



ANOUK VAN DIJK /
FALK RICHTER
PHOTO: FRIEDEMANN SIMON

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'NOTHING HURTS'

"Cult. Stories for a virtual Generation," is the title of a text by Falk Richter, who seems to be "cult" himself. He says you have to "constantly market yourself and know how it's done, and be really familiar with the effectiveness of the media." Anouk van Dijk, the Dutch choreographer, adds: "Dancers have far better control over themselves." And so they can achieve more. Pop is notoriously young. And so it is difficult, fast work that ages in excess, that 'Nothing Hurts' evokes with drum and bass: young powerhouses who suffer under a permanent compulsion to be happy live out their lives like crash test dummies. Drugs are designer consciousness, they serve to provide energy, in order to dance the night through. And in doing so, to recognise the world in a mix of film, dance, and text – the tools of a generation that appears on the stage exactly as one expects it to: high, young, ever new.

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“ Dance messes up your awareness of time, space and dimensions. Nothing is what it seems to be and at the same time it's like putting life under a magnifying glass.

→ → In Germany, it was above all dance-theatre that took up and reformulated certain developments of expressive dance and began to incorporate the individual experiences of its dancers into the thematic and formal material of its pieces. Instead of existing in the service of the representation of societal hierarchies, as it did in ballet, the body took on an emancipatory function. Moulded by social forces, to whose pressures it was subject, the body was, at the same time, a utopian site of conflict with these pressures. Instead of learning a piece given in advance, the emphasis lay on the process-like development of a choreography in which all the dancers took equal part. In the US, the rights of the "democratic body," as the critic Sally Banes put it, were advanced in the '60s by the *Judson Dance Theatre*. The agenda for dance included breaking out of the theatres and into the public sphere, the appropriation of commonplace movements such as walking or running, and also interdisciplinary collaboration with visual artists and musicians. The ability to dance required no special training, as in Yvonne Rainer's 'Trio A,' which, ideally and with a bit of practice, can be danced by anyone. Techniques such as contact improvisation translated this democratic ideal directly into praxis: without any outside direction, the participating partners simultaneously received and transmitted impulses in an equal and balanced power exchange.

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