

sasha waltz & guests



Travelogue I – Twenty to eight
Sasha Waltz

World Premiere
16. September 1993
Grand Theatre Groningen

Revival
27. February 2025
Sophiensæle, Berlin

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Revival »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« in February 2025

The revival of »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« marks a return to the beginning: just one year after Sasha Waltz came to Berlin at the invitation of Künstlerhaus Bethanien, the choreographer founded the dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests together with Jochen Sandig in 1993 – with »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight«. The piece, which was created at the time from a dialogue between five dancers from around the world as part of a grant from Künstlerhaus Bethanien and in co-production with the Grand Theatre Groningen, received high praise from critics and audiences alike. Sasha Waltz had developed a choreographic language that was rough and passionate, painful and whimsical, aggressive and ironic, charged with sex and full of absurdities: a wild, sad, angry, ugly beauty.

It is also the prelude to the »Travelogue« trilogy, which was created in the following years, established the success of the company and became iconic. With humour, aggression and sensuality, Sasha Waltz paints a contemporary genre picture in »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« that has lost none of its explosive power and relevance over the years: a dance classic. To this day, the timeless piece, in which the choreographer herself dances for a long time, continues to inspire audiences worldwide.

From the very beginning, the idea of a repertoire, a »living archive«, has been an important starting point in the artistic work of Sasha Waltz & Guests. »I would say that all my pieces change over time, and of course that has mainly to do with the dancers: they also continue to develop, « says Sasha Waltz, who is very keen on maintaining the repertoire. »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« has been accompanying the company and the audience for over 30 years through many countries and was handed over to a new generation of dancers in 2007.

The individual personalities of the dancers usually play an important role in Sasha Waltz's work, which is why the process of handing over pieces from older creative phases to new dancers is always very exciting for the choreographer herself. The Berlin audience last saw the piece in January 2018 at the Berlin Radialsystem. On the occasion of the revival in February 2025, »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« will once again be passed on to a new generation of dancers.

Cast

Direction / Concept

Sasha Waltz

Stage Design

Barbara Steppe

Light Design

Tomski Binsert

André Pronk

Music

Tristan Honsinger Quintett

Composition

Jean-Marc Zelwer

»Le Tourment de Vassilissa la Belle« / CD Made to measure

Repetition

Orlando Rodriguez

Dance

Neus Montané Santó

Alessio Scandale

Pablo von Sternenfels

Wibke Storkan

Takako Suzuki

The piece was developed by and with the dancers Ákos Hargitay/Thomas Lehmen, Nasser Martin-Gousset, Takako Suzuki, Sasha Waltz and Charlotte Zerbey.

A co-production by Sasha Waltz & Guests and Grand Theatre Groningen, NL. With friendly support of the Berlin Government Department for Cultural Affairs, Fonds of Performing Arts, Initiative Neue Musik Berlin e.V.

Sasha Waltz & Guests is supported by the Senate Department for Culture and Social Cohesion.



Sasha Waltz about her choreographic work (1993)

Humour, aggression and sensuality are important elements of my choreographic work. Use of concrete objects, sets, film editing techniques and the grotesque movements of the silent movies are major sources of inspiration in developing my movement vocabulary. The language is expressive and emotional, but still leaves space for abstraction. The simple events of daily life with comic turning points build the contrast to the dramatic and emotionally loaded parts. I concentrate on detail and the subtlety of gestures and action to create an intricate and rhythmic picture of our time. Cliché and stereotype transform the characters into caricatures of themselves. The music is a driving force in the creation of my pieces. For the »Travelogue trilogy« the music is an original composition by Tristan Honsinger.

Starting point of »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« is the kitchen. On this location, five people meet. The kitchen acts as a mirror in which rituals, habits and behaviour patterns can be observed and reflected as they truly are. Through these reflections a web of relationships is woven. The characters run around, neurotic and obsessive in their actions, lonely and lost, unable to find a way out – prisoners of their own social structures.

I like to use real objects like a fridge, a telephone or a bed to challenge my choreographic research. This is a piece about us, our life, our way of living, about the banal activities and the simplicity of things. I want to show the beauty of ordinary objects, a beauty we no longer see. Our reality becomes a dream. This piece started with our passion for movies and their stars. We decided to become our own heroes, imperfect, ugly and as beautiful as we can possibly be. I was especially inspired by Luis Buñuels »Un Chien Andalou« and Jean-Luc Godard`s »A Bout de Souffle«.

The Kitchen

We are the heroes.
We love movies.

One day my friend
opened the fridge
and gave me a ring.
So I decided to look
at myself
in the mirror.
And I saw some people.
He turned around and
he could just grab
the seam of her dress
as she was walking by.
Under the door
was nothing
but light that crept in.
The night arriving between doors.

Coffee is ready.
It's twenty to eight.

Excerpts from Interviews

with dancers from the original cast (1993) as well as from the new cast (2025) about the revival of »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« 2025

Takako Suzuki

Dancer and Repetition, part of the original cast from 1993

»Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« is actually the first piece I did with Sasha Waltz. Back in March 1993 she invited me and Nasser Martin-Gousset to work with her at Künstlerhaus Bethanien for a week – in which we kind of developed the core material of the piece. And I have danced it since then. Of course, I also did many other projects, and whenever I came back to dance »Twenty to eight« I always put my new experiences into the piece. Through that I kept my role, but you can see more and more colours and depth in it, I hope. So, the role transforms along with oneself. After we started to play as a second cast from 2007, we revived the piece and three different casts are now learning it at the same time, which is unusual, but very exciting and interesting. I feel like each group and different combination of dancers make the pictures. They all perform the same movements, dance the same choreography, but the picture you see is still different. The varying casts change the piece so that it almost feels like watching a new piece each time.

Wibke Storkan

Dancer, in the cast since 2025

I saw the piece when I was a teenager, when I was 15. And that was a moment that really stuck with me. I always wanted to dance this piece, and now I am. One of my favorite moments is this gorgeous solo to the amazing song »Sugar baby, love«, when I am alone on stage, dancing kind of a secret night dance in the kitchen in a red dress.

Tian Gao

Dancer, in the cast since 2025

Three casts learned this piece. For example, in the opening scene we have three different languages in the cast now: Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. So, on the one hand, rehearsals consisted also of waiting around until it is your turn to touch the set. But on the other hand, it was also great to observe how the others are interpreting the role. And it is fascinating, because every person brings its own personality, so that the old repertoire becomes fresh.

Hwanhee Hwang

Dancer, in the cast since 2025

I have been working with Sasha Waltz & Guests since 2012 and have been part of many new projects and productions. When I am working on the reprise of an old piece, there is always this sense of responsibility, of honouring the original version while keeping it alive and fresh. Dancing the piece »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight«

is almost like stepping back into the foundation of the company, rediscovering the world Sasha Waltz built within - while at the same time observing how much we have evolved since then. Dance is such a vibrant art form. And dance pieces evolve over time and through the dancers who bring it to life. So, bringing back »Travelogue« is interesting, because we (the new cast) are trying to make it the same, but also, we interpret it with our own voice inside. »Travelogue I – Twenty to eight« blends dance and theater, incorporating humour and layered emotions in a physical form. It's a timeless piece, and so much fun to dance.

Biographies

Sasha Waltz & Guests

The dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests was founded by Sasha Waltz and Jochen Sandig in Berlin in 1993 and in 2023 celebrated its 30th anniversary. To date, numerous artists and ensembles from the fields of architecture, visual arts, choreography, film, design, literature, fashion and music from more than 60 countries have collaborated as »Guests« on over 100 productions, »Dialoge« projects and films. Sasha Waltz & Guests works in a constantly evolving international and national network of production and guest performance partners, and since its foundation in 1993 has performed at over 300 venues and festivals in more than 50 countries and 180 cities. Today, the company is showing its current repertoire of 12 active pieces in about 80 performances each year. In Berlin, the company cooperates with a wide range of municipal theatres, opera houses and museums and has contributed to establishing new cultural institutions, such as Sophiensæle (1996), St. Elisabeth-Kirche (2004) and Radialsystem (2006). In 2013, the company was named »European Cultural Ambassador« by the European Union. In 2014, Sasha Waltz & Guests was awarded the »Tabori Ehrenpreis« by the Fonds Darstellende Künste. Apart from Berlin stagings, national and international guest performances and the continual work on the repertoire, Sasha Waltz & Guests has been increasingly committed to educational and social projects. In 2007, the »Kindertanzcompany« (Children's Dance Company) was founded and since 2016 the interdisciplinary and open exchange platform titled »ZUHÖREN« has served as a »third space for art and politics«. Alongside these initiatives, the company continues to propose diverse offers in the field of knowledge transfer. With the work »In C«, based on Terry Riley's open composition of the same name, a system with an internationally growing community has been developing since spring 2021: the choreographic material was recorded in video tutorials to enable the easy transfer of knowledge. As a result, participatory, diverse, international and sustainable »In C« projects, workshop formats and ever-new structures have emerged worldwide. Sasha Waltz & Guests is funded by the Senate Department for Social Cohesion.

Sasha Waltz (Choreography / Concept)

Sasha Waltz is a choreographer, dancer and director. She studied dance and choreography in Amsterdam and New York. Together with Jochen Sandig she founded the company Sasha Waltz & Guests in 1993 and was co-founder of the Sophiensæle (1996) and the Radialsystem (2006), two spaces for performing arts in Berlin. From 1999 to 2004 she was a member of the artistic direction of the Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz. The development of innovative, interdisciplinary forms of performance and creation is an important focus of her artistic work, which ranges from internationally renowned dance pieces such as the »Travelogue« trilogy (1993-1995) or »Körper« (2000) to choreographic operas

(»Dido & Aeneas«, 2005) and exploratory dialogue projects (»Dialoge 09 – Neues Museum«). In her current choreographic work Waltz concentrates on the condensation of collaborative processes, such as the fusion of choreography and music (»SYM-PHONIE MMXX«, 2022 or »Beethoven 7«, 2023). To mark the 300th anniversary of its world premiere, Sasha Waltz staged Johann Sebastian Bach's »St. John Passion« (BWV 245) as a timeless tale about the human search for truth and justice beyond its original religious implications (2024). At the same time Sasha Waltz is committed to the transfer of dance knowledge and dance as a medium of social and socio-political understanding. In 2021, Sasha Waltz created the choreography »In C« based on Terry Riley's revolutionary and open score of the same name, which has since not only been successfully performed nationally and internationally, but has also developed into its own system with a growing community. In 2011, Sasha Waltz was awarded the Bundesverdienstkreuz am Bande for her special services to the cultural field. Since 2013, she is a member of the Akademie der Künste Berlin. In 2021, Sasha Waltz was appointed »Commandeur des Arts et Lettres« by the French Ministry of Culture, and in 2024 she received the German Dance Award. In May 2025, Sasha Waltz will be awarded the Helmut Schmidt Prize; this award honours international personalities who, through their significant work, stand for democracy and the common good.

Press Contact

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