

PRESS RELEASE: 28 APRIL 2021

Heide-Marie Härtel, Artistic Director of the German Dance Institute Bremen, wins the German Dance Award 2021

The German Dance Award – the highest distinction in the field of dance in Germany – will be presented on Saturday, 23 October 2021, at the Aalto Theatre in Essen.

The German Dance Award 2021 goes to Heide-Marie Härtel, Artistic Director of the German Dance Institute Bremen. Dance educator Ursula Borrmann and choreographer Claire Cunningham will be honoured for outstanding developments in dance, while former dancer Adil Laraki will be distinguished as an outstanding performer for his dedication to shaping cultural-policy and his social commitment.

On 12 March 2021, the jury of the German Dance Award selected the laureate and honourees for the year 2021. **Heide-Marie Härtel** will receive the **German Dance Award 2021**, which includes prize money of 20,000 euros.

"Having trained as a classical dancer and initially having worked as a dancer with Johann Kresnik's dance theatre, Härtel's life is characterized by changing perspectives and clear positions. Once she took up a camera and turned from a dancer into an observer, the perspectives of the artist and the political being were merged. Through her work, Härtel has created an enormous treasury drawing on the past and present of dance as a source of knowledge, attitudes and inspiration for dance artists and dance filmmakers – foundations from which contemporary artistic and media developments can leap into the digital age." (excerpt from the jury statement)

Since 1983, the German Dance Award has honoured outstanding personalities on the German dance scene – regardless of whether they are contributing to dance on stage or behind the scenes, or in the fields of education, journalism, science or other areas related to dance. The award also honours performers, ensembles and projects in the dance sector for future-oriented initiatives, exemplary concepts or extraordinary productions.

The award ceremony will take place on Saturday, 23 October, 6 p.m. in Essen's Aalto Theatre as part of a dance gala. The programme, featuring contributions from internationally renowned ensembles and solo artists, ranges from classical ballet to contemporary dance. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not yet clear whether the event can take place with an audience. The Dachverband Tanz Deutschland will therefore also make the event available **as a live stream and video on demand service** (www.deutschertanzpreis.de).

Ballet and dance educator **Ursula Borrmann** will also be **honoured** at the event for **outstanding developments in dance**. In her many years of tireless work, Ursula Borrmann has contributed extraordinarily to developing the quality of classical dance. The Borrmann-Methodik® (Borrmann Methodology) has helped many schools of artistic dance to offer systematic, continuous and responsible training from the initial preparatory exercises to the most demanding forms of classical dance and thus pave the way to a professional career for their students.

Furthermore, British choreographer and dancer **Claire Cunningham** will be **honoured** for her **outstanding artistic development in dance**. "Claire Cunningham's work is exemplary for the work of other pioneers towards a future featuring physical diversity in dance and society. This development, which urgently requires more support and appreciation in Germany, is further promoted by Claire Cunningham by virtue of her impressive stage presence, artistic consistency and humour." (excerpt from the jury statement)

Former dancer **Adil Laraki** will be **honoured as an outstanding performer**. "Laraki drives progress by improving the rights of artists and all employees of German theatres through his unionist, cultural policy and social engagement – and he does so with a great deal of humour and unique skill. You could say that the status of the performers in our theatres is being preserved by a dancer doing what he does best." (excerpt from the jury statement)

Each of these awards includes prize money of 5,000 euros.

Detailed information on the awardees – jury statements and biographies – can be found at **www.deutschertanzpreis.de**.

The German Dance Award is funded by the city of Essen, the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North-Rhine Westphalia and the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.

The Dachverband Tanz Deutschland will host the **symposium "POSITIONS: DANCE #4 Creating Access – Diversity"** from 21-23 October 2021 at PACT Zollverein in Essen to run alongside the event. Up-to-date information will be published promptly at www.deutschertanzpreis.de.

The Dachverband Tanz Deutschland e.V. is the nationwide platform for artistic dance – here, dance associations, important institutions and outstanding personalities speak with one voice. As the sponsor of the German Dance Award, the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland collaborates with the Aalto Theatre in Essen and works closely with the German Professional Association for Dance Education (DBFT) and the Federal German Ballet and Dance Theatre Directors Conference (BBTK).

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