



**DANCING MAKES ME JOYFUL**

# DANCING MAKES ME JOYFUL

A unique collaboration featuring works + performances by

**LENA LIV + LINDY NSINGO**

**7 MAY - 15 AUGUST 2015**

Palazzo Flangini,  
Cannaregio 252, 30121 Venice  
+39 333 777 2252

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Coinciding with the 56th Venice Biennale, contemporary artist Lena Liv and dancer/choreographer Lindy Nsingo present *Dancing Makes Me Joyful* from May 7 - August 15, 2015, at Palazzo Flangini, on the Canal Grande in Venice. The exhibition is the manifestation of a year-long collaborative effort between the two artists comprised of four multimedia installations and one pastel work by Liv.

Two monitors are situated in the exhibition space; one depicts Liv's process as she independently constructs her work, the other is a documentation of Nsingo's live performance which initiated this artistic investigation. Neons are installed around the city reverberating the name of the show, *Dancing Makes Me Joyful*.

In the spring of 2014, Liv arranged a meeting at Villa di Corliano in Tuscany with Nsingo to explore the concepts of dance that investigate the reciprocal interaction of body in motion, the world, and human beings. Nsingo responded to the space with a choreographed dance. The results are several new works by Liv, which demonstrate the return of beauty as a fulcrum of art after the crisis of postmodernism. "[Her new works explore the concept of dance as a form of] thought through various materials and languages. For her, the dancer, hovering in space, goes beyond the commonplace gesture to touch the universality of our being," writes Angela Madesani.

Madesani writes:

*In Liv's new multi-media works we find trials of existence where movement underscores the relativity of everything...Liv has brought on a meeting of cultures between this young dancer/choreographer - originally from Zambia, who then moved to Belgium and later, to London - and now to the place where she dances: the huge frescoed hall of Villa di Corliano.*

*This is a dialogue that leads to a hybridization of various elements to give life to something different. Liv's works bring us into an a-temporal dimension in which there is an eternal return, in the sense of Walter Benjamin: the repetitive co-action that determines the universality of phenomena and feelings quite apart from individual events. This is the ontological fil rouge of all her work: the spirituality that we find in folle, in the sense of a philosophical concept, a limit, threshold, existential mystery, in childhood innocence; the primordial moment in the history of man in nature, in places of solitude but also in that surreal and poetic dimension that is profoundly intrinsic to her underground spaces, which we find now in the rooms of the ancient building where Nsingo initially performed.*

*The great dancer Pina Bausch said that when one is completely lost, dance begins. Dance as an existential necessity, just as creating is for Liv and Nsingo: a daily need, a cure to enable one to face up to the complex heterogeneity of existence.*

Liv, formally trained in painting, has incorporated glass into her multimedia works as a way to mediate light. This has become one of her most important tools. Looking at her illuminated pieces, works like *Golden Chains from Star to Star...and I dance*, appear to be a single image from the front. Viewing the work from an angle demonstrates that it is in fact three separate panels of glass donning different transparent images illuminated by a conjoined structure filled with light. The images are conflated into one as light passes through thinner moments of color, and is blocked by thicker, darker areas. In this way, light functions as the life source of the image; the image is revealed through and made by light. In this particular construction, Liv captures Nsingo's body in three postures simultaneously, freezing movement, suspended in time.

Embedded within the exhibition, Nsingo performed a world-premiere of the site-specific choreographed piece *Dancing Makes Me Joyful* on May 7th and May 8th. Nsingo's solo installation is a work that explores "phenomenal moment when body, mind, spirit are concentrated into a single moment." (J. Ashford 2012) Performing the work on a revolving stage, the dance becomes a pivoting exploration of the essence of why human beings dance. Expressed through the physical embodiment of Nsingo's unique dance language, *Dancing Makes Me Joyful* delves into the matter that lies beyond all experiences, and therefore, all reason – both theoretical and physical. This was documented and the film is present in the exhibition.

# DANCING MAKES ME JOYFUL

## LENA LIV

Lena Liv (b. Leningrad, Russia) has been producing poetic and enduring multimedia works since the mid-1980s. Working in a range of mediums - including photography, works on paper and sculpture - her pieces capture a timeless essence and leave the viewer with a residue of memories. She strays far from the obvious, and offers few explanations. She constructs her work in the form of questions rather than answers, devising a search with no end, a search for the enigmatic. Through her works it is possible to trace the common features, which unravel and develop; such as the idea of universality, which we find in her works from the very beginning until now. The red thread that winds and develops throughout all of her research leads to an archetypal journey of light - obscurity - light that recalls the metaphorical wisdom of classical poems. Childhood, places of solitude, animal slaughter, folly, dance, happiness and beauty are a great 'fresco', that cross the boundaries of a single event to lap the boundaries of universality. In her works, images mysteriously emerge from their context: in all monochrome works darkness alludes to light and works of polychrome light - light does not illuminate the matter but becomes the matter. So photographic works seem to be paintings and paintings seems to be photographic works, and oblivion tells the memory and the memory is oblivion. And dance, a fleeting moment becomes an icon of the mystery of existence.

In this new project *Dancing Makes Me Joyful* Lena Liv explores the concept of dance as a form of thought: about the body, about the human being, about the world, and about the reciprocal relationship of these elements.

Liv's works have been exhibited across the globe, most recently her acclaimed *Cathedrals for the Masses* was shown at the Centro Pecci, Prato, Italy and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel in 2009 and 2010, respectively. In the 1990s, Liv also presented a significant solo presentation at Marble Palace at the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg and a solo exhibition at the Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, Germany. In 1994 she showed at Stadtische Galerie Wurzburg, Germany, and in 2001 at Robert Miller Gallery, New York, USA. Group exhibitions include venues such as the Museum Moderner Kunst, Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna, Austria; and the Kunsthalle Helsinki in Helsinki, Finland and City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand and the Sir Elton John collection at the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA.

Liv's work is included in several collections including Diozesanmuseum, Cologne, Germania, Folkwang Museum, Essen, Germania, Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA, Caldic Collection, Rotterdam, Holland, Collection of Sir Elton John, Atlanta, USA, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel, and Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel.

## LINDY NSINGO

Drawing upon her personal migratory experience, dancer and choreographer Lindy Nsingo has established a unique movement aesthetic that speaks to the essential human desire to belong in a constantly spinning world. Extensively trained in both Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham techniques, as well as possessing a background in traditional ballet, hip-hop and theatre, Nsingo is particularly influenced by Graham's focus on the 'center' of the body and the importance of being grounded through movement. In recent years, Nsingo's innovative, bold and athletic work has led her to a series of collaborations with world-renowned visual artists including Shaun Gladwell and Trey Ratcliff as well as a project with Lena Liv to be presented at the opening of the 56th Venice Biennale in May 2015. With Liv, Nsingo has created a new original work that she performed over a series of days in a Tuscan palace and that Liv recorded as the basis for a series of drawings, photographic and light works. Nsingo's arresting live performance and Liv's stunning visual works will come together for the first time in the Venice installation. A documentary is also currently in production: it will capture the relationship between the artists and the project as a whole.

Nsingo was born in Zambia, raised in Belgium and educated in South Africa before moving to the United Kingdom to complete her Bachelor of Arts at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds in 2009 and Masters of Arts, with a specialisation in choreography, at the London Contemporary Dance School in 2012. In addition to her collaborative project with Liv, Nsingo is also presently working with internationally recognised visual artist and professional freestyle skateboarder Shaun Gladwell. As part of their artistic conversation, Nsingo and Gladwell have generated a series of ongoing performances captured in constrained urban environments in downtown London. In each of these performances, Nsingo and Gladwell react to the music, architecture and each other's movements with Nsingo focused on her body's relationship to space and time and Gladwell responding with his skateboard. Their initial efforts have been captured on video and Gladwell, who regularly uses video as the preferred medium of his artwork, intends to finish and edit for presentation in late 2014/early 2015. In 2014, Nsingo has also had the opportunity to complete an impromptu performance with global photographer Trey Ratcliff at the iconic Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo. In response to the world's busiest and most populous pedestrian road crossing, Nsingo performed a series of jumps and slow motion techniques that Ratcliff captured using his extraordinary high-dynamic-range photographic process and posted to his site, which is daily accessed by millions of visitors. Nsingo has also collaborated with UK fashion designer Sadie Clayton, choreographing movement for her restrictive copper body jewelry. In addition to her fashion and art collaborations, Nsingo has also consulted with numerous contemporary musicians providing movement coaching for live performances and acting as artistic director for music videos.



Palazzo Flangini is situated in Campo San Geremia, five minutes from Santa Lucia Railway station, in the heart of Venice. The Palazzo is a noble palace, a typical expression of the Venetian baroque, overlooking the Grand Canal and has completely independent entries with exclusive docks on the Grand Canal for water taxi and private boats.

## LISTINGS

*Dancing Makes Me Joyful*

A unique art and dance exhibition by Lena Liv and Lindy Nsingo

7th May - 15th August 2015

Ground Floor, Palazzo Flangini

*Palazzo Flangini*

*Cannaregio 252*

*30121 Venezia*

+39 333 777 2252

## INFO

[www.dancingmakesmejoyful.com](http://www.dancingmakesmejoyful.com)

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TWITTER @lindynsingo

INSTAGRAM @lenalivart @dancingmakesmejoyful @lindynsingo

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**ENTRY PRICE** Free (suitable for all ages)

### OPENING TIMES

From Friday May 8th until Saturday 15th August

Exhibition Open daily on Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

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