PROGRAM

4th CONFERENCE - the open call edition

on October 14th, 2019 from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm
at Balletzentrum Westfalen in Dortmund
This year we are presenting the Open Call Edition, inviting ALL professionals to take part in the most important meeting for dancers in Germany.

An event organised BY DANCERS, FOR DANCERS, a place for meeting old friends and making new connections.

A platform to take action towards more fair and supportive working structures.
October 14th, 2019

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

10:00 am  Arrival
10:30 am  Welcome
10:40 am  Opening Speech by Friedrich Pohl
11:00 am  Introduction Open Spaces
11:40 am  Coffee Break
11:50 am  Open Spaces (Session 1)
12:30 am  Lunch Break
1:25 pm   Group Photo
1:30 pm   Open Spaces (Session 2 - switch!!!)
2:15 pm   Speakers Meeting
          Election Bundesdeutscher Tanzvorstand
2:50 pm   Coffee Break
3:00 pm   Get to know:
          The Actor’s Ensemble Netzwerk
          #spartensolidarität
3:10 pm   Presentation Results Open Spaces
4:10 pm   Coffee Break
4:30 pm   Panel Discussion
          with directors and politicians
5:30 pm   Goodbyes
Every year dancersconnect aims to create a space where you can contribute your own ideas and experiences whilst also gaining further knowledge.

Let’s open up our perspectives to see beyond ourselves as individuals passionate about making art, to look at our industry's bigger picture.
We will talk about psychological traits that are internal to the dance world and appear as a common fact: Dancers have difficulties creating a group identity which they could use to assert their rights. It all takes place in the reality of an art that does not help to develop communication skills and is full of paradoxes.

The short lifespan of a dancer's career requires them to live in a state of intense body stimulation that often leads to pain. All these aspects perpetuate a dancer's tendency to live in the moment without considering the bigger picture.

It's only when the dance world itself is threatened, like recently when Good Morning America presenter Lara Spencer mocked male ballet dancers, that dancers rise together against an external threat.

How can dancers change something within the dancer's world?
Florent Cheymol after a career as a ballet dancer working in Düsseldorf (Deutsch Oper am Rhein under Youri Vamos and Martin Schläpfer) and Paris for more than ten years, Florent is now a clinical psychologist-psychotherapist in Paris with his own practice. He also has a diploma in sport psychology and mental preparation. As a PhD student in Psychology at University Paris 8, his research concerns the modified states of consciousness of dancers and their relationship to pain. This year, he is finishing his training as a hypnotherapist and will be teaching for the department of psychology at University Paris 8.
Is it possible to be too wrapped up in passion? As artists, we pursue a passion, not a job. We're the lucky ones. We've made our passion our job and can indulge in a life which revolves around something we love.

But at what point do we lose a well rounded view? At what point do we become so engulfed by the dedication to our passion that we fail to see the big picture? We fail to see how certain approaches or circumstances take away from the fullest artistic experience we are striving for.

Then we must ask, why do we start to settle for a mindset, a condition, a compensation, or an experience that is less than ideal just so the final product can be the ideal. Why assume that this is the best it can be, otherwise the art will suffer? Must we as artists be the ones to suffer instead?

By setting standards for ourselves, we raise the standard of the art. Ideals for both ourselves and our art and be reached for equally. Let's dig in and see why and how we as artists fall into the habit of working against our own best interests and interests of the art world as a whole.
Open Space 2
WRAPPED UP IN PASSION
directed by Shelby Williams

Shelby Williams is a soloist with the Royal Ballet of Flanders, and is the creator of the viral ballet comedy character Biscuit Ballerina. Shelby has previously danced with Houston Ballet 2, Dresden Semperoper Ballett (Germany), Ballet d’Europe (France), and Barcelona Ballet (Spain), and as a soloist with BallettMainz and the Hessisches Staatsballett in Germany. In 2016, she joined the Royal Ballet of Flanders. In 2017 she created Biscuit Ballerina as a way to bring humor to the seriousness of ballet and address mental health in the dance world. Biscuit Ballerina was nominated in the category "Best News" in Dance Europe Magazine (October 2018) for "offering amusing and inspiring perspective for dancers on the pursuit for perfection."
Whistle While You Work invites dancers to openly discuss abuse, harassment, and discrimination in dance. Let’s talk problems, solutions, and possibilities.

Co-founded in 2017 by Frances Chiaverini and Robyn Doty, Whistle While You Work has been connecting and learning from dancers by holding open forums and workshops in the US and Germany and online with their website collecting testimonials of abuse. Through these platforms they have found that dancers weren’t always able to define abuse and harassment in dance and have unclear boundaries regarding their body, use of time, and emotional energy. Therefore they have created a workshop to help facilitate discussion and practices for dancers to define these concepts and their boundaries for themselves.

They are also researching the larger scope of experiences in the dance scene to gather a richer understanding of what problems dancers are facing currently.
Frances Chiaverini born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, (Juilliard BFA 2003), is a performer, activist, and choreographer. She was a member of The Forsythe Company in its final seasons and has most recently performed with Adam Linder, Anne Imhof, and Trajal Harrell. Recently she has been creating her own work and was a Fellow at Pact Zollverein Choreographic Center in Essen Germany from 2015-18 and is currently a 2019-20 Resident Fellow at NYU’s Center for Ballet and the Arts.
Robyn Doty is a writer, activist, and co-founder of Whistle While You Work. In 2019 she graduated from the Goethe University Frankfurt where she studied memory studies and transcultural studies. Since 2016 she has collaborated with Frances Chiaverini, Katja Cheranevaon and Roderick George on different projects, working as a writer, dramaturg and project manager. In 2017 she co-organized a weeklong postcolonial studies Summer School about performance. Most recently collaborating with Frances Chiaverini for their fellowship at NYU’s Center for Ballet and the Arts.
How do we talk about our health? For being such an integral part of our profession, health and healthcare in the dance world is oftentimes both a delicate and difficult subject to speak about.

While great strides have been made in understanding how we can effectively treat dancers’ health concerns, there is still much work to be done integrating and developing ‘dance medical science’ into our daily routines and places of work.

But where do we start? How do we begin to voice our opinions and take action to encourage general discussion and integration of something so vital to our field and yet so often stigmatized? Are we even aware of the distinctions of healthcare available to us?

Opening the conversation, removing the stigma, and sustaining an ongoing and relevant discussion about improving dancers’ health and access to healthcare across our field is the first step. Now is the time to organize ourselves and get involved in starting the conversation. With your help, we can destigmatize our health and establish an open and lasting discussion bringing dancers’ healthcare the attention it both needs and deserves.
Anneli Chasemore during her career performed with many companies including Scottish Ballet, Norwegian National Ballet, Ballet Victor Ullatte, Madrid and the Ballet of the Oper Halle and Mainfrankentheater Würzburg, Germany. In 2003, due to a possibly career-ending accident, Anneli was introduced to the Gyrotonic method which helped her to rehabilitate and return to performing. This experience led her to become a certified Gyrotonic trainer and complete a Masters of Dance Science at Trinity Laban, London. Anneli is now a lecturer of Dance Science in the Professional Dancers Postgraduate Teaching Diploma, RAD Berlin. Together with Soraya Bruno, she founded the new “Dancer health and support department” at the Staatsballett Berlin with the aim to support company dancers in all areas concerning injury prevention and performance enhancement.
We as dancers are very aware of the problems and deficiencies in our daily work life - and very often we even talk about ideas to work more efficiently concerning our time, physical and mental resources. Unfortunately these ideas often only go as far as private chats with colleagues in the changing rooms, on the lunch table or backstage. In this open space, we want to encourage dancers to take a step further and to point out that the best place to start change is within your very own workplace.

We want to offer a legal perspective of our everyday reality as artists and focus on the mechanism of representation. Our open space aims to collect tried-and-tested techniques and methods to help your ensemble speak with a united voice.

Which role does the work council play? What does ‘Fürsorgepflicht’ (caring duty) mean? What are our responsibilities as employees? What are the new regulations for dance in NV Bühne? Why is it important we find a way to have all professional dancers in Germany join a union? These are some of the questions we will tackle together.
Adil Laraki born in Settat, Morocco, Adil worked during his dancing career with Staatstheater Hannover and Ballett Essen (1985-1993). He has been involved as member and activist of the artist union Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnenangehöriger (GDBA) since 1988. He held several assessor and chairman positions within the union and is now one of the major experts for stage law in Germany. Besides his permanent commitment to the dance branch, he is the GDBA-Landesverband chairman for NRW since 2003. For his home theatre in Essen, Adil has been a work council member since 1990, the work council chairman since 2002, part of the Supervisory Board since 1999 and a member of the Board of Directors since 2001. Additionally, he is a member of the WDR Broadcasting Council and the Supervisory Board for the Film and Media Foundation NRW.
**Friedrich Pohl** born in Berlin. After graduating from high school in 2010, he completed his dance studies at the Rotterdam Dance Academy Codarts. Since 2011 his dance career has brought him from Tanz Luzerner Theater to Dortmund Ballet and eventually to Ballett am Rhein directed by Martin Schlüpfer. In 2018 he began his law studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin. He is one of the co-founders of **dancersconnect** and in 2018 was also elected onto its German Federal Dance Board.
We are not alone! In 2015 actors all over Germany formed the organisation Ensemble-Netzwerk to create positive change regarding their working conditions and pay. The actors’ and dancers’ movements have independently developed without knowing much about the other. In 2018 they invited dancersconnect to their members meeting and since then we are aware of the similarities of our passion, causes and work to further cooperate!

Both conferences will take place in the same week to symbolize our alliance and start our networks’ on a path together. Laura Kiehne (Ensemble-Netzwerk council member) will introduce the actors’ network at our conference and members of our team will attend their conference just 5 days later in Berlin. #spartensolidarität
Let’s Gather Our Knowledge

On the walls of the conference venue, you will find posters with extra spaces for you to write on. Since we don’t have time to cover every important topic during the day’s main events we have created these “blank spaces” for you to fill with your ideas and experiences on specific topics and also a map of Germany for you to provide information about the situation of your workplace.

We will also post some of last year’s survey results for all to see and comment on.

Every little extra piece of information that we can gather on this day helps us to be better as an organisation representing you, so please, take a pen and scribble away during the coffee and lunch breaks!
COLLECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA BOOSTING

We all know the power of social media! Dancersconnect wants to use this power to spread our message, connect with dancers across Germany but also to engage and inspire artists to take action on an international scale.

Help us achieve this by posting about your experience at our conference on your social media accounts. Keep liking, commenting and tagging to help us reach as many dancers as possible and use these platforms to stay informed and connected even after the event!
At the end of the conference day, we will use our collective experiences and results to lead a panel discussion with representatives of cultural politics and above all of the Dance Directors Conference (BBTK). If a direct dialogue is opened between people who have the power to make decisions in dance with those who ultimately implement the performance live on stage - what significance and advantages could be obtained?

What would this mean to a decision-maker, to society, but also for the art form in general? Dancers don’t always get ‘a seat at the table’… so dancersconnect is creating its own table and inviting you to take a seat!

confirmed guests

German Dance Directorate Conference BBTK and Co-Director Ballett Essen Marek Tuma
Managing Director of German Stage Association Marc Grandmontagne
Cultural Ministry NRW, Commissary for Dance Bettina Milz
Department for Culture Essen Alfons Wafner
Your expertise is essential!
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