DEUTSCHER TANZPREIS

Dachverband Tanz Deutschland

Berlin/Essen, 23 June 2026

GERMAN DANCE AWARD 2027

Choreographer Rafaële Giovanola receives The German Dance Award 2027.

Choreographer Martin Schläpfer is honoured for his Lifetime Achievement.

Dancer and choreographer Joy Alpuerto Ritter is honoured as Outstanding Performer 2027.

The German Dance Award honours outstanding figures in the world of dance in Germany. In the spring, the jury selected the 2027 award winners.
The German Dance Award and the honours will be presented on Saturday, 13 March 2027 at the Aalto Theatre in Essen as part of a dance gala.

The jury of the German Dance Award (chaired by Dr Adriana Almeida Pees) has selected the winner and the honourees from numerous nominations submitted by associations, institutions and dance professionals.
The German Dance Award and the honours come with a cash prize. The exact amount of the awards is currently still being finalised in consultation with funding bodies and sponsors. We look forward to announcing further details before the awards ceremony.

FROM THE JURY STATEMENTS

The jury celebrates Rafaële Giovanola not only for her outstanding body of work, but also for her enduring influence on contemporary dance. Her artistic legacy continues to inspire future generations and enrich the field with imagination, rigor, and originality.
Das The jury is delighted to award the German Dance Prize to Rafaële Giovanola in recognition of 25 years of exceptional artistic achievement and her pioneering contribution to contemporary dance.
Her extraordinary stamina in observing and exploring a single topic is what makes her work unmistakable. Her relentless curiosity and ability to merge unfamiliar movement practices give rise to kaleidoscopic creatures: figures that exist between human and insect, plant and avatar, or machine—magical beings unlike any seen before. She is at home in the search for a body that does not yet exist.

The jury of the German Dance Prize honours Martin Schläpfer with the Honour for Lifetime Achievement.
Dancer, teacher, choreographer, ballet director – Martin Schläpfer has dedicated his life to dance. For decades, Martin Schläpfer has brought his creations to the stage almost without respite. His choreographic oeuvre comprises over 80 works created for his ensembles.
When he stepped down as director of the Vienna State Ballet in June 2025, Martin Schläpfer could look back on 50 years of dance work, including 31 consecutive seasons as ballet director. The Swiss-born artist has shaped and transformed the dance and ballet landscape in Germany in an extraordinary way – both in terms of artistic development and institutional structures.

Joy Alpuerto Ritter is to receive the Honour as Outstanding Performer 2027 .
Born in Los Angeles, raised in Freiburg, and accompanied there by cultural practices such as traditional Filipino folk dance on her mother's side, the dancer transcends stylistic boundaries.
Joy Alpuerto Ritter is a boundary-crosser who effortlessly moves between genres, stages, and spheres of activity – commenting on them, serving them, or merging them – always with her own signature: a powerful lightness.
With great appreciation for her work, the jury of the German Dance Award 2027 therefore honours Joy Alpuerto Ritter in the category "Outstanding Performer."

AWARDS CEREMONY AND DANCE GALA

The awards ceremony will take place as part of a dance gala on Saturday, 13 March 2027 at 7.00 pm at the Aalto Theatre in Essen.

Advance ticket sales for the event via the Ticket Centre of the Theatres and Philharmonie Essen will begin in September.

The detailed programme for the dance gala will be published in autumn 2026. The event will be interpreted into German Sign Language.

INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

The German Dance Prize is sponsored by the City of Essen, the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Essen Cultural Foundation and the Norbert Lammert Foundation, as well as other donors and sponsors.

Detailed information on the Award winner and the honourees – the jury's statements and biographies – can be found at: **www.deutschertanzpreis.de/presse**

Press photos can be downloaded **directly here**
The photos may be used free of charge for reporting purposes, provided the respective photographer is credited.

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