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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
Peter Appel

Short biography - Peter Appel

Peter Appel, born in Surabaya (Indonesia) in 1933, was influenced by famous artists of classical academic ballet early on in his dancing career: He began his dance training in 1949 at the Kennemer Studio in Haarlem (NL) and continued it in Paris with Victor Gsovsky and Olga Preobrajenska. This was followed by studies of the classical repertoire with Mathilde Kshessinskaya and Lubov Egorova. Between 1954 and 1961, Peter Appel danced leading roles in classical repertory, as well as in contemporary dance with the Netherlands Ballet and until 1962, with the Het National Ballet. This became the basis for the connection between the St. Petersburg school and the style that Balanchine developed from it in the USA, which Peter Appel sought in his pedagogical work.

Alongside his work as a soloist at the Stadttheater Basel from 1962 to 1964, he also took on the role of ballet master for the first time. This was followed by an engagement as ballet master at the Hamburg State Opera in 1964. From 1966 to 1971, Peter Appel was a soloist and ballet master, and for a time ballet director at the Cologne Opera House. During this time, he was also instrumental in developing the dance studies at the Institute for Professional Dance in Cologne, where he served as director until 1976.

In 1976, he accepted John Neumeier's invitation to become ballet master at the Hamburg State Opera, where he helped him establish the ballet school in 1978. From 1979, Peter Appel accompanied Heinz Spoerli for 25 years. His contributions helped make the Basel Ballet, the Ballet Ensemble of the "Deutsche Oper am Rhein", as well as the Zurich Ballet become internationally renowned ensembles.

Peter Appel became a formative teacher for generations of dance professionals, including Martin Schläpfer, who worked intensively with him for many years. As a dance educator and guest trainer, he has worked with ballet companies and professional dance institutions around the world.

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