



D&D

AWARDS 2019



Danza&Danza Awards is an annual prize-giving event that recognises excellence in dance. Established in 1987 by Mario Bedendo – whom the Prize is named after – the Awards are assigned by the Jury and cover a variety of categories including dancers, productions, choreographers and new talents seen on Italian stages over the course of the year.

Martina Arduino in the role of Sylvia in the eponymous ballet restaged by Manuel Legris at La Scala Theatre, D&D Award for "Best Ballet Production" (© Brescia-Amisano)

JURY
Maria Luisa Buzzi (Chair)
Elisabetta Ceron, Giuseppe Distefano, Francesca Pedroni, Silvia Poletti, Sergio Trombetta, Carmelo A. Zapparrata

BALLET PRODUCTION
SYLVIA
by Manuel Legris
La Scala Theatre Ballet

CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTION
EX-AEQUO
A QUIET EVENING OF DANCE
by William Forsythe
SINCE SHE
by Dimitris Papaioannou
Tanztheater Wuppertal

PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR
ARTIST AND PRODUCER
SERGEI POLUNIN

DANCERS OF THE YEAR
ALINA COJOCARU
Principal dancer, English National Ballet
CLAUDIO COVIELLO
Principal dancer, La Scala Theatre Ballet
CHRISTIAN FAGETTI
Soloist, La Scala Theatre Ballet
RAUF YASIT, AKA RUBBERLEGZ
Freelance dancer

CHOREOGRAPHER EX-AEQUO
CHRISTOS PAPADOPOULOS
PHILIPPE KRATZ

NEWCOMERS - CHOREOGRAPHERS
GINEVRA PANZETTI/ENRICO TICCONI

NEWCOMERS - DANCERS
CATERINA BIANCHI
La Scala Theatre Ballet
SALVATORE MANZO
Teatro di San Carlo Ballet
GIACOMO CASTELLANA
Rome Opera Ballet

ITALIAN PRODUCTION
GRACES
by Silvia Gribaudo

ITALIAN DANCERS ABROAD
ALESSANDRA TOGNOLONI
Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo
FEDERICO LONGO
Batsheva The Young Ensemble
MATTEO MICCINI
Stuttgarter Ballett

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
AMEDEO AMODIO

MARIO PASI AWARD
DOCUMENTARY SERIES
"WHY DO WE DANCE?"
A Sky Arte Hub production

SPECIAL MENTION
DANCE COMPANY THEATER
OSNABRÜCK
Artistic director Mauro de Candia
For the reconstruction of 'Die Feier'
by Mary Wigman

BALLET PRODUCTION

SYLVIA

It went straight to the heart of ballet's true value, its technical power and performative potential: Manuel Legris' *Sylvia*, co-produced by the Vienna Staatsballett and La Scala Theatre, Milan, where it opened the 2019-2020 season, offered an engagingly fresh rediscovery of the ballet's great tradition in constant evolution.

Three acts, myriad variations and roles; dazzling dances and enchanting ensembles: in *Sylvia*, the classical academic language reaches its full potential of richness and versatility thanks to Manuel Legris' choreographic touches. His interventions fit perfectly with the symphonic score composed by Léo Delibes for the ballet in 1876, now conducted at La Scala by the brilliant Kevin Rhodes.

The characters fully convey their aspirations and feelings through dance: Sylvia's combative fieriness, and her transformation from huntress nymph to seductive prisoner and woman in love; the shepherd Aminta's passionate attraction to Sylvia; treacherous Orion's insatiable desire; the elegance of the *deus ex machina* Eros; the vigour of the nymphs clasping bows and arrows; the sensuality and spirit of the nereids, satyrs, and oriental characters. This production is an immense accomplishment for the soloists and company alike, and the mythological source material inspires an array of dreamlike visions, imbued with a woodland charm or tinged crimson and gold by the elegant hand of Luisa Spinatelli, who designed the sets and costumes.

CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTION

EX-AEQUO A QUIET EVENING OF DANCE

A Quiet Evening of Dance is the kind of show that has the potential to shift our entire concept of dance and ballet. A sort of colourful almanac-in-progress which, from pose to pose, from movement to movement, pulls us into the flow of its shapeshifting adventure of motion and choreography. This adventure seems carefully programmed to take the audience on a journey of perception of the dancing



"A Quiet Evening of Dance" (© Bill Cooper)

itself; the effect is both calm and incandescent due to the dancers' skill in filling the spatial, formal and dynamic choices with movements that hone in on the pelvis, shoulder, arm and wrist joints, ballet-like fragments of positions and port de bras, and dazzling virtuoso hip hop moves.

Coproduced with Sadler's Wells in London, in Italy *A Quiet Evening of Dance* has been performed in the dance seasons of the Teatro Grande, Brescia; the Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia; the Venice Biennale, and the

Romaeuropa Festival. The piece is the result of a joint effort between Forsythe and the dancers: six of them have years of experience with the Forsythe Company, while Rauf "RubberLegz" Yasit is a hip hop dance champ. The astounding range of movements in the first part is reborn with spectacular verve in part two, *Seventeen/Twenty One*, set to *Ritournelle* from *Hyppolite et Aricie* by Jean-Philippe Rameau. It's as though the careful research and awe-inspiring mix of styles and personalities in part one had

suddenly exploded to reveal the full beauty and richness of this dance and choreography.

CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTION EX-AEQUO

SINCE SHE

Dimitris Papaioannou is a visionary artist. With a background in the plastic and figurative arts, he uses painterly concepts to create forms in motion. Watching his shows, one is filled with admiration for his striking tableaux vivants and his choreographic solutions in equal measure. Commissioning him to create a new dance production for Tanztheater Wuppertal was a smart move on the part of the directors of the company founded by Pina Bausch. He was certainly the right person to pick up the baton. Because with *Seit Sie* ("Since She" – the reference is to Pina herself), he has managed to highlight themes and visions typically associated with the queen of German Tanztheater, without repudiating his signature style and the quality of his own theatrical craftsmanship. The result is an astonishing fusion of visions. Papaioannou's new work is leagues ahead of the company's previous attempts to commission other choreographers to take up and continue the Bausch legacy.



"Since She" (© Julian Mommert)

PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR
SERGEI POLUNIN

A multi-faceted artist whose reach spans the stage and the runways, cinema and music videos, Sergei Polunin is above all else one of the greatest ballet dancers of our time. The reason lies in the naturalness of his technique, his versatility of roles, his magnetic stage presence and his inspired performances. It is interesting that at the height of his dancing career, he has already decided to tackle the gruelling role of producer. As such, he and his Polunin Ink company scored not one but two goals in 2019: a 'modern' take on the twentieth-century



Sergei Polunin (© Rankin)

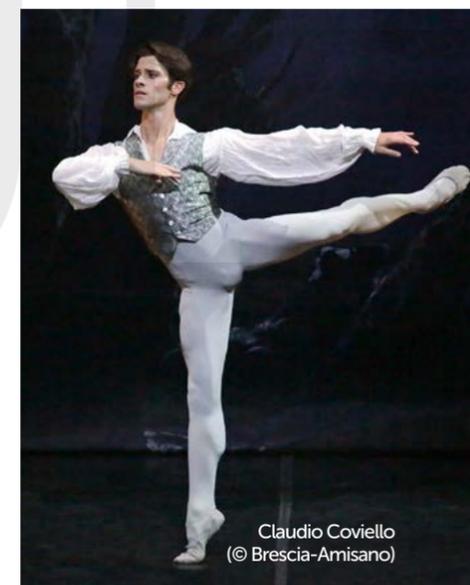
classic *Romeo & Juliet*, brilliantly choreographed by Johan Kobborg and produced with Show Bees and Ater at the Verona Arena, where Polunin gave a powerful, passionate performance opposite Alina Cojocaru before an audience of 11,000 people; and *Rasputin*, choreographed by Yuka Oishi, a memorable dance-drama in which Sergei outdid himself. Now a courageous producer, Polunin is looking ahead to the future of ballet and conquering a mass audience as he catapults his art into the twenty-first century.



Alina Cojocaru (© Ash)

DANCERS
ALINA COJOCARU

One of the foremost dancer-performers of her generation, Alina Cojocaru has already had a glittering career and built up a vast fan base, with admirers from Russia to Japan enchanted by her extraordinary musicality, her dazzling ballet phrasing and total emotional engagement. A graduate of the Kiev Academy and a former star at the Royal Ballet, she is currently a Lead Principal at the English National Ballet and resident guest artist at the Hamburg Ballet, where she has formed a strong artistic relationship with John Neumeier in recent years (Neumeier created for her the principal roles in *Liliom* and this year's *Glass Menagerie*). Equally pivotal is her artistic and personal relationship with Johan Kobborg; the couple have enthusiastically tackled numerous, significant artistic adventures together. Most recently, *Romeo & Juliet* with Polunin Ink: the team set out to draw thousands of spectators to the Verona Arena with their new, streamlined yet intense version of the famous ballet. There, once again, Cojocaru demonstrated her immense talent as a performer and above all, heartfelt generosity in 'offering herself up' to Polunin's vision of taking ballet into the new era, with 'popular' yet high-quality forms, methods and approaches.



Claudio Coviello (© Brescia-Amisano)

DANCERS
CLAUDIO COVIELLO

A Principal at La Scala since 2013, Claudio Coviello is a dancer of rare sensitivity. He has proven capable of throwing himself into his roles with emotion, technique and musicality. He joined La Scala in 2010 having completed his training at the Rome Opera in 2009. In 2011 he received the Danza&Danza Award for the Newcomer of that year. Since then, his performances have only confirmed our decision, ranging from complex characters such as Des Grieux in Kenneth MacMillan's

L'Histoire de Manon; Armand in *La Dame aux camelias* by Neumeier; Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (also MacMillan); Siegfried in the Ratmanský *Swan Lake* and countless other roles.

In 2019, his natural talent for making dance an expression of the soul has earned him his second Danza&Danza Award as Performer. His talent shines through time and again, as Prince Desiré for the Nureyev *Sleeping Beauty*, as Albrecht in *Giselle*, Lensky in *Onegin*, not to mention abstract ballets such as *Symphony in C* by George Balanchine and, most recently, as the tender shepherd Aminta in *Sylvia* by Legris.



Christian Fagetti (© Brescia-Amisano)

DANCERS
CHRISTIAN FAGETTI

Christian Fagetti is one of those dancers who 'make the difference'. Whether he's dancing roles in the classical or neo-classical repertoire, or put to the test in contemporary choreographies, this La Scala Soloist (since 2018) is always completely absorbed by his roles, both technically and artistically. A true product of the Milanese opera house (he graduated from its Ballet School and immediately joined the company) he soon rose to prominence in character roles (Rothbart in Nureyev's *Swan Lake*, Carabosse in Ratmanský's *Sleeping Beauty*), before moving on to more psychologically complex parts, which he always managed to render perfectly; these include Mercutio, Lescaut, and Count N. in

La Dame aux camelias. This season, alongside dramatic works, Fagetti has stood out in two choreographies that particularly highlighted his dynamism and musicality: *Winterreise* by Angelin Preljocaj and *Wolf Works* by Wayne McGregor. He was also very suitably cast in the reprise of Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort* and as a soloist in Maurice Béjart's *Boléro*. Last but not least, he made a dazzling Orion in Legris' *Sylvia*.

DANCERS
RAUF YASIT AKA RUBBERLEGZ

This charismatic virtuoso wowed audiences with his hip-hop-derived contortions, holding his own against the contemporary ballet dancers in William Forsythe's *A Quiet Evening of Dance*. RubberLegz, the stage name of Rauf Yasit (1986), is a German choreographer and hip hop dancer of Kurdish descent. He now lives in Los Angeles, where he works with the Wewolf collective. Having studied traditional Kurdish dance with his father, in 1998 he became a self-taught B-boy and developed his own original style. This led him to take part in various contemporary dance productions from 2007 on. With his exquisite technique – an idiosyncratic blend of talent, flexibility, strength, yoga, breakdance and contemporary dance – in addition to Forsythe his collaborations include the Paris Opera, Flying Steps and Moderat. A finalist in "Switzerland's Got Talent", he receives



Rauf Yasit (© Bill Cooper)

this award for his original language, which breaks down barriers between dance genres.

CHOREOGRAPHER EX-AEQUO
PHILIPPE KRATZ

Philippe Kratz joined Aterballetto in 2008 to work with Mauro Bigonzetti. However, it was Cristina Bozzolini who gave him the chance to try his hand at choreography, during the company's workshops. His first effort, *Lettres d'amour* (2012), on the relationship between Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir immediately pointed to his remarkable sensitivity in evoking moods and feelings through dance alone. Then came *L'eco dell'acqua*, 2015, a work for the whole company in which Kratz



Philippe Kratz (© A. Vacondio)

showed his confidence in creating clear choreographic structures rich in emotional nuance. It wasn't long before he rose to prominence on the international scene: in 2017 he restaged the trio *SentiERI* for the Wiener Staatsballett; the following year his duet *O* won the Choreographic Competition of Hannover. His *Cloud/Materia*, for Aterballetto again, underlines his image as a dance maker who has mastered structure, and knows how to fill it with emotional content, always handled with elegance and subtlety.

CHOREOGRAPHER EX-AEQUO
CHRISTOS PAPADOPOULOS

He extracts the very essence of movement, harnessing it in an innovative circuit with a clear plot that he gradually embroiders with variations in dynamics, intensity and trajectory. There's no doubt that Christos Papadopoulos (Greece, 1976) deserves a place among our award-winning choreographers. Having won acclaim for his previous works *Elvedon* and *Opus*, Papadopoulos lived up to his reputation again in autumn 2019 with *Ion*. Inspired by the movement of electrically-charged molecules (the ions in the title), this work set to Coti K's hypnotic sounds underlines Papadopoulos' creative verve. Here, the analytically-minded choreographer is quite happy to play the part of a physicist, dabbling in kinematics. Thanks to Papadopoulos, the idea of combining research with dance choreography becomes a reality, even in today's world.



Christos Papadopoulos



Panzetti/Ticconi "Harleking" (© D. Hartwig)

NEWCOMERS - CHOREOGRAPHERS
GINEVRA PANZETTI/ENRICO TICCONI

A young couple emerging on the Italian dance scene, Ginevra Panzetti and Enrico Ticconi met as pupils at the Arts High School in Rome. They both continued their studies at the Fine Arts Academy, where they majored in theatre design, while starting training in contemporary dances. A year spent at the theatre and movement research school Stoa, under the founder Claudia Castellucci, paved the way for their joint creative career, with help from Demetrio Castellucci for musical research. Our jury members have been watching them closely since their debut works with *Le Jardin* and *Harleking*; and in 2019, *A.E.R.E.A.* confirmed that these two youngsters have a solid artistic vision, erudite references to figurative art, and a talent for shaping choreographic-spatial-dramatic structure. In this work the concept of belonging, symbolised by the flag, leads to an evocative piece with layers of different meanings; in it, artful flag-waving creates images and shapes, modifying bodies and how they are represented.

NEWCOMERS - DANCERS
GIACOMO CASTELLANA

Born in 1991 Giacomo Castellana, now Soloist at the Rome Opera, trained at the Teatro Massimo in his home town of Palermo before graduating from the Bolshoi Academy of Moscow, where he spent the last three years of his studies. Elegant and virile, with a quality of movement that is at once fluid and powerful, he soon got noticed. He has recently stood out in *Walking Mad* by Johan Inger, and as Lescaut in *Manon*, a daunting last-minute debut as understudy for an injured guest soloist; he partnered Eleonora Abbagnato in *La rose malade* and was a passionate José in Jiri Bubenicek's recent production of *Carmen*, where he also showed remarkable dramatic talent which is sure to provide the company with a first-rate lead soloist as he matures.



Giacomo Castellana "Manon" (© Y. Kageyama)

NEWCOMERS - DANCERS

CATERINA BIANCHI



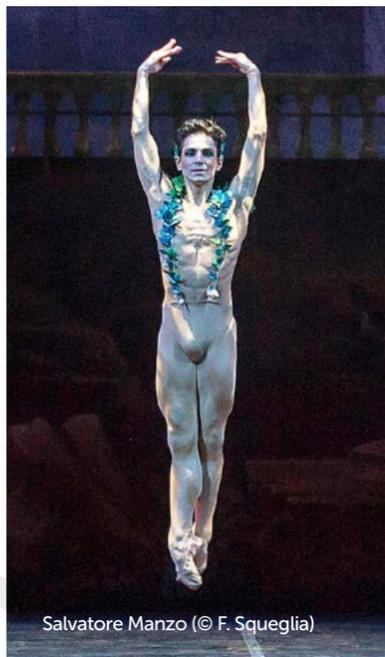
Caterina Bianchi (© Brescia-Amisano)

Caterina Bianchi graduated from La Scala Ballet School in 2017, but her star quality was recognised even as a student when she was plucked from the ranks to star in the school's 2015 production of *Cinderella* choreographed by Frédéric Olivieri. She joined the La Scala Theatre Ballet in the 2017/2018 season, becoming a permanent member of the company the following year. She has already danced some important roles such as Olympia alongside Roberto Bolle in John Neumeier's *La Dame aux camélias*. In 2019 she was one of the fairies in the Nureyev version of *Sleeping Beauty*, and was widely praised for her mastery of style and performance as young Clarissa in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the first act of Wayne McGregor's *Wolf Works*, as well as in *Orlando*. Also this year, Bolle cast her in his gala at the Politeama Trieste with Soloists from La Scala, where she appeared in *The Seasons* by Volpini/Liang. This young dancer is sure to go far.

NEWCOMERS - DANCERS

SALVATORE MANZO

Salvatore Manzo joined the Teatro di San Carlo Ballet in 2011, having already worked with the English National Ballet, at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo and at the Verona Arena. In Naples, he continues to shine, and



Salvatore Manzo (© F. Squeglia)

has been cast in a string of Soloist and Principal roles. His *cahier de danse* is filling up with major parts in a variety of repertoire titles, including *Carmina Burana* by Shen Wei and *Mozart Requiem* by Boris Eifman, with several more in 2019. Over this past year we have particularly admired his dynamic, agile performance in the Act 1 pas de trois in Ricardo Nuñez's *Swan Lake*, and his chameleon-like portrayal of Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Paul Chalmer. It was this Shakespearian character that made up our minds to give this award to Manzo.



"Graces" (© A. Ficai)

ITALIAN PRODUCTION

GRACES

With *Graces* Silvia Gribaudi continues her enquiry into the theme of beauty, by presenting a direct comparison (and playing cleverly with gender-bound conventions) between male and female, everyday life and ideal, dance practised and dance idealised. In it, three tall, bearded male dancers contrast, mingle and play with Gribaudi, herself the epitome of a normal, middle-aged, untrained body type. Brief choreographic sequences are interspersed with classical references, a TV show 'number', and occasional audience interaction providing intellectual cues; the whole thing is put together with a fun, heart lifting sense of humour. Beneath all this, however, is an undercurrent of perceptive satire, not just of today's social mores but also of certain affectations in today's dance, mocked mercilessly by Gribaudi. This gives substance to a piece that is outwardly lightweight but sharply cerebral at the same time.

ITALIAN DANCERS ABROAD

ALESSANDRA TOGNOLONI

Tognoloni joined the John Cranko Schule at the age of fifteen, and graduated two years later; she then joined the Stuttgarter Ballett, where she was made *démi-soliste* in 2008. She had various formative experiences in Cranko's ballets, as well as some



Alessandra Tognoloni (© Alice Blangero)

encounters with charismatic figures like Neumeier, who cast her as Prudence in his iconic *La Dame aux camélias*. The turning point came in 2013 when she joined Ballets de Monte-Carlo, where she has danced in works by Kylián, Inger, Horecna, Verbruggen as well as some title roles for Jean-Christophe Maillot, who cast her in *Cinderella* and *The Taming of the Shrew* – the latter recently came to the Teatro Regio, Turin. In *Shrew*, her Caterina is a multi-faceted role which she renders with swift, confident technique; since being given the role by Maillot, she has fine-tuned all the tiniest details to create an authentic, anti-conformist female character.

ITALIAN DANCERS ABROAD

MATTEO MICCINI

Miccini has shown promise ever since he joined the Stuttgarter Ballett after graduating from the John Cranko Schule in 2015. Florentine-born Miccini stood out in the company for his theatrical personality and the quality of his dance. The ballets closest to his heart are *La Dame aux camélias* (Neumeier), *Romeo and Juliet* (Cranko) and *Mayerling* (MacMillan), with the past two seasons seeing him debut in these solo roles. However, we have also admired him as a dancer in *One of a kind* by Kylián, as Alain in Ashton's *La fille mal gardée*, in *Lucid Dream* and *Le Spectre de la rose* by

Marco Goecke. As well as starring in the video *La Finestra* directed by photographer Christian Oita, Miccini recently danced Benvolio (Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet*) on tour in Taiwan. His latest challenge is as choreographer: his first success as a dance maker came in June at the Noverre Young Choreographers evening with *What we've been telling you*, which he created and performed with Marijn Rademaker.



Matteo Miccini

ITALIAN DANCERS ABROAD

FEDERICO LONGO

Born in Rome in 1994, he started out in his hometown attending the Italian National Academy of Dance before moving to Dresden, where he completed his studies at the Palucca Hochschule für Tanz. He began his professional career with the company at the Saarländisches Staatstheater in Saarbrücken, directed by Stijn Celis. However, it was when he moved to sunny Tel Aviv that Federico Longo really began to blossom. There he joined the prestigious Batsheva-The Young Ensemble in 2018, and was soon chosen by choreographer Sharon Eyal as the central figure in her new work *The Look*, which she created especially for the young company. Statuesque and diaphanous, with incredible lyricism, we have admired his work throughout 2019, both at the European premiere of Eyal's show at Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia, and in various Italian venues where he gave standout performances in works by Ohad Naharin.



Federico Longo (© A. Avraham)

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

AMEDEO AMODIO

Having trained at La Scala and become a dancer at the Milanese company, Amedeo Amodio then moved to the Rome Opera Ballet while at the same time working on primetime Saturday night TV variety shows. This background gave the artist a dual source of inspiration, which stayed with him through his career as a choreographer and dance company director. He was responsible for the widespread success of Aterballetto; as the foundation's director until 1996, he produced a completely new model for Italy, in terms of production and artistic methods. He opened the doors to international contemporary choreographers who had never previously been seen in



Amedeo Amodio (© A. Buccafusca)

this country (from Ailey to Forsythe, Lucinda Childs and Glen Tetley); with his own dance works he presented an eclectic, theatrical brand of creativity that moved confidently between different choreographic registers. He went on to become director of Rome Opera Ballet and the ballet company of the Teatro Massimo in Palermo; having reached the milestone of his eightieth birthday he is currently working on revivals of some of his ballets, which have become classics in the Italian repertoire: they include *The Nutcracker* and *Coppelia*, *Carmen* and *Romeo and Juliet*.



"Die Feier", Dance Company Theater Osnabrueck

MARIO PASI AWARD FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ART OF DANCE

WHY DO WE DANCE?

The television documentary series *Why do we dance?* produced by Sky Arte Hub, broadcast on Sky Arte in Italy and distributed in UK, Ireland, Germany and Austria receives our award for the dissemination of dance culture. The fascinating series is structured as an exploration of the motivations and stimuli that have always led human beings to dance. Its thematic approach took viewers around the world in search of answers to the question in the title, with Akram Khan

as narrator and presenter. In the various episodes, a host of experts including Wayne McGregor, Bill T. Jones, Lin Hwai Min, Christian Spuck, Angelin Preljocaj, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Alonzo King, Sasha Waltz, Sharon Eyal, Alexei Ratmansky, Germaine Acogny, Boris Charmatz, Jan Fabre, Enzo Cosimi, Lil Buck, Cecilia Bengolea and François Chaignaud, Yoshito Ōno, Fernando Anuag'a, Eva Yerbabuena, Candoco, Aditi Mangaldas, Mavin Khoo described how dance means a sense of belonging, moves the soul and takes it to a state of ecstasy, seduces, impresses or provokes people, and can sweep away conventions.

SPECIAL MENTION DANCE COMPANY THEATER OSNABRÜCK for "DIE FEIER"

The Dance Company Theater Osnabrück, directed by the Italian Mauro de Candia, is a dynamic ensemble of twelve dancers from northern Germany. For several years now Candia, flanked by the dance-dramaturg Patricia Stöckemann, has led a broad-ranging venture to reconstruct some epoch-making titles from the twentieth century, and in particular works by Mary Wigman. This admirable research project began in 2013 with the reconstruction of *The Rite of Spring* – a collaboration with Theater Bielefeld, also danced by Bayerisches Staatsballett – of *Totentanz I and II* and of *Die Feier/The Celebration*. The last of these three was also performed in Italy as part of the DAB_Danza dance season in Bari. It offered an enlightening, 'concrete' perspective on the story, which left no doubts as to the value of Wigman's pioneering art and the excellent ideas of Mauro de Candia and his troupe.



Alonzo King LINES Ballet, "Why do we dance?"

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20/23

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