

# DEUTSCHER TANZPREIS

**GERMAN DANCE AWARD 2021**

**HEIDE-MARIE HÄRTEL**



*Heide-Marie Härtel © Eva Radünzel*

## **Jury Statement GERMAN DANCE AWARD 2021**

The founder and director of the German Dance Film Institute in Bremen is known for her strong stances and introducing touching imagery to the world of dance. Her life's work is associated with a globally outstanding institution and the impulse to capture dance through the medium of film and to give it new life.

Through her own documentaries and the tens of thousands of films and videos preserved by the Dance Film Institute, Heide-Marie Härtel has made an extraordinary contribution to the intangible cultural heritage of dance and the development of contemporary dance, as if artistic developments are not

documented, dance loses its history and political context. For dance can and must push off from this ground and leap into the future – time and again.

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. During her training and while dancing with the company, she questioned artistic developments, political attitudes, and the general conditions of theatre. 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. The aim is to unveil dance theatre not only as an ephemeral art, but also as a political movement. A committed dance networker in Bremen and throughout the country, she has become synonymous with the concept of dance film as a form of politics on behalf of dance.

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.

## Biography

Heide-Marie Härtel (\* Saarbrücken, 26 July 1950) is a German dancer, camerawoman, film director, media archivist and artistic director of the German Dance Film Institute in Bremen.

Härtel left Johann Kresnik's dance company at the Bremen Theatre in 1978, thus ending her career as a trained ballet dancer. She then studied cultural studies at the University of Bremen, while familiarizing herself with the technology and methodology of filming. In 1979 she took over the video support section of the dance division at the Bremen Theatre, which was headed by Reinhild Hoffmann and Gerhard Bohner. She founded the German Dance Film Institute Bremen, a non-profit organisation, with Susanne Schlicher in 1988/89 and remains on as artistic director today. From 1992 onwards, she travelled throughout Europe and to other continents on behalf of the Goethe Institut to give lectures on the history and present of German dance theatre. The first 90-minute tele-dance journal was broadcast on 3sat that same year, for which she received a special mention at the "Grand Prix International Video Danse" a year later. She started her career as a "chronicler" of the German dance scene – classic and contemporary – with simple means. Härtel works in the areas of direction, camera, production for NDR, ZDF, arte and the theatre channel as well as for dance companies and cultural institutions throughout the country.

Heide-Marie Härtel initiated and headed the EU project "Terpsychore" (1999–2002) to establish a European archive network to save Europe's audiovisual dance heritage. From 2004 to 2007 she developed the "Dance on Demand" project – an audiovisual dance portal featuring some 400 texts, 100 films and 3,000 photos – in collaboration with the University of Bremen on behalf of the National Library Singapore, the Goethe Institut and the Federal Cultural Foundation. She is co-founder of the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland e. V., based in Berlin, and became a board member in 2010. Together with other archives, she founded the Association of German Dance Archives (VDT) in 2007.

The German Dance Film Institute Bremen was established itself in the Forum am Wall building in 2004. The German Dance Film Institute houses a media archive with a material stock of about 40,000 storage media using various analogue and digital recording standards. The main collection areas are the result of production activities focusing on the history of German dance theatre with Johann Kresnik, Reinhild Hoffmann, Susanne Linke, and Pina Bausch and their successors as well as classical ballet with works by John Cranko, John Neumeier and the choreographers of the major state theatre ensembles. The German Dance Film Institute Bremen has been restoring and digitizing extensive video inventories, featuring the works of well-known choreographers as well as archive collections from major ballet companies since 2006.

[www.deutsches-tanzfilminstitut.de](http://www.deutsches-tanzfilminstitut.de)

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