

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 15 guest plays with altogether about 25 performances in about 9 different theatre 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 six days (Tuesday to Sunday).

The audience varies from numerous students, over the educated middle class to many notabilities of public life. 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«, the 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 Alain Platel from Ghent/Belgium has developed to one of the festival highlights. This competition takes place biannually since 1997 on the legendary, round table with 7 meters in diameter and is planned in 2013 for the 11th time.

For several 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: »Leibesvisitationen« (»Body search«, 2001), »Wurzeln & Visionen« (»Roots & Visions«, 2002), »Die Liebe – Chance der Unmöglichkeit« (»Love – Chance of impossibility«, 2003), »Das Eigene im Gefüge« (»Framing identity«, 2004), »Wahlverwandtschaften« (»Elective affinities«, 2005), »Konsonanzen – Dissonanzen« (»Consonances – Dissonances«, 2006), »Spaltungen« (»Divisions«, 2007), »Taumelnd auf glatter See« (»Floundering on a calm sea«, 2008), »Sonnenfinsternis« (»Eclipse of the sun«, 2009), »Spurensuche« (»Searching for traces«, 2010) and »Tonstörung« (»Sound disturbance«, 2011). The festival is completed by a supporting programme of talks, workshops and films.

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) and several temporary, paid employees (technical direction, press and public relations, graphics, office).

The total budget is around 680,000.00 Euro for the 21st festival year. This includes all the costs of preparation, organisation and implementation of the festival, as well as theatre company expenses, stage hire, staffing and office expenses, technical equipment hire etc. For an international festival of this size, this is a very modest budget, which is also subjected to cuts every year and which offers no security for planning. The festival is financed by the city of Leipzig and the Free State of Saxony.

The BMW Werk Leipzig has been main partner of the festival since 2004 and extended its contract up to and including 2012. Additionally, it receives support from foundations and cultural/diplomatic missions of a country, e.g. embassies, in conjunction with specific guest performances. Media partner are ZDFkultur und info tv leipzig, cultural partner is MDR Figaro.

4. Networking

The national and international contacts are exceptionally manifold. Since 1992 the festival has been member of the IETM (Informal European Theatre Meeting, 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 ITI (International Theatreinstitute) – German Centre, Berlin.

Since 2002, the euro-scene Leipzig has been one of the nine co-organisers of the Tanzplattform Deutschland (Dance Platform Germany) – together with institutions in Berlin, Dresden, Düsseldorf, 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. 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 February 6-10 2002, and experienced 24 choreographies in about 45 performances.

5. Artistic Advisory Council

In 1995 an artistic advisory council was founded consisting of 5-6 internationally known experts for contemporary theatre. The members have advisory capacity and represent the festival internationally. Since 2006 the council has consisted of the following colleagues:

\ Carena Schlewitt	Director Kaserne Basel, www.kaserne-basel.ch
\ Tilmann Broszat	Artistic Director – SPIELART Festival, München
\ Rolf Dennemann	Artistic Director – Festival off limits, Dortmund
\ Thomas Hahn	Journalist, Paris
\ Klemens Wannemacher	Coach and culture consulting – Kreativ Coaching Berlin

Ann-Elisabeth Wolff
Managing Director and Artistic Director

Leipzig, 20.12.2011