

Press release

Gert Weigelt receives the German Dance Award 2019

Jo Parkes and Isabelle Schad are honoured for their outstanding artistic developments

Essen, 5 April 2019

The German Dance Award – the highest distinction in the field of dance in Germany – will be presented once again in autumn.

The German Dance Award honours outstanding personalities on the German dance scene – regardless of whether they have been or are making dance-related contributions on stage or behind the scenes, in education, journalism, science or other areas of dance. The award also honours performers, ensembles and projects in the dance sector for future-oriented initiatives, exemplary concepts or extraordinary productions.

The 2019 jury selected the awardees on 28 January. Photographer Gert Weigelt will receive the German Dance Award 2019, which includes prize money of 20,000 euros. In the 70s and 80s, his photos contributed to the journalistic breakthrough of German dance theatre and continue to reflect the stylings of the choreographer and the expressiveness of the dancers in an ideal light to this day. The works of dance and video artist Jo Parkes and dancer and choreographer Isabelle Schad will each be awarded 5,000 euros for significant developments in contemporary dance.

The award ceremony will take place on Saturday, 19 October, at 6 p.m. in Essen's Aalto Theatre during a top-class gala, under the auspices of the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland for the second time. On this day, North Rhine-Westphalia will once again be the meeting place for dance in Germany and Europe. The award ceremony gala will present the diversity of the local dance scene, from contemporary ballet to contemporary free dance, making reference to the works of the awardees.

For the second time, the German Dance Award will be presented by the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland as the national voice for artistic dance, in close collaboration with former sponsor Förderverein Tanzkunst Deutschland as well as the Deutscher Berufsverband für Tanzpädagogik and the Theater und Philharmonie Essen GmbH, jointly funded by the City of Essen, the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Federal Government. As in previous years, Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert, former President of the Bundestag, will act as the patron of the German Dance Award.

The independent jury was appointed in 2018 by the main sponsor and the additional public sponsors. It considered a number of proposals submitted by numerous associations, their members and dance institutions. An advisory board, consisting of representatives of the public sponsors, the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland, the Deutscher Berufsverband für Tanzpädagogik and the Theater und Philharmonie Essen GmbH, supports the development of the Deutscher Tanzpreises. The advisory board discusses the concept and the further development of the German Dance Award and appoints the jury.

The awardees

Excerpts from the statements by the proposers and the Dance Award jury

Gert Weigelt receives the German Dance Award 2019

Gert Weigelt has dedicated his life to dance. As a dancer, he worked with choreographers such as Hans van Manen, Jerome Robbins, Jiří Kylián, Kurt Jooss, Glen Tetley and Birgit Cullberg.

Following his dance career and his artistic photography studies, he accompanied the outstanding choreographers of our time, such as Pina Bausch, Hans van Manen, Maurice Béjart, Susanne Linke, William Forsythe, Gerhard Bohner and Martin Schläpfer, with his camera.

Weigelt's works are not only documents of dance, they are works of art in their own right. They reveal external form and internal movement. They are a celebration of movement and the body. Furthermore, they are a celebration of dance, which always offers new perspectives and makes the hidden and undiscovered visible to us. At the moment portrayed in the image, the stage, the photographer and the camera seem to have become one to capture the soul of dance – for an instant.

Weigelt's works have paved the way for the ephemeral art form of dance to enter the world of journalism and the media, and therefore also the digital world. He places the dancers at the centre of his works, portraying those who create dance – with their elegance and passion, their grace and energy, with sex appeal and precision.

Isabelle Schad receives an award for outstanding artistic developments in contemporary dance

Dancer and choreographer Isabelle Schad studied classical dance in Stuttgart and has danced for numerous choreographers. Since 1999 she has been producing her own choreographic works at the interface between dance, performance and visual arts.

Isabelle Schad explores the body. The search for internal impulses of movement, for that which moves in the body, forms the starting point of her choreographies. This means that the body is not simply a tool to create choreographic figures or a certain expression but rather undergoes continuous metamorphoses, is observed and brought into play again and again. Her dance and the bodies of her dancers seek less to create a fixed image or a clear form of expression than to help us to experience how movements turn into art. And when these processes are applied to the dancers, completely new forms of collective work emerge.

This particular creative process has had a decisive influence on contemporary dance in recent decades. Isabelle Schad's works are outstanding examples of this.

Jo Parkes receives an award for outstanding artistic developments in social and participatory dance projects

Jo Parkes is a dance and video artist. For 17 years she has been initiating and leading participatory dance projects (community dance) and innovative art projects with participants from very different social and cultural backgrounds. JUNCTION, a dance and video workshop programme in four Berlin refugee accommodation centres, was also created in this manner.

Motivated by the conviction that everyone has a right to participate in art and especially in contemporary dance, and that dance offers an area of experience in which individual as well as social

issues can be processed and shaped on an aesthetic and expressive level, she has worked with various groups, especially those that are socially and politically disadvantaged and neglected.

In an extraordinarily impressive way, Jo Parkes' artistic projects convey how dance can affect our society. They exemplify many developments in community dance in Germany and the social commitment of the protagonists of dance.

Dance gala and symposium

As has been the hallmark of the award in recent decades, the German Dance Award gala will focus on the artistic contributions, making reference to the work of the awardees, and will offer the audience a multifaceted programme featuring international guests.

The Dachverband Tanz Deutschland will host a symposium entitled "Positionen: Tanz" ("Positions: Dance") on 18/19 October at PACT Zollverein to run alongside the event.

Details of the programme for the dance gala will be announced in early summer. Ticket sales will begin on 8 April 2019 at the ticket offices of Theater und Philharmonie Essen GmbH. From 8 – 30 April 2019, an early bird discount of 10% will be offered on tickets for the German Dance Award ceremony (tickets@theater-essen.de / Tel. +49 (0)201/81 22-200).

The German Dance Award

The German Dance Award was first presented in 1983. On the initiative of Ulrich Roehms, a figurehead of the German dance scene, the Deutsche Berufsverband für Tanzpädagogik e.V. (DBfT) used the award to honour individuals who had made outstanding contributions in the field of artistic dance in Germany. From 2004 to 2016, the Förderverein Tanzkunst Deutschland e.V. took over the awarding of the prize and as of 2017, the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland e.V. (DTD) has been responsible for the award, which is presented annually in Roehm's hometown of Essen. Previous awardees include Gret Palucca, Tatjana Gsovsky, John Neumeier, Márcia Haydée, Hans van Manen, Maurice Béjart, Pina Bausch, Gregor Seyffert, William Forsythe, Susanne Linke, Heinz Spoerli, Bertram Müller, Martin Puttke and Nele Hertling.

Biographies of the awardees

Gert Weigelt

Gert Weigelt began his training as a classical stage dancer after graduating high school. He studied in Berlin under Tatjana Gsovsky and then in Copenhagen under Birger Bartholin and Vera Volkova.

From 1967 to 1970 he danced with the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm, then with the Swedish Cullberg Ballet from 1970-1972 and later for the Nederlands Dans Theater from 1972-1975.

During this time he worked with numerous renowned choreographers such as Hans van Manen, Jerome Robbins, Jiří Kylián, Kurt Jooss, Glen Tetley and Birgit Cullberg.



When his dance career ended, Weigelt studied artistic photography at the Fachhochschule für Kunst und Design in Cologne. He quickly established himself as one of the key German dance photographers. He had been chronicling the work of choreographers such as Pina Bausch, Hans van Manen, Maurice Béjart, Susanne Linke, William Forsythe, Gerhard Bohner and Martin Schläpfer since the mid-70s. In the 70s and 80s, his photos contributed to the journalistic breakthrough of German dance theatre. They appeared in dance magazines such as *Das Tanzarchiv*, *Ballett International/tanz*, *Dance Magazine*, in the Friedrich Verlag publishing company's ballet yearbooks and in numerous daily newspapers.

Since 1992, Gert Weigelt has also produced six short dance videos for television, some of which have won awards at festivals. In 1991, his first ballet calendar, *Dance Vision*, was published by the teNeues publishing company. In parallel, teNeues also produced *Pas de Deux* and *Ballett Gala*. The *Dance* calendar became established on the market from 1997 onwards and is still in circulation today. In 2013, calendar publisher Dumont Kalenderverlag published his *Ballett am Rhein* calendar for the first time. More than 150 of his works have been published as postcards (by Art Unlimited and the Gebr. König Postkartenverlag). Since 2003, Gert Weigelt has had his own column in the online dance magazine www.tanznetz.de. Horst Kogler called him a "classicist among dance photographers". In 2014, Weigelt, together with graphic designers Nicolas Markwald and Nina Neusitzer, received the Design Award of the Federal Republic of Germany in the field of Communication Design for a poster series they produced for the *Ballet am Rhein*. Weigelt, Neusitzer and Markwald also repeatedly received the coveted Red Dot Award: Communication Design, the German prize for Communication Design, which is awarded annually by the Design-Zentrum NRW, for other joint projects they completed for the *Ballet am Rhein*.

In addition to his journalistic work, Weigelt also devotes himself to portrait and staged body photography. Unlike his stage photography, for which the main parameters such as action and light are predetermined, his studio work allows him to create his own, autonomous body worlds.

Gert Weigelt has been living and working in Cologne since 1975. He is married to dancer and leading coach for classical dance Sighilt Pahl.

Isabelle Schad

She now conveys ensemble work, the formation of groups – she speaks of "the group's body" – in a process of sharing that recognizes the individual and, moreover, unites the political and spiritual in a unique and congenial fashion.

(Irmela Kästner on the occasion of the 2016 Tanzplattform Deutschland)



Dancer and choreographer Isabelle Schad studied classical dance in Stuttgart and worked with numerous choreographers before she began developing her own projects in 1999. Her research focuses on the body and its materiality, explores the relationships between body, choreography, (re)presentation, form and experience and regards physical practice as a place for learning processes, community and political participation. Her projects take place at the interface of dance, performance and visual arts and are shown at festivals, in theatres and museums worldwide, including La Biennale di Venezia – Danza 2016, ImPulsTanz Wien, the Dance in August festival in Berlin, the International Arts Festival Beijing, Moving in November in Helsinki and many more.

Her pieces Collective Jumps, DER BAU, Still Lives and California Roll have each been invited to the Internationale Tanzplattform Deutschland. In 2015 she received the "tanz" magazine Beacon of Hope of the Year award. She was a mentor at the 2007 Tanztage Berlin festival and 2011 DanceWeb and has also been mentoring at the Berlin Performing Arts Programme (PAP) since 2017. For many years, she has been teaching modules for the BA and MA programmes at the HZT in Berlin and for MA programmes in Cologne, Helsinki and Stockholm. She also teaches in workshops and projects all over the world at the invitation of the Goethe-Institut.

In 2003 she founded the "Good Work" international artist network with Bruno Pocheron and Ben Anderson, and since 2006, she has been part of the "Practicable" project, as part of which she implemented the ensemble pieces Glazba and Musik in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

In addition, she collaborates on a continuous basis with Laurent Goldring, with whom she developed the pieces Unturtled #1-4, DER BAU, Collective Jumps and the joint exhibition On Visibility and Amplifications at HAU Hebbel am Ufer.

Schad has been co-director of the Wiesenburg-Halle production site in Berlin-Wedding since 2009 and a practitioner of Shiatsu and Aikido since 2013.

www.isabelle-schad.net

Jo Parkes

Jo Parkes is a freelance dance artist, director and educator (DE/UK). She works in the area of co-creative participative dance, creating installations, events, performances and videos. Jo Parkes' work is socially engaged. She understands co-creative processes as research for collective living: a laboratory in which diverse groups of people investigate themes that interest them.



She is founder and artistic director of Mobile Dance e.V., an organisation that offers art projects at the intersection of artistic and socio-political concerns, including the international video series "Postcards from..." (2009 – 2018). Since 2014, Mobile Dance has been running weekly dance workshops in 5 temporary accommodation centres for refugees in Berlin as part of the JUNCTION project (which Jo Parkes leads together with special educator Barbara Weidner). Jo Parkes guest lectures, speaks and leads workshops internationally.

In 1995, Jo Parkes received a Fulbright scholarship to complete her Master of Fine Arts in Choreography at UCLA. She has a First Class degree in English Literature and Modern Languages from Oxford University. The piece *On Tradition: the young generation* was invited to the Youth Dance Theatre Meeting in 2017, the same year that Jo Parkes was also nominated for the BKM prize for cultural education. She won the Bonnie Bird New Choreography Award (UK) in 2002, Kinder zum Olymp (with the project *Postcards from Berlin*) in 2009 and a scholarship from the Berlin Senate in 2016.

www.joparkes.com
www.mobile-dance.com

Press conference, Essen 5 April 2019

Mughtar Al-Ghusain

(Head of Cultural Affairs, City of Essen)

Prof. Martin Puttke

(Chairman of the German Dance Award jury)

Michael Freundt

(Director of the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland)

The awardees will also attend this event

Main sponsor

Dachverband Tanz Deutschland e.V.

Nationwide association for artistic dance, supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media

Patron

Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert

Former President of the German Bundestag

Advisory board

City of Essen

State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media

Dachverband Tanz Deutschland

Deutscher Berufsverband für Tanzpädagogik

Theater und Philharmonie Essen GmbH

Personalities of culture and public life

Jury

Prof. Nik Haffner

(Artistic Director, Inter-University Centre for Dance, Berlin)

Kathleen McNurney

(Artistic Director, Tanz Luzern)

Tim Plegge

(Ballet Director, Staatstheater Wiesbaden)

Brit Rodemund

(Dancer)

Prof. Dr. Patrick Primavesi

(Dance and theatre scholar, University of Leipzig)

Prof. Martin Puttke – Chairman of the Jury

(Dance instructor, Ballet Director at the Aalto Theater in Essen from 1995-2008)

Gisela Peters-Rohse

(Dance instructor)

Helena Waldmann

(Freelance choreographer)

Dates and events

"Positionen: Tanz" ("Positions: Dance") symposium

Friday, 18 October, 11.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m./Saturday, 19 October, 11.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

Award ceremony for Isabelle Schad and Jo Parkes

Friday, 18 October, 6.00 p.m.

PACT Zollverein Essen

Award ceremony dance gala

Saturday, 19 October, 6.00 p.m.

Aalto-Theater Essen

Tickets

www.theater-essen.de

Additional information: www.deutschertanzpreis.de

Press contact

Dachverband Tanz Deutschland

Mariannenplatz 2, 10997 Berlin, Germany

Claudia Holthausen

Tel. +49 (0)151 / 191 555 0

Alexa Junge / Michael Freundt

Tel. +49 (0)30 / 37 44 33 92 // Tel. +49 (0)163 / 2616 343

presse.tanzpreis@dachverband-tanz.de