



Audio Description Training Workshop with Gravity Access Services

Gravity Access Services provides live Audio Description for performances in Germany and abroad. With the support of Tanzpakt Reconnect, artistic director and choreographer Jess Curtis and Blind Art Critic Gerald Pirner will lead a five-day workshop in Audio Description and Extra-Visual Access strategies open to people interested in learning the practice.

Audio Description provides blind and visually impaired people with access to the visual elements – action, costumes, settings, gestures, facial expressions, objects and other visually communicative elements – of e.g. theater, dance or live art performances, television/film screenings, museum exhibitions. Audio Description (AD) is usually a live audio track spoken by a professional Audio Describer to patrons with visual impairments through a wireless headset system, but the service may also be pre-recorded.

Gravity's Audio Description Team is comprised of performers, themselves professional dancers and actors trained by Gravity Artistic Director Jess Curtis to provide clear and engaging descriptions of the meaningful visual details of a performance that might otherwise be inaccessible to audience members with visual impairments.

Ideal candidates will have good verbal/vocal skills, be familiar with dance, theater and performance in general and be comfortable with improvisationally describing live performance in real time without a set script. Dancers, Actors, Performers encouraged to apply. Please send a current CV and a letter describing your interest to be considered to magda@jesscurtisgravity.org. Space is limited.

Dates: February 20-24, 2023

Location: Centre Francais de Berlin, Müllerstr. 74, 13349 Berlin

Fee: 100€ per participant

Jess Curtis

Jess Curtis is an award-winning choreographer and performer committed to an art-making practice informed by experimentation, innovation, critical discourse and social relevance. He has created and performed multidisciplinary works throughout the U.S and Europe with the radical SF performance groups Contraband and CORE and the experimental French Circus company Cahin-Caha. In 2000, he founded his trans-continental performance company, Jess Curtis/Gravity. In 2011 he was presented the prestigious [Alpert Award in the Arts](#) for choreography and the Homer Avila Award for innovation in physically inclusive dance. Curtis is active as a writer, advocate and community organiser in the fields of contemporary dance and performance, and teaches accessible Dance, Contact Improvisation and Interdisciplinary Performance courses throughout the US and Europe. He holds an MFA in Choreography and a Ph.D. in Performance Studies from the University of California at Davis. Where his research and dissertation examined the role and function of various modalities of perception inherent in live performance. He writes and speaks regularly on the provision of access accommodation for performance makers.

www.jesscurtisgravity.org

Gerald Pirner

Gerald Pirner – after studying theatre and philosophy – works as an art critic, editor for the Kreuzberg publishing house Schwarze Risse and wrote articles on factory work and social struggles for various magazines. After going blind in 1989 due to retinitis pigmentosa, he trained as a media documentarian at the Sächsische Zeitung in Dresden in 1992 and subsequently began writing as an essayist for the online magazine kultura-extra in 2006. In 2014, he founded "Gerald Pirner - Texte zu Kunst", a website on which he publishes essays on visual arts, theatre, music and film from the perspective of a blind person. Since 2019 he has been working with Gravity Access Services as a consultant and co-author of audio descriptions. He also works on various dance performances and installations in audio description for Sophiensäle. In 2015, he began to work with photography and in 2017 founded the Fotostudio für Blinde Fotograf*innen (Photo Studio for Blind Photographers) in Berlin with the photographer Karsten Hein, among others. He works primarily in the technique of light painting. His photographic works have been shown in various exhibitions, most recently in June 2021 in the forum edition of f/stop, the festival for photography in Leipzig.

www.geraldirner.com