

I, Rita Mazza am born deaf into a deaf family. I am a native signer, my first language is Italian Sign Language. Since I attended a hearing school, I grew up bilingual and between two different cultures – the deaf and the hearing culture. Although I wanted to be on stage from an early age, my opportunities as a deaf person were limited: I never had the chance to study dance or acting because there were no artistic training courses with sign language access. So I had to educate myself and gain performance experience on my own within the deaf community in Italy and Europe. Over time, I got more offers and in 2018 I started my collaboration with the dance company Fattoria Vittadini, founded in 2009, which continues until today, among other things as Artistic Director of the Festival del Silenzio, an international performing arts festival with a focus on sign language and deaf culture. The festival fosters the exchange about visual art forms between deaf and hearing artists and audiences. Besides, in 2019, I developed the visual musical "Vier" together with three other deaf artists at Sophiensaele. Today I live between Berlin, Turin and Milan as a freelance deaf performer, continue to create visual performances and promote deaf events.