

Malika Fankha

No Place Like Home

2026, February 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st

brut nordwest Vienna

Photos © Christine Miess



No Place Like Home addresses the silence surrounding sexual violence within family systems, aiming to raise awareness of our collective responsibility and expose incestuous behavior hidden behind the shield of privacy. The work examines systemic abuse and manipulative mechanisms on legal, neurological, and political levels and their lifelong consequences for survivors: What values do we internalize after years of humiliation and violence? How can a body whose boundaries have been repeatedly violated reclaim its autonomy? What concepts of truth emerge when an entire environment's main narrative is built on lies? How can home be associated with safety and security when it has been a site of crime for years?

The piece meanders through physical and psychological states that reveal the ambivalence between repulsion and attraction toward one's own and other bodies. At times trapped in endlessly recurring spirals of memory, at times hopeful, empowered by queer desire.

CREDITS

Artistic direction, performance Malika Fankha Performance Oneka von Schrader
Dramaturgy Asher Ó Gormáin Lights Marek Lamprecht Sound Moët & Random (Bernd Ammann & Malika Fankha) Costume Goran Bugaric Makeup Lisa Frantz Sound engineering Lisa Hollaus Outside Eye Elizabeth Ward Documentation Mar* Szydłowska & Daphne von Schrader
Outside eye Elizabeth Ward Flyer Design Rani Fankha Production management mollusca productions Admin Takelage (Sophie Menzinger & Julia Haas) Residency Partners Im_flieger Vienna, Tanzhaus Zürich Special Thanks To Bears In The Park

A co-production by FANKS & brut Wien. With the kind support of the City of Vienna's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Swiss Embassy in Vienna.



LINKS

Video: [Trailer](#) (© Daphne von Schrader)

Podcasts: Malika Fankha in conversation with [Two Glasses Deep](#) & [DramaQWiens](#)

INTERVIEW

About research and working methods with Katrin Brehm (dramaturgy & outreach, brut wien) & Malika Fankha



KB: No Place Like Home touches on very complex and sensitive themes. Could you share a bit about how you approached the research process – how you engaged with the topic, and which sources, perspectives, or methods helped you explore it artistically?

MF: Literary works such as *Siebenmeilenherz* by Katharina Winkler, *Triste Tigre* by Neige Sinno, and *The Chronology of Water* by Lidia Yuknavitch were particularly formative for me. All three address experiences of incestuous violence. I was deeply impressed by the variety of their linguistic approach and how each of them – in their own way – manages to create images through language that make the unspeakable viscerally tangible.

As I was therapeutically working through my own history, I also wanted to better understand psychological and neurological phenomena such as dissociation and traumatic amnesia. Through this process, I encountered the work of anthropologist Dorothee Dussy and psychotraumatologist Muriel Salmons. Both describe incest (sexualized violence within family systems) not as an isolated pathology but – despite being legally prohibited – as a widespread, invisible, and heavily tabooed practice. From there, my research expanded into legal and political questions concerning victim protection, statutes of limitation, burden of proof, and criminal defense strategies. What I find particularly disturbing is that in cases of sexualized

violence, the protection of privacy (including that of perpetrators) is often prioritized, pushing the fact that it is about violence into the background. We need to stop thinking and saying that sexualized violence has anything to do with sex or sexuality. It is violence. Period.

KB: The piece combines spoken word with choreographic work. What other elements are part of the piece, and how can we imagine the process that brings these different elements together?

MF: The spoken word has always been a central element of my work. In *No Place Like Home*, I understand it as a form of linguistic anarchy – a reclaiming of language. In French, I would describe the act of breaking the silence as *prendre la parole*: reclaiming the word. This process also manifests in the choreography: the body frees itself from objectification and becomes a subject with its own agency. Music is another essential element. I wanted to create a sound that one cannot escape physically – one that hits you seismically, floods the organism, and sets everything vibrating, breathing, pulsing. This dense and expansive web of frequencies holds transcendental potential – if one allows it. It takes courage to truly let the body feel itself.

Regarding space, we consciously chose a non-frontal setting. On the one hand, this allows for greater proximity between performers and audience; on the other, it enables multi-directional perspectives. The light acts as a vehicle with its own agency, seamlessly transforming the space from a family gathering into a courtroom, from a club into the interior of a body. It determines what becomes visible and what remains hidden, what happens in the dark and what disappears under the table.



KB: Your team includes another performer, Oneka von Schrader, as well as Asher Ó Gormáin and many other collaborators. How have these different perspectives influenced the process?

MF: In this work, it was very important to me that the focus is not on an individual experience, but that it becomes clear that incest cuts across all social classes and that we are therefore all directly or indirectly affected*. This requires multiple voices and listening ears within the team. Together, we developed methods for dealing with memories, triggers, and trauma responses. Since these often arise unexpectedly, it remains an ongoing challenge to stay attentive and empathetic – toward others as well as toward oneself. Even then, it is inevitable that mistakes happen, that we sometimes fail to respond appropriately and reveal our blind spots. Our goal, both in rehearsals and in the theater, is to create a “brave space”: an atmosphere that allows for complex and ambiguous discourse and encourages collective growth and learning.

*According to statistics, 3 or 4 out of 10 people experience sexual abuse during childhood; in 90% of cases, the perpetrator is someone close to or related to them. However, these figures do not represent an absolute reality – the number of unreported cases is likely high, and much remains hidden.



KB: What role do community, collective reflection, and collaboration play in your work?

MF: After having developed primarily solo works in recent years, with *No Place Like Home*, I was much more aware of the socio-political dimension of the topic and the responsibility that this brings. Of course, every solo work is also supported by a team – many things would not be possible otherwise – but in this process it was particularly important to include other perspectives from the very beginning.

Community is central to me, both privately and professionally – vital rather. Even though I sometimes need days alone in the studio, my appreciation for collectively developing, overturning, and further spinning ideas continues to grow. Ultimately, it is this shared process that makes a work relatable, gives it urgency, and potentially enables it to resonate beyond the shared live moment. I would love to involve even more people in such processes, but the lack of resources often set those boundaries.

PRESS

Malika Fankha refuses to remain silent any longer. They refuse to listen to lies. They bring to the surface what has been left unspoken, unsayable, unheard, and silenced. In *No Place Like Home*, they speak through the body, using their own language to make the reality of sexualized violence within the family tangible.

Premiering at brut on February 18, this performance cuts deep. Performance artist Malika Fankha—working across dance, sound, and poetry—addresses the silence surrounding sexual violence in the family. Those who experience such violence—rape that is less about sexuality than about power and domination—are often left traumatized, yet unable to speak.

In the performance, the violated body reclaims its agency. Yet it struggles against a silence that “sticks like chewing gum under the family table.” To break that silence, to dismantle the taboo, Fankha turns to language. Her words are both unsparing and poetic, as ritualized as the twisting and contorting bodies on stage.

To move the subject beyond the personal and into the collective, public, and socio-political realm, the work evolved from a planned solo into a duo. Through this doubling, performer and singer Oneka von Schrader helps shift the focus away from personal accusation or individual experience toward the creation of a shared space for reflection and recognition—a space in which the taboo can be exposed. To look, to listen, to remain attentive. Sexualized violence cuts across all layers of society and therefore concerns us all: private individuals as well as state institutions.

From early on, the team—alongside Fankha and von Schrader, dramaturge Asher Ó Gormáin, lighting designer Marek Lamprecht, and sound artist Bernd Ammann—was aware of the sensitivity of the subject. The private is pulled onto the stage, which may be painful for some audience members. At the team’s request, a “brave space” is held during and after the performances: a space that allows for complex, ambiguous discourse and encourages collective growth and learning.

Fankha’s phenomenal stage presence and the almost poetic, verse-like delivery of the text soften the brutality of the subject at moments, allowing the artistry of the performance to come to the forefront—before the weight of the theme takes hold again.

Through sound, light, and use of haze, a sense of oppressive intimacy fills the large space at brut, where the audience is seated along the long sides. At the beginning, tables and platforms form a domestic setting. Like the performers, the audience sits or lounges on and around them, witnessing as the performers scrub and scrape their bodies, producing sounds that are deliberately uncomfortable, even intimidating to hear.

Fankha then introduces the theme through rhythmic language in dialogue with the moving body. The intense performance is repeatedly interrupted by silence and darkness—moments to process, to reflect.

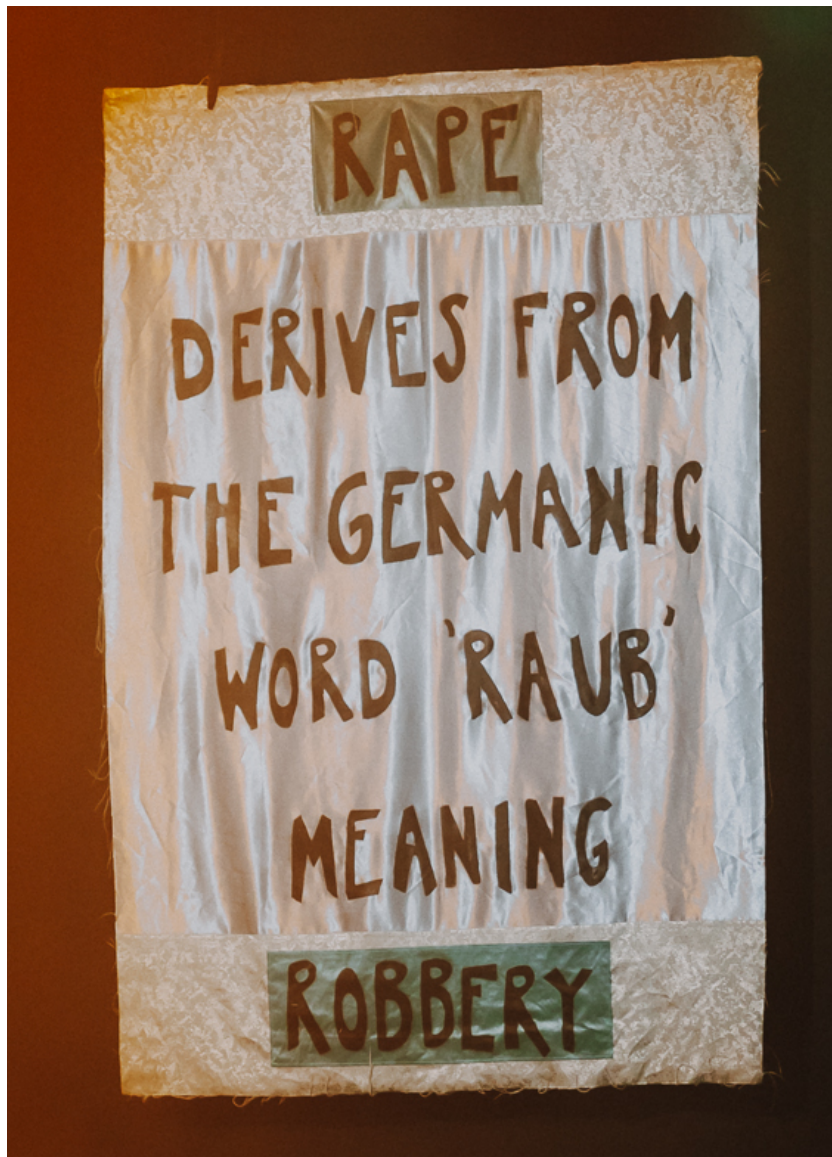
On Thursday, February 19, a discussion titled *Breaking the Silence* accompanies the performance.

Moderated by Stefanie Sourial, Malika Fankha, Oneka von Schrader, Emanuel Lerch, and Asher Ó Gormáin engage with the audience on questions around boundaries, (in)justice, and responsibility.

Whistling, cheering, or even applauding felt difficult. And yet, Malika Fankha and their team deserve strong applause. It is not the content itself that is being applauded, but its sensitive staging and the careful, responsible way in which domestic and sexualized violence are addressed. The team also guides the audience—who may not have expected to be confronted with the wounds of victims and the crimes of perpetrators—through this experience with care and attentiveness.

That the audience is still able to find words afterward is, ultimately, a testament to the work of Malika Fankha and their team.

- Ditta Rudle, tanzschrift.at



ARTIST BIO

[Malika Fankha](#) studied theatre in Zurich and contemporary dance at SEAD in Salzburg (AT), at NYU Tisch (USA) and works as a dancer, poet and DJ. Mal is interested in subverting predictable narratives and carving out spaces for both precarious intimacy and campy melodrama. Their work unfolds structures and politics of desire by seeking softer weavings between sensation and sociality, while building an obstinate yet malleable matrix of connections. Mal's previous collaborations include, among others, Tanzquartier Wien, brut Wien, WUK, ImPulsTanz, Wiener Festwochen, Tanzhaus Zürich, Südpol Luzern, Dampfzentrale Bern, Art Basel, Zentrum Paul Klee, Pianofabriek Brussels, workspacebrussels, Kaaitheater, CAMPO Ghent, BUDA Kortrijk, Cullberg Ballet Stockholm, Life Long Burning, Golden Days Copenhagen, Mladi Levi Ljubljana, Swissnex, Counterpulse San Francisco and Théâtre National du Luxembourg. www.malikafankha.com



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