

Dossier  
Creation 2023

# The Crip Academy

laGeste (les ballets C de la B + kabinet k) & wit.h



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## HISTORY

In June 2022, vzw wit.h and BUDDA arts centre invited Kwint Manshoven and Joke Laureyns to create a performative exhibition for the Almost Summer Festival. At the Buda Tower in Kortrijk, Kwint and kabinet k set to work with works from the three public "outsider collections" in Belgium: those of the Dr Guislain museum in Ghent, Art et Marges museum in Brussels and Trinkhall Museum in Liège. Pierre Muylle and Els Vermeersch made a selection from those rich collections and this exhibition activated Kwint and the dancers into a performance.

For a weekend, the audience was part of the exhibition, the dancers part of the work, the music part of the space, the whole was part of the whole. Rarely was the spectator so directly involved and his/her gaze so disarmingly appealed to as then. The strength of the works, unknown to many, appeared more emphatically as they were handed to you. The works did not hang passively on the wall waiting for attention but were carried along in an improvisation and shared with the audience.



© kwint



© kwint

## THE CRIP ACADEMY

laGeste + wit.h

That haunting experience set the stage for further development of this project christened "The Crip Academy", which is supported by wit.h and laGeste.

wit.h is an arts organisation working on the inclusion of crip artists within the mainstream arts field. To this end, they set up artistic collaborations within three-year thematic expeditions. With the Crip Academy, wit.h takes the next step in its search for new forms of presentation. In this way, they also bring the work of crip artists into museums to which they would otherwise have difficulty gaining access. wit.h hopes to achieve a collaboration between a museum and a theatre per city/place, as this travelling exhibition can only be activated through performance.

laGeste is a Ghent-based organisation born out of the merger between kabinet k and les ballets C de la B. laGeste focuses on the body, dance and inclusion. Kwint Manshoven and Joke Laureyns are part of the permanent team as choreographer duo. Their work is always intergenerational.

Pierre Muylle, independent curator, is the link between the two producers. Pierre shaped the Crip School at wit.h and previously the expo *'Who wants to dance with me'* at les ballets C de la B.



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## CAST

The cast consists of several generations of dancers and musicians from previous projects by kabinet k. Long periods of creation preceded performances such as *horses*, *promise me* and *as long as we are playing*, where the performers worked intensely on a common language, on an unspoken but vivid vision of physicality and touch.

There is a rapport among the performers that makes them able to improvise coherently even in new and unexpected circumstances, performing quasi instantaneously and engaging the audience. They have their own codes and intuition.

For the Crip Academy, they work specifically with the gaze, the viewing, the architecture, the arrangement of the works and the relationship to the bodies present in the space. Always light, tactile, disarming. Always inspired by the works and with the intention of letting those works communicate as honestly as possible with the visitors. An alliance between painting and dancer. Between space and music. Where the visitor becomes a participant.

**Performers** (alternate) : Ilena Deboeverie, Lucia Deboeverie, Juliette Spildooren, Lili Van den Bruel, Sueli Besson, Lio Maelfeyt, Jitte Schoukens, Marie-Lou Liberale, Kwint Manshoven, Mohanad Askoul, Mohammed Alhajjar, Malik Alhajjar.

**Live music** (alternate): Jef Van der Burght, Thomas Devos or Marieke Berendsen.

**Production** laGeste en wit.h

## COLLECTIE

The collection assembled by Pierre Muylle consists of works made by artists with intellectual disabilities created in specialised studios in Europe. This is different from the initial Crip School where the works came from existing collections. Pierre collects these works as a coherent group exhibition in function of the performance.



## PERFORMANCE

The works are displayed in an empty exhibition space, in which the audience is seated. Use is made of the seating elements present. Only the musician and his amplifier have a fixed place. The dancers build a long improvisation with the works, between the spectators, supported and accompanied by the music. Spectators can walk in and out, as in other museum galleries. Yet such improvisations also have a shared internal timing that works towards breaks.

The length of the performance can be discussed in consultation with the museum's organisers and range from an afternoon to a three-day event.

## PRACTICAL

*when* 10 and 11 March 2023 at 11.30 | 13.30 | 15.30

*where* S.M.A.K. - Jan Hoetplein, 9000 Ghent

*duration* to be determined by the spectator - session approximately 1h (without break)

*language* non



### laGeste (les ballets C de la B + kabinet k)

laGeste came into being in 2022, from a fusion of les ballets C de la B and kabinet k. The two Ghent dance companies had a long history of collaboration and a great artistic affinity in the search for visceral storytelling. They decided to join forces and continue their work under the new name

**laGeste**: a home both for the intergenerational practice that Joke Laureyns and Kwint Manshoven developed at kabinet k, and for the legacy of choreographer Alain Platel, who was the pivot of les ballets C de la B for more than thirty-five years.

laGeste, written by the body.

Each project is "un monde des possibles" populated with a diversity of bodies. Bodies carry a history. They can be weighed down by it, scarred by it, permeated by it to every pore. But a body is not a prison, a scar not a condemnation. The body also holds the promise of transformation. Bodily practices emerge from that deep connection between place and time, between individual and community. We prefer movement, produced by that connection, to words, but without excluding language.

The body is a battlefield on which the great social battles are fought. Cisgenders versus fluids, the enterprising versus the unproductive, the excellent versus the limited, the identitarians versus those who think they can become anything and anyone, the privileged versus the decolonised, the old scarred by historical traumas versus the young threatened by ecological disasters, the haves versus the have-nots.

This polarisation has increased enormously in the last five years, and intensified in times of pandemics and other crises. With our work, we hope to create temporary spaces where we can bridge the gap between people again.

We are building an inclusive narrative, not on the margins, but right at the heart of what we do. We aim for diversity and mixability at all levels. We would like to see more reality in the represented bodies and at the same time fight for the possibility of transformation, play and poetry, of singing our way out of the boxes we keep each other in.

[www.lageste.be](http://www.lageste.be)





**CONTACT**

Helena Elshout (distribution)  
E/ helena@lageste.be  
T/ +32 485 32 70 58

laGeste  
Bijlokesite  
Bijlokekaai 1 - 9000 Ghent (BE)  
E/ info@lageste.be  
T/ 0032 9 221 75 01

[www.lageste.be](http://www.lageste.be)