

# Another Perspective

Cristina Caprioli in conversation with Virve Sutinen

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***Tanz im August is devoting a major retrospective to Cristina Caprioli, the influential choreographer and pioneer of post-modernism in the Nordic countries. Virve Sutinen asks her about the chosen programme, what it means to look back and what she has in store for the future.***

Working alongside Cristina Caprioli demanded us to keep up with her critical, rigorous and fast-moving thinking. The curatorial process was aided by the extensive research that Caprioli launched with her collaborators and her team from ccap. She was in the midst of reworking and testing out numerous old works and also choreographing new ones as we settled on the present programme. With a diverse selection of old and new pieces, visitors will have the opportunity to dive into many aspects of Caprioli's artistic vision. At the centre of it all is dance. On the retrospective, Caprioli states; "The visitors can expect a lot of dancing, both loose and rigorous. There's a low-key sentiment, intellectual stimuli, and quite often an absurd sense of humour in disguise. Perhaps most importantly, they will see brilliant dancers trusting the dancing."

## Looking back

For Caprioli, a retrospective is just another perspective. It's a singular take on a body of works that is to be followed by other perspectives. She calls the experience of visiting her past together with her collaborators overwhelming, challenging and extremely productive. "I don't relate to the past as a chronological progression towards the now, as a line of conduct from there to here. Rather, I see it as layers of time travelling back and forth, occasionally fluttering up to the surface, mixing themselves with the now, and the future. In this sense, working on a retrospective becomes a timeless leafing through time." "Leafing" is also the title of the branch of the retrospective that takes place at the KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art. It is a changing weekly programme with a keen look into works arranged by such titles as "Silver", "Spoons" and "Undercover", giving the visitor a multisensory experience of Caprioli's world.

## Staged beauty

The festival's opening weekend presents a stunning double bill of Caprioli's solo, "Scary Solo" (2020), and "Omkretz2.22" (2022), a virtuosic duet with Philip Berlin and Madeleine Lindh paired with electronic live music by Yoann Durant. It is a serene evening, not at all a scary experience. Rather, it's the solo itself that is scary, as Caprioli notes: "The point of the solo is to perform instability, and to pretend it is a horror cartoon where the scary part stands for entertainment. Besides this, it is also scary because times are scary and I am always scared of the stage."

## A place of one's own

In Stockholm Caprioli has her own space, The Hall, a huge sports hall in the suburb of Farsta, where her team can work both with productions and with audience engagement. The audience is welcomed in a lobby with some drinks and chat, and the place feels partly like a creative factory and partly like a temple for art. "It is very important to have my/our own space. Just like everything else, choreography needs a home. A place you can return to daily where you can host other artists from your community and invite the audience to recurrently visit the work. Moreover, having 'a place' has tremendous symbolic value."

Furthermore, ccap, short for cristina caprioli artificial projects, a non-profit organisation for the production and distribution of her works, is crucial for the continuity of her work. "ccap is not a company; it is a site for different constellations to engage in different projects, not necessarily only for the production of performances. In turn, the structure is as democratic as we can possibly make it, where each person must invest something and at the same time can benefit from each other. So working means being super alert, super committed, and happy to follow the flow."

***Performing is an invitation, not a transaction, audiences are not buying anything, and we are not selling. Both of us are paying attention to art.***

In Farsta ccap also works with local communities and different audience groups that will have specially designed experiences in The Hall. Working with autistic children and adults has been particularly empowering: "My belief is that the type of choreography that I entrust makes no difference between people. If anything, it connects very quickly with people whose sensations are less dictated by preconceived ideas." Regardless of where the audience is viewing from, engagement is key. "Dancing requires a cross leaning from two sides. The audience must lean forward, and we, as performers, must also lean forward, not only with our dancing, but also by providing the conditions for our reciprocal leaning. Performing is an invitation, not a transaction, audiences are not buying anything, and we are not selling. Both of us are paying attention to art."

## Writing as thinking

It is impossible to write about Caprioli without asking her about her own writing, which constitutes an important part of her practice. Tanz im August will publish a catalogue alongside the retrospective that includes excerpts from her own writings as well as an interview with the writer and playwright Tone Schunnesson. At the end of the festival Caprioli will launch her three-volume art book "tung tunn tom" (heavy thin empty). "Writing invites me to





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think, opens my imagination, and makes me physically perceive how meaning moves. Dancing to me is about the overlapping and interacting of different languages, bodies, and situations.”

*Imagine a place that doesn't crave visibility or appreciation ...*

Conversation is a constant in Caprioli's world. Her critical mind is always at work, and she has organised symposiums and festivals to keep up with the present. There are the references to contemporary thinkers, which she is undoubtedly one of, but the conversation also comes closer to home. "First of all I am in conversation with my closest working colleagues, and for certain projects scholars and writers from the Swedish community. I have had short encounters with eminent thinkers whose writing has been critical to my work, such as Peggy Phelan, Fred Moten, and André Lepecki."

In 2021 Caprioli was awarded one of the most precious acknowledgments, the Illis Quorum royal medal, an honour that only the brightest of stars like Birgit Cullberg or Astrid Lindgren

have received in Sweden. Therefore it is only fair that the retrospective will be brought back to her chosen homeland. "Next we are going to Norrlands Operan in Umeå (in the north of Sweden) and to Dansens Hus in Stockholm with a piece from the past in a new version, 'Petrolio22'. Then to our own space, The Hall and Accelerator, Stockholm University, where we will show parts of the Berlin retrospective. Finally we will close the year with a new installation called 'The Chapel'."

Before that, Berlin gets to enjoy three weeks of "ONCE OVER TIME" at KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art, HAU2 and Radialsystem. "Haze" at HAU3 will be the last stop, where the installation will take over the stage and what we see as spectators is only partial, as it always is.

"Imagine a place that doesn't crave visibility or appreciation that's where this dancing might occur not for my sake but for its own and yours and our desires trusting this particular groove is attended for then recognized and left unknown" (Cristina Caprioli)\*

\* From "JUMP CUTS AND REPETITION", aka downsized preaching from a pale basement, from a disorder of notes collected for a talk on the topic of artistic research in choreography at REACHER, WELD, fall 2018

**Cristina Caprioli**  
**ONCE OVER TIME – a retrospective**

**Leafing: Silver**  
 5.–7.8. | KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst  
 5.8., 17:00–21:00 | 6.+7.8., 14:00–18:00

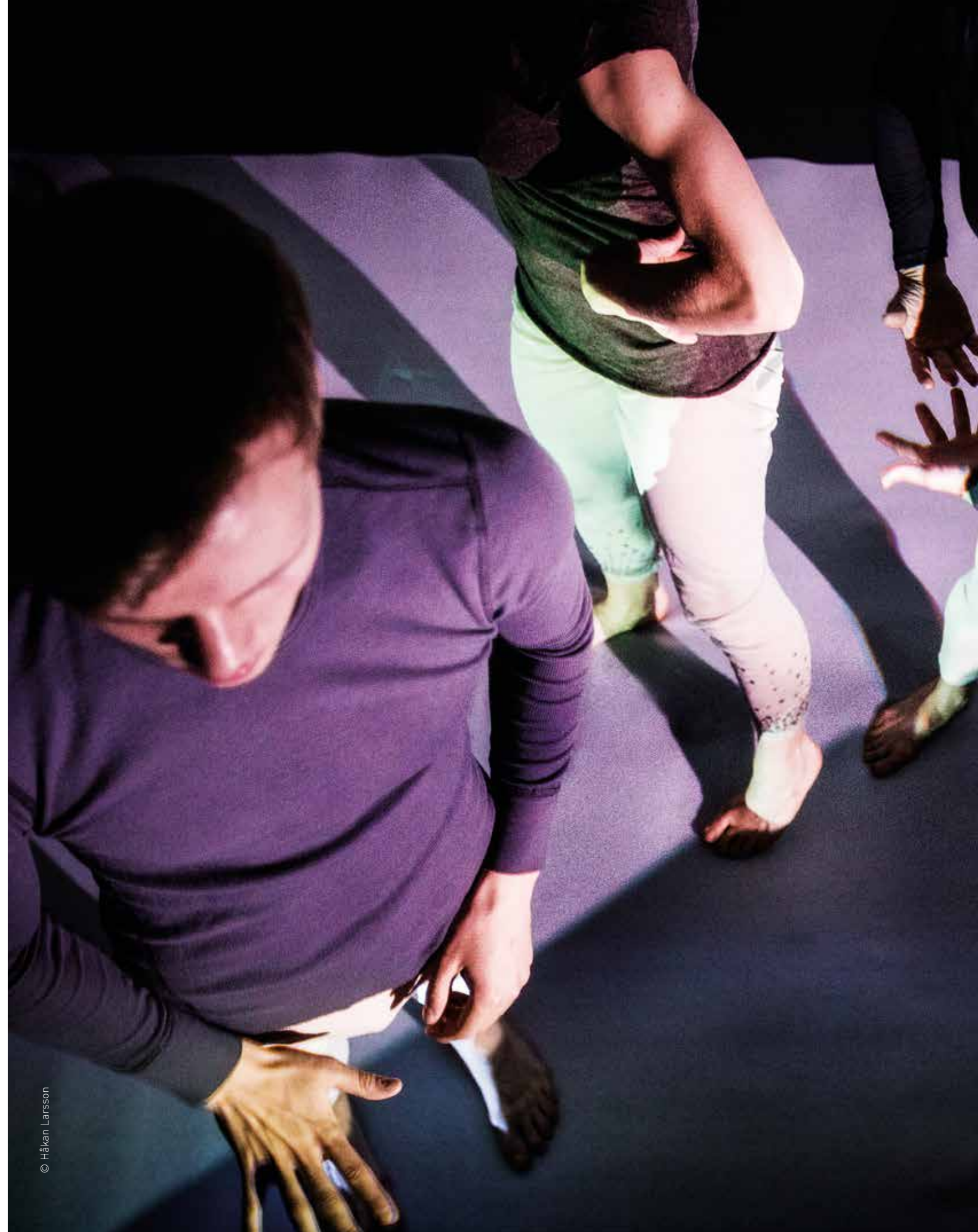
**Loops: Scary Solo & Omkretz2.22**  
 6.+7.8., 21:00 | HAU2

**Leafing: Spoons**  
 11.–14.8. | KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst  
 11.+12.8., 17:00–21:00 | 13.+14.8., 14:00–18:00

**Leafing: Undercover**  
 18.–21.8. | KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst  
 18.+19.8.: 17:00–21:00 | 20.+21.8.: 14:00–18:00

**Ashes**  
 17.–20.8. | Radialsystem  
 17.8., 19:00: ASKA  
 18.8., 19:00+21:00: ASKA  
 19.8., 19:00: ASKA | 21:00: Once Over Time | 22:00: Until Midnight  
 20.8., 14:00: Always Sometimes | 17:00+19:00: ASKA

**Haze**  
 24.–27.8. | HAU3  
 24.–26.8., 18:00: rigor | 20:00: conversations  
 27.8., 14:00: rigor | 16:00: conversations | 18:00: Book presentation: "tung tunn tom"



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