

## Festival Portrait

### 1. The euro-scene Leipzig

The festival euro-scene Leipzig was founded in 1991 and takes place each November. It brings experimental theatre and innovative dance throughout Europe to Leipzig and belongs to the cultural highlights of the city. The euro-scene Leipzig is the only festival of contemporary European theatre and modern dance in the five new German states and belongs to the most-important festivals of its kind in Europe.

The euro-scene Leipzig shows the latest trends in the European dance and theatre scene and presents on average 12 guest plays with altogether about 25 presentations from 10 countries in about 8 different venues. These include the theatre stages of Schauspiel and Oper as well as the free scene and unusual, newly discovered places. The duration of the festival is 6 days (Tuesday to Sunday). From 1993 – 2020 the programming lay in the hands of Ann-Elisabeth Wolff in collaboration with the Artistic Advisory Council. From 2021 on Christian Watty will take over the directorship of euro-scene Leipzig.

In addition to the audience from Leipzig, more and more spectators come from the environs, from other German cities and from abroad. Furthermore, the festival constitutes a fixed meeting place for national and international colleagues.

### 2. Programme selection

Important criteria for selection include: high degree of professionalism, international quality, innovation, extremely individual and artistic handwriting, courage for aesthetic experimentation. The euro-scene Leipzig tracks down new trends and supports time-related and social topics; it is the hub between eastern and western Europe and it crosses genre boundaries. Above all, productions should be moving, exciting and stirring, they should provide food for thought and discussion.

Thereby the festival programme is composed of »big names« – directors and choreographers who have »made it« on the international theatre and dance scene – as well as young companies waiting to be discovered and promoted. Own artistic forces living in this city are selectively included into the international events. The competition »Das beste deutsche Tanzsolo« (»Best German dance solo«) in the conception of the important Flemish choreographer Alain Platel, Ghent/Belgium, has developed to one of the festival highlights. This competition takes place biannually since 1997 on the now almost legendary, round table with 7 meters in diameter.

For many years now, the euro-scene Leipzig has chosen a motto or theme in order to concentrate guest performances and avoid becoming an »all-sorts« shop. Examples of titles include: »Herbstzeitlose« (»Autumn crocus«, 2012), »Schwarze Milch« (»Black milk«, 2013) and »Transit« (2014). In 2015 euro-scene Leipzig went without a motto because of its anniversary. Instead the festival took place under the title »25 years – a celebration«. Then »Doch bin ich nirgend, ach! zu Haus« (»But nowhere am I – alas! – at home«) followed in 2016; the motto was based on the title of a play by Nikolaus Habjan, Vienna, who was presented in a showcase. In 2017 the motto was »Ausgrabungen« (»Excavations«), 2018 »Bühnen – Klang – Welten« (»Stage – Sound – Worlds«), 2019 »Parallelwelten« (»Parallel worlds«) and 2020 »Alles nicht wahr« (»It simply ain't so«). The festival is completed by a fringe programme of talks, workshops and films.

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival was supposed to take place from 03. – 08. Nov. 2020 under the motto »Alles nicht wahr« (»It simply ain't so«). Unfortunately, the festival had to be cancelled completely just before its planned opening. This was due to a decree by the federal government to prohibit all events from 02. Nov. 2020 because of the rapidly increasing number of Covid-19 infections. A subsequent appreciation of the 30 years of euro-scene Leipzig by Burkhard Jung, Mayor of the City of Leipzig, will take place on 20. and 21. Sept. 2021 – linked with a guest performance by Nikolaus Habjan, Vienna.

### 3. Structure, Team and Budget

The euro-scene Leipzig is organised by the Sächsischer Verein zur Förderung des kulturellen Austauschs nationaler und internationaler Tanz- und Theatergruppen e. V. (Saxon Association for the promotion of cultural exchange between national and international dance and theatre groups). The team consists of three permanent staff members (Managing and Artistic Director, Administrative Management and Management Assistant/Coordination) and several temporary, paid employees (technical direction, press and public relations, advertising, graphic design).

The festival is financed by the City of Leipzig and the Cultural Foundation of the Free State of Saxony. In addition some guest performances are supported by foundations and cultural representatives like embassies. The euro-scene Leipzig is searching for new partners. Cultural partners are MDR Kultur and ARTE.

### 4. Networking

The national and international contacts are exceptionally manifold. Since 1992 the festival has been member of the IETM (International network for contemporary performing arts), head office in Brussels, as the most important network for free theatre in Europe with about 450 members and renders important public relations and representation for the city of Leipzig, the Free State of Saxony and the new German states.

Further on, the euro-scene Leipzig is an active member of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), Paris – Center of the Federal Republic of Germany, Berlin.

Since 2002, the euro-scene Leipzig has been one of the current 11 co-producers of the Tanzplattform Deutschland (Dance Platform Germany) – together with institutions in Berlin, Dresden, Dusseldorf, Essen, Frankfurt/Main, Hamburg, Hanover, Munich, Nuremberg and Stuttgart – as the most important festival of innovative dance in Germany. The Tanzplattform Deutschland is an event of international significance and is organised every two years in another city.

Due to the high reputation of the euro-scene Leipzig, the Sächsischer Verein zur Förderung des kulturellen Austauschs nationaler und internationaler Tanz- und Theatergruppen e. V. (Saxon Association for the promotion of cultural exchange between national and international dance and theatre groups) was assigned the organisation and staging of the Tanzplattform Deutschland in 2002. Under the project direction of Ann-Elisabeth Wolff and co-direction of Michael Freundt, a colleague who had been with the euro-scene Leipzig for many years, it was the first time that a dance platform was held in the new German states. More than 350 organisers and journalists from all over the world as well as 35 representatives of the Goethe Institutes came to Leipzig from 06. – 10.02.2002, and experienced 24 choreographies in about 45 performances.

### 5. Artistic Advisory Council

In 1995 an artistic advisory council was founded consisting of internationally known experts for contemporary theatre. The members have advisory capacity and represent the festival internationally. Until 2020 inclusive the council consisted of the following members:

\ Dr. Brigitte Fürle	Artistic Director – Festspielhaus St. Pölten
\ Prof. Jason Beechey	Rector – Palucca Hochschule für Tanz Dresden
\ Thomas Hahn	Journalist, Paris
\ Axel Tangerding	Artistic Director – Meta Theater, Munich
\ Christian Watty	Consultant – internationale tanzmesse nrw, Dusseldorf

Ann-Elisabeth Wolff  
Managing Director and Artistic Director

Leipzig, 11.12.2020