dancing that is constantly recharged and examined with the set of physicalised choreographic tools that are activated in the realm of improvisation. "Undoing the body" as the key strategy serves here as a way of letting the body forget its habitual as well as trained pathways. The dancing body and its relation to the history of dance is being constantly examined. Those undomesticated bodies are feeding on and from the attention, perception, sensations, imagination that circulates within them and from them to us, the viewers.

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<sup>2</sup> Phrases are direct quotes from a conversation with Rosalind Crisp, 24.02.2018, Berlin.

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