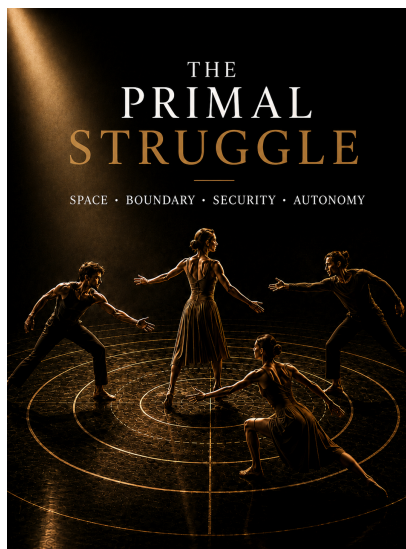
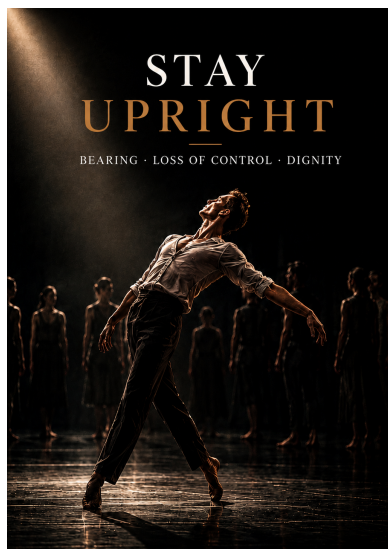
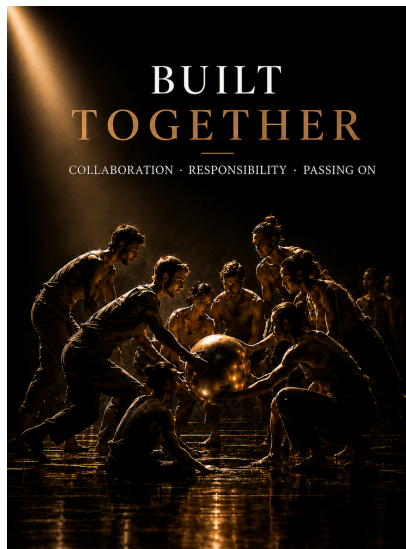
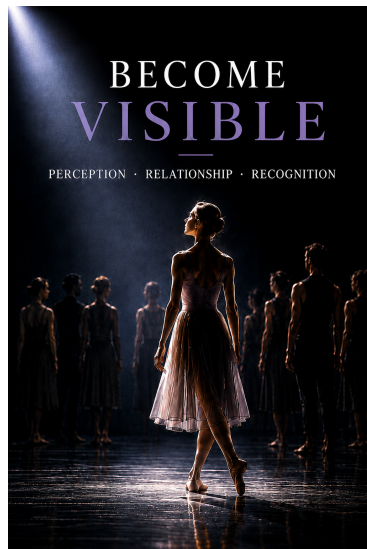


CHOREOGRAPHY · BALLET · PROJECT DEVELOPMENT · COLLABORATION

Four Contemporary Ballet Projects

Become Visible · Built Together
Stay Upright · The Primal Struggle



Mathias Ellmann

Choreography and Concept

Four Works – One Artistic Progression

SERIES OF WORKS

Four independent contemporary ballet projects explore how human relationships become visible through movement.

CENTRAL ARTISTIC QUESTION

How does one person's action change the possibilities available to another?

Become Visible	Built Together	Stay Upright	The Primal Struggle
Perception	Collaboration	Bearing	Space
Relationship	Responsibility	Loss of control	Boundary
Recognition	Passing on	Dignity	Security
12 dancers	12–24 dancers	approx. 14 performers	Autonomy
approx. 40 min.	approx. 50–55 min.	full-length format	4 dancers
			approx. 20 min.

A Shared Artistic Line

The four works do not tell one continuous story. They form a series in which the same fundamental question deepens from different perspectives.

Become Visible begins with perception: When does another person's presence become relevant to me?

Built Together develops this into collective action: How are responsibility and trust organized among several people?

Stay Upright turns to support and self-determination: How can support remain possible without taking over another person?

The Primal Struggle carries the investigation into shared space: How can security and autonomy coexist without having to control another person's movement?

DRAMATURGICAL ARC

Perception → Collaboration → Dignity → Autonomy

Choreographic Point of Departure

Classical ballet technique serves as precise movement material. Its dramaturgical meaning, however, emerges through relationship: through gaze, distance, direction, handoff, weight shift, blocking, support, response, and non-response.

Movement is therefore not only form. It changes the space and, with it, the possibilities available to other bodies.

For Specific Stage Productions

The dramaturgical structures, scene sequences, movement principles, and spatial logics of the works are fully developed. The specific stage version is refined in the studio with each ensemble and adapted to the space, cast, and production conditions.

More detailed production and staging materials are available on a project-by-project basis when there is specific interest.

01 · PERCEPTION · RELATIONSHIP · RECOGNITION

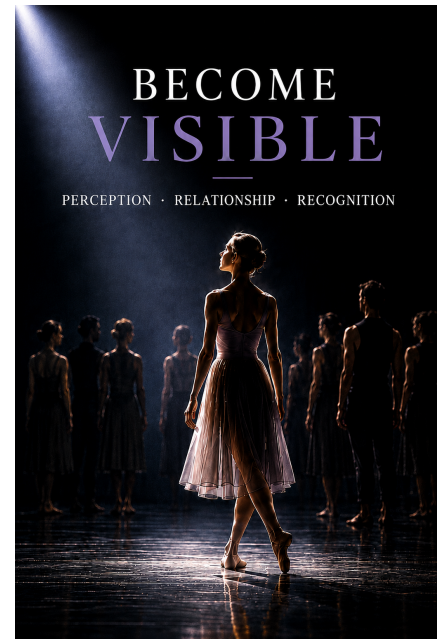
Become Visible

A contemporary ballet project about perception, relationship, and visibility

People become visible when their presence changes the behavior of others.

CENTRAL ARTISTIC QUESTION

When does one person truly become visible to another?



Concept

Twelve people share the same space without initially forming a meaningful relationship with one another. Their paths may cross and their distances may be small, yet their movements remain independent of one another.

Visibility begins where an action produces a response: a gaze, a delay, a changed path, an approach, a boundary, or support.

The work therefore treats visibility not as a question of center stage or lighting, but as a relational situation.

Dramaturgical Progression

DRAMATURGICAL ARC

Non-perception → first response → approach → proximity and boundary → conflict → recognition → shared space

Proximity is not equated with harmony. Distance and boundaries can also be forms of relationship when they are perceived and responded to.

Recognition emerges where one person perceives another person's decision and changes their own behavior without erasing the difference between them.

Become Visible

MOVEMENT · SPACE · PERCEPTION

Choreographic Language

The movement language is based on classical ballet technique used in a reduced and functional way.

Lines of sight, spatial pathways, distance, changes of direction, repetition, delay, contact, and non-contact are central parameters.

A tendu can offer a direction. A relevé can focus attention. A bourrée can change distance. A port de bras can prepare contact or withdraw it. A turn can avert the gaze and redirect it.

Meaning emerges from the consequence a movement has for other bodies in the space.

Space and Lighting

The stage remains largely open. The space is structured by bodies, pathways, distances, lines of sight, and contact.

The lighting supports these relationships without imposing an additional psychological meaning on them.

Work Details

Genre	Contemporary ballet
Duration	Approx. 40 minutes, no intermission
Cast	12 dancers
Structure	7 consecutive scenes
Space	Studio stage to mid-sized stage
Language	No spoken text
Focus	Perception, boundary, and recognition

Artistic Aim

The final image does not show the ensemble merging into one. The individuals remain distinguishable while consciously sharing the same space.

Community does not emerge through uniformity, but through mutual perception.

02 · COLLABORATION · RESPONSIBILITY · PASSING ON

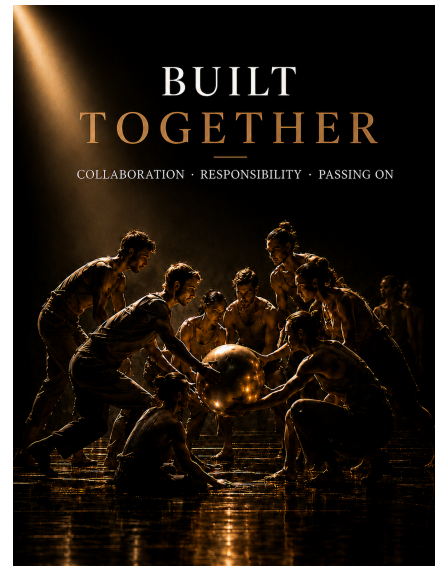
Built Together

A contemporary ballet project about collaboration, trust, and collective creation

A ball sets in motion a process in which responsibility is assumed, shared, lost, reorganized, and passed on.

CENTRAL ARTISTIC QUESTION

How does collective action emerge when responsibility does not remain with a single person?



Concept

In *Built Together*, the ensemble is the protagonist.

The starting point is a ball. It has no fixed symbolic meaning. Its function emerges from how people engage with it: as a task, point of reference, movement impulse, obstacle, jointly carried weight, or object of a handoff.

With every change in its position, the organization of the group changes as well.

The decisive question is therefore not: Who owns the ball?

Instead: Who assumes attention, orientation, and responsibility at a given moment?

Dramaturgical Progression

DRAMATURGICAL ARC

Task → Approach → Order → Collaboration → Crisis → Reorientation → Shared carrying → Completion → Passing on

A disruption interrupts the system that initially works. The group must reorganize roles, pathways, and partnerships.

Collaboration therefore becomes visible not as perfect order, but as the capacity for shared change.

Built Together

ENSEMBLE · BALL · RESPONSIBILITY

Choreographic Principles

The work follows five core principles:

- perception before evaluation,
- action before symbolism,
- relationship before hierarchy,
- process before outcome,
- passing on before possession.

The ball influences lines of sight, spatial axes, groupings, speed, and distance.

Classical movement material also takes on concrete functions: plié prepares handoffs, relevé gathers attention, tendu indicates direction, pas de bourrée structures role changes, glissade connects movement pathways, and port de bras can offer, secure, or release.

Responsibility as Action

Responsibility is assumed, shared, passed on, refused, and redistributed.

It appears not as an abstract concept, but as an observable process between people.

Work Details

Genre	Contemporary ballet / ensemble work
Duration	Approx. 50–55 minutes, no intermission
Cast	Standard version: 16; adaptable to approx. 12–24 dancers
Structure	9 consecutive scenes
Central object	A ball as the dramaturgical engine
Language	Nonverbal
Focus	Collaboration, responsibility, and passing on

Artistic Aim

The work does not end with possession or triumph.

What is created together is carried together and ultimately passed on.

03 · BEARING · LOSS OF CONTROL · DIGNITY

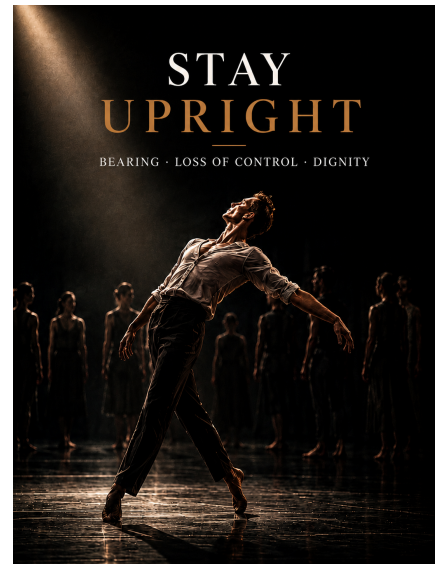
Stay Upright

A contemporary ballet project about bearing, loss of control, dignity, and self-determination

A technically accomplished central figure gradually loses physical control — and in doing so changes the behavior of those around them.

CENTRAL ARTISTIC QUESTION

How can I support another person without overriding their self-determination and dignity?



Concept

Stay Upright begins with precision.

Body, space, and social order seem controllable. A central figure has mastered classical form and tries to maintain that security even as the first deviations emerge.

The figure self-corrects, realigns, conceals uncertainty, and holds on to outward form.

A tragicomic tension emerges from the serious attempt to preserve bearing.

The figure does not become a caricature. The comedy arises from the difference between aspiration and physical reality.

Dramaturgical Progression

DRAMATURGICAL ARC

Control → Opening → Deviation → Assertion → Loss of control → Public gaze → Withdrawal → Help and boundary → New bearing

The physical loss of control is a turning point. What becomes decisive afterward is the response of the community.

Stay Upright

HELP · BOUNDARY · SELF-DETERMINATION

Help as Relationship

Support is not automatically positive in this work.

It may be necessary, but it can also override a person's self-determination.

Help is therefore negotiated choreographically: it can be offered, refused, offered again, initiated by the person receiving it, and ultimately shared.

The question "Does this person need help?" is not the only one that matters.

Equally important is: Who decides the form, timing, and extent of that help?

Uprightness and Dignity

The work does not tell a story of returning to lost perfection.

At the end, the central figure is not simply restored to the original order. The order itself changes.

Uprightness therefore takes on several dimensions: physical posture, social bearing, and ethical stance.

Work Details

Genre	Full-length contemporary ballet
Duration	Dependent on the final music and transition structure
Cast	Central figure, counterpart, and ensemble; approx. 14 performers recommended, adaptable
Structure	9 consecutive scenes
Language	Nonverbal
Distinctive feature	Controlled instability and costume dramaturgy
Focus	Dignity, help, boundary, and self-determination

Artistic Aim

Dignity does not mean never losing control. It is also revealed in how a person and those around them respond to that loss.

04 · SPACE · BOUNDARY · SECURITY · AUTONOMY

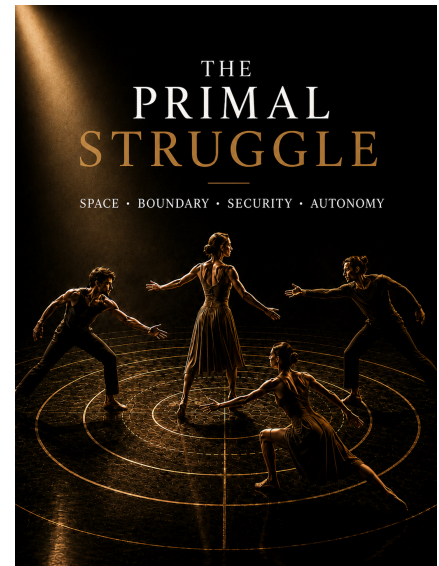
The Primal Struggle

A contemporary ballet about space, boundary, security, autonomy, self-respect, and the emergence of conflict

Four people share the same space. Habit becomes expectation, expectation becomes a boundary, and the attempt to create security develops into a system of mutual control.

CENTRAL ARTISTIC QUESTION

How can autonomous people use the same space without having to create security by controlling others?



Concept

The Primal Struggle does not begin with a fight.

Four people use the same stage space. Repeated pathways create habit, orientation, and predictability.

There is no visible boundary line, no wall, and no explicit claim of ownership.

Only a changed route reveals that repeated use of the space has long since created an expectation.

An invisible boundary takes effect through behavior.

From Need to Strategy

Security, autonomy, orientation, respect, and self-respect are understandable needs.

The conflict does not arise from these needs themselves, but from the strategy used to secure them.

One person begins to make their own security dependent on how another person moves.

A request becomes a demand. Resistance becomes counter-control.

DRAMATURGICAL ARC

Habit → Perception → Boundary → Crossing → Demand → Control → Mutual dependence → Opening

The Primal Struggle

CIRCLE · RESPONSE · FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

The Circle as Spatial Dramaturgy

At first, the circle organizes living space and habit. Later it is treated as a boundary and becomes increasingly defined as territory and ultimately as an arena.

The more the participants try to control another person's movement, the more strongly they themselves become bound to that person's behavior.

Movement energy increases while each person's room for independent decision-making becomes smaller.

Conflict Without Realistic Violence

Blocking and counter-blocking, direction, distance, speed, repetition, gaze, and interruption are enough to make power relationships visible.

The struggle is not directed against another person's body, but against that person's possibilities for movement.

The Opening

The ending offers no winner.

Familiar impulses remain perceptible, but they no longer automatically compel the expected counter-movement.

Closed circular pathways open. The four people retain their own paths, directions, and decisions within the same space.

Work Details

Genre	Contemporary ballet
Duration	Approx. 20 minutes, no intermission
Cast	4 dancers
Structure	8 consecutive scenes
Performance area	Ideally approx. 12 × 10 m; minimum approx. 10 × 8 m
Technique	Classical ballet used in a contemporary context
Focus	Space, boundary, security, and autonomy

Open Interpretation

The work does not depict a specific war, state, or historical conflict.

It examines a fundamental mechanism: how security can turn into control and how shared space can become possible without forcing one another into reactive behavior.

Choreographic Signature

BODY · SPACE · RELATIONSHIP

Classical ballet technique is used as a precise language of human relationships.

The Choreography of Relationship

The element connecting the four works is not a recurring pose or step sequence, but a choreographic way of thinking:

What changes between people when one person moves?

Direction, distance, speed, gaze, timing, and response change the possibilities available to other bodies.

Relationship itself therefore becomes choreographic material.

Classical Vocabulary as Function

Plié, tendu, dégagé, relevé, piqué, bourrée, pas de bourrée, port de bras, turns, and jumps remain recognizable as classical technique.

Their dramaturgical function, however, changes:

- *Become Visible*: perception, gaze, and distance,
- *Built Together*: handoff, collaboration, and responsibility,
- *Stay Upright*: uprightness, instability, and support,
- *The Primal Struggle*: radius, direction, blocking, and response.

Small Change – Major Consequence

A gaze can make a person visible.

A delay can show that a movement has been perceived.

A step backward can acknowledge a boundary.

The absence of a response can interrupt an existing system of conflict.

Dramaturgy therefore emerges not only through escalation, but also through reduction, pause, deviation, and non-response.

No Simple Moral Roles

A need does not automatically make an action good. A boundary is not automatically possession. Help is not automatically right. Community is not automatically sameness.

The works are interested in **the strategies people develop from their needs and how those strategies change the possibilities available to others.**

Project Status and Materials

DEVELOPED · READY FOR REHEARSAL · ADAPTABLE

The dramaturgical and choreographic structures of all four works are developed. The specific stage version is created with the respective ensemble.

Available Materials

Depending on the project, available materials include:

- short and detailed project proposals,
- audience guides,
- production and staging documentation,
- dramaturgical scores,
- scenic scores,
- movement principles,
- character and ensemble logic,
- spatial and stage structures,
- lighting and music dramaturgy,
- rehearsal planning,
- technical procedures,
- stage-management documentation,
- program and press texts.

Established

The materials define, among other things:

- scene sequence,
- overall dramaturgical arc,
- character relationships,
- movement functions,
- spatial logics,
- central transitions,
- turning points,
- final states.

In the Studio

With the specific ensemble, movement sequences are physically refined, transitions are tested, distances are adjusted, and the score is transferred to actual stage conditions.

These adaptations serve the practical stage production while preserving the dramaturgical core of the respective work.

The complete production materials are not sent as initial information. They are made available on a project-by-project basis once there is specific interest.

Collaboration and Production

THEATER · COMPANY · CO-PRODUCTION · RESIDENCY

The projects are developed for collaboration with professional ensembles, theaters, festivals, and production partners.

Commission	Rehearsal, ensemble-specific adaptation, and refinement of a selected work within a professional rehearsal process.
Co-production	Joint coordination of choreography, dramaturgy, music, lighting, costume, production, and financing.
Residency	Studio and stage exploration, adaptation to the space, work on partnering dynamics, technical coordination, and development of a specific stage version.
Stage production	Adaptation to ensemble size, stage space, and production framework while preserving the dramaturgical core.
Festival / Studio	A condensed version, provided that the structure of the work and its dramaturgical logic are preserved.
Artistic collaboration	Collaboration with artistic assistants, répétiteurs, dramaturgs, and experienced dancers.

The First Step

An initial exchange clarifies three points:

- Which work fits the artistic profile of the organization?
- Which production format and cast are realistic?
- What next step would allow for a practical evaluation in the studio or onstage?

From there, more detailed project materials, rehearsal scope, technical requirements, and a possible production timeline can be discussed.

Mathias Ellmann

CHOREOGRAPHY AND CONCEPT

Contemporary ballet as the precise organization of body, space, and human relationships.

Artistic Approach

Mathias Ellmann develops choreographic and dramaturgical concepts for contemporary ballet works.

His work takes classical ballet technique as a point of departure for investigating interpersonal and social questions through the body and through space.

At the center are observable processes: gaze, distance, approach, handoff, weight shift, boundary, support, response, and changes in shared space.

The four projects *Become Visible*, *Built Together*, *Stay Upright*, and *The Primal Struggle* form an artistic progression from perception through collective action and dignity to security and autonomy.

Additional Professional Background

In addition, Mathias Ellmann develops publications and models on body knowledge, motivation, self-respect, and artistic learning in ballet.

These include *The Ballet Teaching Tree* and *Leni and Oscar and the Secret of the Ballet Tree*.

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Become Visible · Built Together · Stay Upright · The Primal Struggle

Four Contemporary Ballet Projects
Mathias Ellmann · Choreography and Concept