

Tanz Münster 2022/23

Introduced by Artistic Director and Head Choreographer Lillian Stillwell
Press Conference 3.5.2022, Theater Münster (translated from German)

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

As you have already heard, my first language is English.

My second – like the wonderful dancer, Enrique, in the video behind me - is dance.

My third is German.

Talking about dance is difficult.

That is why I would like to start with the words of the American writer Eve Ensler.

“Dance is dangerous, joyful, sexual, holy, disruptive, contagious and breaks the rules. Dance can happen anywhere, anytime, with anyone and everyone and it’s free. Dance joins us.”

Dance connects us with ourselves, with each other, with our communities and with the bigger issues in the world.

In the pandemic we have become accustomed to such images as the one you’ve just seen: a single dancer, all alone, without an audience.

Our longing for closeness and togetherness, for direct, honest encounters, has grown stronger through the last years.

The group has an increased importance.

I will not mention all of the projects in our first season.

You can read about them in the book you are holding.

And I chose not to have an overview of the season on the projection behind me for a reason.

It is more important to me that you understand what drives me. What my intentions are.

The group.

The collective.

The community.

The community is the protagonist of our first dance season.

My first dance evening for Tanz Münster, **FURIEN**, takes its inspiration from the third book of the Orestie trilogy by Aeschylus.

The furies themselves are a wild pack of revenge-seeking punks, a collective that is transformed through their confrontation with a cosmic force, the goddess Athena.

The theme of collective transformation seems to me to be highly relevant today. We find ourselves in the midst of an enormous social transformation.

Who are we now, after a pandemic has torn apart the last few years?

What can we become in the future?

In FURIEN, 12 dancers will move in unison. Over the course of the evening, their movement language evolves from a pulsing, angry, animalistic swarm to a harmonious, gliding corps de ballet.

The music for FURIEN, composed by classically-trained electronic sound designer Randomhype intertwines elements of Baroque musical structures and natural soundscapes. The stage design by Stella Sattler & Jonathan Brüggmann, winning team of Tanz Münster's "Sustainable Dance Stage Competition," uses modular principles to establish new relationships between space, movement and light. The costumes are by Louise Flanagan, who is developing a Costume Collection for Tanz Münster using sustainable fabrics and principles. Tom Ryser, long-term artistic partner to Lillian Stillwell, accompanies the work as a Dramaturg.

In the spring, Tanz Münster will premiere **THE FOUR SEASONS**, a dance evening with orchestra by Paloma Muñoz and Lillian Stillwell with a prologue by James Vu Anh Pham.

With whom is our existence intertwined?

For whom – human, animal, planet – are we responsible?

Who is carrying whom?

Relationships, caretaking and the interconnectedness of the human and natural worlds are central themes. While inspired by the idea of generational contracts, the agreement that different generations will provide economic and social support for each other, the term is extended from its narrowest meaning by considering both historical and contemporary implications of vulnerability for environmental, cultural, and inter-species balance. The choreography of Paloma Muñoz and Lillian Stillwell unite rhythmic precision with physical intimacy: revealed in Muñoz's work through archaic contortions and in Stillwell's in emotional, repetitive rituals. James Vu Anh Pham's choreography will lead the audience from the foyer into the theater with a sensual prologue.

The evening travels through the seasons twice: once with John Cage's "The Seasons" and once with Antonio Vivaldi's famous score. The musical program is rounded out with Kaija Saariaho's violin solo "Nocturne." Once again, the "Sustainable Dance Stage" and the Costume Collection will be seen. GE Patterson, widely published American poet and activist, will accompany the production as a Dramaturg.

The immersive dance evening **AFTERLIFE** will be seen in the summer at a Münster club with live DJ Duo Schwifi. Here the community plays a central role in answering the question:

Is there life after death for those left behind?

Dancers from the Münster's talented freelance dance scene will participate in this production alongside dancers from Tanz Münster.

Dance as a connection to the other disciplines also plays an important role in our first season.

In the production **SILBERLICHT**, Tanz Münster will collaborate with the Young Theater and its director, Angela Merl. A journey through the night in Designer Mayke Hegger's magical room full of lights with dance and baroque music arranged by Johannes Pramsöhler, this dance piece is for the youngest audiences, aged 0 – 2, and takes place in the Ballettsaal of Tanz Münster.

und wenn ich von der zeit spreche spreche von der zeit die schon nicht mehr ist (am rande des rollfelds) is a newly commissioned interdisciplinary work by Austrian author Thomas Köck. In this collaboration between the dance, drama and musical theater departments, Judith Sanchez Ruiz's choreography will integrate the dance company and performers from the other the disciplines in the direction of Mareike Mikat.

Songs of love and war by Moteverdi form the musical foundation for the new interpretation of **MADRIGALE ZUR KRIEG UND LIEBE** by director Tom Ryser and choreographer Annie Hanauer. Choreographer Annie Hanauer, known for her work integrating dancers and movers of all abilities, will create her first work for opera.

It is a great privilege to build a dance company and team. I have had tremendous support from the theater and my colleagues. I look forward to introducing the company to you!

We have twelve dancers.

They are a mixture of dancers who are staying on, those who are coming with us and those who are brand new to us.

Additionally, we have the newly created **Tanz Münster Studio** to support young talent.

We have lightly restructured the team. Dramaturgy is now in the hands of guests.

In the team beside me are:

- Christian Maier as dance company manager and my partner in the organization and strategy of the company. He comes to us from Theater Regensburg Tanz and studied Cultural Management at LMU in München

- Stefanie Fischer as rehearsal and training director and my partner in the studio and in my choreographic work. She just finished her Master's in Teaching and Coaching Professional Dancers in Zürich

- and the dancer Keelan Whitmore, known and loved here in Münster, who will be joining us both as a dancer in THE FOUR SEASONS and in a new role in the team as Coordinator for Dance Outreach and Diversity

In our vision, a special emphasis will be placed on establishing more innovative approaches to dance practice that increase its longevity, sustainability, and accessibility.

That is a big statement. What do we mean concretely?

I'll mention a few of our first initiatives here.

First: the **new format TanzNAH** will bring dance to a wider audience. Dance connects people of all abilities and heritages, is shared between generations, triggers our feelings of wellbeing and is the highpoint in rituals throughout the world. Dance doesn't only take place on stages but everywhere, where people come together to celebrate, grieve, work and relax. TanzNAH (DanceCLOSE) will use a playful and direct style to bring dance to our audiences. In museums, clubs, shop windows, daycare centers and marketplaces, with drag queens, architecture students, at the medical rehab center we will demystify our work by connecting our work to people and institutions in Münster

Secondly: we are establishing a **field of research for sustainability in dance practice**, starting with the prize-winning stage design of the "Sustainable Dance Stage Competition." Initiated in 2021 to seek innovative solutions questions of sustainability in dance practice, the winning set design is by team Stella Sattler & Jonathan Brüggmann. The trained architects have created a modular design that will be used in ever-changing constellations of movement, light, space and music in four dance evenings over two seasons.

In closing I would like to say **what a great honor it is to step into the long and rich dance legacy in Münster.**

Dance is highly valued and enjoys the support of a large audience in Münster.

We look forward to connecting our work with you.

Thank you.