

QUESTIONS FOR DANCE / FIVE

Author and performer: **Petr Ochvat**
Sound: **Petr Ochvat**
Visual and technical support: **Veronika Šmírová**
Curator: **Zuzana Žabková**

Date: **Saturday, 18 May 2019, 8 p.m.**
Venue: County Hall's Concert Hall

Free Admission!

A lone body in an empty quiet space that is trying so survive 40 minutes without losing its concentration. How to turn movement into something that is and is not dance at the same time? What is dance in its most basic form? Petr Ochvat is a young Czech choreographer who calls his initial choreographic studies *Questions for Dance*. The Nitra Gallery is proud to present his solo project titled *Questions for Dance 5*. Originally, the performance was supposed to be a duet, but as a result of breakups, it has turned into a solo project that invites the audience to a contemplative dialogue. It separates and extends a shared moment, contemplating where my body does not begin and where your space does not end. How much can you remove and still leave the dance intact? You cannot sever the connection that runs from head to toe. Self-awareness. You need to know where you are in order to consciously influence the form. You cannot manipulate if you are not aware.

Peter's solo career began with his choreography titled *Breakdance Dance*, presented at platforms for young choreographers Werkstück (Vienna), Frisch eingetroffen (Mannheim) and Dance Ostrava (Ostrava) in 2013. Even back then, in order to achieve self-awareness, he was interested in changing positions using a kind of joint articulation that would include body parts which are usually difficult to access, like individual vertebrae or finger phalanges. He turned his slowness into a tool for engaging a larger number of joints. It allows him not just to better understand his body in action, but also to highlight and communicate certain body positions and associations that would get lost in case of a faster pace.

The project's original reference to break dance positions has moved towards referencing the break dance logic of a motion chain. The final form or choreography are not as important to him as making himself self-aware in front of the audience, confronting a certain type of co-habitation with our own bodies, the necessity of daydreaming, nonviolent and uncensored exploration that deconstructs the original form of break dance in order to present the viewer with dislocated body positions and discomfort that slowly melts into a contrastingly comfortable meditation.

Text: Zuzana Žabková

PETR OCHVAT is a freelance choreographer currently living in Ostrava (CZ). In 2010, he began his career at Vienna's contemporary dance scene, worked with various dance groups and choreographers, such as: Georg Blaschke/M.A.P. Vienna, Christine Gaigg/2nd Nature, Milan Kozánek/Artyci. In 2013, together with Anna Prokopová (CZ) and Kostas Kekis (GR), they founded their own Vienna dance group called Maggie Palms. Their performance titled *It Beats Soft in the Veins* was presented as a part of a platform for young choreographers known as 8:tension at the Impulstanz festival in 2017. This performance was nominated for the Prix Jardin d'Europe award in 2017. In the past, he has received support from the Czech Centres in Vienna and Madrid, Austrian Ministry for the EU, Arts, Culture and Media, the Dance-WEB Scholarship and the Tanzquartier Wien scholarship.