

A word from the curator:

The performance programme *Archiwum ciała* [Archive of the Body] is an attempt to join in the discussion taking place among contemporary dance artists and critics about bringing old-time choreographies back on today's stages. Dubbed "dance archaeology", the tendency sees choreographers turning into archaeologists of a kind to dig deep in the repertoire of cultural memory. They strive to extract "products" of their predecessors. Yet their task is a bit more difficult than that faced by historians and actual archaeologists, as when it comes to dance and theatre tangible artefacts of the work of actors, dancers or directors are missing. The original performance disappears in a void. How to fill it in? How to deal with it?

There are a few ways: you may make use of the remaining movement and musical scores, you may learn by repetition from your master, or you may look for clues and try to reconstruct your predecessors' works in your own way. At times you manage to recreate the original piece, on other occasions – you fail but your helplessness becomes a starting point for inventing a new form. And sometimes experiencing the process of extracting an old-time choreography is more inspiring than its reconstruction.

As we are in a dance archive, we need to introduce some order in all of these different approaches to cultural memory and ways of making a dialogue with it. Each shelf of the archive stores a different thing. There are reconstructions and rewrites (recycling), rich collections of remixes, postmodern and intertextual forms, namely works which are old and new at the same time, and finally – new interpretations of canonical choreographies.

*The Archive of the Body* is meant as a review of choreographic pieces which in some way revive old works giving them a contemporary twist at the same time. Similarly to any archive, specialists participating in two panel discussions will try to put the different ways of thinking and working on stage in order. An important role in this project is played by the performances of Mikołaj Mikołajczyk, Tomasz Bazan and Kaya Kołodziejczyk, namely choreographers who have started a dialogue with the Polish tradition of avant-garde theatre and dance. They have employed different ways of referring back to the thought and art of Henryk Tomaszewski, Tadeusz Kantor and Conrad Drzewiecki, both quoting the absent masters and making their own individual stance. This Polish context will be broadened with European influences, including pieces of the first half of the 20th century. Olga de Soto and Martin Nachbar have undertaken to reconstruct *Das grüne Tisch* by Kurt Jooss and *Affectos Humanos* by Dore Hoyer. It is crucial both to bring back to life the old pieces, as well as to stress the importance of shaping audiences' memory and to initiate a debate revolving around these milestones in dance history.