

NEWS

The 2025–2026 season ended with two exciting premieres: **Land of Lakes** at Theater Münster and **Nullpunkt** at the Zurich University of the Arts. In July, I was delighted to receive the annual prize of the Theater Friends of Theater Münster in the category Dance. Dr. Wolfgang Weikert, the society's chairman, delivered the laudatory speech, which you can read in its entirety [here](#).



Land of Lakes

Premiere: April 24, 2026

Kleines Haus | Theater Münster | DE

How do we become who we are? Which traces are left, which are washed away? This work is inspired by music from band WHY NOT from Minnesota, the "Land of 10,000 Lakes."



[Trailer](#)

Nullpunkt

Premiere: July 2, 2026

Theater der Künste | Zürich | CH

Inspired by the number 0, this choreography to a driving electronic score is a study of the power, danger and potential found at Point Zero.

You can find the [full performance as a recorded livestream on Vimeo](#), starting at 1:28.



Since its premiere in February 2026, **DIE SCHWÄNE**, my "Swan Lake" to music by Pjotr I. Tschaikowsky, has been running at over 90 percent capacity. The 17th and final performance on October 11th played to a sold-out audience and was singled out by critic Miguel Schneider in *Die Deutsche Bühne* for successfully reinterpreting a story ballet with a small ensemble.

At Tanz Münster, we're kicking off the 2026–2027 season with two thrilling new productions: **Frankenstein**, premiering on October 30, 2026, and **Raunächte oder Was ihr wollt**, which will premiere on February 7, 2027, also at Theater Münster.

LILLIAN STILLWELL | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER

+41 79 828 2355 | www.lillianstillwell.com | hello@lillianstillwell.com

DIE SCHWÄNE

Lillian Stillwell's Swan Lake to Music by Pjotr I. Tschaikowsky
World Premiere: Sa. 7.2.2026, 19:30 Uhr, Großes Haus, Theater Münster



© Jubal Battisti

It is a dance piece that will be remembered. Not as a 'modernisation', but as a transfer of the classic into the present.
(Miguel Schneider, Die deutsche Bühne)

Lillian Stillwell [...] brings the ballet classic out of feudalism and into the democratic present.
(Hanns Butterhof, tanznetz.de)

We see an ensemble that skillfully alternates between pointe work, turns, high jumps, and individual bursts. [...] A rewarding take at a proven classic. (Sarah Heppekausen, tanz magazine)

Stillwell has a sense of humor and demonstrates skill in reinterpreting classical ballet steps [...] To perform the dance of the little swans to the original music with almost classical yet modernized steps, not as a parody or homage, but as something unique, is quite an achievement. (Edda Breski, Westfälischer Anzeiger)

Stillwell's integration of Ingeborg Bachmann's "Undine departs" into the stage action is more than just literary embellishment. [...] What is striking here is how Stillwell avoids turning the literary element into explanatory theater, instead translating it into rhythm. [...] Stillwell's sharpening of realism radically shifts the power axis of the material. And it explains why the evening not only mentions violence against women and femicide in mere side notes, but confronts them openly.
(Miguel Schneider, Die deutsche Bühne)

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES:

- 15.05., 06.06., 16.06., 01.07., 16.07.
- Revival Season 2026/27: 12.09., 26.09., 03.10., 11.10.

CREATIVE TEAM:

CHOREOGRAPHY, DIRECTION: Lillian Stillwell | MUSICAL DIRECTION: Henning Ehlert | LIBRETTO, DRAMATURGY: Claus Spahn | SET, LIGHT: Ben Baur | COSTUMES: Uta Meenen | LIGHTDESIGN: Meike Parys | DRAMATURGY: Regina Genée | CHOREOGRAPHIC ASSISTANCE: Katelyn Skelley

WITH:

- Tanz Münster
- Sinfonieorchester Münster

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DIE SCHWÄNE

Lillian Stillwell's *Swan Lake* to Music by Pjotr I. Tschaikowsky
World Premiere: Sa. 7.2.2026, 19:30 Uhr, Großes Haus, Theater Münster



With **DIE SCHWÄNE** (The Swans), I am choreographing my first work from the dance canon and will tell the love story from the perspective of the female lead character Odette.

In the libretto by Claus Spahn, long-time Chief Dramaturg at the Zurich Opera House and Librettist for Choreographer Christian Spuck, Odette's character is expanded by integrating Ingeborg Bachmann's story *Undine geht* (1961) into the plot. Our new interpretation also questions the uniformity of the swan world and offers Odette a chance to free herself from the corset of ballet.

The individuality of the dancers in Tanz Münster's diverse ensemble plays a central role in the production. Now in my fourth season in Münster, my choreographic language continues to use ballet as a central point of reference in a contemporary dance context that focuses on diversity, authenticity, and community.

PRODUCTION TEAM:

- Choreography, Direction: Lillian Stillwell
- Musical Direction: Henning Ehlert
- Libretto: Claus Spahn
- Stage Design: Ben Baur
- Light Design: Ben Baur, Meike Parys
- Costume Design: Uta Meenen

CAST:

- Tanz Münster: Arianna Hartanov, Hana Kato, Bartłomiej Kowalczyk, Enrique Sáez Martínez / Sebastiano Villa, Wendel Lima de Alcantara, Juan Fernando Morales Londoño, Enrique Sáez Martínez, Melina Solkidou, Sebastiano Villa, Valerie Yeo
- Tanz Münster Studio: Naho Takeda, Aaron St. Hilaire
- Sinfonieorchester Münster

LES DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

Opera in three acts by Francis Poulenc

Premiere: Sa. 31.01.2026, 18:00 Uhr, Semperoper Dresden

World Premiere: 13.02.2022, Opera Zürich

This production remains a highlight of my long-standing collaboration with Dutch director **Jetske Mijnsen**. Her deeply emotional productions create space for expression through movement. The choreography works within her reduced scenic language to expand and consolidate emotional states of the protagonists to Poulenc's heart-wrenching score.

PRODUCTION TEAM:

- Choreography: Lillian Stillwell
- Stage Direction: Jetske Mijnsen
- Musical Direction: Marie Jaquot
- Set Design: Ben Baur
- Light Design: Franck Evin
- Costume Design: Gideon Davey



© Lillian Stillwell

Season 2024/25 - Retrospective 2/2



EXECUTIVE MASTER OF ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Universität Zürich, 2024

I wrote my thesis, *Dance Programming and Social Sustainability: Is there an 'Ideal Formula' for Institutions?* under Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Elisabeth Bronfen, University of Zurich and Prof. Dr. Christina Thurner, University of Bern. In addition to case study interviews with executives from Ballett Zürich and Ballett Dortmund, my thesis posed the question of whether ballet Swan Lake is the "most sustainable dance of all time."

At the graduation ceremony, I gave a speech on "The Body as a Sustainable Resource."

The dancers move primarily as a group, answering the strong approach taken by the previous works on the program with subtle, careful, nuanced dancing. ("I could be the one") often seems to have a symbolic character, regardless of whether the meaning of the signs is revealed to us. A very enjoyable evening.

*- Markus Hladek, Frankfurter Rundschau,
9.2.2025*



I COULD BE THE ONE, Dance Piece by Lillian Stillwell to Steve Reich's "Proverb", Conservatory for Music and Performing Arts Frankfurt (HfMDK), 2025

INSIDE / OUT, Dance as Physical Intervention in the Museum Space

Initiated by: Lillian Stillwell, Theater Münster and Marianne Wagner,
LWL-Museum für Kunst und Kultur, Münster

Sponsor: Kunststiftung NRW

Season 2024/25 - Retrospective 1/2



A magnificent, complete work of art.
- Bettina Trouwborst, tanz Magazine, 4.2025

A short, fascinating evening of dance that transmits its effect in fascinating pictures and sounds. [...] No wonder the final applause quickly escalated into a resounding march.

- Harald Suerland, Westfälische Nachrichten, 3.2.2025

JEANNE D'ARC, Interdisciplinary Dance Evening with a cappella Chor and Percussion by Lillian Stillwell, Theater Münster, Premiere February 1, 2025

Driven by unseen voices, a 19-year old changed the face of Europe in the 1400s and left a long political and spiritual legacy. This full-evening production for dance, acappella chorus and percussion is choreographed to music from the 20th and 21st century.

The two "worlds" that Stillwell outlines here do not actually exist spatially. Conceptually and dramaturgically, her approach is all the more interesting. The idea of letting death break into the moments of happiness in the club is as difficult to grasp as it is coherent. Death just doesn't ask if the time is right.
- Rico Stehfest, tanznetz.de, 12.10.2024



AFTERLIFE AFTERLOVE AFTERDEATH, Dance Evening with Live DJs by Lillian Stillwell & Tom Ryser, Theater Münster, Premiere October 11, 2024

A dance evening about the here and now and that which lies beyond, AFTERLIFE AFTERLOVE AFTERDEATH is an extended version of the duet AFTERLIFE (2021) by SNOW productions.