

DANCE COPRODUCTION

REPERTÓRIO N.1

DAVI PONTES &
WALLACE FERREIRA



FREE
REPUBLIC OF
VIENNA
FESTIVAL

29 – 31 May
MAK – Museum für
angewandte Kunst

How can dance serve as a form of self-defence? The *Repertório* trilogy was the response of Brazilian choreographers Davi Pontes and Wallace Ferreira to the rise of state violence following the election of far-right president Jair Bolsonaro. The performers' nude bodies become instruments of resistance, giving rise to a choreographic repertoire of self-defence. The poses, gestures and collective acts are inspired by capoeira, vogue and funk carioca as much as by contemporary political theory. Pontes and Ferreira map out the stage with stomping steps, interrupt their powerful movements with playful gestures. It is a performance of magical intensity. Following the acclaimed performances of parts 2 and 3 at Vienna's ImPulsTanz dance festival, it is finally time for the only recently completed first part of this globally celebrated work of choreography to come to Vienna.

Duration

40 mins.



Barrier-free access

Q&A

30 May, following
the performance

‘If the Black body at rest is suspicious and when in movement a threat, Pontes and Ferreira find within this choreographic act possible strategies to re-elaborate imaginaries.

It is possible to say that Pontes and Ferreira develop a countercolonial anti-choreography, which, in the practice of Black life can mean the recovery and foundation of strategic ways of moving towards self-defense in everyday life.’

MARIA LUIZA MENESES

Concept, Performance Davi Pontes, Wallace Ferreira **Management, Distribution** Something Great

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World Premiere October 2025, Dance Umbrella/Serpentine Gallery (London)

DAVI PONTES AND WALLACE FERREIRA IN CONVERSATION WITH PAULA CATALINA RIOFRIO

PAULA CATALINA RIOFRIO: How do you know each other?

We first met in 2018, in Rio de Janeiro. Interestingly we didn't know each other before we started working together though we did follow each other on Instagram. Later that year, I invited Wallace to perform a version of a piece that eventually became part of the trilogy we now call *Repertório*. At that time, I was studying visual arts and Wallace was studying dance. These two worlds collided and gave us the foundation for the work we've been developing ever since.

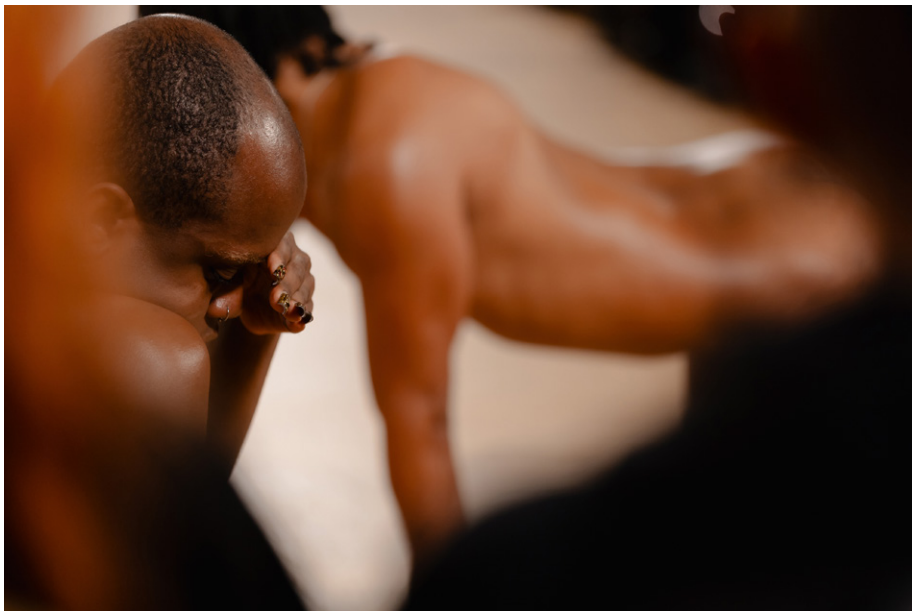
What was it that made the first step of the performance?

This project emerged specifically from the historical context of Brazil at that time. Under President Bolsonaro, we were facing a climate of great insecurity as policies became increasingly hostile towards minorities. That was when the word self-defense emerged – it felt like the only possible demand at that moment. It's strange to reflect on this now, as Bolsonaro faces trial for

various crimes, the most serious being the violent abolition of the Democratic State of Law. Denise Ferreira da Silva, a Brazilian philosopher and artist whom I greatly admire, wrote about how democratic systems are being used to promote anti-democratic acts. Bolsonaro's imprisonment may signal a kind of justice, although I personally believe that as a principle justice is flawed. Still, it matters that he faces accountability. In some ways, everything he produced during those years still stands: the violence, the radicalism, and the attacks on democracy. For us, the central question that keeps returning in our work is: how do you choreograph self-defense? It's a question that feels endless – one we'll never stop asking.

Tell me about the process of creation.

Our creative process is very quiet. Usually, it's just the two of us in the studio and we build material from suggestions each one of us makes, without much discussion. We listen to each other and push those suggestions to their limits.



Repertório is a work that demands a very specific kind of physicality and as the trilogy evolved, the work became even more physical than we had initially expected. That's why we approach the actions with such intensity. Across all the trilogy, there are poses and heavy stomps against the ground, which can be read as erotic, as military, or as referring to dances from a specific Brazilian context or elsewhere. What interests us is creating images and seeing how they are transformed as people believe, doubt, refuse, or identify with them. We don't use any specific contemporary dance technique; the actions develop more like performance art, from prompts and tasks. *Repertório* is about company, but not in the sense of a dance company. It's about a radical partnership between us.

Even though we are completely different, as a duo we create a very specific kind of ethics for being together. We never watch ourselves in videos, for example; we learn by observing one another. When the audience enters, everything transforms, because we never know what will happen. Each day, the work reveals itself new mysteries, and it's in that mystery that we place our trust. (...)

Is there a lot of your persona in this piece or what can you tell me about the character you embody?

I think a lot of our personalities are present in the work, and they really come through in our encounters with the audience. When someone in the

audience rejects, doubts, or ignores what's happening, it demands a certain sensitivity from us to not let ourselves be dominated by these feelings and react impulsively. Instead, we have to hold the material together. The repertoire does allow space for choice, but that doesn't mean it's improvised.

(...)

What have you learned from this process?

This work began seven years ago, and I believe it was the work that saw us transform. We learned to work with fragility, we learned about time, we learned to refuse, we learned to distance ourselves from what it means to build a dance work and come from a context like Brazil. We learned about company, to believe in small revolts. We learned that there are things that are non-negotiable for us.

BIOGRAPHIES

Wallace Ferreira is a choreographer, performer, and visual artist working at the intersection of dance, image-making, and social practice. Trained at Escola Livre de Artes da Maré and Parque Lage, she has presented work internationally since 2018 – now for the first time at the Vienna Festival (Wiener Festwochen). Her practice explores bodies as carriers of social codes, composing choreographies of dissent. Characteristically, she approaches dissident bodies as living archives, making strategies of resistance and self-preservation visible through movement. Recipient of the ImPulsTanz Young Choreographers' Award (2022) and FOCO ARTRIO Award (2024), she expands her work into Ballroom culture as *Legendary Mother of the Kiki House of Mamba Negra*.

Davi Pontes is an artist, choreographer, and researcher whose work unfolds between performance, theory, and visual art. Educated at Universidade Federal Fluminense and ESMAE, he has presented internationally since 2016 – appearing for the first time at the Vienna Festival (Wiener Festwochen). His projects examine the body as a political terrain across theatrical and exhibition contexts. His work is marked by research-driven choreography that uses movement as a tool of analysis, exposing power structures embedded in corporeal practices. Recipient of the ImPulsTanz Young Choreographers' Award and multiple grants, he collaborates with Wallace Ferreira on *Repertório*, a series that approaches dance as a form of self-defense.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

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