

# DE PONT MUSEUM



*National Chain 2020/Social Practices, De Pont museum, Tilburg, maart 2021*

## **NATIONAL CHAIN 2020/SOCIAL PRACTICES**

**RITA MCBRIDE**

**ALEXANDRA WAIERSTALL**

**FONTYS DANCE ACADEMY**

23 March - 02 May 2021

***Dance is nothing but a skillful way of being in the world*** - Alexandra Waierstall

In April 2021 De Pont Museum will present *National Chain 2020/Social Practices*, a special project by the American artist **Rita McBride**, the German-Cypriot choreographer **Alexandra Waierstall** and students from **Fontys Dance Academy**. The project can be seen and experienced live, every day, if the museum opens to the public in April. Should De Pont Museum remain closed, then the performance (without an audience) can be watched online via livestreams and social media.

*National Chain 2020/Social Practices* is in response to a request from De Pont to address the remarkable impact Covid-19 has had on society. At the end of 2020, McBride proposed for the Museum, a reinterpretation of her installation *National Chain* (1997) that takes the new specific dimensions and invites the collaboration of

choreographer Alexandra Waierstall and her team of dedicated dancers as well as the graduating students of the Fontys Dance Academy in Tilburg.

### **New positions for looking, moving, standing still**

*National Chain 2020/Social Practices* is given form through a standard aluminum ceiling grid system suspended from the Museum's existing textile mill beams. The overall dimension of the grid is 30x30meters and is installed in the main space of De Pont at chest height with increments of 1.5meters. Visitors are encouraged to engage with the floating structure and navigate together, exploring the perspective shift that allows for funny, playful and informative interaction in the newly defined public space established in 2020.



Rita McBride: "2020 has brought us many opportunities to become more conscious of the basic assumptions we have for accepted social interaction. *National Chain* has always provided a shift of perspective for people who have engaged with the installation over the years. It always offered experiential surprise and humor; providing new positions for looking, relating, moving and standing still."

### **Fontys Dance Academy**

On a daily basis *National Chain 2020/Social Practices* will be activated by students from Fontys Dance Academy. The movements of the dancers will be developed in workshops with the German choreographer Alexandra Waierstall, with whom Rita McBride previously worked. The choreography for *National Chain 2020/Social Practices* will take shape completely online, via closed Zoom sessions among the dancers, choreographer and artist. A unique virtual creation that says everything about the time in which we live, but also an extraordinary collaboration between international and local artists of different generations and disciplines.

Ulrika Kinn Svensson, artistic advisor of Fontys Dance Academy: "This project is an unusual fusion of visual art and dance, in which the two disciplines complement and reinforce each other. Fontys Dance Academy trains dancers who know how to create dance and execute it in *and* for various contexts. We have a strong affinity with projects that take place beyond the stage. This special collaboration with De Pont, Rita McBride and Alexandra Waierstall dovetails with our vision as an international dance school."

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## Biographies

**Rita McBride** was born in Des Moines, Iowa in 1960. She lives and works in Düsseldorf and Los Angeles. She earned a BA at Bard College and an MFA at the California Institute of Arts. In 1987 she began to explore architectonic and sculptural forms in works that vary from small-scale objects to large public commissions. McBride's artistic career includes a wide range of exhibitions, projects and work in the public domain. Major solo exhibitions were recently held by Wiels in Brussels (2017), Kestnergesellschaft and Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2015/2016) and Museo Tamayo in Mexico City (2013/2014). In 2001 De Pont Museum organized a compact retrospective of her work under the title *472 New Positions*. Since 2013 McBride has been director of the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

Choreographer and artist **Alexandra Waierstall** was born in England in 1979, to German/Cypriot parents, and grew up in Cyprus. She lives and works in Düsseldorf. In 1998 she studied at the European Dance Development Center in Arnhem. She earned her BA in performance and choreography in Düsseldorf in 2002, and her MA in choreography in 2006 at ArtEZ University of the Arts in Arnhem. Waierstall creates choreographies, installations, situations, sound work, texts and images and presents her work in theaters, galleries, museums and in public spaces in Europe, Canada, China, Korea and Brazil. She has previously collaborated with Rita McBride in 2018 and 2019.

**Fontys Dance Academy:** Fontys Dance Academy offers a four-year full-time Dance Arts in Context program, which gives young performers and makers of dance to develop a signature and to create their own live work. There are three profiles: Contemporary, Contemporary Urban and Bachelor in Choreography. These enable students to explore contemporary dance practices and techniques while aiming to collaborate with various art forms, in order to create innovative, challenging and exciting performances.

Team Alexandra Waierstall: Scott Jennings, Harry Koushos, Karolina Szymura.

Dancers Fontys: Jolanda Bazzi, Katya Vershinina, Joana Pereira de Sà Carvalho, Dazza Schouten, Emma Versluys, Emma Hanekroot, Roberta Çekinskaitė, Lara de Ruyter, Myrthe Marchal, Henna Männikkö, Antti-Pekka Pudas.

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