

**Choreography:**  
Hannah Ma

**Concept:**  
Hannah Ma, Sebastian M. Purfürst

**Production:**  
Hannah Ma

**Production Assistance:**  
Dirk Seifert, Lena Vaske

**Digital Development, Music, Photos, and Videart:**  
Sebastian M. Purfürst  
LEM Studios Berlin

**Costume:**  
Eli Bleffert, Hannah Ma

**Make Up and Hair:**  
Emanuelle Simone

**Lighting Design:**  
Nico Tremblay, Hannah Ma, Sebastian M. Purfürst

**Dramaturgy:**  
Hannah Ma, Marc-Bernhard Gleißner, Sebastian M. Purfürst

**Choreographic Assistance, Rehearsal Director:**  
Christin Reinartz, Sergio Mel

**Translation:** Lena Vaske

**Videos:**  
Sebastian M. Purfürst, Alexander Outh, Delmar Mavignier

**Graphic Design:**  
Annick Krieffler, Sara Giubelli, Simão Polenta

**Technical Services:**  
Tharston Müller, TM Eventservice

**Co-Creation:**  
Ritsuko Matsuoka, Sergio Mel, Maher Abdul Moaty, Christin Reinartz, Valentina Zappa

**Performances:**  
Hannah Ma, Ritsuko Matsuoka, Sergio Mel, Maher Abdul Moaty, Sebastian M. Purfürst, Christin Reinartz, Valentina Zappa

**Production:**  
*The People United is a Force* (L.), hannahma.com  
Tuffi Tuffi e.V. (GER)

**Coproduction:**  
Théâtre National du Luxembourg (L.)

**With the support of:**  
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**Special Thanks to:**  
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**Tour 2021:**  
Official Trailer Launch: March 23<sup>rd</sup> as part of B. (S)A. Assembly  
Business and Arts South Africa partnered by British Council, WED  
<https://basa.co.za>

**Premiere:**  
Théâtre National du Luxembourg: May 7<sup>th</sup>  
Théâtre National du Luxembourg, Luxembourg: May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 11<sup>th</sup>  
Europäische Kunstakademie, Trier: August 2021 (dates to be announced)  
Uferstudios, Berlin: Berlin: August 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Jonhai Festival, Durban (ZA): September 2021 (dates to be announced)

*How do we define the "non-reproducible magical soul", the aura, the prehistoric part in every individual, the meaning of love in this modern, digitalized and globalized society? How can we deal with our hidden desires and our deepest fears in times of a pandemic and in the isolation of confinement? ONDA is an emotional road trip into the abysses of ourselves and the abysses of the oceans that remain silent witnesses of global colonial structures. ONDA explores the relationships of the performers since their collective trip to South Africa back in 2019 until today and how they deal with confinement and the cold, technical world. The team asks itself how they can become and build an identity in the stress field of the digital and analog world by analyzing the mythology and hybridity of mermaids in our contemporary narratives.*

ONDA ISLANDS 2021  
ONDA | live performance  
ONDA | video and sound installation with performers  
ONDA | music album  
ONDA | digital performance

# ONDA KNOW UNKNOWN

*"ONDA" is a research, performance and a production space curiously discussing the relationship of humans and nature against the background of anthropocentrism and nature against the background of anthropocentrism*  
ONDA is a creative collaboration between  
Hannah Ma, Hannah Ma Dance,  
Sebastian M. Purfürst (LEM Studios, Berlin)  
and their teams

*The artistic research focuses on elements of dance, physical acting, audiovisual compositions and immersive digital arts which are woven into transmedia storytelling – experienced through live performances, installations, online presentations and new media formats.*



*"Hinter der Maske verbirgt sich ein ungezügelter Geist."*



Christin Reinartz | GERMANY  
*works with Hannah Ma Dance since 2016*



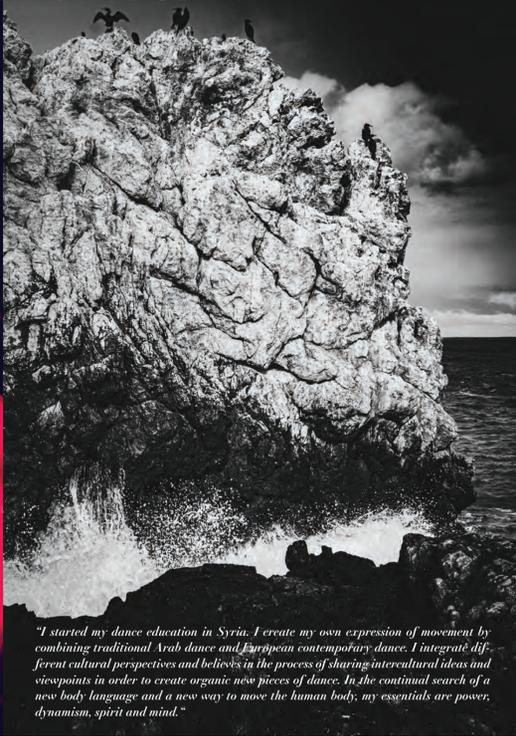
*"Be true to myself, to my body, to my soul. How much do we manage to remain authentic while everything around us is always changing?" Beside dancing I constantly drawing and both influence each other. With paper and pen it is the same process I do with my body, constantly drawing in space and creating new shapes."*



Valentina Zappa | ITALY  
*works with Hannah Ma Dance since 2017*



Maher Abdul Moaty | SYRIA  
*works with Hannah Ma Dance since 2015*



*"I started my dance education in Syria. I create my own expression of movement by combining traditional Arab dance and European contemporary dance. I integrate different cultural perspectives and beliefs in the process of sharing intercultural ideas and viewpoints in order to create organic new pieces of dance. In the continual search of a new body language and a new way to move the human body, my essentials are power, dynamism, spirit and mind."*



Sergio Mel | BRAZIL  
*works with Hannah Ma Dance since 2016*



*As a dancer/choreographer, my art is based on my relationship with outer space, in a powerful mixture between intensity and fluidity, both expressive and emotional. My identity brings the brand of all my artistic, multicultural and multidisciplinary experience. Stimulated by the performing arts in general, i intersects to create a unique universe full of energy."*



*"For me it's a big adventure to know who I am. When I discover another side of me, I feel I did a big step for my life. Sometimes I discover suddenly, sometimes after 10 years. For me dancing is important for these processes as well as to share part of myself to all That's why I am here. And I am dancing."*



Ritsuko Matsuoka | JAPAN  
*works with Hannah Ma Dance since 2019*



*The process of ONDA was emotional, a road trip into a "landscape without a name".*

*The "landscape without a name" is a terminus that James Hamilton Patterson uses to describe the oceans in "The Sea and its Thresholds", a book that was the starting point of our research.*

*Whilst still conceptualizing ONDA the COVID-19 waded to us.*

*ONDA was somehow born when the team was on its South Africa tour. Staying at the most south spot in South Africa, Kenton on Sea. We decided then and there that the wave shall be the metaphor we built our piece on. The wave as a dynamic movement that we're dependent on. The wave as a base of communication and interconnection. Communication is impossible without waves and frequencies. We find them in the air or in water. The wave as a symbol of energetic ups and downs in life. The wave that hits us and shows us that we're mortal creatures.*

*Whilst working on ONDA and being forced to continuously postpone all our working steps. We were busier surviving and coping with the COVID-19 wave than working on our piece. Soon we realized the obvious analogy of our private live and the piece. "Into the unknown" became an imperative and we are in fact still remaining here in the wild sea, in the open ocean of COVID 19 and life in general – diving into the unknown and there is no end in sight.*

*Our world was shattered and became really fragmented and while we were trying to build some kind of story, we got closer and closer to the reality, that actually there is no story. It's only us. And what makes this work so precious to us, is that we can be together, we can be in the studio, that we can share our emotions and feelings, our transformation, our desires and our thoughts about being a hybrid creature. Hybrid in terms of simultaneously existing in a digital space and the analog world, but also in terms of the desire to overcome human nature in transforming into "shapeshifters". We understood that we can only breathe and let the wave hit us. Letting go of everything we're holding on, we understood that communication, that the words, our reality is built on, is only merely a myth. We're constantly exploring this jungle of words, the jungle of communication. We're still trying to navigate on the open sea. We're in different places, with different destinations but we can feel that when we are lost, we can find ourselves again through being a team – through belonging together. With ONDA we created a place where we can feel our feelings, where we can let go of everything, where we can forget the "importance" (the weight?) of being human for a second. We designed this landscape without a name for you. We're here already and we want to invite you to join us in open waters for a while."*

*Hannah Ma and team*

# ONDA INTO THE UNKNOWN

"ONDA" is a research, performance and art production space curiously discussing the relationship of humans and nature against the background of anthropocentrism

ONDA is an artistic collaboration between Hannah Ma (Hanna Ma Dance), Sebastian M. Purfürst (L.E.M.-Studios, Berlin) and their teams

## WELCOME TO THE OPEN WATERS TRACKLIST

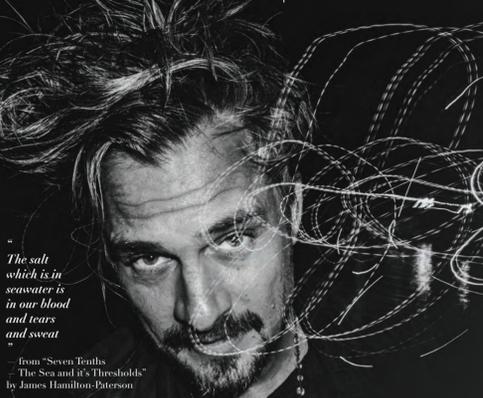
Voices and body percussions are musical instruments we all can play to a certain degree. With great joy we captured many sonic fragments during our rehearsals – from beatboxing to whale like singing to choir cluster chords that got lost in the reverberations of our rehearsal space almost like in a church. Especially breathing and the intimacy of voices can create a wonderful atmosphere that brings back a certain human element into a composition no digital instrument can. Encouraged by our experiments we created together a sample kit based on our voices and body sounds that were later digitally mangled and manipulated. These rather otherworldly and strange results fitted our idea of the "unknown" almost like some field recordings directly from the uncanny valley twenty thousand leagues under the seas.

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## LIST OF BOOKS WE WORKED WITH:

- Seven-Tenths: The Sea and its Thresholds by James Hamilton-Petersen
- "Homo Deus" Yuval Noah Harari
- "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit" Walter Benjamin
- "Alles fühlt: Mensch, Natur und die Revolution der Lebenswissenschaften" Andreas Weber
- "Synchronicity" C.G. Jung
- "Liebe, Tod und Wasserfrau - Mythen des Weiblichen in der Literatur" Anna Maria Study
- "POLITICS OF INTIMACY: Rethinking the End-Of-Life Controversy," Anna Durkova
- "Todesarten" Byung-Chul Han
- "Interspecies Politics" Rafi Youatt
- "Bodies of Evidence" Gurue Ertan, Sandra Noth (eds.)

## Sebastian M. Purfürst | GERMANY



The salt which is in seawater is in our blood and tears and sweat

from "Seven-Tenths: The Sea and its Thresholds" by James Hamilton-Petersen

Sebastian M. Purfürst, born in 1976, is an artist for audiovisual media. The main focus of his work is the design of immersive rooms for video, music and sound. Since completing his Master's degree 2005, at the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, EMW Potsdam, and the Filmuniversität Babelsberg Potsdam he has been involved as a freelance artist in various national and international theatre productions, live performances, exhibitions and commercial productions, incl. in Athens, Berlin, Cologne, London, Luxembourg, Mainz, Beijing, Shanghai and Zurich. In 2017 the artistic cooperation with Hannah Ma Dance started with SWAN where his music and visuals became key element of the performance. The piece was followed up by Wanderer (2018) and Onda (2021). The team

presented their work to an international audience in Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, France and South Africa. Many projects are carried out by his own label, LEM Studios founded 2002, often in cooperation with other artists or commissioned by agencies. Since 2002, he has worked regularly as a freelance lecturer at design and art schools, incl. at the Design Akademie Berlin, BTK Art & Design Berlin, the UK University of the Arts Berlin, the Filmuniversität Babelsberg Potsdam, and the Royal College of Art in London. Sebastian M. Purfürst also produces music and videos for the independent Berlin project SONICNOCLASM. lem-studios.com

My work for ONDA started in 2018 without knowing it at the time. In retrospect many artistic bits and pieces of ONDA were washed ashore and I just kept collecting them – without planning it. I had already started to work on something that would later turn into the audiovisual world of ONDA.

I was travelling the western cape of South Africa after our "Wanderer" performance at the National Art Festival. I had spontaneously decided to stay for the rest of my summer holidays and see more of the country and especially its breathtaking ocean and its wonderful coastal scenery. I was fully equipped with my artistic tools - cameras and various lenses, my laptop, my guitar and two wonderful books: "Seven-Tenths: The Sea and its Thresholds" by James Hamilton-Petersen and "The Invention of Nature" by Andrea Wulf which would be a great inspiration for our upcoming project. The experience of unbelievable natural forces is unique around Cape Point where the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the warmer waters of the Indian Ocean meet: an endless dark and stormy wild with creature's that dream of the impossible are made of.

I spent many evenings on the shorelines trying to capture the force of crashing waves which grew more and more intense, since the African summer was arriving in August. Months later, after my return to Europe, Hannah Ma sent me a project memo with the working title ONDA - which is Italian for "wave". We started playing around with ideas, musical sketches and plans to return to South Africa for a first workshop in cooperation with the University of Johannesburg.

It seems almost like irony of fate that less than a year later everybody was talking about a wave – a pandemic wave, like an apocalypse in slow motion, hitting the countries of this world. And suddenly all of us were swallowed by this wave. Everything became more and more muted, like sinking into the depths of an ocean. I always liked the picture of deep waters - symbolizing our subconsciousness, with endless thoughts and dreams. This metaphor was really helpful in trying to stay away

from feelings of helplessness and depression. The whole world in an REM-phase and it can't move. Months passed and every new lockdown seemed like a new mark for a bigger depth, with the pressure rising – but also discovering deceleration and silence in a formerly constantly busy and restless world.

Another ten months later and against all hopes it became obvious that the situation for live performances had completely changed for the worse. In retrospect I think the corona virus might have pushed our efforts into the same direction we knew we had to pull. Digital culture and the convergence of media has massively challenged the idea of the classic live performance and their viewers anyway for years. It is a big chance to think of innovative forms of presentations – not as a substitute – but as a creative expansion of watching, listening, reading, interacting and playing and turning it into a wider experience in transmediality.

As all our projects, ONDA started as a three-dimensional associative space with three axes: Mythology, Nature and Digital Culture. I think understanding ONDA as a transmedia laboratory instead of simply a live event completely liberated us from squeezing too many ideas into one format.

With this approach in mind our working process highly emancipated itself from the traditional idea of producing a purely live show: the rehearsal stage became a photo, film and music studio and a mutual space for workshops and lectures. ONDA became the laboratory for live performances, participative video installations and music software development and much more. And with all these possibilities the subtle "open waters" seemed to fit perfectly.

In 1850 Alfred Tennyson wrote In Memoriam: "There where the long street roars, hath been The stillness of the central sea"

I hope we made good use of the stillness of this pandemic sea that has flooded all of us, expanding our artistic perspectives and trying to make the creative streets roar again against all odds.

## Hannah Ma | GERMANY/CHINA



Hannah is a German-Chinese choreographer. She was born in Bielefeld, Bavaria. Her focus lies on contemporary rituals and the translation of archaic roots within our society. Her works are divided in two choreographic directions: "Taming Monsters" and "Transfeminaries". Besides of her work as an artist, producer and curator Hannah also works as a hospice helper since 2021.

Hannah reflects on eurocentrism, post-colonialism, racism, sexism and focuses on diversity, mainstreaming, empowerment of feminist actions and genderfluidity. Her choreographic language is creatively mixing elements of dance and theatre, of ballet, dance-theatre and performance.

Hannah is and has been working with and was supported by: Théâtre National Luxembourg/Trois C.L., Choreographic Center Luxembourg, Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen, The German Unesco Commission, Festival Passages Metz, Conseil Général New York, Dachverband Tanz Deutschland, Fonds Darstellende Künste, Arp, Museum am Rolandseck, UJ Arts & Culture Johannesburg, National Arts Festival South Africa, MAC Cretel Paris and others.

www.hannahmadance.com  
www.the-people-united.com

## YOUR PEAK

## QUADROPOLIS OCEANIS

## NOISE IN ALL COLORS

## YOUR ABYSS

## MERMAID

## TRAFFIC ISLAND

## KELP FOREST

## SWEAT PANTS PROCESSION

ONDA ist ein fragmentarischer, intuitiver Road Trip in der analoge und digitale Komponenten organisch verwoben werden.

Was ich dem Betrachter vorschlage, ist eine Performance, in Anlehnung an die Ästhetik einer Naturdokumentation.

Die Choreografie erschafft organische Schwarmmuster, kreative Momentaufnahmen und energetische Synthesen nach Vorbild der Natur. Die Performance selbst ist ein hybrider Organismus – entstanden aus dem analogen, dem digitalen und dem mythischen Raum und ist in sich miteinander auf sichtbare und unsichtbare Weise verwoben.

Dem Mythischen wird eine besondere Bedeutung beigemessen, denn der Mythos macht uns, betrachtet von einem kapitalismus- und anthropozentrischen Standpunkt aus, erst zum Mensch; zum vernunftbegabten Wesen, das sich dennoch erst durch die Begabung mit Kreativität zur schöpferischen Kreatur erhebt. Der Mythos der Meerjungfrau dient als Brücke zwischen dem Festen und dem Fluiden, zwischen der materiellen Welt und der der Fantasie, zwischen Träne und Kulturphilosophie und zwischen Stimme und Verstand. Das Hybridwesen Meerjungfrau, das unsere Sehnsucht nach Unsterblichkeit, unsere Ohnmacht gegenüber der allmächtigen und nicht-zählbaren Natur und unsere Ängste vor dem weiblichen Prinzip darstellt, ist die Schnittstelle zwischen Wahnwitz und Verstand. Es stellt das Moment dar, in dem wir uns selbst aufgrund unserer eigenen Übermächtigkeit und Göttlichkeit verlieren können.

... Der Mythos (...) stellt ein verlorenes Paradies dar: ist das Produkt prätorischer Kulturen, von denen unsere entrandete und fragmentarisierte Welt des Geldes, der Politik, der wissenschaftlichen Rationalität, kurz einer Welt in der die Differenz regiert, grundsätzlich abgeschnitten ist. (...) Was als Trennung erlitten wird, ruft nun schon seit fast dreitausend Jahren in den Sirenenmythen (...) nach Versöhnung. Was als Sprachlosigkeit erfahren wird, drängt in ihnen nach Versöhnung, was als Tod erlebt wird, will in ihnen lebendig bleiben."

"Liebe, Tod und Wasserfrau", Anna Maria Study S. 11 und S. 17



Interview von Hannah Ma mit Michael Freundl, Deutscher Tanz Deutschland Fachzeitschrift "The Other Body - Tanz und Rassismus" | "The Performative Politics of Body of today" | Saitterthronen Berlin, September 2020

Die Sirenen haben zwar, scheint es, gesungen, aber auf eine Art die nicht befruchtete.

Maurice Blanchot