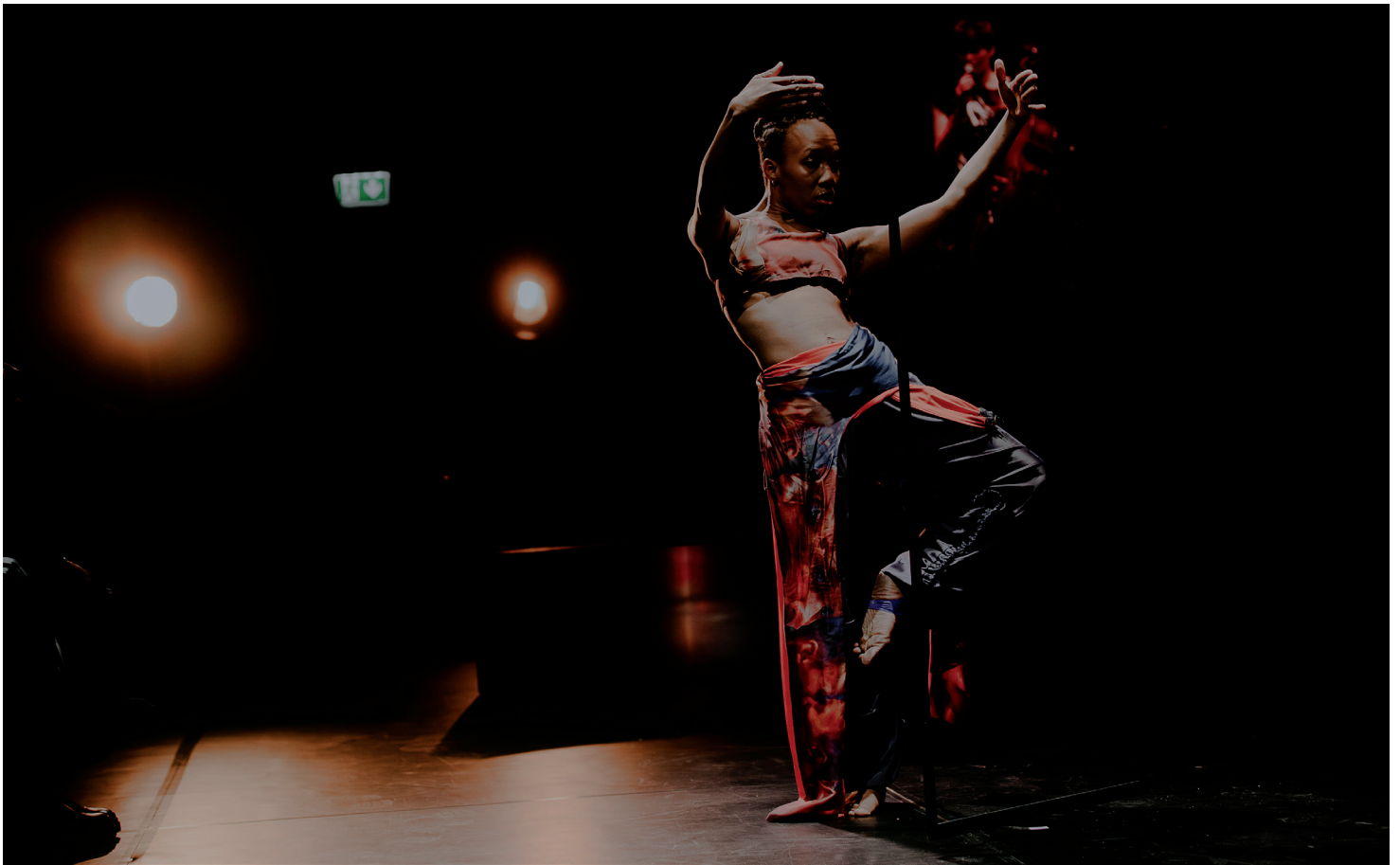


New Art

on Stage

# brut



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**Zieglergasse 25, 1070 Wien**

Thu. 20/ Fri. 21/ Sat. 22 March, 19:00

## Imani Rameses First Person Plural

Performance

in English

World premiere

Duration: 60 minutes

## Content Notes

The performance uses punctual bright light and loud sound frequencies through live music.

Die Performance verwendet punktuell blendendes Licht und laute Tonfrequenzen durch Live-Musik.

## Credits

**Concept & choreography** Imani Rameses **Assistance** Teresa Awa **Co-movement research** Cat Jimenez **Sound design** Marleen Moharitsch **Dramaturgy** Jared Robinson **Costume design** Mariama Sow **Textile design** Abiona Esther Ojo **Production** Sheri Avraham **Set design** Lukas Kötz & Márton Zalka **Lighting design** Yasemin Duru

Thanks to Bears in the Park Residency Programme, Angewandte Performance Lab and Celestial Space

A co-production of Plexus – Kulturverein für Kunst, Bildung und Neurowissenschaften Wien and imagetanz 2025 / brut Wien

Funded by the City of Vienna's Department of Cultural Affairs (MA 7)



## About *First Person Plural* by Imani Rameses

There has been a breach in the contract of being. *First Person Plural* seeks to restore it or erase it altogether. In her 'five-person solo', scientist/artist Imani Rameses searches for herself and shatters into many.

What happens when you look at yourself in the mirror long enough? In *First Person Plural*, Imani Rameses explores this question at the intersection of African divination and psychoanalysis. Chaotic, curious, open and neurotic: Five performers and their performances are being held in the same body, trapped and transformed by the enclosure around them. Five solos – or just one performed by five dancers – shatter to pieces and are being reassembled over the course of the show. They explore the hard-to-grasp nature of the self not conceptually but as embodied practice: Each of them is so different that the living body becomes the only formal limitation expressing the self. *First Person Plural* is the first piece in a trilogy. It places Imani Rameses's many personalities and the soundscapes of cello, electronic music and voice performed live by Marleen Moharitsch in the same environment. The audience is invited to participate in this attempted erasure of the many binding contexts of a faulty and maddeningly iterative human reality. How can the self survive the splitting caused by self-expression? Maybe, Imani Rameses's answer will be to disappear altogether.

### INFO

The performance on Fri. 21 March will be followed by an artist talk.  
Moderation: Teresa Awa (*First Person Plural* Team).

## Über *First Person Plural* von Imani Rameses

Der Daseinsvertrag wurde gebrochen. *First Person Plural* ist der Versuch, ihn wiederherzustellen – oder komplett auszulöschen. In ihrem „Fünfpersonen-Solo“ sucht die Wissenschaftlerin und Künstlerin Imani Rameses nach ihrem Selbst und zersplittert in viele.

Was geschieht, wenn man sich lange genug im Spiegel betrachtet? Zu dieser Frage an der Schnittstelle von Methoden afrikanischer Wahrsagerei und Psychoanalyse forscht Imani Rameses in *First Person Plural*. Chaotisch, neugierig, offen und neurotisch: Fünf Performer\*innen und ihre Performances sind im selben Körper gefangen und werden durch die sie umgebenden Grenzen verwandelt. Fünf Soli – oder ein einzelnes Solo, das von fünf Tänzer\*innen aufgeführt wird – zersplittern und setzen sich im Laufe des Abends neu zusammen. Sie ergründen die schwer zu greifende Natur des Selbst nicht konzeptuell, sondern als verkörperte Praxis: jede\*r von ihnen so verschieden, dass einzig ihre Körper zu lebendigen formalen Begrenzungen werden, die das Selbst zum Ausdruck bringen. *First Person Plural* ist das erste Stück einer Trilogie. Es platziert Imani Rameses' viele Persönlichkeiten und die live performten Klangwelten aus Cello, elektronischer Musik und Stimme von Marleen Moharitsch in einer gemeinsamen Umgebung. Das Publikum ist eingeladen, ein Teil dieses Versuchs zu werden, die vielen Kontexte auszulöschen, die das Selbst an eine fehlerhafte und aufwühlend repetitive menschliche Realität binden. Wie überlebt das Selbst die Zersplitterung, die durch die Selbstdarstellung entsteht? Vielleicht antwortet Imani Rameses ja, indem sie ganz verschwindet.

### INFO

Im Anschluss an die Vorstellung am Fr., 21. März findet ein Artist Talk statt.  
Moderation: Teresa Awa (First Person Plural-Team)





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## Interview with Imani Rameses about *First Person Plural*

### What did you deal with in the piece?

Myself mostly. That's what you might expect me to say, and initially yes, this is true. The piece is concerned with the self, the possibility of a self, the wager of selfhood—a risk we take, a dance we do together with ourselves daily, this is dealt with. But there is more: The position, first person plural, in English is the “we”--the “We” of family and friends, of the state (“We the people...”), and the idea of the collective that lives on, for better or for worse, with or without me, as a single word. Tonight you will meet five characters. In another version, maybe closer to 50. The point would remain the same. We all want one thing and that is to cohere, to come together as the word “we” into one, to become in that sense both whole and wholly erased.

## ***First Personal Plural* is a ‘five-person-solo’. What does that mean?**

When we began there was nothing but myself–myself in the mirror, myself in journals or stories I would write, myself in dialogue with my team, myself even on a security camera I installed in my house–sleeping or waking, walking around, trying to force an image. We decided that the language of the self is a codex of movements, a set of scripts for the body or choreographic scores. I plotted the movements of my multiple selves: drew them and danced them, and eventually five dominant strains emerged, as you’ll hear in the accompanying music. The themes that you’ll see in the piece, the “five characters,” grew first into narrative– I unfolded them through question and answer. This method joined to the more straightforward dance signatures to produce scenes and lines of movement, which I blended and blurred into the piece. The goal, however, isn’t that you leave having felt them all fully, except perhaps, as they fail to cohere into something larger than themselves, and in doing so, find themselves erased.

## **You are not only a dancer and choreographer, but also a cognitive scientist.**

### **To what extent does this influence your practice and your piece?**

The time in my life in which I was a scientist has not ended. Or, put another way, my interest in perception and my research-based practice never left–it has merely shifted focus, at least for the moment. It was not that long ago that science and art were practiced as one and the same. It may be the case that, given the acceleration of interdisciplinary knowledge production, this union will be made again. As far as the piece is concerned I will say simply: The mind moves the body, and the body is a mind.

### **What further questions/topics did working on the piece bring you to?**

The piece as you will see it is a solo. Next, I would like to think more in the multiple. How can this practice be taught and transferred? What happens to the self when it encounters another who is truly other? What is the character of relation? How does it find movement in conflict or as harmony?



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**What would you like the audience to think about when they leave the play, or during it?**

Perhaps like me you can start with the self. What is the culture that lives your body? Perhaps there too, a multiple—your dark double or her shining twin, swimming in that other world within, in the mirror.



15.03.  
— 12.04.

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