

Dancer of the Year

Choreographed and Performed Trajal Harrell
Costumes and Sound Design Trajal Harrell
Dramaturg Sara Jansen

"It's one thing to be named Dancer of the Year, it's something entirely different to try and make something of it."

With *Dancer of the Year*, Trajal Harrell, who came to contemporary dance fame with his *Twenty Looks* or *Paris is Burning* at The Judson Church Series, ventures into a full-length solo project for the first time in a while. The point of departure is a personal one: Harrell's selection as 'Dancer of the Year' by *Tanz* magazine in 2018 and the reflection on (self)worth which this triggered. With this project, Harrell focuses attention on (self)representation. He confronts his singularity and aesthetic with the eponymous honorary title and reflects on what he means to dance and what dance means to him. Here, he updates his legacy and what he hopes to leave behind for history not only as a choreographer but as a dancer.

Co- Producers: Kunstenfestival des Arts, Festival d'Automne, Lafayette Anticipation, Impulstanz Festival, Bit Theatergarasjen, Schauspielhaus Bochum, Museum Ludwig (Cologne), Dampfzentrale (Bern), and others TBA
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Trajal Harrell came to contemporary dance world fame with the *Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church* series of works which theoretically juxtaposed the voguing dance tradition with the early postmodern dance tradition. He is now considered as one of the most important choreographers of his generation.

Trajal Harrell's work has been presented in many American and international venues including The Kitchen (NYC), New York Live Arts, TBA Festival (Portland), Walker Arts Center (Minneapolis), American Realness Festival, ICA Boston, Philadelphia Fringe Festival, LA's RedCat Theater, Festival d'Automne (Paris), Holland Festival (Amsterdam), Festival d'Avignon, Impulstanz (Vienna), TanzimAugust (Berlin), Forum do Futuro (Porto), and Panorama Festival (Rio de Janeiro) among others. He has also shown performance work in visual art contexts such as MoMA, MoMA PS1, Perfoma Biennial, Fondation Cartier (Paris), Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), MUDAM (Luxembourg), The New Museum (New York), The Margulies Art Warehouse (Miami), Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), Serralves Museum (Porto), The Barbican Centre (London), Centre Pompidou- Paris and Metz, ICA Boston and Art Basel-Miami Beach.

His work *Judson Church is Ringing in Harlem (Made-to-Measure)/Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church (M2M)*, has the distinction of being the first dance commission of MoMA PS1. He has been awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship; The Doris Duke Impact Award, a Bessie Award for *Antigone Sr./Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church (L)*; as well as fellowships from The Foundation for Contemporary Art, Art Matters, and the Saison Foundation, among others

In 2016, he completed a two-year Annenberg Residency at MoMA, where he has turned his attention to the work of the Japanese founder of butoh dance, Tatsumi Hijikata. By looking at butoh through voguing's theoretical lens of "realness" and modern dance through the theoretical lens of butoh, Harrell is creating a number of works which combine a speculative view of history and the archive with contemporary dance practice and composition. He has created *Used Abused and Hung Out to Dry*, premiered and commissioned by MoMA in February 2013; *The Ghost of Montpellier Meets the Samurai* premiered in Montpellier Danse Festival in July 2015; *The Return of La Argentina* premiered in Paris' Centre National de la Danse and commissioned by MoMA; *In the Mood for Frankie* premiered in May 2016 at MoMA; *Caen Amour* premiered at Festival Avignon 2016; *Juliet and Romeo* produced for the repertoire of Munich Kammerspiele premiered in 2017; *Morning in Byzantium* also for Munich Kammerspiele in 2018; and most recently *Séance du Travail* for Schauspielhaus Bochum.

Most recently, he has become well-known for *Hoochie Koochie*, the first survey (1999-2016) and performance exhibition of his work, presented by the Barbican Centre Art Gallery in London during July-August 2017. In this same line, a new group of pieces made for museums and galleries have recently been shown including *Okidoki* in March 2018 at The Pulitzer Art Foundation (St.Louis) and April 2018 at Casa do Povo (Sao Paulo); *Everything Not In It's Right Place II* in June 2018 at the Centre National de la Danse in Paris; and *Everything Not in It's Right Place* in August 2018 at The Weisbaden Biennale.