

PRESS RELEASE

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TANZ IM AUGUST 2008

From August 15 to 31 this year, Germany's biggest dance festival is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a top-notch program including five outstanding works from internationally renowned choreographers.

Over the last twenty years, TANZ IM AUGUST has established a reputation for inviting both lavish productions by well-known companies and experimental works that redefine the limits of dance. The festival's organizers TanzWerkstatt Berlin and Hebbel am Ufer have continued this tradition of diversity by putting together a program that runs the gamut from ballet to urban dance.

Among the highlights TANZ IM AUGUST is presenting this year are pieces by British artist AKRAM KHAN, OLIVIER DUBOIS from France, and Dresden's SemperOper Ballet, with works by WILLIAM FORSYTHE, DAVID DAWSON, PASCAL TOUZEAU and JOHAN INGER – all internationally renowned choreographers working in the field of contemporary ballet.

AKRAM KHAN's new piece *Bahok* is a co-production of Khan's ensemble with the National Ballet of China. An international company of nine dancers from widely divergent cultural, social and professional backgrounds come together on stage to create a modern-day version of the Tower of Babel.

As the name suggests, the point of departure for OLIVIER DUBOIS's new production *Faune(s)* is *L'après-midi d'un faune*, the ground-breaking ballet that caused a scandal when it premiered in 1912. In addition to Dubois's own reinterpretation, *Faune(s)* includes versions – one might say (re)visions – of the original choreography by Dominique Brun and Sophie Perez, among others, as well as a medial interpretation by French filmmaker Christophe Honoré.

The Dresden SemperOper Ballet's *Dreamlands* features four works that take on the classical legacy in fresh, new ways and place it in a contemporary context. Audiences can look forward *The Second Detail*, a piece charged with energy that reveals the very essence of WILLIAM FORSYTHE's work, and the highly-acclaimed *The Grey Area* by Dresden's house choreographer DAVID DAWSON. PASCAL TOUZEAU highlights non-verbal communication in all its diversity and depth in *No Thumb*, and the entire stage pulsates with the clearly defined movements and expressive elasticity of JOHAN INGER's *Empty House*.

Another focus of TANZ IM AUGUST 2008 is Urban Dance, a form of artistic expression rarely represented on stages and at dance festivals in Germany. Its protagonists compete against their rivals in so-called "battles," in which they show off their virtuosity and the complex vocabulary of movement Urban Dance has developed using Hip Hop as a musical foil.

For its anniversary edition, TANZ IM AUGUST has invited a number of productions that celebrate new forms of movement in the 21st century urban landscape. MEMBROS COMPANHIA DE DANCA from Brazil is presenting the German premiere of a choreography by Tais Viera, whose work aims to show alternatives to violence and destruction: Titled *Febre*, the street dance piece revolves around the theme of violence and its symbolic significance. The performance is a unique opportunity for representatives of the urban dance scenes in Brazil and Berlin to exchange ideas on artistic approaches, shared experiences and the social context in which they work.

This year's festival audience can also look forward to highlights such as performances by BORIS CHARMATZ (Paris), BALLETT DE LORRAINE (Nancy), VA WÖLFL / NEUER TANZ (Düsseldorf), DAVE ST-PIERRE (Montréal), and TRISHA BROWN COMPANY (New York), and to discovering new productions by HIROAKI UMEDA (Tokyo), LES SLOVAKS DANCE COLLECTIVE (Brussels), LES STUDIOS KABAKO (Kisangani, Democratic Republic of Congo), among others.

In addition to the performances presented in the program, this year's festival also offers classes and workshops for dance professionals, and of course the popular sommer.bar at Podewil, which will feature numerous accompanying events, as well.

In addition to the Podewil and the three stages at Hebbel am Ufer, HAU 1-3, this year's TANZ IM AUGUST venues will include HALLE, Haus der Berliner Festspiele, RADIALSYSTEM V, Sophiensale and Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz.

The complete program for the 20th edition of TANZ IM AUGUST will be presented at our press conference on June 25, 2008; details about the press conference will be made available at a later date.

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