



GERMAN DANCE AWARD 2023

Malou Airaud, Josephine Ann Endicott, Lutz Förster und Dominique Mercy

Biography – Josephine Ann Endicott

Josephine Ann Endicott was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1950. When she started taking ballet lessons at the age of seven, her father – a pharmaceuticals sales rep – announced drily, “Too dear”. It was Jo Ann’s mother who did her utmost to nurture her daughter’s love of dance, because she herself had grown up with three sisters who were mad about dancing. It didn’t take long for Jo Ann’s teachers to recognise her talent, and she was sent for professional ballet training at the Australian Ballet School in Melbourne. In 1967 she joined Australian Ballet’s corps de ballet, where she met famous ballerinas of the day who were invited to perform with them, including Margot Fonteyn, Carla Fracci and Maya Plisetskaya. She got to work with great choreographers such as Anthony Tudor, Frederick Ashton, Paul Taylor, Leonide Massine and Rudolf Nurejew, who made the greatest impression on her. However, her position in the company was precarious. She did not conform to the contemporary ideal of a ballerina – her face was considered too round, her body too feminine, her personality not suited. Nureyev advised her to go to Europe.

From London to Wuppertal

Endicott went to London in 1972, where Pina Bausch discovered her – more or less by chance – a year later, and immediately signed her up for the new Tanztheater Wuppertal. The young Australian was a perfect fit. Pina Bausch’s newly formed ensemble did not pander to the standardised models of ballet, wanting instead to show people “as they really are” – tall or short, plump or slight. The idea of the ensemble was to gather as many different characters as possible, each of whom should be seen as a unique individual. With her unpretentious personality and direct manner, Jo Ann Endicott fitted right in. And she had the makings of a protagonist. The Australian’s break-through came when Pina Bausch cast her in the leading role of Anna I in the Brecht–Weill double bill *The Seven Deadly Sins* in 1976. From then on, through the early years of Tanztheater Wuppertal, Endicott became the public face and the best ad for the company. She threw herself unreservedly into every role, whether in “Come Dance With Me”, “Renate wandert aus” (Renate emigrates), the “Macbeth project”, “Kontakthof”, “Arien”, “Keuschheitslegende” (Legend of Chastity) or “Walzer”. Not only was Pina Bausch’s language of movement practically made for her, Endicott could also act, laugh, shriek, wail, rant, even belch on command. She could portray a dreamy girl as convincingly as a screeching nag, act the playful comedian as well as the haughty lady at a dinner party. Above all, her emotional intensity lent each piece great credibility. Jo Ann Endicott had the ability to give her all on stage. She didn’t pretend to be someone – she became the person she was playing.

Change of scene

In 1987, emotionally drained, she took a break from Tanztheater Wuppertal and did not return until 1994, initially as a guest artist. She had already begun to collaborate with theatre directors – with Hansgünther Heyme in 1979, then with Peter Palitzsch (1991) and Wolf Seesemann (1995) – and she considered this very important for her artistic development. She published two books about her work with Pina Bausch: “Ich bin eine anständige Frau” (“A respectable woman”) in 1999, and “Warten auf Pina” (“Waiting for Pina”) in 2009. Back with Tanztheater Wuppertal, she began to work more and more as rehearsal director and on ensuring that the pieces were passed on to the next generation.

Her restagings of “Kontakthof. With Ladies and Gentlemen over 65” with Beatrice Libonati (1999/2000) and “Kontakthof. With Teenagers over 14” with Bénédicte Billiet (2009/2010) were major successes. From 2007 to 2015 Endicott became a full-time employee of Tanztheater Wuppertal again and was responsible for several international restagings of Pina Bausch pieces, including “The Rite of Spring” and “Orpheus und Eurydike” at the Paris Opera. In 2020, she restaged “The Rite of Spring” with an ensemble of dancers from various African countries, produced in École des Sables, Senegal.

Among other awards for her work, Endicott was conferred with the honour of Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2008, and Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2012. As one of the original members of Pina Bausch’s company, Endicott particularly enjoys the opportunity that each restaging presents to train new, junior colleagues as the assistants and rehearsal directors of the future.

Text by Norbert Servos

Translated by Rachel McNicholl

World premieres with the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch

- Season 1973/74 Fritz
- Season 1973/74 Iphigenie auf Tauris
- Season 1973/74 Zwei Krawatten
- Season 1974/75 Adagio – Fünf Lieder von Gustav Mahler
- Season 1974/75 Ich bring dich um die Ecke...
- Season 1974/75 Orpheus und Eurydike
- Season 1975/76 Wind von West
- Season 1975/76 Der zweite Frühling
- Season 1975/76 Das Frühlingsopfer
- Season 1975/76 Die sieben Todsünden
- Season 1976/77 Blaubart. Beim Anhören einer Tonbandaufnahme von Béla Bartóks
Oper »Herzog Blaubarts Burg«
- Season 1976/77 Komm tanz mit mir
- Season 1977/78 Renate wandert aus
- Season 1977/78 Er nimmt sie an der Hand und führt sie in das Schloß, die anderen
folgen
- Season 1978/79 Kontakthof
- Season 1978/79 Arien

- Season 1979/80 Keuschheitslegende
- Season 1981/82 Walzer
- Season 1983/84 Auf dem Gebirge hat man ein Geschrei gehört
- Season 1984/85 Two Cigarettes in the Dark
- Season 1986/87 Ahnen
- Season 1997/98 Herzog Blaubarts Burg

Took over roles in the following pieces by Pina Bausch

- 1980 – Ein Stück von Pina Bausch
- Ein Trauerspiel

Rehearsal management at the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch

- 2000 - 2008 Das Frühlingsopfer
- 2001 - 2020 Die sieben Todsünden
- 2001 -2010 Komm tanz mit mir
- 2017 and 2019 Arien
- 2019 Er nimmt sie an der Hand und führt sie in das Schloß, die anderen folgen
- 2021 Kontakthof
- 2022 Orpheus und Eurydike

Rehearsal management for rehearsals with other ensembles

- 1997 -2017 Das Frühlingsopfer mit dem Ballett der Pariser Oper
- 2000 Kontakthof. Mit Damen und Herren ab „65“ in Wuppertal
- 2005 - 2018 Orpheus und Eurydike mit dem Ballett der Pariser Oper
- 2008 Kontakthof. Mit Teenagern ab „14“ in Wuppertal
- 2013 Wind von West and Der Zweite Frühling with students of Folkwang Universität der Künste (Essen) and of Juilliard School (New York)
- 2017 and 2019 Das Frühlingsopfer mit dem English National Ballet
- 2020 and 2021 Rite of Spring with a specially assembled ensemble of 38 dancers from 14 African countries at the École des Sables (Senegal)
- 2022 Auf dem Gebirge hat man ein Geschrei gehört with the ballet ensemble of Opéra de Lyon
- 2022 Kontakthof with the ballet of Opéra de Paris

Books by Jo Ann Endicott

- 1999 Ich bin eine anständige Frau
- 2009 Warten auf Pina
- 2015 Chez.Pina.Bausch.de

Movies with Jo Ann Endicott

- 1972 Don Quichotte von Rudolf Nurejew und Robert Helpmann

- 2005 Voyages of Josephine von Catherine Berge
- 2010 Warten auf Pina Dokumentarfilm von Birgit Adler-Conrad
- 2010 Tanzträume Dokumentarfilm von Anne Linsel
- 2011 Pina von Wim Wenders
- 2019 Mein Tanz mit Pina von Birgit Adler-Conrad
- 2022 Dancing Pina Dokumentarfilm von Florian Heinzen-Ziob

Prizes and honors

- 2008 Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres.
- 2010 Enno und Krista Springmann Preis
- 2012 Officier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres
- 2023 Deutscher Tanzpreis

Other activities

- 2002 Jo Ann Endicott conceives her own one-woman show Gala for one
- 2013 Jo Ann Endicott works, assists and dances in the art project Carmina Burana with 70 mentally handicapped people from the Laufenmühle in Welsheim and 70 students of the Albertville Realschule and the Janusz-Korczak Förderschule Welsheim-Winnenden (choreography Roysten Maldoon/Wolfgang Stange).
- workshops in Germany, Italy and France, among others.

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Further information about Jo Ann Endicott:

https://www.pinabausch.org/de/id/josephine_ann_endicott

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