DEUTSCHER TANZPREIS

Tadashi Endo

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

as part of the German Dance Award 2026

Jury statement

Tadashi Endo's life is deeply connected with Butoh dance. Tadashi Endo is a great master of this dance. Butoh is expressive dance, radical and expressive, and was founded in Japan in the 1950s by Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno. Butoh is not limited to fixed forms or techniques, but emphasises the emotional connection of the dancer with his body and the world that arises in the moment of the dance.

After studying at the Max Reinhard Seminar in Vienna, Tadashi Endo worked at various German theatres. However, he soon began to search for freedom in theatre creation, which he finally found in his encounter with Kazuo Ono.

MA is "the emptiness", "that between things", an "in between", which Tadashi Endo makes visible in very subtle transformations and which he radiates with extreme concentration and body control. All of this turns his dance into a representation of motionless movement. His body is at rest even though he is dancing. He does not dance - he is danced.

As artificial as his dance is, Tadashi Endo is closely connected to the world we live in. His pieces deal with the pandemic, war and drowning people in the Mediterranean. They are about the search for the soul of humanity, about human solidarity, about the path to a great community.

Tadashi Endo has brought this message of the strength and fragility of humanity to the dance, theatre and opera stages. In Germany, he became known to a large audience in ‘Kirschblüten-Hanami’ by Doris Dörrie.

Tadashi Endo is a great master and teacher of Butoh. With his MAMU Festival and the Butoh Centrum MAMU, dance has found space and perception, a home and a centre in Germany. From here, he has inspired dancers in Germany and Europe and brought his art to the world.

For this outstanding contribution to the dance scene, the jury of the German Dance Award will posthumously honour Tadashi Endo with the Lifetime Achievement Award.