

**PRESS RELEASE****29 July 2026****30 September—4 October 2026****Humboldt Forum, Berlin**

## **Transkontinentale 2026. International Festival of Dance, Theatre and Performance from Four Continents**

**With the third edition of Transkontinentale, the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss will bring contemporary guest performances from Brazil, China, Cameroon, Nigeria and Aotearoa—the most widely used Māori name for New Zealand—to Berlin from 30 September to 4 October 2026. Through dance, performance and theatre, the invited artists explore themes of cultural and natural heritage, water, land and forests, as well as personal and collective ownership of history and storytelling. Staged in part among the ethnological collections of the Humboldt Forum, the selected productions offer fresh perspectives and direct engagement with the institution's central themes.**

With: Tian Gebing, Zora Snake, Tupua Tigafua, Qudus Onikeku, Reinaldo Ribeiro, Lucas Lacerda / Daniel Weyand, and many others.

Transkontinentale opens on 30 September with *Luftmasse* (Air Mass), a production by Chinese director Tian Gebing, based on a text by Alfred Döblin and featuring a spatial concept by Ai Weiwei. The performance celebrated its world premiere at the Theater der Welt festival in Chemnitz in June 2026.

Over the following days, the festival presents compelling dance and performance works by Zora Snake and Qudus Onikeku. The dance production *Shel We* by Māori choreographer Tupua Tigafua is also suitable for children aged four and above.

Interactive performances by Brazilian artists Reinaldo Ribeiro and Lucas Lacerda / Daniel Weyand will take place throughout the Humboldt Forum—in the exhibitions of the Ethnologisches Museum, as well as in the foyer and on the rooftop terrace.

The annual festival, curated by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss, presents dance, theatre and performance productions from four continents. The invited works engage in a variety of ways with the themes and collections of the Humboldt Forum, with several productions staged directly within the exhibition galleries of the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst. All events are accompanied by opportunities for audiences to encounter and engage in conversation with the participating artists.

The inaugural edition of *Transkontinentale* in 2024 reflected on the Berlin Conference of 1884–85, where European powers negotiated the colonial partition of Africa. The festival's second edition in 2025 focused on the annual theme *Family Matters* (*Beziehungsweise Familie*). This year's festival serves as a prologue to the thematic programme *Mine. Yours. Ours!?*, which launches at the end of November.

## EVENTS AND DATES

*Transkontinentale* 2026 at the Humboldt Forum

### **Tian Gebing / Paper Tiger Theater Studio: *Luftmasse* (Air Mass)**

30 September–2 October, 7 pm daily, Hall 1

Theatre–Dance–Performance / Co-production / Berlin Premiere

The present moment seems suspended in a state of uncertainty. China's rise is reshaping Asia—and, in turn, Europe. A century ago, Alfred Döblin captured a similar condition in his visionary novel *Mountains Seas and Giants* (*Berge Meere und Giganten*), describing it as a “fantasy of facts”: an unrelenting chain of climate catastrophes and continental shifts, pandemics and global economic crises.

The Chinese–German Paper Tiger Theater Studio has brought this material to the stage in a striking new production. Co-produced with the Theater der Welt 2026 festival in Chemnitz, the performance creates a rich world of images and sound through movement and remarkably simple yet highly sensory means. The visual concept was developed by Ai Weiwei, China's most internationally renowned contemporary artist.

Five dancers, performers and singers from China and Germany work with videography and spatial design to explore the tensions of our time. Shaped by different cultural backgrounds and discourses, their bodies embody conflicting emotions that oscillate between dystopian visions of the future and the realities of the present.

With: Elena Bechter, Wang Yanan, Sheyang Sibó, Jingwen Li, Fu-Hsuan Shih, Tian Gebing. Director and Text: Tian Gebing. Choreography and Producer: Wang Yanan. Music: Piotr Kurek. Lighting Design: Zhao Tong. Set and Costume Design: Paper Tiger Theater Studio. Video: Xin Tong. Visual Concept: Ai Weiwei. Dramaturgy: Christoph Lepschy

**Zora Snake: Combat des lianes**

1 and 2 October, 8 pm, Hall 2

Dance / Berlin Premiere

Following his acclaimed solo performance *Opéra du villageois*, Zora Snake returns to the Humboldt Forum. For his latest choreography, the exceptional Cameroonian dancer has drawn inspiration from the powerful lianas that wind through the forests of his homeland. Like the lianas themselves, the piece grows, twists and unfurls across the stage. It is a call for a more conscious stewardship of our shared natural heritage and a powerful statement against the injustices of today's capitalist world order, the exploitation of nature and the destruction of living ecosystems. Movements drawn from hip-hop, contemporary dance and traditional Cameroonian dance come together in a collective ritual of resistance and renewal.

Performance: Zora Snake, Joy Alpuerto Ritter, Jessica Chiye Warshal, Zadi Landry Kipre, Gandir Prudence; Live Music: Christiane Prince, Rokia Bamba; Choreography: Zora Snake; Set Design: Jean Michel Dissake; Costume Design: Lamyne M. A production of Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles, co-produced by Charleroi Danse, Riksteatern Stockholm, South North Foundation, Julidans Amsterdam, One Dance Festival Plovdiv, Theater Freiburg, Manège Maubeuge, and africologne Festival Cologne, among others, with the support of Institut Français Cameroun.

**Tupua Tigafua: Shel We**

3 and 4 October, 4 pm, Hall 2

Dance / German Premiere

*Shel We* is a playful and captivating dance production created by Tupua Tigafua—the celebrated Māori dancer, award-winning choreographer and distinctive storyteller. Trees, spirits, deer and mischievous pranks all play a part in this imaginative performance.

Tigafua's tribute to the American composer, musician and writer Shel Silverstein—best known for the children's classic *The Giving Tree* and the Johnny Cash hit *A Boy Named Sue*—draws on a musical landscape shaped by memories of his parents, family and community. Among the works featured are Baroque compositions dating from the era of James Cook, whose voyages marked the British Crown's claim to Aotearoa / New Zealand. *Shel We* has enchanted audiences of all ages across Aotearoa / New Zealand and in Sweden. Critics have praised the work as “deserving to become a contemporary classic.”

Dance: Villa Lemanu, Sean MacDonald, Chris Ofanoa, Tupua Tigafua, Aloalii Tapu, Andy Tilo. Idea / Choreography: Tupua Tigafua

**Qudus Onikeku: Lagos Is A R.A.V.E.**

3 and 4 October, 7 pm, Special Exhibition Galleries

Dance / European Preview

LAGOS is a R.A.V.E. (Radical Audio Visual Experience) is the latest work by Nigeria's leading contemporary choreographer Qudus Onikeku and his QDance Company, created for eleven dancers. The piece explores the megacity of Lagos as a living choreography, asking how history continues to move through bodies marked by the legacies of colonialism, military rule, migration, the oil economy, religious ecstasy and emerging visions of the future. Movement becomes a social technology, opening up new ways of being together that unfold between spirituality, pleasure and resistance. Drawing on Yorùbá cosmology and Nigeria's socio-political history, the work brings Afrobeats, rave and youth cultures into dialogue with the dynamics of urban street life.

With: Joshua Anum, Evangel Austin, Bright Bassey, Emmanuel David, Abok Ezekiel, Ruth Felix, Vessy Igben, Matthew Ilione, Tijese Jatto, Lizinmwa Man, Angela Okolo,  
Choreography: Qudus Onikeku. Lighting Design: Michel Abdallah. Producer: Hajarat Alli

**Reinaldo Ribeiro: On My Way Home**

3 and 4 October, 2.00–4.30 pm, Stair Hall/Foyer (starting location to be announced)

Participatory Durational Performance / Berlin Premiere

Sulwe is only three years old and identifies as German-Kenyan. Reinaldo Ribeiro is queer and Afro-Brazilian. Visa applications and bureaucracy shape not only their movements across borders, but also their identities. Who gets to decide who they are—or who they are allowed to be?

*On My Way Home* combines performance, film and conversation to explore questions of identity, migration and decolonisation through personal stories. Ten performers use bricks as the central element of the work. Carried, stacked and passed from hand to hand, they are transformed into symbols of ownership, loss and new beginnings. While looting and dispossession are closely tied to the history of colonialism, bricks also evoke reconstruction and the possibility of creating something new.

With: Dessa Ganda, Judith Harder, Tatiana Mejía, Taiwo Ojudun, Reinaldo Ribeiro.

Direction: Reinaldo Ribeiro, Lucia Oiro Video: Kefa Oiro

**Lucas Lacerda, Daniel Weyand: *Parte de Nós***

3 and 4 October, 12 noon and 5 pm, starting point: Foyer

Audio Walk / German Premiere

From the very beginning, humans have told stories about what it means to be human, where we come from and where we belong. Some of these stories continue to shape our lives today, while others have faded into oblivion.

*Parte de Nós* (Part of Us) rediscovers one such forgotten tale: the fable of an ancient bird separated from its own flock. A bird as old as time itself—the last of its kind—sets out on a solitary quest to find a companion who sings with the same voice. Brazilian artist Lucas Lacerda gives voice to the many legends surrounding this sacred bird, from the bedtime story his grandmother told him as a child to the place where it was last sighted, on the banks of the Rio Vermelho in Salvador da Bahia.

Originally created by Lucas Lacerda in collaboration with German audio artist Daniel Weyand, *Parte de Nós* has been further developed for the Humboldt Forum as an artistic audio walk—an immersive experience that combines speculative fiction, documentary storytelling and live performance. Equipped with headphones, audiences are invited to embark on a three-dimensional sonic journey through the spaces of the Humboldt Forum: a sensory exploration of time, memory, echoes and emotion.

With: Lucas Lacerda & Daniel Weyand (text, direction, performance, sound design), Norma Lacerda (performance), Luciana Lacerda (artist support and assistance), among others.

**Further information and ticket sales** will be available shortly at [humboldtforum.org](https://humboldtforum.org)

**Press images:** [humboldtforum.org/en/press](https://humboldtforum.org/en/press)

Transkontinentale is presented by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss.

One building, four partners: This diversity is founded on the collaboration of our partner institutions. The Humboldt Forum is a collaboration between the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss; the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz for collections from the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for the Humboldt Lab; and the Berlin Museum for the BERLIN GLOBAL exhibition.

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