

The construction site as a stage: technology and dance

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Building construction



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In our new video, Rafael Lesage dances across the PORR construction site of the Aspern Central Vocational School in Vienna. For him, it is literally the biggest stage. For PORR, it is Austria's largest PPP building construction project. A combination of concrete and balance, technology and dance.

Rafael is ready: the dancer has warmed up, jumped on the spot, and gone through every movement in his head once more – like a ski racer just before the start. He is now looking down from a roof at our huge construction site. In Aspern, Vienna, PORR is building a central vocational school for up to 7,500 students per year, 2,500 of whom can attend at the same time, and 350

employees. The new timber-hybrid building with a gross floor area of 42,000 m² consists of a 26 m high main building connected to a workshop by a glass bridge. Today, however, it is not only the largest PPP building construction project in Austria. Today, it is a stage.



The big chance

He is not nervous; Rafael Lesage is a professional and was born to dance. His father, Jean Christophe Lesage, was a ballet dancer, training director of the Vienna State Opera and Volksoper ballet companies, and ballet master of the Vienna State Ballet. His mother was also a ballet dancer. Rafael himself is a dance teacher and won the television show *Die große Chance (The Big Chance)* as a member of *Indeed Unique* in 2024. He rehearsed a special choreography for us. Equipped with a helmet, PORR jacket or vest and safety shoes, he enters

the construction site. Because occupational safety rules apply to everyone, including dancers. He now stands alone on the roof. And then it begins. Camera rolling. Sound running. Rafael dances. A drone approaches, circles him, rises again and shows cranes, excavation pits, excavators and the enormous dimensions of the project before flying through Rafael's legs. We follow what the drone is filming on a small screen. Rafael dances two or three more times. Then we have everything in the can.



The big find

Now it's time for our stars to take stage: site managers Patrick Schneider and Alen Heric guide us around the site. Sustainability is the focus at the Aspern Central Vocational School: CO₂-reduced cement, state-of-the-art building technology, and in addition to photovoltaics and green roofs, there will also be a geothermal system with a capacity of up to 1,068 kW. This required 145 deep boreholes with a total of 19,430 metres of drilling. The shell will be completed in autumn, and our colleagues will start work on the façade and interior fittings in

the middle of the year. Particularly exciting: during the work, the construction team came across the graves of soldiers and horses from the Battle of Aspern-Esslingen in 1809 – Napoleon's first significant defeat. They also discovered settlement pits from the Late Bronze Age.

A project of superlatives. A construction site as a stage. A dance between history, the present and vision.