



AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING DEVELOPMENTS IN DANCE
Sophia Neises

Jury statement

Sophia Neises is a choreographer, dramaturg, performer and dance educator. Since 2015, she has been developing various performance forms of dance. As a dance teacher, workshop facilitator and dramaturg, she succeeds in communicating the need for action to break down barriers and raise critical awareness of the stigmatized role of disabled people both on stage and in everyday life.

As a performer, she identifies herself as an artist with visual impairment. Not incidentally, this self-description allows her performative practice to interact with the limits that she encounters due to the conditions that define disability. The interaction creates new, lustful relationships between the artist and her audience.

In her work with disabled and non-disabled people, she uses different techniques and tactics on stage. She discovers new skills and develops contemporary forms of artistic expression together with other artists in mutual exchange and learning from each other. Through her unconventional strategies, she challenges the audience to actively re-examine their own approach to disability by including and applying innovative approaches. The prevailing concepts and criteria of body, space and time are questioned and expanded. This enables new aesthetic approaches not only in dance and performance, but in contemporary culture and society as a whole.

This honor given to Sophia Neises for her outstanding development in dance is also intended to underscore the importance of new approaches and opportunities for action in the various areas of contemporary dance. For example mixed-abled ensembles, audio descriptions, haptic introductions, relaxed performances and improving access to the arts outside of normative standards and processes - all contribute to a self-confident development of a diverse concept of culture.

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