

Erick Hawkins (US, 1909-1994) Dancer and choreographer. He danced with George Balanchine's American Ballet and was the first male dancer to join Martha Graham's company. He later founded his own company and school - Erick Hawkins School of Dance, where he developed a new dance technique. Numerous choreographic works and collaborations with many composers, most notably Lucia Dlugoszewski.

<https://www.erickhawkinsdance.org/Biographies>

Bert Gstettner (AT) Dancer, choreographer, artistic director of Tanz*Hotel. Dance /Choreography studies in Vienna, Paris and in NY with Erick Hawkins. He continues to maintain close ties with Hawkins' artistic successors. In 1992, he founded his company TANZ*HOTEL. Numerous choreographies, productions, festival appearances, commissions for major theaters. He teaches, mentors and directs residency projects. www.tanzhotel.at

Hofstetter Kurt (AT) He works across disciplines of conceptual and media art, visual art and composition. He presents his works in public spaces as well as at international exhibitions and festivals. His creations often combine traditional techniques with contemporary technology, exploring mathematical patterns and boundaries of perception. <https://hofstetterkurt.net/>

Reinhard F. Handl (AT) A wide range of artistic works – writing, sound, research, text performances, directing and producing for Kunstradio. Decades of collaborative work with Bert Gstettner.

Peter Sandbichler (AT) conceptual sculptor, whose work interweaves socio-political issues with fundamental questions of sculptural aesthetics, exploring surface, space and time as well as material, form, and process. With a range of media, he creates large-scale objects, installations, and architectural interventions in public space. <http://www.petersandbichler.com/>

Many thanks to: Gloria McLean, Ken Hiratsuka, Laura Pettibone, Harry I Hofstetter Kurt, artist-composer „ZART - una cantata moebius“ | artist Peter Sandbichler for the shoe sculptures | author Reinhard F. Handl for the text „Inclination“ and outside eye | Bernadette Weigel as outside eye | Luca Major for her support in the T*H office

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AILEY STUDIOS
Manhattan, New York City

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Bert Gstettner
Performance, Choreography

July 16th, 2026, at 8 pm



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The outstanding American dancer and choreographer Erick Hawkins gave a speech and a performance for his late friend, the Austrian American artist, architect and designer Frederick Kiesler at his funeral service on December 30th, 1965. Many more artists and friends paid their last respect to Kiesler, including Lucia Dlugoszewski – who shared a close friendship with Kiesler's second wife, Lillian – and Ralph Dorazio, Kiesler's long-time assistant. At the funeral Hawkins performed a slow bow in front of Kiesler's coffin – a gesture that resonates both farewell and continuation.

In 2024 Bert found Erick's speech in the archive of the Lilian and Frederick Kiesler Foundation in Vienna. The funeral speech and his memories as a student of Erick as well as the lively connections to the Hawkins-people were his point of departure for the piece. Bert expands Hawkins eulogy excerpts through a present text by Reinhard F. Handl. He wonders about the Ericks bow, recalls his' principles of movement, walks into Kiesler's Endless House and dances on the Moebius strip of Hofstätter Kurt's music.

While tracing back the paths he has walked, Bert discovers notions of the unending, ponders over the passing of the torch, where the question arises: on whose shoulders are we able to stand and is such a standing even truly possible or in today's world of interest? Echoing Arthur Rimbaud's words and the necessity of the illusionary renewal: *"Art must be reinvented, that much is certain."*

Excerpts from Hawkins' eulogy, quoting a conversation with Kiesler:

"Anytime you met Kiesler, he met you with a demanding, embarrassing, or baffling question. His mind was always roving like a free spirit in a new land.

"Erick, why do you want a new movement technique?", he once asked me. *"Isn't there enough technique?"* "I guess, I don't want whizzing around like a machine." I answered. - *"I guess I don't want neurotic contortions either. What I want is maybe difficult. I want muscles that really feel – you know what I mean, really effortless."* "You see," Kiesler shouted, *"dance has to fight this cold war of glass and steel just the way architecture does. Now everything moves so fast, there is no time to feel you understand in US YOU ME? This is the disease of the accelerated senses."*

script & choreography

Beautiful	Choreography Way, Ritual, Directions & Elements
Funeral I - Friends	Sensitivity, Parthenon, Shifted, Floor of the Shrine
Keynote '65	Choreography
Inclination I Legacy	Legacy, Giants, Sparks, Jewels, Old One, Glory Choreography, Shoe Sculptures
Funeral II Conversation	Here and Now, Love Dances, Free Spirit, Equilibrium
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end.less.ness	Choreography
Inclination II - Universe	Minotaur, Zephyr, Friends, Pegasus, Fire
Animal Innocence	Zoltan Kodaly, Cello Sonata – Allegro

Inclination I – Legacy

*Although, sparks are from some graves
flashing up to the stars
their crackling, wrinkles burn solar storms
fair weather, fair word
and from the grave oblation
chirps the proclamation:
That from the jewels/gemstones/opaque-opals/
amethysts/tinder stones a disclosure occurs: propensity*

Performance, Choreography, Script, Costume: BERT GSTETTNER

Music: HOFSTETTER KURT - ZART *una cantata moebius*

Objects: PETER SANDBICHLER

Costume Parts HANNA ADLAOUI-MAYERL

Text excerpts: ERICK HAWKINS - *For Kiesler (1965)*, REINHARD F. HANDL – *Inclination (2024)* | **Adaptation:** BERT GSTETTNER

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