

# ON HER SHOULDERS

A CONTEMPORARY DANCE PIECE

**CONCEPT:**

ARIANNA DI PALMA, FINJA KELPE, VERENA ECCARDT

**CHOREOGRAPHY:**

FINJA KELPE & ARIANNA DI PALMA

**ARTISTIC DIRECTION:**

VERENA ECCARDT

**DRAMATURGY:**

DANOSCH MAGHSUDI

**DANCERS:**

CHIARA MARTORANA, FINJA KELPE, JULIA SIKELL ARNET, MAREN WITTIG,  
MARIE HÖHNE, ROOSA SOFIA NIRHAMO, VANESSA WÜTHRICH

**SINGER:**

CAROLINA WALKER

**COSTUME:**

LEA SIMON

**MUSIC:**

11:68PM

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:**

PAUL KALVELAGE

**PROJECT MANAGER:**

AYTAC HÜNAL

**GRAPHIC/AD:**

KIMERA, MICHAEL CLASEN

**PHOTOS:**

MARIE PIETRUSCHKA

BASED ON THE TEXT „SUPERMARKET“ BY EILEEN KELPE

A PRODUCTION BY VISITORS

SUPPORTED BY FONDS DARSTELLENDEN KÜNSTEN WITH FUNDS FROM  
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER FOR CULTURE AND MEDIA  
WITHIN THE PROGRAM NEUSTART KULTUR AND DIS-TANZEN-START BY  
THE DACHVERBAND TANZ DEUTSCHLAND.

## **VISITORS**

Finja Kelpé,  
Arianna Di Palma,  
Verena Eccardt  
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-for immediate release-

## **ON HER SHOULDERS**

*Germany, 2022*

The piece „On her shoulders“ by Finja Kelpé and the artist collective „Visitors“ is a powerful mixture of contemporary dance and song that explores the paradoxes and boundaries of the world of work and consumption. Seven dancers and a singer immerse themselves in the mind of a supermarket cashier, look for people in a de-individualised system, and pose the question: What happens when the outer and inner worlds collide?

An anarchical energy emerges, fuelled by opposites, optimism and impotence, rigidity and lightness, 90s music and a powerful performance that calls into question the absurdity of modern capitalism.

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Length: 52 minutes

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Visitors is a collective of dancers based in Europe creating dance pieces for live performances, music videos and short films.

## ABOUT VISITORS

Finja Kelpé,  
Arianna Di Palma,  
Verena Eccardt  
[www.visitorscollective.com](http://www.visitorscollective.com)

VISITORS is an artist collective that creates and produces contemporary dance pieces developed for professional live performances, music videos and dance films.

The founders Arianna Di Palma (dancer, choreographer), Finja Kelpé (dancer, choreographer) and Verena Eccardt (director, cinematographer, dancer) completed their dance training together at the Iwanson International School of Contemporary Dance in Munich. In 2019 they officially joined forces to form "Visitors". In their projects, they work across genres and styles and collaborate internationally with artists from various fields. With their work, they want to engage in a creative network, inspire and in the long term establish themselves in the international dance scene.

### Videos:

"Visitors" (2019)

*music video*

for Amy Ayanda; nominated at "Santorini Film Festival 2021",  
online mentioned by redbull as 1 out of 10 Aesthetically Appealing  
Music Videos.

<https://youtu.be/JMNMwt2WME0>

"The F-Word Feminism" (2020)

*dance video/performance*

<https://vimeo.com/773429100/35d3bbb99f>

"Anonymous" (2022)

*dance video/concept video*

<https://youtu.be/eE8TLaANt3Y>

"The island of renegades" (2023)

*dance short film*

<https://vimeo.com/734797356/526c255fc3>

### Stage:

"On her shoulders"

*dance and music stage piece*

<https://vimeo.com/763847768/6f2074af31>



**ON HER SHOULDERS**  
A CONTEMPORARY DANCE PIECE

Length: 53 minutes



## SHORT SUMMARY

The dance piece "on her shoulders" is an hour-long stage piece designed for eight dancers and one singer. the choreography (contemporary dance with experimental soli) is dedicated to the work of a supermarket cashier as part of an automated and dehumanizing system that she's trying to break out of. In this way, the piece plumbs the paradoxes and boundaries of the capitalist world of work and consumption.

The play premiered on October 14, 2022, at the Sprechwerk Hamburg. Another performance took place on November 5, 2022, at the Wasserburg Theater in Bavaria.

Conceptual content: The short text "Supermarket" by Eileen Kelpé forms the basis for the content and dramaturgy of the play. It's about a woman who works in a supermarket. She sits at the checkout and is not noticed by the customers. But in her imagination she is free: she breaks out, unfolds an anarchic force, and thereby brings the system into being stagger.

Based on this story, interviews were conducted with people who work in supermarkets and who shared their experiences. These served as an authentic insight into the workers' real work and emotional world in the supermarket. In addition to the content research, together with the dancers, the movements of the supermarket employees were analyzed, abstracted, and developed into choreographic elements during the rehearsal phase.



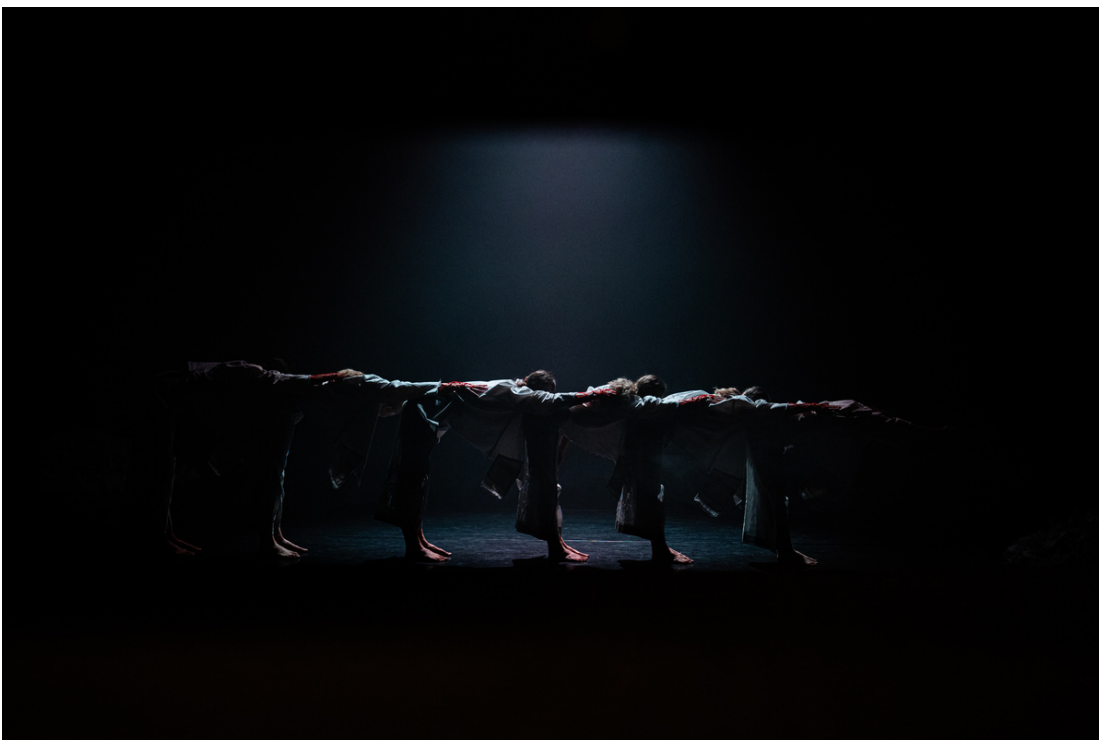
## CHOREOGRAPHY

The choreography of the piece is divided into three main parts. The first part is introduced by the singer, who initially stands alone on the stage before the dancers come in. The dancing parts are characterized by repetitive and monotonous movement sequences and mimic games. There are also moving group pictures, soli, and a popping sequence representing the automatism of the system and the exhausting work. This is emphasized by the imitation of an assembly line: the dancers line up, bent over, and repeat the same monotonous sequence of movements. In this way, the performers explore the different facets of the work routine and the alienation of the cashier.

In the second part, there is a breakout from the system, through which emotionality comes through. Lightness, joy, and freedom are created. The movements escape their static state, they are flowing and appear as uncoordinated energetic chaos on stage.

The dancers perform individual movements, inspired and cheered by the singer.

In the third part, the circle closes to the beginning, and the awakening from the dream world catapults the performers back to reality. They are moving in a canon, back into the automatism of the work routine.





## MUSIC

Three songs were performed by the singer: "Free" by Ultra Nate, "Show Me Love" by Robin S., and "High Energy" by Evelyn Thomas. Also, original compositions were arranged and mixed by the artist 11:68PM to reflect the lightness and emotionality of the 90's music. The goal was to create a supermarket atmosphere, amplify the feelings of the story and express a contrast to the movements on stage.



## COSTUMES

The costumes of the performers are designed uniformly. Consisting of a white overall that is cut asymmetrically and cut out at the arms. Wide, gray, transparent pants made of synthetic material to remind packaging. There are supermarket receipts in various places on the costumes. Under the costume, the performers wear orange nets, which are knotted with the macramé technique. During the piece, these nets glow under the costumes depending on the stage light. They are reminiscent of fruit and vegetable nets and simultaneously express the imprisonment of the individual in the system.

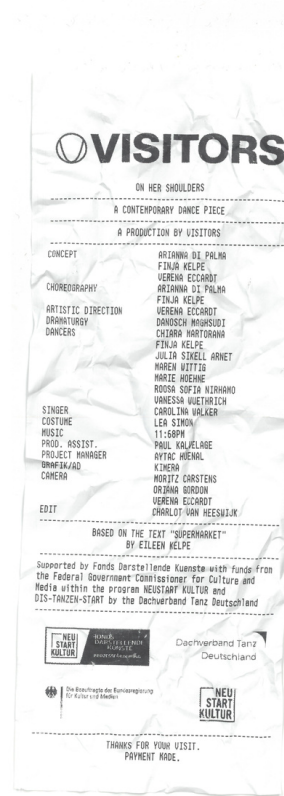




# SUPERMARKET CONCEPT

The supermarket motif is recognizable in the form of receipts. In order to welcome the viewers into the "supermarket", the program is printed out live before the performance in the form of a receipt and given to everyone. The posters are also based on the layout of receipts.

They also form the stage design: initially, there are two heaps on the stage, while in the second part they are mixed up.



## SUPERMARKET BY Eileen Kelpo

She opens her eyes. The day weighs heavily. On her shoulders. Work. She walks between the supermarket shelves. Stocking packages of orange juice. Apple juice. Then oatmeal cookies. Then cups of yogurt. Raspberries. Vanilla. She's invisible. People rush past her, pulling chips off the shelves, canned soups, frozen pizzas. She glides the grey, damp rag over the tiles. The customer is king. The customer is queen. She's a servant. At the bottom of the system.

At the cash register. The beeps from the scanning still sounds like the end of the day in her ears. Pistachio ice cream. Beep. Condoms. Beep. Egg liqueur. Beep. Cat food. Beep. Peanuts. Beep. She smiles mechanically. People disappear their purchases into crackling plastic bags. They don't look her in the eye. She's not there. Vanished into the décor. But then she raises her eyes. Looking at them, seeking their gaze, as if she wanted to call out to them. "I'm here. Look at me!"

She stops the conveyor belt. Traffic jam. The hazelnut chocolate falls down the sides, the cigarettes, the spaghetti, the toilet paper. The watermelon breaks open as it falls to the ground. System error. And then they look into her eyes with horror. The one that disrupts the process. She's frozen for a short time. But her color returns. She takes shape. Her feelings overwhelm her. Rage. She erupts, because only when she moves does she feel the narrowness, the cage, the chains, the supermarket. She's flooded with energy. She reaches into the cash register. Bills start flying, coins clanking. A rain of money. And it didn't matter. The shopping carts collide. Bang. Milk bottles break on the floor. People lose their bearings, wandering around the department store without an orientation. Stamping on grapes, slipping on toothpaste, tearing down shelves. The neon lights flicker. She spins in circles until she gets dizzy. And laughs. The chaos is welcome!

The beeping rips her from her thoughts. The conveyor belt begins to run as usual. Salami. Beep. Red wine. Beep. Gummy bears. Beep. Chewing gum. Beep. Nobody looks at her. She lowers her gaze.

## CREDITS

### ON HER SHOULDERS

A contemporary dance piece

Based on the text „Supermarket“ by Eileen Kelpé

#### Concept:

Arianna Di Palma, Finja Kelpé, Verena Eccardt

#### Choreography:

Finja Kelpé & Arianna Di Palma

#### Artistic direction:

Verena Eccardt

#### Dramaturgy:

Danosch Maghsudi

#### Dancers:

Chiara Martorana, Finja Kelpé, Julia Sikell Arnet, Maren Wittig, Marie Hühne, Roosa Sofia Nirhamo, Vanessa Wüthrich

#### Singer:

Carolina Walker

#### Costume:

Lea Simon

#### Music:

11:68PM

#### Production assistant:

Paul Kalvelage

#### Project manager:

Aytac Hünal

#### Graphic/AD:

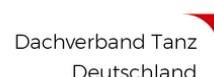
Kimera, Michael Clasen

#### Photos:

Marie Pietruschka

### A production by Visitors

Supported by Fonds Darstellende Künste with funds from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media within the program NEUSTART KULTUR and DIS-TANZEN-START by the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland.





**Wasserburger Stimme** - Von Regina Mittermair 7.11.22

<https://www.wasserburger-stimme.de/blog/2022/11/07/on-her-shoulders-tanz-choreo-brachte-schwung-auf-die-theaterbuehne/>

**OVB** - von Ute Fischbach- Kirchgraber 08.11.2022

<https://www.ovb-online.de/rosenheim/kultur/wasserburg-kuenstlerkollektiv-visitors-war-zu-gast-91902567.html>

## Die Last von den Schultern tanzen

OVB 9.11.22

Künstlerkollektiv „Visitors“ begeistert das Belacqua-Publikum mit Gesang und spektakulärer Choreografie

Wasserburg – „Absurd“ leuchtet zwar auf dem Spruchband über der Kasse im Wasserburger Belacqua, doch so absurd ist die Tanzperformance des Künstlerkollektivs „Visitors“, das den Abschluss des fünfmonatigen Projekts „Tanz mal fünf“ darstellt, wahrlich nicht. Gefördert vom Sonderfonds DIS-TANZEN geht es bei „On her shoulders“ um die Gedankenwelt einer Supermarktkassiererin, die unsichtbar für König Kunde im monotonen Fließbandrhythmus malocht und einen Crash zwischen Außen- und Innenwelt herbei tanzt. Wobei die immer wieder auftauchende Sängerin den Gegenentwurf stimmstark in den Raum stellt: Mach, was Du willst, ist ihre Botschaft, und so befreien sich die sechs Tänzerinnen im Laufe des Abends zunehmend aus starren Bewegungs-Schemata.

Anfangs schaufeln sie breit in der Grätsche stehend mit den Händen in Fließband-Manier imaginär vor sich Liegendes unter dem Beckenboden durch. Sie treten auf als sich



**Kopfstand:** „Visitors“ bieten ungewohnte Persepektiven.

ständig in Reih und Glied formierende und gegeneinander verschiebende Reihen, ein exakter Formationstanz.

Den stärksten Eindruck hinterlässt eine endlose Kette, bei der die Tänzerinnen sich kurz erheben, den Arm strecken, ihn in 45-Grad-Winkel halten, um dann in 90-Grad-Beugung ihre Hand jeweils auf die Schulter der vor ihnen Tanzenden zu legen. Der Musik folgt dann der tänzerische Ausbruch. Das Zacki-

ge wird aufgelöst in weich fließende Bewegungen, in Pirouetten mit denen der Chor der Kassiererinnen über die Bühne fegt und die beiden weißen Haufen von Kassensbons rundum aufwirbelt, sodass sie wie weiland in Tschschows Kirschgarten die Kirschblüten herabrieseln und ein Chaos hinterlassen. Wobei Tschschow natürlich schon mehr wusste, dass nämlich die hier in der Performance viel beschworene



**Arbeitswelten:** ausdrucksstark interpretiert.

FOTOS KIRCHGRABER

Liebe auch nicht hilft. Doch andererseits darf man die Hoffnung darauf nicht aufgeben...

Weichheit gegen Härte zu setzen gelingt den Tänzerinnen bemerkenswert gut. Selten sieht man so beredete Hände, die sich wie sanfte Wellen ausbreiten können, wobei selbst einzelne Finger zart und einfühlsam ein Eigenleben führen und die zupackende Arbeitswelt verlässen. Dass das natürlich nur

eine Utopie sein kann, versteht sich. Das Gewusel der Kassiererinnen bewegt sich mit einer Mittelfigur buchstäblich Hals über Kopf im Handstand über die Bühne, bis am Ende die Losgelassenen die in der Mitte stehende Sängerin umkreisen. Sie liegen auf dem Boden der Tatsachen, aber sie rollen noch.

Das Gebotene war auch optisch ein Hochgenuss: denn im blauen Licht strahlen die rot phosphorizierenden

Spinnweben um das rechte Handgelenk, aber auch um Brustkorb, Rücken und Beine wie enigmatische Zeichen, Hoffnungsträger in einer ansonsten grau-schwarze Welt.

Starke Bilder, auch wenn man von der passenderweise auf einer Kassensrolle gedruckten Programmzettel-Anweisung nichts direkt gesehen hat. Aber das sind Interpretationsangebote, um die Zuschauer-Fantasie in Gang zu setzen und die Abstraktion zu erden. Und das hat vorzüglich funktioniert. Das Publikum war begeistert von dieser von Hip-Hop und Modern Dance inspirierten Performance.

Finja Kelpo, von der die Konzeption stammt und sie zusammen mit Arianna di Palma choreografiert hat, durfte sich über den herzlichen Applaus ebenso freuen wie Sängerin Carolina Walker und die Mit-Tänzerinnen Chiara Martorana, Marie Höhne, Roosa Sofia Nirhamo, Vanessa Wüthrich und Julia Sikkell Ahmet.

UTE FISCHBACH-KIRCHGRABER