



The Come Closer Story

About New Nearness: "Come Closer" merges piano music, contemporary dance and film arts

Wörthsee (district of Starnberg), 25 June 2020. An international group of artists stages a contemporary dance production on a nocturnal airstrip - despite and because of Coronavirus. The result can now be viewed at www.come-closer.org.

We have all experienced in the past weeks how much we miss interpersonal contact. The current project of a group of artists who creatively dealt with the Corona-related banishment from the stage tells us about the new and regained appreciation of closeness, about longing and the new sensitivity. In May, the team around the Wörthsee composer Axel Werner staged the contemporary dance video "Come Closer" according to the motto "then art comes to the audience". All Corona requirements were met and maybe that's exactly why something astonishing was created. Originally planned as a stage production, the short video merges piano music and contemporary dance into a format of film art that can be viewed on www.come-closer.org from 25 June 2020.

The three-minute film processes the first work of the "Blue Hour Suite", a series of ten piano pieces that Axel Werner composed for modern ballet and expressive dance. The filigree piano solo mixes romantic-balladic figures with jazzy twists and turns and leads into a lyrical style

between Eric Satie and George Gershwin. "I write film music for the head cinema. My piano pieces should inspire smiles and dreams and be a blessing to the moved soul", says the composer from Wörthsee.

The music was a welcome challenge for the choreographer Maged Mohamed. While the dance is often choreographed first and then the music is composed, the creative sequence was reversed in "Come Closer": "We translated the flow of the piano piece into an emotional body language and interpreted the current social distancing from the perspective of two lovers. Closeness and non-contact become a symbolic language in their own right," explains the Egyptian Munich resident. In the film a young man dreams of his distant lover. All attempts to overcome the physical distance fail. Finally he leaves his protected space and follows his vision of her into the vastness of the night. In the magical Blue Hour, the impossible finally becomes reality. An homage to the New Nearness.

The special thing about it: the two dancers are a couple in real life as well. The Belgian Amelie Lambrichts had previously returned to Munich from the Rotterdam Scapino Ensemble to join her boyfriend David Valencia. The Colombian is a soloist in the company of the Gärtnerplatztheater. The fact that both live under the same roof made rehearsals much easier. "The whole project team developed an enthusiastic spirit. Perhaps precisely because the Corona behavioral corset has a stimulating effect on creative people," says Lambrichts, and Valencia adds: "Art is always also a reflection of the present. We simply interpreted the beautiful music in a dancing way and gave it our honest, contemporary expression".

The group organized itself through various video conferences and project messengers. They rehearsed in the kitchen and in Munich's English Garden. Filming took place at the abandoned airport of the Landsberg airbase in Penzing and in the Wörthsee studio.

"An airport at night is a fascinating setting," says Frank Meyer, who directed and shot the film. "Our aim was to convey aesthetic dance details to the audience through the lens that they would never see from their armchair during a stage performance. In the abandoned aircraft shelter and surrounded by the nighttime expanse of the runway, very moving images were created." Peter Mang, who organized and realized the entire production, paid attention to clarity in the post-production: "Following the intimate style of music and choreography, we do without any dazzling visual effects and let the beauty radiate only from within itself".

"The project was a great adventure. And we want to achieve much more," says Werner. It is the hope of the initiator to win further supporters and sponsors who will contribute financially to the planned nine music dance productions through artist and technology sponsorships. "Art is made by people and they must be able to live. And technology provides

the necessary media quality to reach the audience". According to Werner, innovative revenue models are being looked for, including new media forms such as virtual reality subscriptions.

The starting point has been set. The artists are looking forward to receiving feedback and support.

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Team of Artists

- Axel Werner (composer, initiator and piano)
- Peter Mang (produktion and cut)
- Maged Mohamed (choreography in co-operation with dancers and direction)
- Frank Meyer (director of photography, steadicam and direction)
- Amelie Lambrichts (contemporary dance)
- David Valencia, (contemporary dance)
- Michael Augustin (editing)
- Reinhold „Reini“ Binder (sound engineering)
- Christian Kröck (photography)
- Roland Braun (design and web)

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