

# sasha waltz & guests



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

## Press Information

### In C

Sasha Waltz & Guests

Terry Riley

### World Premiere

on a Livestream from Radialsystem, Berlin

6 March 2021

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

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

Sasha Waltz

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

## **Cast**

**Concept / Light / Choreography**

Sasha Waltz

**Costume Design**

Jasmin Lepore

**Lighting Design**

Olaf Danilsen

**Concept / Dramaturgy**

Jochen Sandig

**Dance / Choreography**

Sasha Waltz & Guests

## Biographies

Sasha Waltz

Concept / Choreography

Sasha Waltz is a choreographer, dancer and director. After her initial studies at the School for New Dance Development in Amsterdam, she joined the postmodern-oriented dance scene in New York City that worked interdisciplinarily with other arts. In 1986 and 1987, she danced in the New York-based companies of Pooh Kaye, Yoshiko Chuma & School of Hard Knocks and Lisa Kraus & Dancers. Following her return to Europe in 1988, she began an intensive phase of collaboration with choreographers, artists and musicians. In 1992, she came to Berlin with a grant by the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, where she developed the improvisational format »Dialogue« driven by the spirit of her interdisciplinary and international work. She chose the young German capital as the center of her activities, where she practiced new choreographic approaches in self-developed infrastructures. Together with Jochen Sandig, she founded the dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests in 1993, and in 1996 the Sophiensæle as a venue for dance and more – today it is a center for the independent dance and theatre scene not only in Germany. From 2000–2004, she was one of the directors of the Schaubühne at Lehniner Platz. For the season 2019–2020, Sasha Waltz was director of Staatsballett Berlin together with Johannes Öhman.

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

she created the choreography »Kreatur« (2017) followed by »ΕΞΟΔΟΣ / EXODOS« (2018), both premiered at Radialsystem in Berlin. In early 2019, the project »rauschen« received its world premiere at the Volksbühne Berlin. In March 2022, »SYM-PHONIE MMXX«, a piece for dance, light and orchestra by Sasha Waltz and Georg Friedrich Haas, received its world premiere at Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, followed by »Beethoven 7« at Radialsystem, Berlin in March 2023. To mark the 300th anniversary of its world premiere, Sasha Waltz staged Johann Sebastian Bach's »St. John Passion« (BWV 245) in spring 2024 as a timeless tale about the human search for truth and justice beyond its original religious implications. The production of the Opéra de Dijon in co-production with Sasha Waltz & Guests and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées opened the Salzburg Easter Festival on 22 March, 2024, before it celebrated its French premiere in Dijon on 30 March.

In 2020, Sasha Waltz reacted to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with different projects on- and offline. From March to June 2020, she published an online »dance diary«, in August developed the open-air project »Dialogue 2020 – Relevante Systeme«, premiering a choreography to Maurice Ravel's »Boléro« as well as solos to Georg Friedrich Haas's »I can't breathe« and in December streamed a series of improvisations with the title »Dialogue 2020 – Relevante Systeme II« live from the Radialsystem in Berlin. In 2021, Sasha Waltz created the choreography »In C« based on Terry Riley's revolutionary and open score by 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. The work consists of 53 choreographic figures that were recorded as video tutorials to facilitate the transfer of knowledge. Participatory, diverse, international and sustainable »In C« projects, workshop formats and ever-new structures have developed and continue to develop from the material worldwide. In June 2021, a choreography by Sasha Waltz to Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 received its world premiere in the frame of the Franco-German television channel ARTE's Beethoven Day, broadcast live from the ancient Apollo temple in Delphi together with musicAeterna under the baton of Teodor Currentzis.

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

## Sasha Waltz & Guests

### Dance / Choreography

The dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests was founded by Sasha Waltz and Jochen Sandig in Berlin in 1993 and in 2023 celebrated its 30th anniversary. To date, numerous artists and ensembles from the fields of architecture, visual arts, choreography, film, design, literature, fashion and music from more than 60 countries have collaborated as »Guests« on over 100 productions, »Dialogue« projects and films. Sasha Waltz & Guests works in a constantly evolving international and national network of production and guest performance partners, and since its foundation in 1993 has performed at over 300 venues and festivals in more than 50 countries and 180 cities. Today, the company is showing its current repertoire of 12 active pieces in about 80 performances each year. In Berlin, the company cooperates with a wide range of municipal theatres, opera houses and museums and has contributed to establishing new cultural institutions, such as Sophiensæle (1996), St. Elisabeth-Kirche (2004) and Radialsystem (2006). In 2013, the company was named »European Cultural Ambassador« by the European Union. In 2014, Sasha Waltz & Guests was awarded the »Tabori Ehrenpreis« by the Fonds Darstellende Künste. Apart from Berlin stagings, national and international guest performances and the continual work on the repertoire, Sasha Waltz & Guests has been increasingly committed to educational and social projects. In 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.

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

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