DEUTSCHER TANZPREIS

Joy Alpuerto Ritter

HONOURED AS OUTSTANDING PERFORMER 2027

Joy Alpuerto Ritter ©Koonepics

Jury statement

Anyone who tries to find a category for Joy Alpuerto Ritter's dance quality, expressive power, and fields of activity will inevitably fail. She impresses not only in her own works and within the styles and companies of others, but also as a workshop leader and mediator within communities. Born in Los Angeles, raised in Freiburg, and accompanied there by cultural practices such as traditional Filipino folk dance on her mother's side, the dancer transcends stylistic boundaries. She

completed her dance diploma at the Palucca School in Dresden. Her artistic path has led her to collaborate with choreographers such as Christoph Winkler, Constanza Macras, and Yui Kawaguchi.

She has expanded her practice by participating in dance battles, engaging with their rules and aesthetics, and is therefore closely connected to both the voguing and hip-hop scenes. The success of her ability to move fluidly between styles is particularly evident in engagements such as with Cirque du Soleil, as a dancer and aerial artist for the Michael Jackson Immortal World Tour, as choreographer for the Friedrichstadt-Palast Berlin production Falling | In Love, and as dancer and rehearsal director for the globally touring Akram Khan Company.

How does Joy Alpuerto Ritter dance in her own distinctive voice? In her work Oz – The Magic Within Us (2025), created for Theater Junges Tanzhaus in Berlin-Neukölln, she dances the Lion—tentatively padding across the stage in search of courage. In the piece Babae (2022), she brings Mary Wigman's Witch Dance to the stage, catapulting this icon of modern dance into the 21st century through a choreographic commentary that combines voguing and traditional Filipino dance.

Joy Alpuerto Ritter is a boundary-crosser who effortlessly moves between genres, stages, and spheres of activity – commenting on them, serving them, or merging them – always with her own signature: a powerful lightness.

With great appreciation for her work, the jury of the German Dance Award 2027 therefore honours Joy Alpuerto Ritter in the category "Outstanding Performer." Congratulations.

Biografie Joy Alpuerto Ritter

Joy Alpuerto Ritter was born in Los Angeles to Filipino immigrants and grew up in Freiburg im Breisgau. At the age of five, she took her first dance lessons at the Krain Ballet School and, at the same time, learnt Filipino and Polynesian folk dances from her mother.

Joy graduated from the Palucca School in Dresden and subsequently moved to Berlin, where she has been based since 2004. Joy's personal and artistic complexity go hand in hand. Her work as a dancer and choreographer is characterised by Joy's versatility and interdisciplinary perspective, which is nourished by her practice of and experience with various dance cultures.

Following her classical training, she found a second home in urban dance styles; in the years that followed, she successfully took part in battle events such as Defipayette, Funkin Stylz and Voguing Out, and is now frequently invited to sit on judging panels thanks to her many years of experience.

Her work as a freelance dancer is wide-ranging; in this country, for example, she has worked with Christoph Winkler, the Oxymoron Dance Company, Heike Hennig, Yui

Kawaguchi, Bouldry/Lorenz, Hennermann's Horde and Raphael Hillebrand. Joy Alpuerto Ritter has also toured worldwide as a dancer with international choreographers and companies such as Cirque du Soleil, WangRamirez and Zora Snake. Her collaboration with Akram Khan was particularly formative for her, initially as a dancer in various pieces such as iTMOi, Kaash, Until the Lions and Thikra, and later also as an associate choreographer.

Since 2016, Joy Alpuerto Ritter has increasingly devoted herself to her own choreographic work, for which she soon received international recognition. With her solo piece BABAE, she was selected as an Aerowaves artist in 2020. Her group piece UNDA premiered at the iconic Barbican Centre in London, and OZ – DER ZAUBER IN UNS, a piece for young audiences, was awarded the Berlin Ikarus Prize.

Joy has choreographed at German venues such as the Sophiensäle, Junges Tanzhaus in Berlin, Pottporus, Hellerau, LOFFT Leipzig, Musiktheater im Revier Gelsenkirchen and the Friedrichstadtpalast.
Her works have toured internationally at various venues and festivals, such as Orsolina 28, the Kalamata Dance Festival, the Romaeuropa Festival and the STEPS Festival in Switzerland.

As a choreographer, she has collaborated with artists such as Akram Khan, Hannes Langolf, film director Floria Sigismundi, film director Garin Nugroho, Viviana Durante, Farooq Chaudry, Rianto, Chen Shi Zheng and Florence + the Machine. Her choreographies combine diverse cultural movement languages and often bring together classical forms with urban and modern dance elements.

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