

# In Performance: Lea Moro, FUN! (Tanz im August)

By [Philip Gates](#) on August 20, 2017 [No Comments](#) / 840 views



## **FUN!**

**Lea Moro**

**Tanz im August, HAU2**

**August 11-13**

The title of *FUN!*, its aggressive capitalization and that emphatic punctuation, reads both as encouraging exhortation (have fun!) and vaguely threatening guarantee (you WILL have fun). It's an apt encapsulation of a performance that, in its commitment to the relentlessly cheerful aesthetic of the amusement park, takes the spectator on an alternately delightful and infuriating ride. The performance is exhausting, but then, so is having fun.

Choreographer Lea Moro (who also performs in the piece) is interested in entertainment as industry, in the codified structures within which we are encouraged and expected to consume the product that is "fun." *FUN!* draws inspiration from, and re-performs for our benefit, a parade of familiar cultural diversions including carnival rides, magic tricks, cartoons, arcade games, sock puppets, bad jokes, chain-restaurant birthday songs, and more. If this list sets your teeth on edge, you're not alone. But Moro and her merry band of committed, charismatic performers are as determined to win you over as amusement park workers competing to win employee of the month. "Happiness is our business!" they sing in unison, smiles wide. A business it is: interludes of frenetic, repeated movement evoke not just rides at the fair, but also assembly lines and mechanical reproduction. This is unmistakably a factory of fun.

Who benefits from all this manufactured enjoyment? What is at stake in its production? Beneath the performance's giddy sheen are ripples of something darker, more chaotic: Dani

Brown (deliciously off-kilter) calmly describing the joy she gets from putting kittens' heads in her mouth, or the little red balls spewing uncontrollably from the mouth of the bemused, helpless Micha Goldberg. Might the entertainments this performance interrogates be a way of channeling (and monetizing) certain impulses, impulses society is invested in containing? Why so serious, I imagine the exuberant dancers asking in response. Don't worry so much, don't think so hard. It's just fun. And it is.

*Photo: Dajana Lothert*