

# DEUTSCHER TANZPREIS

## AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENTS IN DANCE 2020

### Raphael Hillebrand



Raphael Hillebrand©Kooné Photography

Until now, the urban scene has never been represented within the Dachverband Tanz platform or as part of awards such as this. Raphael Hillebrand is German and grew up in Hong Kong as the son of an African father and a German mother - a fact that still leads people to discriminate against him today. This should be mentioned here in order to honour his belligerence on behalf of both expressive contemporary dance and urban dance with a clear message: this belligerence is important for both the hip hop community and the contemporary scene. Hillebrand has dared to venture across borders and studied at the University of Contemporary Dance without ever denying his hip hop roots. He continues to be driven by the fight against the establishment of boundaries not only between the arts but also between people who often want to see their demands on and views of the world reflected in a particular art form. His political engagement in the

small party The Urbans and his commitment to a dance that is not content with roadworthy rebellion and intellectual self-reflection fit together seamlessly. We honour Raphael Hillebrand because, with all his charm and openness, he is an artist through and through, who recognizes an engine in the body that can only overcome the social imbalance in our society through courage.

Statement of the jury DEUTSCHER TANZPREIS 2020

## Biography

Born in Hong Kong, rooted in Germany and West Africa, raised in Berlin and educated by hip hop, choreographer Raphael Hillebrand uses his background to realise his visions of hip hop dance theatre. He began his career as a dancer, initially participating in numerous b-boy battles and winning national and international championships. At the same time, he worked on stage productions - first as a performer, then increasingly in collective creations and now as a choreographer, director and curator.

By working on an international level enables him to make use of his flair for socio-political issues and cultural identities. Raphael is one of the most important choreography representatives of the Goethe-Institut. He regularly hosts cultural and collaborative programmes worldwide and develops various creations with local dancers. He has toured globally with the "Gemeinsam Einsam" dance theatre video performance. While working at the Freiburg Theatre, he choreographed an urban version of Richard Wagner's "Ring" cycle, entitled "Der Rap des Nibelungen", and subsequently conceived and directed the "volXtanz" stage play - a work that combined hip hop and folk dance - at the same theatre.

His works are shown nationally and internationally: He was a guest at the Breakin' Convention festival at Sadler's Wells, toured the UK, and has appeared at the Théâtre national de Chaillot, at CND Pantin, at HAU Berlin and at Théâtre de l'Archipel Perpignan, to name but a few. As a member of Battle Squad and Animatronik, he is an integral part of today's hip hop community.

He completed his master's degree in choreography at the HZT Berlin in June 2014 and subsequently toured Central America with the resulting dance theatre production "POW\_2045" in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut and Waltz Binaire.

As a source of ideas for and founding member of the world's first hip hop party: The Urbans. A Hip Hop Party, he advocates decolonisation, empowerment and cultural diversity. His current play "Auf meinen Schultern", produced at Ballhaus Naunynstraße in Berlin, premiered in September 2019.

[www.raphael-hillebrand.com](http://www.raphael-hillebrand.com)

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