Dance Info Finland is a gateway to Finnish dance. It works as an active information office and expert organization with a mission to develop the art of dance in Finland and strengthen the position of dance in Finnish society.

Founded in 1980, Dance Info Finland’s main activities include communications, promotion, advocacy, gathering statistics and facilitating international projects. It has ten member organizations that represent the variety of dance styles and dance organizations in Finland. Dance Info Finland’s website www.danceinfo.fi includes e.g. performance calendar, dance database TANKA and the latest news about Finnish dance. Finnish Dance in Focus, which represents the Finnish dance field to an international readership, is published once a year.
Editorial

The Roots of Art

Dance art is international by its nature and traverses borders. Also, crossing borders continues to become less and less complicated thanks to global communication devices and convenient, inexpensive modes of travel.

Definitions based on national boundaries or cultural identities such as “Finnish dance art,” now seem a little old-fashioned. However, they still contain strong mental images as well as real, concrete structures. After all, this publication is called Finnish Dance in Focus!

About a hundred years ago, the arts, culture and nature were deliberately utilized to serve as building blocks for the newly independent republic of Finland. Although ideas regarding national identity and “country brand” have changed since those days, Finland still is a big, sparsely populated country.

There is plenty of space, and the level of urbanization is not dense. There are the four seasons, a lush green, bright summer, and the dark, snowy winter. There are thousands of square kilometers of forests, thousands of lakes, and the tranquil and spacious wilderness areas of northern Finland.

The physical surroundings of where a person, an artist, lives and functions inevitably influences his/her work. This publication features Finnish dance artists telling about their relationship with nature, and how the natural environment affects their art.

The pages of this magazine also highlight Finnish dance art as a component of colorful, international collaborative productions and projects, whose participants hail from the other side of the globe in Asia, as well as from our neighboring Scandinavian countries.

While art is becoming more international, it doesn’t – luckily – turn uniform: productions with deep-rooted local flavor merging with the universal offer even the most distant viewers enriching experiences and new viewpoints into our world.

Enjoy!

Sanna Rekola
Editor-in-chief

Elina Manninen
Editor
Overflowing emotions, outrageousness, sensitivity, sophisticated humor – aesthetic, kinetic, provocative and energetic movement; sliding and flying.

Recent years’ young choreography program graduates parade on stage a very original and distinctive assortment of topics, emotions, and movements.

Four upcoming Finnish choreographers, Elina Pirinen, Janina Rajakangas, Jarkko Mandelin and Veli Lehtovaara, let us in on their sources of inspiration, their goals, and on what moves them as artists.

**Jokes with the Audience**

**Elina Pirinen** is a university-trained dancer choreographer, and a passionate singer songwriter. Her trademarks are overflowing emotions, singing live, mixing live and taped music, as well as joking around with the audience.

- For me as an artist, the most important works have been those that have allowed me to fully express the breadth and depth of my humanity, while also reveal something veiled and unusual about us as human beings.

  According to Pirinen, dance is absurd and meaningful, as well as fun and difficult – all at the same time, just like life itself.

- Currently, I am interested in studying the human psyche. It is a phase I am going through, and the multi-layered nature of art fits in perfectly. They complement each other and, in the best of scenarios, bring forth truly engaging stage acts.

- What also interests me is how and when dance transmutes into art, because for me, being an artist is an omnipresent channel and device to cognize and comprehend reality.

Pirinen’s recent solo work, the playfully erotic *Lover of the Pianist* (2011), made it to the European Aerowaves Touring Network’s picks for 2012. This piece has also opened new horizons to Pirinen, in terms of her own creative work.

- It has helped me to find direction, a way to grow as an artist.

  I want to convey and share fearlessness, boldness, directness, sensitivity, enjoyment and even utopias.

Lately Pirinen has been moved and inspired by the 24-voice choral work *Qui Habitat* by renaissance composer Josquin des Prez, as well as by the Pina Bausch dancers in the movie *Pina*.

- And also by the utterings: “Richard, don’t leave me” and “There is an ice age trekking through me,” she adds. 

**Welcome the New Faces!**

By Elina Manninen and Katri Riikonen  □ Photo Uupi Tirronen
There is a unifying theme prevalent throughout the works of Janina Rajakangas, MA, a choreographer who completed her studies in Helsinki and in London.

Her 2011 work The Last Dance Before the End of the World (Viimeinen tanssi ennen maailmanloppua), is about the dance we embrace when there is no time left for anything else. Rajakangas had been deeply touched by Lars Von Trier’s apocalyptic film Melancholia, which inspired how the final resolution concluding her piece was constructed.

Her latest work Wonderful and Fine (Ihana ja hieno, 2012), which is said to be a bit risky and outlandish, examines what happens when one strives for absolute perfection.

Rajakangas is taken with dance moves that are well defined, precise and exact. She thinks it is important that the movement language supports the overall theme and purpose of the work, and not vice versa.

- My style is energetic, in-your-face provocative, but also mundane and very present-day, she describes.

Rajakangas has always been fascinated about dance as an art form, and as a medium of expression. It comes to her naturally. Observing the human physique on display and letting it breathe and evolve in harmony with the audience, as the performance unfolds, are fundamentally moving experiences.

- I firmly believe that I can influence another person by articulating through the body and movement the things I find important.

Rajakangas notes that she herself is easily stirred and moved.

- My works are about inequality and indifference. They tackle the common trait people have of not accepting or not being able to truly see each other. You often witness this when you go about your daily life.

What does she want to communicate through her work?

- I want to highlight the absurdity of the rules and restrictions in our lives. I want to probe into the exploited existence of many people, and reflect why is it we do certain things and act in specific ways. 

KR
Towards Something Greater

Dancer choreographer Jarkko Mandelin, MA, is the founder of the Kinetic Orchestra group. His trademark is a hodgepodge of ideas and styles, punctuated by small, delicate details. Mandelin’s expression is both kinetic and aesthetic.

— As a dancer and learner I am motivated by curiosity. For example, I am fascinated by skating, high jumping, and the martial arts. Furthermore, their highly developed, creative ideas inspire me endlessly. I am trying to learn to slide and fly, and I also want to inspire others to experience weightlessness.

He considers In a Loud Voice (2011), which he created for his own company, to be one of his most important works. It is geared for youth, being sensitive and perceptive of what they have to share. It is a fresh, new kind of dance piece which combines many styles and genres.

Yet, Mandelin believes his most important and meaningful works still lie ahead.

— Creating a piece that works is like a puzzle I need to solve. I need to crack that nut, but often after I have discovered an idea, a style, or a logic that works, I lose my interest.

Mandelin wants to prove that dance is a very precious, but unfortunately, quite underappreciated art form.

— Each piece has its own raison d’être, but in all honesty, I continuously strive to prove that my medium is sound and solid.

He practices and creates dance, while constantly keeping a more distant goal in the bull’s eye.

— One day I’ll again solve another problem, and thus gain a bit more understanding of my instrument. They say I am supposed to live here and now and enjoy this present moment, but I don’t have the time.

The present, after all, is just a step in my journey, and I am heading towards something greater.
Exploring the Small Things

Veli Lehtovaara, who graduated from the Helsinki Theater Academy and the Performing Arts School in Belgium (P.A.R.T.S), sees himself as an odd bird in the world of dance.

- Choreography and dance are mediums I discovered by accident about ten years ago. The unfamiliarity and constant challenge to understand what’s going on is fascinating and perplexing.

However, Lehtovaara has already challenged himself in the realm of dance, and quite successfully so. A couple of his pieces have toured abroad, and his award-winning dance film project has received praise.

His most recent work, in collaboration with Maria Ferreira Silva, is a duet Light as a Feather, Green as an Apple (2012). This piece, while digging deep into Christian iconography, displays the more sensitive, vulnerable side of Lehtovaara, and brings to light his sophisticated sense of humor.

On the Threshold (Kynnyksellä, 2011), which is next featured at the Düsseldorf Tanzmesse 2012, introduces five charismatic performers, four dancers and a musician. This joint venture with choreographer Mikko Hyvönen is commissioned by the Dance Company Off/Balance, and it is the group’s debut performance as well.

Lehtovaara’s works and artistic career clearly indicate that it is people who are the source of his inspiration.

- I’m sensitive towards social situations and how people act and manifest themselves. That’s why the people I work with usually have a great influence on my work.

After several collaborations, Lehtovaara is planning to work on his own for a while. He’s currently doing a research on political speech and looking for ways to treat spoken language as music.

Lehtovaara doesn’t think that he possesses any particular agenda even though he tackles weighty political and religious topics. It is more like each work is itself a personal expedition for him.

- My work is about exploring how small and simple things, and gestures, can unfold surprisingly into many dimensions and directions during a performance. It’s characterized by the attempt to maximize the minimal – and it’s from there that the poetry and the preciseness of the work emerge.
The Importance of Inquiry
– Pia Lindy’s work penetrates to the core of democracy

By Maria Sakö
Photo Suvi-Tuuli Kankaanpää

It is unusual that a dancer so relentlessly carries on her intense, open, and outspoken commitment to the core values of democracy as Pia Lindy does. For her, art represents inquiry but is also the source for answers.
From the start, Pia Lindy's work has in some way succeeded to embody our society. She believes that it is of utmost importance for her as an artist to have the ability to be firmly rooted in inquiry. This need for questioning has led Lindy from theaters to the streets. Her evolution has morphed from a creative artist to that of a documentary filmmaker, from an observer to an artist who actively yearns for a change.

In the early 1990's she studied in Amsterdam at the School for New Dance Development. Her training was not intended to provide her with all-inclusive answers but to equip her with the instruments necessary to continue her inquiry and exploration.

- My way of working is a fusion of contemporary dance, visual arts, and performance art. Many of my performance pieces have taken place in the Live Art context. It is an open and unrestricted setting with no predetermined definitions or boundaries.

Towards the end of the 90's was the first time she deliberately started to examine the relationship between her works and the audience. She heeded the feedback and revised and altered her performances accordingly.

For Lindy asking questions has been one way to talk about dance and life in general. It is also her way to create performative settings that facilitate encounters and connections with people during their daily life.

At first her interactions with people consisted mostly of musing about dance and art.

- All the experience and understanding I have gained over the years has broadened the scope of my inquiry. It is no longer confined just to questions about artistic experiences, she says now.

- My experience and understanding acquired through dance have hugely influenced my present disposition. You could say those are the backdrop to who I am, and determine what kind of projects I choose to do or what I communicate as an artist.

Ten Years of Improvisation

Lindy is in a habit of making long-term plans. A decade ago she decided that she was going to spend the next ten years improvising. In 2001 through her About to Dance project, she started to contemplate dance and the human body in everyday life.

- In the 90's I still believed that art and dance would save the world. My outlook had been strongly shaped by certain cultural thinking patterns. That kind of Western arrogance, that I had grown up to, has started to crumble.


The common thread through her performance works is the blending of minimalism and playfulness. The titles hint towards the many nuances of language. The movement and spoken language contained in her works are extremely concise and compact, resembling aphorisms.

During the project Lindy and her videographer have also pounded the pavement to interview people and get their input and opinions to questions about dance and life.

How do you feel about the word “dance”? Is there a particular movement that comes to your mind hearing the word? Is there a movement you would like to teach me? What kind of movement or motion reflects life itself? These interviews have taken place in Eastern Finland, Helsinki, Lapland, Prague, Saint Petersburg, New York, Barcelona and Hammerfest.

In fall 2007, a bunch of Finnish Parliament members joined her project to answer her questions with movement and dance. About to Dance, Swing of Politics video production premiered at the Finnish Parliament during spring 2008.

It was important for Lindy to connect with politicians as ordinary people. Focusing on moving and one’s own physical being allowed the more humane qualities of the politicians to emerge. They gave Lindy cold feet, but she made them a bit nervous as well. In the end, the project became a series of works offering meaningful comments on society.

Conveyor of Messages

In spring 2011 Lindy, cultural researcher Juhana Venäläinen, and photographer and community artist Annsuka Dal Maso started to collaborate on a new project About to Dance – CONNECTING. This project focuses on the roles of art and artists as communicators and conveyors, and connecting with people in general.

In CONNECTING Lindy and her workgroup convey messages collected from citizens to the politicians. For example, one of the messages is a personal account of experiences at the state employment office by a 20-something young adult.

- What really shines through is how little people are encouraged to think on their own, and how little adults really are aware of the origins of that preferred lifestyle they are shoving down young people's throats.

Lindy strives to increase tolerance for the incomplete.

- When you learn to live with or look at something that is imperfect and unfinished, it will make you more resilient to face the unknown.

Lindy's upcoming solo performance Oh Lightness includes elements of About to Dance - CONNECTING. In Oh Lightness messages sent by people and other experiences gained during the project are infiltrated into her performance. In the performance she also examines the problems of success and loss.

- People have shared many tough stories. What should happen after we have delivered that message to the politicians, what then? Is it our role just to bring issues to the daylight, or should we follow up and take it further?

Other Ways to Connect

Art helps us to comprehend otherwise, and it also helps us to think independently. Therefore, art builds a foundation for democracy.

Lindy creates encounters, listening and connections, with the hope that people would have the courage to think and question freely and independently. For Lindy, dance and art are ways to observe the world, and that ability will deepen and strengthen as time goes by.

- I wouldn't say that I have changed as an artist. Over time my perception and senses have sharpened and have become more finely tuned to interpret this world and thus help me to continue my dialogue.

She finds it important to introduce alternative ways to encounter people, not just during theater performances.

- You can reach a thousand people from a big stage. On the street I might meet only three people. However, the end result might turn out to be that over the years those three street encounters will radiate and reach thousands and again thousands of people.
In 2007 Lindy asked questions about dance and life from Paavo Arhinmäki, who is currently the Minister of Culture in Finland.
My job is like a Christmas Eve

– Sketching a portrait of choreographer Jorma Elo

By Hannele Jyrkkä
Photo Sakari Viika

Jorma Elo is a world renowned Finnish dance artist whose choreographies have graced the stages of American Ballet Theater and the New York City Ballet. His works have also been performed in Russia, China, Great Britain, Canada, Netherlands, Denmark, and on and off in Finland as well. The home base for this globe-trotting cosmopolitan is the Boston Ballet, where he has worked as a choreographer since 2005.

In April 2012 Elo was in Finland conducting rehearsals for his work Double Evil for the Finnish National Ballet. It was about time to find out more about this illustrious and award-winning 51-year-old choreographer who has created over 55 dance pieces.

First of all, he is incredibly enthusiastic about his work.

Elo is on the road ten to eleven months a year, visiting dance ensembles in various countries. During spring 2012 he created choreographies for ballet groups in Boston, Antwerp and Atlanta. Just before his summer vacation, he completed a commissioned work, Dream of Dream, for the Moscow Bolshoi Ballet.

In July he leads a rigorous choreography workshop, and in October he’ll be busy with a new production for the Boston Ballet. During the fall season you will also find him in Oklahoma, rehearsing earlier works such as Slice to Sharp with the Tulsa Ballet, and in Moscow, preparing the piece 1st Flash for the Stanislavsky Ballet.

- I am busy, but I enjoy my work enormously, so I don’t mind the pace at all. My parents instilled in me a strong work ethic, besides I have good genes! In the midst of this all, I do try to enjoy the special fleeting moments life offers.

Elo trained to become a dancer at the Finnish National Ballet’s school and in Leningrad. From 1978 to 1984 he performed with the Finnish National Ballet. At the time of the interview he felt especially honored to be back at his Alma Mater, where Double Evil premiered in May 2012.

This work which he created in 2008 is set to the music of Vladimir Martynov and Philip Glass. It’s a piece for eight dancers, a brilliant choreography that facilitates a smooth and effortless dialogue between classical ballet and contemporary dance.

- I am working with many familiar faces including my former colleague Kimmo Sandell. We have had a great time. It has been somewhat like “putting the band back together.”

In 1984 Elo’s path led from Helsinki to Sweden’s Cullberg Ballet, and then continued to Holland, where he performed with the Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT) from 1990 to 2004. During his period with the NDT he gradually got more and more interested in creating choreography, especially while working with artistic directors like Jiří Kylián, Ohad Nahirin and William Forsythe.

Additionally, his creative juices led him to experiment with scene, costume and lighting design in NDT’s workshops for dancers. He continues to be actively involved in the planning stages of the overall visual presentation, and ponders questions like how to partition an architectural space with lighting.

The Dancer Assumes Responsibility
Elo’s spirit is further spurred on by the dancers' enthusiasm.

- I just arrived from Moscow, where within couple of weeks I got quite accustomed to their way of working. The Russians are loud and talk nonstop.

- In Finland, excitement is expressed in a more subtle ways. During my absence in Moscow, under the leadership of my assistant and mate Nancy Euverink, the Finnish dancers had demonstrated enormous dedication and time commitment to have the Double Evil polished and ready to go by my arrival in Helsinki. It was remarkable.

The highpoint in choreographer’s work is always the premiere. That’s when the dancers take the responsibility on stage and carry the given material into new heights.

- The dancers transform it all into a magical experience. At that moment it feels wonderful having been part of the crew that built this vessel. My job is like a never-ending Christmas Eve; I am continuously showered with presents.
The dancers seem to be happy as well. Jaakko Eerola, an étoile with the Finnish National Ballet, was dancing in Double Evil's premiere. Rehearsing this piece was really hard for him due to the fast tempo of the music.

- You must have a solid technique from a strong classical background. However, Jorma has a deep trust in his dancers and that is unusual. Eerola who has performed in Elo's earlier productions, says that it is awesome when the choreographer creates a working environment where all the dancers feel that they are appreciated professionals.

I am busy, but I enjoy my work enormously, so I don’t mind the pace at all. My parents instilled in me a strong work ethic, besides I have good genes!

Maria Baranova joined the National Ballet as a principal dancer in November 2011. Baranova, who is the winner of the 2009 Helsinki International Ballet Competition junior series, also finds Elo’s dance movements technically challenging. Working with the choreographer was an unforgettable experience for her.

- It has been inspiring to work with such a great personality as Jorma. He has made me look at ballet from a different angle and see the beauty in simplicity.

The choreographer himself likes all kinds of dance. In his works he combines movement language from the classical tradition with materials that have an earthier, more organic style.

However, he admits that with each new production and place, he is constantly refining the material from his earlier works. His frame of mind is set in the continuous working gear and it just doesn’t accommodate anything ready-made.
He shares his hectic life with an agent and three assistants.

- Experience has taught me to start building a new work bit by bit. However, when I am creating a new piece, sometimes the steps come in a quick tempo: 25 movements within 20–30 seconds. My concentration is focused on how to articulate these movements together. My sharp assistants are there to take it all in and to interpret the movement material.

Music is the Lifeline
It is also music that keeps Elo’s creative machinery purring. The strong bond between dance and music is evident throughout his whole production.

- Yeah, music is the lifeline we hang on to. Music always has a clear structure, so you can hold on to it if you are lost or out of inspiration. Thanks to music I also feel more uninhibited when working with dancers. We can all relax and experience the state of flow.

What is Elo’s recipe to reach the state of flow?
- It is a big secret! Actually, I am trying to figure out how to turn it on. Basically, it is meditation, an effort to utilize the full capacity of our brains, even the subconscious parts that we are not usually aware of, he says.

- For example, you can draw from previous experiences of the flow, the physical feeling that can include colors and sounds. If you can reach a state of flow even for a few minutes in a day, that is an achievement. The rest of the time you can just carry on and take care of stuff with your rational mind.

This sympathetic choreographer acknowledges that he is in his dream job. In the future he might want to tackle the idea of a narrative ballet which, similar to movies, would allow him to combine many various elements; that would provide another learning experience.

During his travels he often marvels how alike dancers operate around the world.

- In the morning you’ll see more smiling faces in San Francisco than in Moscow but, nevertheless, in both places the day starts with the 10:00 am morning practice. It is touching how dancers everywhere, day after day, enthusiastically immerse their whole body and soul into their craft and dance like there is no tomorrow.

Ballerinas of the 90-year Old National Ballet

2012 marks the 90th anniversary of the Finnish National Ballet. Under the guidance of its Danish artistic director Kenneth Greve, the ballet currently employs a diverse group of 75 dancers and ten apprentices from fourteen different countries.

Each year, the ballet offers approximately 85 performances, including three to four premieres, and also stages about five additional productions.

What does the life of a ballerina look like in today’s Finland?

Salla Eerola has been dancing with the National Ballet since 1996, and in 2009 became an étoile. She spent last fall in the gym and on the hiking trails, getting back into her dancer’s body following a maternity leave. Her first big challenge was the lead role of Clara in Nutcracker.

The 34-year old Eerola sums it up by stating that the daily life of a dancer is, above all, paying attention to one’s body.

- Your physique changes continuously, so it is a balancing act throughout one’s career. There needs to be equilibrium between exercising and over-exercising yourself. Also, pain can be your daily companion. That is the toughest part of this job, says Eerola, who in spring 2012 was rehearsing for Jorma Elo’s dance piece Double Evil.

Eerola notes that her work presents a lot of special moments on stage, in the rehearsal studio, and in interactions with people. However, she emphasizes, the best part continues to be the dancing itself, that is what is essential.

20-year old Maria Baranova is the ballet’s newest principal dancer, and has already performed for example the roles of Kitri in Don Quijote and Swanilda in Coppélia. She also performed in Elo’s Double Evil. Baranova says that she enjoys the daily routines as well as the surprises that everyday life brings along.

- It is hard to put in words how wonderful the life of an artist really is!

Tiina Myllymäki’s Black Swan enchanted the audience at the Ballet’s 90th anniversary gala celebration in January 2012. Dancing as a soloist since 2011, the 27-year old Myllymäki says that for her ballet represents surpassing oneself.

- Being a ballet dancer means you are continuously competing against yourself, and that is never ending. It is addictive! I also view dancing as a service occupation. I would like to create an unforgettable experience and touch the lives of people, because for many, a night at the ballet might be the highpoint of the season.
Back to Nature

By Katja Keränen and Elina Manninen

Photo Lasse Hagman
Finland is a large, sparsely populated country. Its topography is cloaked in vast forests dotted by thousands of lakes. In the northern regions, magnificent fjelds adorn the landscape. Most Finns are connected to nature in some way, and this bond is also reflected in Finnish contemporary dance art.

Finns create art in the wilderness and while doing so, yield to nature’s demands. Conversely, the shapes and fabric of nature, as well as its movements, animals and seasons inspire the art that we get to enjoy on stage.

During past decades ecological viewpoints have also found a place in the art scene. Nature inspires and offers a perfect backdrop for artistic pursuits, but it has also become a subject that arouses commentary and debates.

On Nature’s Terms

- Circumstances and my internal summoning have driven me away from theaters and out into the nature, says choreographer Reijo Kela. Hundreds of his productions have found their setting in nature or in various alfresco venues.
- In urban settings we mostly live in compact apartment buildings, which limit our natural ties with nature. You can’t just step out and do stuff like cut wood or kick around pine cones. When you open the door there is no forest you can dash into. In that sense there is more perspective in the countryside, there is more freedom and space and paths to explore.

Kela’s massive environmental art performance River Woman (Jokinainen), which was carried out in collaboration with performing artist Katarina Angeria and a work group, took place during summer 2010. The setting was the hundreds of kilometers long Tornio River, the longest unharnessed river in Europe.

- I got an urge to create a work for the river. I wanted to take advantage of this surging force that nature offers, and I wanted to pay homage to the Nordic landscape and its might and vigor, Kela recounts the ideas that nudged him towards this production.

Kela was pondering whether it was possible to construct a raft out of recycled plastic bottles, and whether this raft could carry a bunch of performing artists on its journey down the river. He was also wondering whether all the unrecyclable stuff hauled to the starting point by car could be transported back via the waterway.

These contemplations resulted in a raft, constructed out of 16,000 plastic bottles. The raft supported dancing River Woman, a two and a half meters high figure whose enormous white skirt concealed three dancers, two security personnel and a musician.

The work evolved into a 21-days-long dance, music and white water rafting performance. And what an audience did it receive – sheep, reindeer, birds, fish, fishermen, occasional passersby, and the hundreds of people who lined the rapids to take in the spectacle. In many villages along the river, the River Woman inspired full-blown festivals; art exhibits and other events were organized.

The timetable for this event was dictated by nature since the venue was a free flowing river.
- The spectators would have liked to know exactly where we were going to be at a certain hour, but since we were at nature’s whim, we were never sure whether we’ll reach our destination in time, or at all.

The Body Reflects the Surroundings

For several decades nature has been a source of inspiration for dancer choreographer Raisa Vennamo, and she has presented her works in the midst of the most beautiful scenery in Eastern Finland.

For example, she has found perfect settings in the national parks of Koli and Petkeljärvi near the Russian border. During summer 2012, together with dancer Kaisa Kukkonen, she even produced a small-scale nature dance festival.

Nature has taken a complete hold of Vennamo.
- I like to spend time in nature. It is there that I choreograph, improvise and rehearse. It has grown to me, she says.

Among others, nature was the source of inspiration and the setting for her 2007 work In to the Forest (Metsän Peitto). This work, realized together with musician Emilia Kallonen, dug deep into Finnish folklore. The scene design was provided by the surrounding forest.

Vennamo explains that the spatial dimensions in nature make it a desirable setting for her works.
- The work breaths in a different way outdoors, because it can reach out spatially, free of the constrictions and confinements of a room.
There is more perspective in the countryside, there is more freedom and space and paths to explore.
Most Finns find nature to be a nurturing place, where you can even experience a glimpse of the sacred.
Dance artist **Jukka Ristolainen**'s milieu is an old farm in Central Finland, which also provides workspace for artists-in-residence. He is interested in the site-specific dance, and likes to explore how variable circumstances either hinder or enhance movement.

One example of his work that emanated from nature's elements is the -25°C Wide Scenery Is Time (-25°C Avara Maisema On Aika, 2004), a dance video where the dancing takes place on a lake ice. The performer on the ice dances fully clothed or totally naked, twirls and whirls farther and farther away into the horizon, and dips into the hole in the ice. The video was first shown at a bus station, breathing a glimmer of cool breeze into its warm, expectant air.

You can sense the presence of nature in Ristolainen's works. Though he lives on this idyllic farm, he doesn't believe that a rural lifestyle would automatically mean that nature would inherently be integrated in one's works. Nature can gain even a greater significance in a piece that has been created in an urban setting. - You can't always see the forest from the trees. One tree in New York can create a greater contrast than a bunch of trees in a forest.

Then again, the history of a dancer's body contains all his or her life experiences, he adds. - Our bodies are dependent on and reflect the environment where we live and interact. Our surroundings manifest through the haste, tempo and rhythm of our actions, and even through the quality of our movements.

**Pirjo Yli-Maunula** agrees. She is a dance artist from Northern Finland who lives and works in Oulu. Her works like *Self Portrait* (Omakuva, 2005), *The Polar Night* (Kaamos, 2008) and *Karikko* (2011) portray a strong presence of nature, particularly the northern elements of snow, ice, darkness and light.

- I would argue that nature's circumstances, such as extreme changes in light and darkness, the change of seasons, or the proximity or absence of nature in everyday life, have a huge influence in one's personality structure. For example, I believe that the way Finnish dance artists use elements of time and stillness in their works truly reflect our living conditions.

Yli-Maunula says that she has encountered visitors from big Central European cities, who might even get anxious in the expansive stillness of Lapland.

- I guess it can be frightening if you are accustomed to an environment where you are always surrounded by people and buildings. However, most Finns find nature to be a secure and nurturing place where you can enjoy calm and stillness, and even experience a glimpse of the sacred.

**Nature Steps on Stage**

You are at the mercy of nature's forces when your setting is on a river, in a forest, or on ice. Yet it is possible to instill subject matter derived from nature's phenomena and fabric, along with the influences of the animal kingdom, onto the stage.

**Vennamo**, who has spent a lot of time in the lush green Finnish countryside, has formed a strong bond with materials found in nature like lichen, trees and water. And as time passes “being embraced by nature's cloth” has gained more and more importance for her.

During stage performances Vennamo dips into her past experiences in nature that are stored in her body memory.

- In my imagination I can feel the caress of wind or sense my toes touching the lichen, she describes.

Residents in senior homes have also had an opportunity to enjoy breaths of nature through the dances that Vennamo has brought to them.

- In addition to movement, my works incorporate scents. I also work with focused breathing, which brings us closer to experiencing the wind and currents in air. Nature is so much richer an environment for our senses than interior spaces.

In his work *Backwoods* (Mehtäautotieltä, 2009) Jukka Ristolainen studies the physical realm, humankind and the nature of animals. What shines through this work is the same mellow pace of life moving in harmony with nature's rhythms that permeates his homestead.

The soundscape echoes resonances from Ristolainen's daily routines as well as voices of birds and horses. The traditional Japanese costume blurs away any visible human contours, and deer huffs donated by a local hunting lodge protrude from the costume, in place of human hands.

- I would say it is a very direct reference to the animal nature within us. Conversely, when I am working on the farm with horses, in obvious comparison, I strongly identify as a human being even if I am constantly trying to break through the communication barrier, Ristolainen muses.
Animal Motion, which premiered in Helsinki in 2010, is choreographed by Sari Palmgren. It is a dance piece about an animal called the human being; it contends with this creature’s feelings and attitudes vis-à-vis its own physique, its relationship with other animals and its living environment.

The impetus for this piece was Palmgren’s desire to gain deeper understanding about evolution and about the changes taking place in our environment. The choreographer is interested in the way humanity has declared itself to be the pinnacle of evolution – and as such, has defined the status of our fellow creatures and nature itself.

While creating the choreography she didn’t try to mimic other species, instead she tried to imagine how a humanoid animal would move about.

- I was after those animal characteristics in human beings, examining the basic animal impulse within us. We function a lot like animals, much more than we ever would want to admit. However, we are no longer comfortable in our bodies; we stoop, hunker and tense up instead of stretching out and feeling gravity. We should use the full range of our kinetic capacities.

Dance as an Ecological Choice

Can dance then, as an art form, be an effective advocate in ecological and environmental questions? Yes it can. Even though Finnish dance artists are no preachers, you still can discern all sorts of commentary in their work.

For example, Reijo Kela performed his Summit (1997) piece on a red Afghan rug laid on the frozen Baltic Sea. His bare torso cloaked in wolf fur, he brought his dance right outside the windows of Finland’s president Martti Ahtisaari’s official residence, while he was meeting with Bill Clinton and Boris Jeltsin.

Kela danced on the Baltic. Stopping the rapid deterioration of this body of water has been one of the hottest environmental topics in Finland since the beginning of this new millennium. Maybe we should have been attentive and heeded Kela’s cautions much earlier?

Alternatively, the act of creating dance can itself be seen as an ecological choice. Jukka Ristolainen thinks as much.

- In order for dance to happen you just need a moving human being, a place, and some time to dance. All other auxiliary elements having to do with dance, can be realized within an ecological framework.

Since 2006 Ristolainen and his family have lived and worked in the countryside. His farmstead is also the cornerstone for his artistic work. The great room has become a multifunctional space serving often as a dance studio, sometimes as a performance space, and also as a site for educational events.

- Here traditional physical labour, contemporary dance, and the necessity for an authentic experience, are all meshed together. Our choice of a rural lifestyle is an essential part of the creative process and also testifies to our ecological values. Man’s relationship with nature is palpable all the time, starting with the mundane tasks of daily life.

Sari Palmgren is looking for new ways to combine dance art and ecological projects. During recent years she has been actively involved in the international Challenge Europe Climate Change Project, working as a choreographer and project manager in collaboration with experts from environmental and sustainable development fields.

Teams in participating countries fleshed out ideas for concrete plans to lessen our carbon footprint, and formed partnerships in order to realize their conceptual work.

- In March 2011, together with Helsinki Climate Info, we organized an Energyday-fair. The event drew some 1500 visitors, and the main theme was to encourage people to generate energy, for example by dancing and biking.

Presently Palmgren has plans for a dance piece that would be self-sufficient in terms of the production energy consumption, by generating the needed energy with dynamic movement. The work would thus demonstrate transparency in energy usage. At this point her plans are at a conceptual phase.

Raisa Vennamo believes that a choreographer’s connection with his/her own body fundamentally correlates with the artist’s relationship with nature. Vennamo, who also works as Feldenkrais teacher has learned through this method of simplicity and letting go that there is an easier way to do things, in a smaller scale.

- For me being ecologically oriented is a way of life. Performing outdoors or in natural daylight is simple and saves energy. My choice to create small-scale dance productions mirrors my philosophy about life in general. I don’t pontificate, but I am a firm believer in the power of individual choices.
Animal Motion, choreographer and dancer Sari Palmgren.
Dancer choreographer and film maker Thomas Freundlich is captivated about how people relate to the natural environment of the northern latitudes; how we venture into a new territory and leave our mark.

This contemplation is the theme of North Horizon, a dance film Freundlich created together with his colleague Valtteri Raekallio in 2010. One of the production locations was a 1960’s era Soviet mining village in the Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic Sea.

- The place was absolutely incredible. As soon as extracting the natural resources had become unprofitable, the whole village was just abandoned with its frozen-solid coal mines. And in this part of the world nature renews itself so slowly that you can actually still see the 60-year old tractor imprints on the tundra!

The arctic wilderness areas have long been exploited for utilitarian and economic needs, which have varied from a century to another.

- The explorers saw the arctic regions as something to be conquered. During the 20th century, the North was turned into the wasteland of the industrialized world, into a nowhere land, whose nature or indigenous people you could completely ignore. People ventured into these wilderness areas to drill oil, or to test nuclear weapons. It was a place to do stuff you didn’t want to mess with in your own backyard, says Freundlich.

At the turn of the millennium, the Arctic has become a living proof of climate change.

Expansive Spaciousness

Stepping on the arctic soil opened new dimensions and experiences of spaciousness to this choreographer.

- You can’t help resorting to the word “empty” when describing the Arctic, as if it was totally void of anything. Only after you have settled down and spent some time there, do you gradually start to comprehend the richness and the significance of it all. You’ll realize that it is definitely not empty space.

Freundlich believes that dance art, at least in a form of a film, is well able to illuminate this concept of completeness.

Creating art in the arctic wilderness presents a new set of queries in terms of the performance space and movement characteristics:

- A glacier or the slope of a fjeld is drastically different in its dimensions and other qualities, than a space where we are accustomed to seeing and creating dance. First of all, how is this expansive, vast spaciousness going to affect the creative process of choreography, and second, how is the audience going to take it in, he ponders.

Freundlich’s 2011 work Waterline (Veden Raja), a collaboration with dancer choreographer Neil Owens, also examined the natural environment, but as a cultural heritage. The opening night took place at Vellamo, a maritime center in the Baltic city of Kotka.

This site-specific work navigates the history of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland through dance.

- In Waterline the sea also represented the transience of time, and it was explored as an environment for all sorts of human activities. One of the elementary experiences when creating the piece was to stand on the shores of Kotka, and reflect on those seafaring men and women who for a thousand years have navigated on these very same waters and sailed between these same islands.
Karsikko
– a Border Sign

Karsikko exists between a graveyard and human habitat. It is a symbol placed on a tree, a carving on a tree trunk or perhaps some cut off branches. It signals to the souls of the departed not to cross the line into the world of the living.

For dancer choreographer Pirjo Yli-Maunula, her work Karsikko (2011), symbolizes the division between the everyday life and the subconscious. And a bizarre, sensual expedition via paper, iron, plastic, leather, wood, earth and water, into an alternate reality.

No Words to Describe
There is so much that is concealed, taboo, in the depths of existence, beyond all verbal expressions; birth and death, sexuality and violence, distortion of mind, extreme pleasure.

- I am often at a loss for words when it comes to my works. But I trust that through movement we can discover things that otherwise remain beyond our grasp. Movement is a way of thinking, dancing is a way of expressing things that can't be put into words.

Nail Dance beneath Raining Feathers
Seated on benches of piled-up encyclopedias, the audience watches as the subconscious world, in the form of dancers, breaks through the paper walls. Finally, from the ruptured wall, a woman costumed in spikes appears dancing under a shower of feathers.

Ecstatic Trees and Pink Bunnies
A tower 3.5 meters high, a man dresses two women with branches in place of a head. A hunting platform, night club go-go dancers — snorts, chuckles, growls. The low voices resonate in the body. A rooster crows.

- The treehead is the oddest of the characters in this work. Two bare-chested women, with branches supplanting their heads. Who would ever imagine encountering such a being? Here, the keyword was pleasure, extreme, ecstatic, bottomless pleasure.

Inside the tower wrapped in plastic sheet, a solitary woman dances in her private space, in her own enclosed world. Meanwhile people close by are peering at this woman and the pink bunnies dance through distortive lenses.

Loose Animal Motion
If you cross a fox and a wolf, you get a “wolfox.” A masked fantasy creature with horns, eyes gleaming humping his partner, and dancing on all fours with controlled ease on the fake, red lawn. The snout touches the spectator. The breath is felt on your palm. The animal surfaces.

- We used an idea of a floating head and sort of an animal creature, who is always in a fully alert state: ready to burst into volatile action or ease into a relaxed mode. That is the way of a wolfox.

The Birth of Mermaids
Gently and delicately the mermaids glide out from beneath the stands, slither between the legs of the audience, back and forth along the wet floor. Someone remarks that it reminds her of giving birth. The background video features swimming fish and plankton. A woman sings.

- The water scene was accompanied with a feeling of absolute freedom. It is so easy to work with water: just a small amount of water on the dance floor makes gliding incredibly effortless.

Returning to Earth
Hands and feet rooted in the soil, a trace of dirt on moist skin, imprints of one's body left on the mud, impassioned sinking into the earth. The homecoming.

- There was so much of it. An enormous amount of soil, a huge pile of earth and mud where we roll, twist and muck around, and bathe. And at the same time that presence of death and enormous pleasure, the horrific and the wonderful: just like in a child’s play where the fear weaves into the temptation and joy.
Pirjo Yli-Maunula is a dance artist working in Northern Finland. Many of her pieces reflect our relationship with the natural environment, as well as the natural phenomena and seasons of the northern landscape. Similarly, her work Karsikko is based e.g. on tree and animal characters and derives from nature’s materials and soundscapes.

The Karsikko production team included Pirjo Yli-Maunula and Titta Court (choreography and dance), Terje Isungset (music), Aake Otsala (sound effects), Pirjo Valinen (scene design), Julia Adzuki and Heidi Kesti (costume design) and Jukka Huitula (video).
HAIGAFURU Speaks to Us Again

By Outi Järvinen
Photo Uupi Tirronen

“Ash is falling, ash is falling,
from the stratosphere, ash is falling.
Ash is falling, ash is falling,
in every corner of the world, ash is falling.
Polar bears, penguins, nightingales, palm trees and violets
blissfully ignorant, while
the world is ending up homeless.”

After half a century, Tatsuji Miyoshi’s 1962 poem HAIGAFURU (Ash is falling) suddenly became relevant in Japan again.

This poem, written in the wake of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki tragedies, has touched the hearts of a new generation when a catastrophic, nuclear-scale calamity manifested itself once again in 2011 with the Fukushima power plant’s accident.

The poem is also the starting point for Japanese choreographer Kosei Sakamoto’s work, aptly named HAIGAFURU, which premiered in Helsinki during spring 2012.

The piece, performed by five Finnish dancers, is part of the Finnish-Japanese choreographers’ exchange and co-production project. Sakamoto’s work is already the second collaborative dance production between Zodiak – Center for New Dance and the Japan Contemporary Dance Network.

HAIGAFURU, which commences in total darkness, is somber and heavy, but also compelling work that makes audiences pause. “Above all, HAIGAFURU is a powerful reminder, that if we don’t act, our future will be, as described by the poem, a planet lost in deep sleep for millenniums”, wrote one dance critic after the opening night.

In order to perform this aesthetically stylish and sophisticated work, the dancers need to have tenacity, sensitivity, and the skills of an acrobat. It also calls for an enormous amount of physical and mental endurance.

In July 2011, Sakamoto lead an intensive workshop for professional dancers in Finland. From the workshop participants, he chose five dancers for his piece; Meeri Altmets, Johanna Ikola, Jarkko Lehmus, Kaisa Niemi and Ville Oinonen. The group started their rehearsals in March 2012.

- To tackle a theme like this, which is incredibly demanding, explicit, political and current, one must be brave and have faith in the significance of the work, dancer Ville Oinonen contends.
- I didn’t quite know what to expect in terms of the outcome, or how the process would unfold. Previously, I had seen Kosei’s works mainly on YouTube. It was interesting and even exciting to learn more about the topic as the process moved along.

Rewarded by Co-operation

Sakamoto, the artistic director of the Monochrome Circus dance group, also invited composer Toru Yamanaka and light designer Takayuki “Kinsei” Fujimoto to join the HAIGAFURU project. In the past, both of these Japanese artists have worked with the world famous Dumb Type ensemble.

It was while working on the HAIGAFURU project with the Finnish dancers and production team, that this threesome, Sakamoto, Yamanaka and Fujimoto, found themselves working together for the first time.

Regardless of cultural differences, the Finnish-Japanese work group found creative commonality, and on the whole, this intensive process ended up being a very rewarding experience for all the participants.

- I am happy that I got to be part of this production! Kosei conducted some great practice sessions, which really inspired and guided us to create the movement material. It was interesting to observe how he handled a very challenging subject and developed it into a dance piece, dancer Kaisa Niemi recounts.
- I didn’t have any preconceived notions nor expectations about him. I had no idea what to anticipate, so that in itself was quite interesting. I had envisioned a more authoritarian control, but the entire process turned out to be much more relaxed than what I had previously thought, Niemi muses.
- Perhaps the work methods Kosei used to fashion his dance movements during the workshop, and later during the rehearsals, created some expectations of his style. He utilizes a lot of different tools to compose his material. The material itself can be almost anything. Then again, he can have very specific opinions concerning particular movements, Ville Oinonen says.
- The cultural differences were most apparent in the ways we communicated. There certainly were a few “lost in translation” type situations, which also lead to some hilarious moments, Oinonen reminisces.

Oinonen was interested in the opportunity for a new kind of dialogue with a person coming from a different cultural background.
- Through our differences, we can also discover our common denominators, he notes.

The process which all started with open minds, also brought with it some positive surprises, Oinonen recounts.
- I was surprised by how much of the material was generated by us, the dancers; so, in that sense it was also quite a creative process. Due to the short timeframe, I had anticipated that we would mainly be working with fully developed concepts and movement material.

In the end, this collaborative work proved that international projects can be rewarding, not only for the project participants, but also in offering a new kind of experiences for the audience. HAIGAFURU resulted in a work of art that has a universal message; it touches and moves us.

Citing Sakamoto’s earnest words in the program of the performance: “I hope this work will help you to consider about civilization and the future of yourself, your family and all the children in the world.”
Everything falls perfectly in place in choreographer Kenneth Kvarnström’s 2011 production (play). The performance features graceful duets by Helsinki Dance Company’s seven dancers, a continuous stream of different group configurations, smaller distinct pieces, handsome designer costumes, and a group of six musicians performing live on stage.

This internationally acclaimed Finnish choreographer often brings us wild creations and entertaining features. This time though the audience, who is accustomed to Kvarnström’s minimalist, dark-toned world accompanied with electronic music, is absolutely taken by surprise.

In keeping with its name, (play) is playing around with various ways of seeing, observing and being observed, as well as with surprising and unusual ways of combining different styles, movements and music.

This work is a collaboration between the Swedish NorrlandsOperan, Helsinki Dance Company, and Kvarnström’s own K. Kvarström & Co. From the beginning it was clear that this was going to be a touring piece that could enjoy a long run.

In November–December 2011 (play) saw its opening nights both in Finland and Sweden. Wolfsburg in Germany launched its international tour in May 2012. From there the tour will continue via wintery Brugge in Belgium to Luxemburg, before finally returning to Bonn Germany in summer 2013.

This work was commissioned a year and half prior to the opening night by Annelie Gardell, director of the dance department at the NorrlandsOperan in Umeå. Every year the opera is involved in a similar Nordic collaborative project where the choreographer works together with the in-house symphony orchestra. The expectation is that part of the choreographer’s work is completed in residence with the orchestra.

- It took some talking to convince Kenneth to work with our symphony orchestra, but as we know it all ended very well! Our preference is to include our entire 53-member strong orchestra in the projects, but Kenneth had a different vision: the musicians were to perform on stage, and his choreographic concepts were to perforate not only the dance but also the music.

The final ensemble of musicians included Pontus Björk, Karin Eriksson, Pelle Hansen and Pär Lindqvist forming the string quartet, Asuka Nakamura on the grand piano and Jonas Nordberg who played the theorbo, an aesthetically beautiful instrument.

Kvarnström, who lives in Stockholm, was already familiar with the venue, as his 2008 piece Destruction Song was also a product of collaboration with the NorrlandsOperan. Partnering with the opera is his number one choice in Sweden. He hopes that there could be more similar, international collaborative opportunities for artists to work in residence.

- The focal point of this partnership was the process itself; mutual understanding and good dialogue, says the choreographer who at the time of the interview in February 2012 was about to leave his post as the head choreographer of the Helsinki Dance Company. He is returning to being a freelancer and directing his own company.

Common Language

Annelie Gardell notes that she loves working with Kenneth.

- He is a fantastic choreographer who interacts with audiences incredibly well, being able and willing to open up his works to any type of a viewer. You see, in addition to performances we also organized many kinds of workshops and audience education events.

Gardell thinks that the (play) also served as an excellent professional development opportunity for the musicians. In a very concrete way they were involved in the step by step process of creating a dance piece, while also observing the physical aspects of developing and rehearsing the movements.

Janne Marja-aho, one of the Helsinki Dance Company dancers, said that (play) felt more like a concert or a gala rather than a dance performance.
For Marja-aho, who also combines dancing with singing in his own choreographies, the ambiance generated by performing together with the musicians was most remarkable. The moment the musicians walked into the rehearsal space he felt a smile creeping upon his face. It is quite a luxury to have live music performed during a dance piece.

For about a year prior to the actual production schedule, Kenneth's kitchen in Stockholm served as a meeting place for the musicians, among them Marco Feldkistoff, the musical director of the symphony, and Jonas Nordberg who plays the theorbo.

This became the setting for intense discussions about the repertoire and also the place for spotify-sessions, during which they listened to numerous works that could possibly be included. What stood out were Philip Glass and J.S. Bach's Goldberg variations.

- At one point I asked whether the musicians could play the notes backwards. That did not go through very well... But I wanted classical music to go through a process in order to draw out a different sound universe. That was the most important meeting at the point when we were about to start the actual creative process, Kvarnström reminisces.

"Maybe right now I could do something new and completely different. Perhaps I should write a book or work on sculptures which could capture movement. Got to seize the opportunity when you see it."

For example, the music in the final scene of the completed work resembles more of a theme music from a spy movie than Dmitri Shostakovich's Piano concerto No. 2: the musicians really get into their new, ingenious and inventive way of playing as the dancers come into view on stage, donning a tough appearance in their fur coats and Kung Fu Panda inspired face masks.

Towards the spring in 2011 while fixing up his new house and blueprinting his next work YOUMAKEME, Kvarnström listened nonstop to classical music because the completion of the music for (play) took longer than anticipated – luckily so, says the choreographer.

The first dance rehearsal took place already during summer 2010. Out of that came a solo dance for Cilla Olsen. Kvarnström's trusted Swedish dancer who was visiting HDC in (play). During that summer a duet was also created for Olsen and Kenneth Bruun Carlson from Norway. Nordberg performed live during the rehearsals.

- We were improvising a lot during the rehearsal but, nevertheless, it produced a whole afternoon's worth of material. At the same time the pianist was practicing in my living room. Very communal existence I would say, Kvarnström laughs.

During the months leading to the opening night, the rehearsals in the Helsinki City Theatre were accented by the tempo of Shostakovich's music. The actual music for the show was not yet available, and the iPhone demos were not very helpful. The choreographer was getting a bit nervous.

- When the Swedish musicians arrived in Helsinki a week and a half before the opening night everything, suddenly, turned out superb! I was quite a dictator I must admit and made everybody work really long hours. In two days we went through the entire repertoire. The young musicians were truly talented and fun to be around – real pranksters. We hit it off right away. I still get goose bumps when I think about those rehearsals!

A Moving Moment
Normally in the past Kvarnström would have completed and demonstrated all the dance moves to his dancers. His self-generated material would tell him immediately what works and what comes naturally. This time though this self-admitting control freak, who strives for pure form, allowed his team more creative freedom.

Dancers Kenneth Bruun Carlson, Sofia Karlsson, Kai Lähdesmäki, Janne Marja-aho, Cilla Olsen, Valteri Raekallio and Terhi Vaimala received assignments. The guidance was something like “this works, whereas this doesn’t.”

- It works when you know the dancers well. Actually, the content generated by the dancers themselves ended up being the best material in the whole piece, Kvarnström concludes.

Janne Marja-aho found this task both enjoyable and challenging.

- Well, our hands were not totally free, but often Kenneth left us by ourselves in the rehearsal room and told us to come up with some choreography. First, we were a bit startled like, oops, what are we supposed to do, he says.

- But we are quite familiar with Kenneth's style and range of movements. So it was fun to play with all that and experiment with the parameters – kind of like this time I am not going to do it the way I know Kenneth would do it. He was pretty excited about it as well.

Marja-aho says there is something very natural about Kvarnström's movement material as well as his way of being and moving, albeit dancing is also physically tiring. His first encounter with Kvarnström's universe in Destruction Song became one of the cornerstones of his career.

- During the second to the last scene of (play) I stand 30 seconds my back to the audience, facing the musicians and listen to their interpretation of Glass. That instant, I tangibly feel how we all come together in that one moment. My eyes glisten, but I must stay cool and calm and tell myself just to pull it together. I force myself to think about something else, like liver casserole for example!

- That sums up the glory of performing together live; I myself get moved on stage, says Marja-aho who has danced in six of Kvarnström's productions and will dance in the next one as well.

The acclaimed choreographer, who has created 40 dance productions and founded his own dance company in 1987, turns 50 next year. Right now focusing on his own choreographic work is central to him.

Fall 2012 in Stockholm should witness the opening night of the new piece he is presently working on for his own company, and his 2014 calendar is already pretty much booked solid. He is enjoying an "art professorship" government grant in Finland until summer 2013 and would like to invest more time and effort into that work as well.

- However, maybe right now I could do something new and completely different. Perhaps I should write a book or work on sculptures which could capture movement. Got to seize the opportunity when you see it, Kenneth muses with a faintly pious expression, before flashing his familiar mischievous smile.
The Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, the Sibelius Academy of music, and the Theatre Academy Helsinki, which houses the departments of dance and drama, will join their forces in early 2013, merging into a new University of the Arts Helsinki.

It is anticipated that the new University of the Arts will develop arts education and research, strengthen the overall status of the arts in the society and increase artistic activity both in Finland and internationally.

The University of the Arts will be comprised of three academies of equal educational and cultural standing and significance. The staff, as well as the approximately 2000 students from the three existing academies, will automatically be part of the new university.

The strategic groundwork for the University of the Arts was laid down during spring 2012, and the actual strategic plan will be ratified in fall 2012 by the newly elected board of directors. The board includes representatives from the three merging academies, student associations, as well as other stakeholders. For example, one of the board members is Virve Sutinen, the director of the House of Dance in Stockholm.

Seppo Määttä, project manager for the new university formation scheme, emphasizes the importance of active engagement and participation in the developmental phase, by all the involved parties, i.e. students, staff and other stakeholders.

- It is important that students actively participate in the formation process, and that staff is heard and involved when we are laying the groundwork for the educational content areas, our organizational culture, and the founding principles and values for the new university.

- To complement this internal process we are reaching out and inviting partnerships from the art education and research fields, and we welcome the involvement and input of art advocates and many friends of art, Määttä concludes.
Contemporary Dance Goes to Wilderness

In the coming years, contemporary dance professionals from the Nordic and Baltic countries will be presented with a unique opportunity to work and perform at locales where you rarely see contemporary dance.

The Wilderness Dance residency program offers ten new art residency opportunities in Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway and Latvia. In keeping with its name, the locations of the Wilderness Dance residencies are in close proximity to nature in the provinces, away from the big metropolitan centers.

The settings in the chosen locales can vary tremendously in comparison to those of urban centers. For example, traditional dance studios or performance venues might not exist at all. According to the organizers, that is exactly the point; to find innovative ways to introduce dance art to new communities and unconventional audiences.

During the fall of 2012 ten Nordic/Baltic groups of artists will be chosen to participate in the program, each staying in two different residencies between January 2013 and May 2014. The length of a residency stay is three weeks.

The old Kokko farm in Kangasniemi in Central Finland is one of the two locations in Finland that is going to welcome artistic groups. The other location is the cozy Blue Bike Inn on the island of Hailuoto, situated in the northern pocket of the Baltic Sea.

The Hailuoto residency is organized by JoJo – Oulu Dance Center, whose artistic director Satu Tuomisto warmly welcomes the groups of artists to this island of only a thousand inhabitants.

- Hailuoto, with its natural surroundings, is quite a unique place. It has inspired numerous artists, movers and shakers from the art world, and event organizers. In spite of its sparse population, Hailuoto is a surprisingly active community, a real island of culture!

The Wilderness Dance program is part of the broad Nordic/Baltic ke ja-project aimed at dance professionals. The main partner of the Wilderness Dance program in Finland is MAD Productions.

Nordic Contemporary Dance Presented in Helsinki

From December 12th through the 15th, 2012, ICE HOT – Nordic Dance Platform will spread into wintery Helsinki presenting today’s most fascinating contemporary dance from the five Nordic countries. The program features many worldwide renowned names as well as upcoming artists.

By the January 2012 deadline, applications had arrived from almost 200 dance groups and choreographers from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. ICE HOT program was selected by a jury of international dance experts, and published last May.

The best known names in the program include national contemporary dance group Carte Blanche from Norway, Helsinki Dance Company and Sweden’s biggest independent dance company, Skånes Dansteater.

The Finnish performances on stage are: In Human Disguise by Eeva Muilu and Milja Sarkola, Lover of the Pianist by Elina Pirinen, YOUMAKEME by Kenneth Kvarnström (HDC), The Weight of My Heart by Liisa Pentti, Our Social Democratic Bodies by Maija Hirvanen and On the Threshold by Veli Lehtovaara and Mikko Hyvönen (Off/Balance).

All in all, the event features 21 dance performances. Additionally, More, More, More program includes twelve dance artists presenting their work for professional audience. Seminar program focusing on current topics will also be offered.

The first ICE HOT – Nordic Dance Platform took place in Stockholm in 2010, and the host for the next ICE HOT event in 2014 will be Oslo, the capital of Norway. ICE HOT is a Nordic collaboration project between Dance Info Finland, House of Dance in Stockholm (Sweden), Dansehallerne (Denmark), House of Dance in Olso (Norway), and Performing Arts Iceland. The upcoming event in Helsinki is organized by Dance Info Finland.

21 performances from big names and fresh newcomers.
California-born choreographer Carolyn Carlson, who has enjoyed a long career in Europe, has been bestowed the merit of honor of Knight, First Class, of the Order of the Lion of Finland. This Medal of Honor is granted to individuals whose personal accomplishments have made an enduring positive contribution towards Finland, and have benefited the country as a whole.

Carlson, with a Finnish-American background, has had a big influence on Finland's dance scene since the 1970's, both as a dancer and choreographer, and as a teacher. Finnish choreographers like Jorma Uotinen and Leena Gustavson view Carlson as a mentor and note that she has greatly inspired their careers. Tero Saarinen has also worked with Carlson since the 1990’s.

Carlson's first performance in Finland was with the French choreographer Anne Béranger’s dance group at the Kuopio Dance Festival in 1972.

Carlson’s most intensive period in Finland occurred in the early 1990’s when she choreographed many sizable works, including some for the Finnish National Ballet. From 1991 to 1992 Carlson served as the artistic director for the Helsinki City Theatre’s dance group.

Carlson’s repertoire also includes several solo pieces created for Finnish dancers like Nina Hyvärinen, Reija Vaahter, and Tero Saarinen. In 2008, Carlson recreated her 1983 work Blue Lady into a new production Blue Lady (Revisited) especially for Saarinen.

Presently Carlson lives and works in France, serving as the director for the Centre Chorégraphique National Roubaix, and the Atelier de Paris – Carolyn Carlson. She will receive her Order of the Lion of Finland Medal of Honor at a dance gala event taking place in Helsinki in November 2012.

Bérenger’s dance group at the Kuopio Dance Festival in 1972.

Every summer, fans of contemporary dance in Finland and from abroad gather at the five-day Full Moon Dance Festival at Pyhäjärvi, a small town in Northern Ostrobothnia, Finland. In August 2012, dancer choreographer Liisa Pentti stepped in as the festival’s new artistic director.

Pentti (b. 1958) has been active in the Finnish dance scene since the 1980’s. She is a 1986 graduate from the Amsterdam School of the Arts, School for New Dance Development.

Since 1987, Pentti has worked as a dancer, choreographer and teacher, for example at Zodiac – Center for New Dance in Helsinki. She was also one of the founding members of the Sidestep Festival in 1996. In 2000 she launched her own dance company, Liisa Pentti + Co.

Pentti is a central figure among Finnish choreographers, who has introduced many new trends into the Finnish contemporary dance scene. She has also been a bridge between generations, and has gathered around her many international work groups.

Her first appearance at Pyhäjärvi was in 2004 with the piece Wallpainted Abstractions. As the festival’s artistic director Pentti envisions a more participatory role for the annual event.

- What interests me is how the town of Pyhäjärvi and its surroundings could interact more with the festival. Perhaps, every year the program could feature a dance piece that in some way reflects this area. It could be a year-long, collaborative production between an artist-in-residence and the people of Pyhäjärvi.

What interests me is how the town of Pyhäjärvi could interact more with the festival.
In 2013, the Helsinki Dance Company (HDC), housed in the Helsinki City Theatre, will welcome choreographer Jyrki Karttunen as its new artistic director. Kenneth Kvarnström who has been leading the company since fall 2009, will continue his work by embarking on new challenges.

During his leadership Karttunen is planning to steer the group stylistically more towards a dance theater genre.

Karttunen (b. 1969) started his career as a dancer with the HDC, and during 1989–1993 performed with choreographers like Jorma Uotinen, Marjo Kuusela and Carolyn Carlson.

Since 1993 he has been a freelance dancer and choreographer. In 2008 he founded the Karttunen Kollektiv dance company, where he will continue as the artistic director while at HDC.

Karttunen is going to be a guest choreographer with the HDC prior to the actual start date of his new post. His works are well known for their gently ironic but humane touch. His latest work 100 Ways to Laugh (100 tapaa nauraa) will premiere in Helsinki City Theatre in October 2012.

Connecting Korea and Finland

The 2012 project of the Korea-Finland Connection program is a collaborative work by dancer choreographers Sari Palmgren and Na Hoon Park. Their production Lost Missing and Forgotten is a site-specific dance performance.

Lost Missing and Forgotten will be performed at the SI Dance festival in Seoul in October 2012, as well as at the Loikka Dance Film Festival in Helsinki in March 2013.

While in South Korea last fall, I caught myself continuously pausing and engaging in discussions about the forgotten culture, the people long-gone, and the destroyed landscapes. What kind of history do these places possess? Who were the people living there? These themes and the history of our performance space were the starting points for our work, Palmgren recounts.

The Korea–Finland Connection 2012 program supports the development of one creative and high-quality collaborative contemporary dance production between artists in Korea and Finland. The successful project was chosen through a joint evaluation process by Dance Info Finland and Korea Arts Management Service.

The Korea–Finland Connection is a co-operation program between Dance Info Finland and KAMS.
Practical Information:

- Production Centre
- Dance Company
- Within Art Institution
- Dance Company
- Subsidised by Law
- Dance Organization
- Independent Dance Company
- Festival & Event
- Regional Dance Centre
- Venue
- Professional Education

Locations:

- Rovaniemi
- Oulu
- Kajaani
- Kokkola
- Pyhäsamli
- Kaustinen
- Kuopio
- Jyväskylä
- Tampere
- Mikkeli
- Karjalohja
- Savonlinna
- Outokumpu
- Joensuu
- Lappeenranta
- Turku
- Kerava
- Espoo
- Helsinki
- Vantaa
- Karjala
- Vaasa
- Vaasa
- Pori
Catalogue
This catalogue, specially compiled for Finnish Dance in Focus, offers an overview of the Finnish dance field. It lists dance companies, production centers and independent choreographers. It also includes regional dance centers, festivals, venues and schools providing professional dance education.

Dance Companies
Dance companies are listed under three categories according to their funding structure.

Dance Companies within Art Institutions
There are two dance companies operating within a larger art institution.

Finnish National Ballet/ Suomen Kansallisbaletti

Contact:
Artistic Administrator Sampo Kivelä
PO Box 176, FI-00251 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)50 5998 588, sampo.kivel@opera.fi
Press Manager Heidi Almi
Tel. +358 (0)9 4030 319, +358 (0)40 5671 814
heidi.almi@opera.fi
www.opera.fi

The Finnish National Ballet was founded in 1922 and currently employs 75 dancers representing 16 nationalities. It offers 3–5 premieres and 75–85 performances per season, both traditional works of classical ballet as well as productions by contemporary choreographers, such as Tero Saarinen, Jorma Elo, John Neumeier, Alexei Ratmansky and Ohad Naharin. Artistic director of the company is Kenneth Greve.

Genre: Contemporary dance, classical ballet, contemporary ballet, performances for young audiences

Helsinki Dance Company

Contact:
Artistic Director Jyrki Karttunen
Tel. +358 (0)19 3940 319, jyrki.karttunen@hkt.fi
Managing Director Marinella Jaskari
Ensi linja 2, FI-00530 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 3940 318, +358 (0)9 50 5671 814
marinella.jaskari@hkt.fi
www.hdc.fi

Helsinki Dance Company (HDC) operates in conjunction with a large drama theater, the Helsinki City Theatre, and is the biggest contemporary dance company in Finland with its 12 dancers. HDC performers are known for their versatile skills in performing physically demanding contemporary dance as well as expressive dance theater. The repertoire consists of a variety of productions of different length and entourage size.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater

Government Funded Dance Companies
There are eight dance companies and two other dance organizations that receive a yearly subsidy under the Theaters and Orchestras Act.

AB Dance Company/Aurinkobaletti

Contact:
Artistic Director Urmas Poolamets
Managing Director Katja Lehmussaari
Manilla, Itäinen Rantakatu 64, FI-20810 Turku
Tel. +358 (0)2 2501 032, info@eri.fi
www.eri.fi

AB is a constantly evolving, high-quality contemporary dance group, which is not afraid to venture over the limits of its own genre. The repertoire includes productions for both adults and children. Besides its own choreographers, the company has also offered a stage for many appreciated Finnish names and several international choreographers. AB’s regular guest is Russian choreographer Sasha Pepeljew. AB tours both in Finland and abroad.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, performances for young audiences

Dance Theater ERI/Tanssiteatteri ERI

Contact:
Yliopistonkatu 7, FI-20100 Turku
Tel. +358 (0)2 2501 032, info@eri.fi
www.eri.fi

Dancer-choreographers Tiina Lindfors, Lassi Sairela and Eeva Soini are the founding members of Dance Theater ERI, which has been touring with its unique and innovative dance performances both in Finland and abroad since 1989. During the past 20 years ERI has built up a repertoire that now includes more than 300 works. Every year the group produces about 130 performances, of which six or seven are premieres.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater
Catalogue

Dance Theater Hurjaruuth/
Tanssiteatteri Hurjaruuth

Contact:
Director Arja Pettersson
Talberginkatu 1 A/117, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)9 5657 250, fax +358 (0)9 6931 299
info@hurjaruuth.fi
www.hurjaruuth.fi

The dynamic Dance Theater Hurjaruuth has produced over 100 works in the past 30 years that have inspired young audiences in Finland and abroad. Hurjaruuth’s aim is to break down the barriers of contemporary dance by collaborating with circus artists, musicians, writers and visual artists. Each year Hurjaruuth presents its signature work, Juggling, magic and eye-boggling entertainment. Winter Circus, which thrills audiences with its aerial stunts, has performed in about 150 performances annually and has toured in more than 20 countries. Hurjaruuth features a repertoire of first class folk dance and music performances. They give 3–4 premiers, over 140 audience events and over 30 000 spectators. Hurjaruuth is being supported by the city of Van- taa and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Genre: Dance theater, performances for young audiences

Dance Theatre MD/Tanssiteatteri MD

Contact:
Managing director Anniina Kumpuniemi
Hämeenkatu 25, FI-33200 Tampere
Tel. +358 (0)50 5837 012, +358 (0)9 8732 306
raatikko@raatikko.fi
www.raatikko.fi

Dance Theatre Raatikko was founded in 1972. Raatikko has its own space in Vantaa and it also tours. Raatikko makes dance pieces for children, young people and adults. Combining dance, theater and circus is typical for Raatikko’s works. Raatikko has over 400 performances annually, 2–4 premieres, over 140 audience events and over 30 000 spectators. Raatikko is being supported by the city of Vantaa and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Genre: Dance theater, performances for young audiences

Dance Theater Rimpparemmi/
Tanssiteatteri Rimpparemmi

Contact:
Artistic Director Matti Paloniemi
Managing Director Ilkka Kängäs
Lapankuja 3 J, FI-96100 Pauvaniemi
Tel: +358 (0)16 315 605, +358 (0)40 8284 258
fax +358 (0)16 315 008
rimpparemmi@rimpparemmi.fi
www.rimpparemmi.fi

Finland’s northernmost professional dance theater, Rimpparemmi, offers a unique mix of Finnish folk dance and contemporary dance. Yearly the ensemble produces three to four full-length performances to target groups of varied ages. In addition, Rimpparemmi features a repertoire of first class folk dance and music performances. They give about 150 performances annually and have toured in more than 20 countries. Rimpparemmi dates back to 1974.

Genre: Dance theater, folk dance, contemporary dance

Tero Saarinen Company

Bulevardi 23–27, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 6813 1881, fax +358 (0)9 680 2008
info@terosaarinen.com
www.terosaarinen.com

Artistic Director Tero Saarinen
Managing Director Iris Autio
Dancer / Rehearsing Director Henrikki Heikkilä
Dancer / Teacher / Choreographer’s Assistant
Sini Länsivuo
Acting Marketing and Communications Manager
Päivi Kolvunmaaho
Booking Manager Marja Ollikainen
Company Assistant Maiju Lempinen
Technical Director Ville Konttinen

International Agencies:
FRANCE, ASIA AND OCEANIA:
DLB Spectacles Performing Arts
Mr. Didier Le Besque, didier@dlbdance.com
Tel. +33 (0) 1 4251 7363

ITALY:
A.T.E.R. - Associazione Teatrale Emilia Romagna
Ms. Francesca Zitoli, danza@ateremr.it
Tel. +39 059 540 221

GERMANY:
Ecotopia Dance Productions
Mr. Meinrad Huber
meinrad.huber@ecotopiadance.com

Tero Saarinen Company was founded by Tero Saarinen in 1996. In addition to the group’s world-wide performances, its core activities include an international teaching program and licensing Saarinen’s choreographies for other dance companies. The group is the resident company at Alexander Theatre in Helsinki.

Genre: Contemporary dance
Independent Dance Companies

In addition to the state-subsidized dance theaters, in 2012 there are 17 dance organizations that receive state funding, so-called operational subsidies for communities (OSC). These are granted for one year at a time.

The other companies listed here operate with production grants from various sources, both from the state and from private foundations.

As2Wrist Dance Company’s choreographers, Minna Tuovinen and Martin Heslop, have been combining tango with contemporary dance for ten years. Their work is unique, dynamic and richly complex combining strong emotional themes and original movement material. Most of their works have been commissions by national and international festivals. They have toured Argentina, Brazil and Cuba as well as Europe.

**Genre:** Contemporary dance

**Canela**

**Contact:**
Choreographer-dancer Anna Palmio
Tel. +358 (0)40 7478 979
Choreographer-dancer Anntauu Saine
Tel. +358 (0)5168 705
www.canela.fi

Canela, founded in 2001, is one of the pioneers in Finnish new flamenco. In addition to flamenco, Canela’s repertoire consists of works that combine contemporary dance and other art forms. Their works include solo pieces by the group’s members, as well as commissioned pieces by top new flamenco and contemporary dance choreographers from Spain and Finland.

**Genre:** Contemporary dance, flamenco, performance/live art, performances for young audiences

**Aho & Lundén Company**

**Contact:** Emilia Aho and Katja Lundén
Tel. +358 (0)98 5267 758 / +358 (0)40 746 2099
info@aho-lunden.com
www.aho-lunden.com

Aho & Lundén Company is a contemporary flamenco group founded by Emilia Aho and Katja Lundén. It combines Finnish and Spanish culture and views in interesting combinations, for example in the commissioned piece Flamencov x 3. The group has adapted flamenco also to the music for Finnish folk poetry. The group sees flamenco both as an experimental and a tradition-based art form that gets new dimensions from different art fields’ worlds of ideas.

**Genre:** Contemporary flamenco, live music, performance

**Arja Tiili & Co**

**Contact:**
Juhamiusvuori 3 A 42, FI-00990 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)50 3756 728, arjaarjatiili.fi
www.arjatiili.fi

Arja Tiili’s works baffle, frighten, awaken, thrill and make one laugh. The performances lie in the borderline between dance, performance art and theater, bravely mixing styles from breakdance to contemporary dance and video art. Tiili’s artistic team always creates a small world out of the piece that holds the spectator spellbound for a long time. The latest work All-Matters-No-Escape is mixing Brechtianism, breakdance, politics and power relations.

**Genre:** Contemporary dance, dance theater, young audiences

**Dance Company Gruppen Fyra (G4) (OSC)**

**Contact:** Pia Liski
Vyökatu 5 B 11, FI-00160 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)40 7373 235, pialiski@kolumbus.fi
www.gruppenfyra.com

The dance company Gruppen Fyra (1998) produces one to two premieres per year. Apart from theaters, the company has also performed at business events and has made improvisation-based pieces, for example, in parks, streets and trains. Their trademark is an easily approachable form of contemporary dance and intelligent humor. The company currently consists of Jenni Nikolajeff, Pia Tavela, Tommi Haapaniemi, Virpi Juntti and Kaisu Hölttä.

**Genre:** Contemporary dance, dance theater

**As2Wrist Dance Company**

**Contact:**
Choreographers Minna Tuovinen & Martin Heslop
Itämerenkatu 26 B 38, FI-00180 Helsinki
info@as2wrist.fi
www.as2wrist.fi

As2Wrist Dance Company’s choreographers Minna Tuovinen and Martin Heslop have been combining tango with contemporary dance for ten years. Their work is unique, dynamic and richly complex combining strong emotional themes and original movement material. Most of their works have been commissions by national and international festivals. They have toured Argentina, Brazil and Cuba as well as Europe.

**Genre:** Contemporary dance

**Compañía Kaari Martin**

**Contact:**
Artistic directors Kaari and Roni Martin
Luostarikatu 2, FI-00160 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)50 5630 144
info@companiaakarimartin.fi
www.companiaakarimartin.fi

Compañía Kaari Martin is an independent dance group founded in 2002. Its primary focus is to incorporate flamenco, and its Nordic dimension, into the field of international contemporary art. The group has a large repertoire and it runs its own contemporary flamenco festival Flamingo. The company was the first foreign dance company to win an award in the highly acclaimed Choreography Competition of Madrid with the piece Tell me Ram (2006).

**Genre:** Dance theater, flamenco, performances for young audiences, contemporary flamenco

**Carl Knif Company**

**Contact:**
Artistic Director Carl Knif
Managing Director Laura Karén
Tel. +358 (0)40 5080 870, laura.karen@pp.inet.fi

In an age of throwaway art and sleek production thinking we find something that stands out. Dancer and choreographer Carl Knif is more than personal, he is singular, almost peculiar. His art does not resemble anyone else’s. With pieces such as Mandorla, Hologram Walls and Claude Glass, audiences have learned to know the surrealistic, dreamlike, humoristic qualities of his works. His deeply humanistic message is conveyed by highly skilled dancers.

**Genre:** Contemporary dance, adult and young audiences
Dance Theater Dis Tanz/Tanssiteatteri Dis Tanz
Contact: Managing Director Anna Othman
Tikkuri saari 44, FI-01300 Vanhakaupunki
Tel. +358 (0)45 135 0545, info@d-tanz.com
www.d-tanz.com
Dance Theater Dis Tanz, founded 1995 by Tytti Kronqvist and Suvi Pohjonen, is focused on contemporary dance. By combining skilful dance with different art forms and bringing dance out from the theatres, Dis Tanz presents a playful and humorous repertoire to audiences of all ages. The porability of our productions enables us to perform on different stages. The members are choreographers/dancers Anna Othman, Suvi Pohjonen and Oonosofia Saukkanen.

Dance Theatre Kaie/Tanssiteatteri Kaie
Contact: Anne Jouhinen
Tukholmikatu 1, FI-02410 Kerava
Tel. +358 (0)350 3609 167, anne.jouhinen@gmail.com
www.cra-company.com
Dance Theatre Kaie, founded in 1987 and based in Kerava, is known for its diverse and multi-artistic productions for adult and young audiences. Traditional stages as well as streets, market squares, parks, shop windows and kindergartens function as stages. The audience is invited to participate through interactivity. Collaborating with other art forms is an integral part of the group’s work. The Finnish-Ugrian roots inspire with their mysticism.
Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, multi-artistic performances
Ehkah-production/Ehkhä-tuotanto
Contact: Kalastajankatu 1 B, FI-20100 Turku
ehkatuotanto@gmail.com
www.ehka.net
Ehkah-production produces works of independent dance and performance artists, groups and collectives. The activity consists of collective projects, XS Festival for new dance and contemporary art space Kutomo. Ehkah was founded in 2004 by dance artist Anna Torkkel and performance artist Tashi Iwakoa. Since 2009 Torkkel has been curating Ehkah-production together with dance artist Maija Reeta Raumanni.

Glims & Gloms Dance Company (OSC)
Contact: General Manager Riitta Aittokallio
Tel. +358 (0)50 354 5936
riitta.aittokallio@glimsgloms.com
Artistic Director Tuomo Railo
Tel. +358 (0)50 742 3828
tuomorailo@glimsgloms.com
Artistic Director Simo Heiskanen
Tel. +358 (0)40 570 1129
simo.heiskanen@glimsgloms.com
www.glimsgloms.com
Glims & Gloms dance company was founded in 1999 by Simo Heiskanen and Tuomo Railo. Since then G&G has fascinated its audience with mythical, symbolic and fantastic subjects. Its works are characterised by stylish and inventive visuals, multi-layered themes, and visual harmony. The theatre directs its performances to a wide public—children, the youth and adults. In 2009 G&G received the Finnish State Prize for merits in dance.
Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, performances for young audiences

Ismo Dance Company
Contact: Artistic Director Ismo-Pekka Heikinheimo
Kalastajankatu 1 B, FI-00560 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)40 1340 884, ismo@ismodance.fi
www.ismodance.fi
Ismo Dance Company is created by Ismo-Pekka Heikinheimo, one of the top choreographers in Finland, known for inventive, ground-breaking and sexually provocative performances and festivals. Electronic interaction and intimate encounters between audience and performers. Each show is a masterwork of cutting-edge talent, design, music, and art in a kaleidoscope of visual culture. International commissions with thousands of shows across 15 countries.
Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, site specific, community dance

Jenni Kivelä & Kind People
Contact: Tel. +358 (0)50 595 1229
info@jennikivela.com
www.jennikivela.com
Jenni Kivelä has worked with her group Kind People as well as Helsinki Dance Company, Transitions Laban and Nordans. She combines features from dance and theatre in her works, which move between the conceptual and the concrete. Her work Red-Letter Days was awarded the Grand Prix at the Salamanda International Creative Dance Contest 2005.
Karttunen Kollektiv (OSC)

Contact:
Managing Director: Satu Tujunen
Artistic Director: Jyrki Karttunen
PO Box 580, FI-00101 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)44 274 8862
firstname@karttunenkollektiv.fi

www.karttunenkollektiv.fi

Prepare to be delighted, surprised, confused and moved. The dancing world of Jyrki Karttunen, and his company, is full of moments slightly out of joint, offering you a deliciously new perspective on ordinary situations. You might come to realize that the world can be seen differently. Unique style and human scale performances has firmly established the Karttunen Kollektiv at the forefront of Finnish and international contemporary dance.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, performances for young audiences

K&Co Kekäläinen & Company (OSC)

Contact:
Managing Director: Sanna Kekäläinen
Artistic Director: Jarkko Mandelin
PO Box 580, FI-00101 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)40 212 351
el: +358 (0)50 5824 914, liisa@liisapentti.com

www.liisapentti.com

Liisa Pentti + Co was founded in 2000. Liisa Pentti establishes creative contacts and works with the possibilities between bodily and narrative expression. She creates her choreographic form through a dialogue between ephemeral physicality, visions and gravity, and she works with the transformation capacity of the body in the borderland of dance and imagination.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, performance / live art

MAD Productions/MAD Tuotanto

Contact:
Managing Director: Jari Castrén
Artistic Director: Mikko Kallinen
PO Box 580, FI-00101 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)40 212 351
sihteerin@apinatarha.fi

www.piensuomalainenbalettiseurue.fi

An independent troupe of classically trained dancers and choreographers seeking for new forms of classical and contemporary ballet, tradition and thinking. The company was founded in 2009 and has since then been performing successfully in different venues and theaters in Finland. Artistic director is Sami Salokkonen.

Genre: Contemporary dance
Nomadi Productions

Contact:
Managing director Janne Ikäheimo
janne.ikahemo@nomadi.fi
Bulevardi 23–27, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)44 3233 509
nomad@nomadi.fi
www.nomadi.fi

Nomadi Productions promotes and produces performances and tours by Finnish dance companies alpo aaltokoski company and Arja Raatikainen & Co.

alpo aaltokoski company (OSC)

Alpo Aaltokoski has created dozens of highly acclaimed choreographies. These include: Whirl (2011), Together (2010), Lucid Dreaming (2005), Sahara (2002), Deep (2000) and Promises (2000). In addition to his undeniable talent as the artistic director and leader of his company, Aaltokoski has had varied and multiple roles in the field of dance; for example, as a pedagogue in influential cultural institutions both in Finland and abroad. 

www.alpoaaltokoski.com

Arja Raatikainen & Co. (OSC)

Arja Raatikainen has produced numerous highly praised works, including pieces for Finnish dance festivals, Helsinki Dance Company, the Finnish National Ballet and her own group. Her path has embraced nuclear issues and movement in time and space, but also the treatment of new elements and the search for a balance between disparate elements. This has given birth to exquisite works such as Räkkö (2011), Asylum (2009) and Labile Mobile (2002).

www.arjaraatikainen.com

PDC Pori Dance Company (OSC)

Contact:
Artistic director, producer Liisa Nojonen
Pohjasranta 11 1st Floor, FI-28100 Pori
Tel. +358 (0)40 7420332, +358 (0)400 590 392
pdc@pordancecompany.com
www.pordancecompany.com

PDC has established its place among professional dance groups in Finland. Its dancers have been recognized for their skilful technique and the varied repertoire for its high artistic level. This has guaranteed international tours and a broad national and international collaboration network. PDC has regularly participated in festivals in Europe, USA and Asia. Well-known choreographers such as Jorma Uotinen and Tero Saarinen have worked with PDC.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, performance/live art, contemporary/classical ballet

Petri Kekoni Company (OSC)

Contact:
Petri Kekoni
Maria Joutunintie 10 E 51, FI-00400 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)300 571 7579, petri@kekonico.fi
Producer: Akela Kaukoranta
Tel. +358 (0)40 111 1020, akela@kekonico.fi
www.kekonico.fi

The company was founded in 2007. Its repertoire consists of choreographer Petri Kekoni’s works from 1998 onwards, including Thespi of the Dead (2011), Green Armchair (2010) and Falling Earth (2010). The company is a collective of ca 20 artists, including dancers, composers and designers. Kekoni’s works are known by their personal movement language in combination of strong visual thinking. His next piece “Miniatures” will premiere in January 2013.

Genre: Contemporary dance

Roundly – Dance company for kids/ Tanssiteatteri Kiertuli

Contact: Riku Immonen
Käisyväyläntie 18 P 60, FI-00750 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)40 505 1056, riku@rikuumonnen.fi
www.rikuumonnen.fi

Riku Immonen is one of the Finnish dance field’s dedicated workers. He has worked as a choreographer since 2004 and presently is best known for his work with young audiences. His strength is the profound knowledge of dance he possesses. Also having four sons helps him with creating the pieces. The biggest fans live at home and having cruel judgmental home critics is a clear advantage. In 2009 he received a 5-year personal grant from Arts Council.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, performances for young audiences

Susanna Leinonen Company (SLC) (OSC)

Contact:
Managing Director Marijo Pyykönen
Bulevardi 23–27, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)45 1380 336, info@susannaleinonen.com
www.susannaleinonen.com

Susanna Leinonen is one of the most internationally acclaimed Finnish choreographers. With her unique and articulate choreographic style, Leinonen combines classical know-how with contemporary movement thinking. Her works produce surrealistic visions creating a total and uncompromising dance experience. SLC has been appointed as one of the Key Projects in Finnish Cultural Export. SLC is available for touring with several works for 1–7 dancers.

Genre: Contemporary dance

The Tempest Group/Myrskyryhmä

Contact:
Elli Isokoski, Pauliina Tyni
Tel. +358 (0)40 7378 293, +358 (0)40 5313 183
elli.isokoski@gmail.com, pauliina.tyni@gmail.com
www.myrskyryhma.info

The Tempest Group was founded by Elli Isokoski and Pauliina Tyni in 2002. The group takes dance into the community, to people who wouldn’t normally get to see contemporary dance. Their works tackle issues that all kinds of audiences can easily relate to. The Tempest Group has had over 180 dance performances for seniors and long-term patients in assisted living facilities around Finland.

Genre: Contemporary dance, dance theater, dance film, performances for senior audiences
Independent choreographers

Niina Airaksinen
Tel. +358 44 5060 560
niina@niinaairaksinen.net

Erika Alajärvi
Tel. +358 50 3393 732
erika@hierbabuena.fi

Hanna Brotherus
Tel. +358 40 872 646
hanna.brotherus@gmail.com

Titta Court
Tel. +358 40 3953 328
court.blye@pp.inet.fi

Thomas Freundlich
Tel. +358 400 805438
info@freundlich.org

Leena Gustavson
Tel. +358 40 8677 729
leena.gustavson@hotmail.com

Sari Hannula
Tel. +358 40 5610 622
sari.hannula@turunkonservatorio.fi

Maija Hirvanen
Tel. +358 50 3526 342
pia.lindy@gmail.com

Elina Pirinen
Tel. +358 40 570 2514
elina_pirinen@hotmail.com

Jenni Koistinen
Tel. +358 44 3794 4514
jennikoistinen@hotmail.com

Ulla Koivisto
Tel. +358 50 5701 305
ullako@gmail.com

Harri Kuorelahi
Tel. +358 40 7927 399
harrikuorelahi@toxdak.fi

Marjo Kuusela
Tel. +358 400 522 119
kuuselamarjo@gmail.com

Teemu Kyytinen
Tel. +358 40 742 7792
teemu.kyytinen@welcho.com

Soile Lahdenperä
Tel. +358 50 5677 283
soile.lahdenpera@teak.fi

Pia Lindy
Tel. +358 50 3526 342
pia.lindy@gmail.com

Mia Malviniemi / Malviniemi Company
Tel. +358 50 3882 486
mialmalviniemi@gmail.com

Heidi Masalin
Tel. +358 50 3279 231
heidimasalin@hotmail.com

Katarina McAlester
Tel. +358 40 792 036
katarina.mcalester@teak.fi

Heidi Meklin
Tel. +358 40 5201 996
helmi.meklin.com

Kirsi Monni
Tel. +358 40 545 6350
krsmonni@teak.fi

Eeva Mäki
Tel. +358 45 6394 704
eevamakki@hotmail.com

Vera Nevanlinna
Tel. +358 50 5620 220
veranevanlinna@gmail.com

Ari Numminen
Tel. +358 40 5575 738
arini@metsasavo.fi

Sari Palmgren
Tel. +358 50 5410 105
sari.palmgren@welcho.com

Riitta Pasanen-Willberg
Tel. +358 50 5000 448
riitta.pasanen-willberg@tema.fi

Elina Pirinen
Tel. +358 40 570 2514
elina_pirinen@hotmail.com

Janina Rajakangas
Tel. +358 50 3778 155
janina.rajakangas@gmail.com

Mamu Rankanen
Tel. +358 40 7264 989
maanti.rankanen@teak.fi

Nina Renvall
Tel. +358 40 7679 409
renval@hotonl.com

Tarija Rinne
Tel. +358 50 3701 001
trinne@teak.fi

Lissi Risi
Tel. +358 40 7577 381
lissi.risi@gmail.com

Marianne Rouhiainen
Tel. +358 50 5975 167
marianne.rouhiainen@elisanet.fi

Ervi Sirén
Tel. +358 40 7577 381
ervi.siren@gmail.com

Virva Talonen
Tel. +358 40 748 8539
vtronen@gmail.com

Ari Tenhula
Tel. +358 50 430 8664
ari.tenhula@welcho.com

SATU Tuittilu
Tel. +358 50 5466 461
stttilu@hotmail.com

Pauk Tuuvinen
Tel. +358 40 5838 549
pauk.tuuvinen@teak.fi

Johanna Tuukkanen
Tel. +358 40 742 9091
johanna@tuukkanen.net

Jorma Uotinen
Tel. +358 50 512 483
jormaj.uotinen@jormauotinen.com

Panu Varsta
Tel. +358 40 5659 562
panu@panuvarsta.fi

Favela Vera Ortiz
Tel. +358 50 5844 624
fvela and fve

Pirjo Vitanen
Tel. +358 50 5434 063
pirjovitanen@arvianet.fi
Tuumi Dance Theatre/Transsiteatteri Tsuumi (OSC)

Contact:
General Manager Elina Ruoho-Kurola
Bulevardi 23-27, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)44 745 4454
eлина.ruoho-kurola@tsuumi.com, info@tsuumi.com
www.tsuumi.com

Helsinki-based Tsuumi Dance Theatre provides an outlet for Finnish folk dance and musical tradition, observes the boundaries of these fields and finds ways of overcoming them. Tsuumi brings dance traditions and old tonal world into the present day – skill and competence combined with sensitivity and humor. Artistic directors are Reetta-Kaisa Illes, Salla Korja-Paloniemi and Johanna Elovaara.

Genre: Dance theater

Zodiak – Center for New Dance

Contact:
Artistic Director: Harri Kuorelahti
Managing Director: Raija Ojala
Producer: Maija Eränen
Communications: Kaisa Rissanen
Education and Outreach: Katja Kirsi
Tallberginkatu 1 B/154, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 6944 948 • fax +358 (0)9 5625 805
zodiak@zodiak.fi
www.zodiak.fi

Zodiak – Center for New Dance is a progressive dance organization and the main venue for freelance contemporary dance in Finland. It is a discursive platform for production, performance, community work and education, and the Regional Center for Dance in Helsinki. Zodiak provides a joint and collegial production forum for dance groups and artists. It co-produces and hosts 15–20 new dance productions each year. Zodiak is a member of several international networks and works with international partners in production, teacher and artist exchange as well as touring.

Genre: Contemporary dance

Regional Centers for Dance

Central Finland Regional Dance Center/ Pirkanmaa Regional Dance Center
Sisä-Suomen tanssin aluekeskus/ Pirkanmaan tanssin keskus ry

Contact:
Managing Director Plia Kulin
Tel. +358 (0)50 552 1138 • plia.kulin@sisausumentanssi.fi
Chairman: Maja Hoiisko
Tel. +358 (0)40 5241 490 • maja.hoiisko@gmail.com
Ahlmanintie 63, FI-33800 Tampere
www.sisausumentanssi.fi/pirkanmaa/english/

The Central Finland Regional Dance Center is run by the Pirkanmaa Regional Dance Center and Keski-Suomi Regional Dance Center. The regional center operates in Pirkanmaa, Central Finland, and Häme with the aim of strengthening dance art and its availability, supporting the development of versatile skills, promoting collaboration, and enhancing job opportunities and the professionalization of dance in Central Finland.

Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland/ Itäinen tanssin aluekeskus

Contact:
Producer: Jupe Pohjolainen
Suokatu 42/2, FI-70110 Kuopio
Tel. +358 (0)50 5816 300
itak@itak.fi
www.itak.fi

The Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland operates in Eastern Finland with the aim of promoting dance, creating work opportunities for professionals, offering education, and supporting dance productions in the area. The center organizes dance festivals, such as Paakallisleike, every June (in collaboration with Kuopio Dance Festival), and Lonely in the rain? festival in November. Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland also runs cultural centre Sokku in Kuopio.
Regional Dance Center in Northern Finland/
Pohjoisen tanssialuekeskus
www.pohjoisentanssialuekeskus.fi

Members of Regional Dance Center in Northern Finland:

The Regional Dance Center in Northern Finland consists of:
Oulu – Oulu Dance Center, Routa Company from Kajaani, Rimmaremm Folk Ensemble from Rovaniemi, and Pyhäsalmen Dance Association that organizes the Full Moon Dance Festival.

The center’s goals are to increase job opportunities for dance professionals and to promote the availability and accessibility of art and cultural services and dance art in the municipalities of Oulu and Lapland by producing and organizing dance performances and tours, as well as visits between different companies.

Regional Dance Centre of Ostrobothnia / Pohjamaan tanssialuekeskus
Contact: Manager Anniika Sillander
Tel. +358 (0)40 375 3375 / anniika.sillander@watt.fi
watt.fi

The Regional Dance Centre of Ostrobothnia in Western Finland operates in the entire Ostrobothnian region. The Centre creates employment and performance opportunities for dance artists, promotes dance, engages in the planning and marketing of dance events, and in maintaining and building different forms of collaborations between artists, cultural associations and local councils. The Centre also maintains and improves Nordic and international networks and collaborations.

Regional Dance Center of Western Finland/
Läntinen tanssialuekeskus
Contact: Managing Director Lotta Skaffari
Linnankatu 24, FI-20100 Turku
Tel. +358 (0)2 231 4212 + info@l-tanssi.fi
www.l-tanssi.fi

The Western Finnish Regional Dance Center has the goal of enhancing job opportunities for dance artists, developing general awareness of contemporary dance, and increasing the availability of dance art in the region. It covers Southwest Finland and the province of Satakunta. The center aims to develop collaboration between different agents in the dance field and gain more public recognition for contemporary dance. One of its main challenges is supporting freelance dance artists.

Zodiak – Center for New Dance /
Regional Dance Center in Helsinki
Zodiak – Center for New Dance functions as a regional center for dance in Helsinki.

Organizations

Dance Arena / Tanssiareena ry
Contact:
Cable Factory, Talberginkatu 1 B/149, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)300 395 6622 + info@tanssiareena.fi
www.dancearena.fi

Dance Arena is a support organisation for international exchange focused on the import of contemporary dance. Moving in November and Side Step Festival are managed by Dance Arena. Both festivals take place annually and feature international and Finnish performances.

Dance Arena participates in various international networks and projects and is the Finnish Associate Presenter of the Aeowsaves network. Dance Arena organises the annual Aeowsaves FULL FOR DANCE tour which presents a double bill evening in several cities around Finland.

Theatre Center/Teatterikeskus
Contact: Marja Kuukoriento
Mentullinkatu 33, FI-00170 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)9 1357 613, +358 (0)40 7313 655
info@teatterikeskus.fi / www.teatterikeskus.fi

Theater Center is a cooperative organisation for professional theater and dance companies in Finland. Its goal is to promote the activities of the individual companies and strengthen their position in Finland. Theater Center is also a network of 34 member theaters.

Union of Dance Artists in Finland
Contact: Chairperson Outi Kallinen
ouiti@konvaluva.fi
Teatterikulma
Mentullinkatu 33 A, FI-00170 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)9 251 21147 + fax: +358 (0)9 2511 2191
sami.hiltunen@tefte.com / www.tefte.com / sttl

The Union of Finnish Dance Artists is the oldest and largest union in Finland. It was founded in 1957 and has about 920 members, including dancers, choreographers, circus artists and dance and circus pedagogues. The organization’s main role is to look after its members’ contractual rights, working conditions, employment and copyright issues. It tries to influence policy issues in Finland, and it also organizes professional development opportunities for dance artists, as well as various events.

Festivals and Events

ANTI – Contemporary Art Festival
International contemporary arts festival presenting site-specific works made for public spaces.
Contact:
Minna Canthin katu 4 A, Floor 7, FI-70100 Kuopio
Tel. +358 (0)50 3052 005 info@antifestival.com
www.antifestival.com

Baltic Circle Festival
Baltic Circle is an international contemporary theatre festival that takes place every November in Helsinki, both in theatre venues and on different sites in the city. Baltic Circle focuses in the context of European contemporary performing arts, and is a platform for developing new trends and ideas. Next festival: November 7 – 11, 2012, Helsinki.
Contact:
Festival Director Eva Nelkylea
eva.nelkylea@q-teatteri.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 621 4363
info@fullmoondance.fi
www.fullmoondance.fi

BRAVO!
Contact: ASSITEJ Finland
Mentullinkatu 33, FI-00170 Helsinki
Tel: +358 (0)40 886 355 info@assitejfi.org
www.bravofinland.org / www.assitejfi.org

OuDance Festival
Annually in September; international and local performances, mainly contemporary dance.
Contact: JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre
Artistic Director: Satu Tuomisto
PO Box 42, FI-90015 Oulu
Tel: +358 (0)50 585906 satu.tuomisto@jojo.fi
www.jojo.fi

Factory Festival Manifesti
Annual festival with wide-ranging programme from contemporary dance and new circus to exhibitions. The festival is held in a beautifully restored unique old factory milieu, the Manilla quarters, by the Aura River in the heart of Turku. Manifesti is organized during September 2012.
Contact: Producer, programme director Katja Lehmuusaaar Pro Manilla Foundation
Manilla, Itäinen rantakatu 64, FI-20810 Turku
Tel: +358 (0)2 2840 100 katja.lehmussaari@manillatehdas.fi
www.manillatehdas.fi

Feet Beat Tap Festival
Festival with tap dancing and other percussive dances.
Contact: Sofi Kyrklund
Feet Beat ry
Mannerheimintie 132 B 40, FI-00270 Helsinki
Tel. / fax +358 (0)9 621 4363 +358 (0)9 720 4844
sofi.kyrklund@saunalahiti.fi
www.feetbeat.fi

Full Moon Dance Festival
Contemporary dance from Finland and abroad; program includes courses and discussions. Next festival: July 2013.
Contact: Artistic Director: Lisa Pentti (from 2013) Managing Director: Arja Saastamoinen
PO Box 15 (Asematie 4) FI-86801 Pyhäälmi
Tel. +358 (0)40 747 884, +358 (0)44 3191200 info@fullmoondance.fi
www.fullmoondance.fi
Helsinki Festival

The Helsinki Festival is the largest arts festival in Finland, organised annually in late summer. The Helsinki Festival program line-up features classical and world music, circus, dance, theatre, a children's program, cinema and a range of urban events.

Director: Erik Söderblom

Lasipalatsi, Mannerheimintie 22-24, FI-00100 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 6126 5100
www.helsinkifestival.fi • www.helsinkifestival.fi

HURRAA!

A national festival of performing arts for children and young people; produces and invites Finnish performances with new forms and content. Organized by cultural centers from the Helsinki metropolitan area. Next festival: March 2013.

Contact: Katarina Metsälampi
PO Box 4741, FI-00099 City of Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 6126 5100
info@helsinkifestival.fi • www.helsinkifestival.fi

Jyväskylä Arts Festival

City festival for different art forms that offers concerts, non-verbal theater, a children’s program, and a large club repertoire. It is held annually in the second week of July.

Jyväskylän Talvitanssisetti

A three-day event, full of contemporary dance and dance theater, takes place annually in the beginning of February in the city of Jyväskylä, Finland.

Artistic directors: Mikael Aaltonen
info@kokkolantalvitanssit.fi
www.kokkolantalvitanssit.fi

Kuopio Dance Festival

Diverse international program, ranging from contemporary dance to classical ballet, workshops for amateurs and professional dancers, as well as lots of off-program activities.

Lappeenranta International Ballet Gala

Lappeenranta Ballet Gala is a meeting place for Nordic dance and international stars. The Gala introduces interesting contemporary works and classics every year.

Artistic Director: Juhan Teräsvuori
Contact: Nordic Dance Makers
Valkokappi 17, FI-49510 Hamina
Tel. +358 (0)50 594 1859
juhaniteravuori@noriddance.com
www.lappeenranta Nballetfestival.com

LOIKKA Dance Film Festival

The international and annual LOIKKA Dance Film Festival presents high quality dance film – both new and classics – as well as lectures, workshops and events. The next festival will be held in March 2013 in Helsinki, with the open call for film entries beginning in August 2012.

Artistic directors:
Thomas Freundlich and Valtteri Raekallio
MAD Production, Bulvandi 23–27, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)40 805 438 • info@loikka.fi
www.loikka.fi

Lonely in the Rain?

Festival for contemporary dance, new dance and improvisation, takes place in Joensuu.

Contact: Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland
Sotku, Suokatu 4/2, FI-70110 Kuopio
Tel. +358 (0)44 055 3009 • koika@koik.fi
www.wtak.fi

Moving in November

This annual festival introduces recent dance innovations and new approaches to choreography. Moving in November presents both international and Finnish performances.

Producer: Isabel González
isabel@artsmanagement.fi
Contact: Ari Tenhula
Ari.tenhula@tanssiareena.fi
Miika Aaltonen, miika.aaltonen@tanssiareena.fi
Mikael Aaltonen, mikael.aaltonen@tanssiareena.fi
Cable Factory, Talberginkatu 1 B/149, FI-00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)50 306 4774 • info@loikka.fi
www.movinginnovember.fi

Pispala Schottische Dance Mania

Concert and training event for new folk music and dance. In addition to the courses, there will be performances of the latest Finnish folk dance productions. Next festival: September 26–30 2013.

Contact: PO Box 69, FI-33101 Tampere
Tel. +358 (0)3 2122 147 • info@tanssipidot.fi
www.tanssipidot.fi

Pispala Schottische International folkloire festival

The international folk dance and music festival Pispala Schottische will be arranged in Tampere on June 11–15 2014. Dancers, musicians and singers from Finland and other European countries are attending the festival.

PO Box 69, FI-33101 Tampere
Tel. +358 (0)3 2122 147 • info@tanssipidot.fi

Ruutia!

International dance festival for children and young audiences. Takes place annually in April. Contemporary dance, dance theater, performances for young audiences.

Contact: Artistic director Teemu Kyttynen
Tel. +358 (0)40 742 7792 • info@tanssivaaka.fi
www.timeofdance.fi

URB – Urban Festival
Urban dance, urban theater.
Contact: Johanna Strandberg
Kiasma – Museum of Contemporary Art
Mannerheimintie 2, FI-00100, Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)1755 6649 • johannastrandberg@kiasma.fi
www.kiasma.fi • www.urb.fi

Venes

Alexander Theatre
Contact: Producer Saia Nisula
Bulevardi 23, 00180 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)400 353 079
saia.nisula@aleskaneinteatteri.fi
www.aleskaneinteatteri.fi
Capacity: 473. All forms of performing arts.

Barker theatre, stage for independent art in Turku
Contact: Laura Taberman
Vitnusmäentie 65, FI-20800 Turku
Tel. +358 (0)23 236903
info@barkere театретаре.it
Contemporary dance and circus performances, facilities, dance residency.
Espoo Cultural Center Louhi Hall
Contact: Tiina Kasvi, Mari Savolainen
PO Box 2563, FI-02070 City of Espoo
Tel. +358 (0)9 8165 7206
Tiina.kasvi@espoo.fi • maria.savolainen@espoo.fi
www.espoo.fi • kulttuurikeskus
Capacity: 233/296 depending on the configuration. Contemporary dance, classical ballet, contemporary ballet, dance theater, folk dance, flamenco, performances for young audiences.
KokoTheater/KokoTeatteri
Hämeenranta 3, FI-00530 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)50 3219 919 • toimisto@kokotheateri.fi
www.kokotheateri.fi
Kiasma Theatre – Kiasma, Museum of Contemporary Art
Contact: Jonna Strandberg
Mannerheimintie 2, FI-00100 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)1755 6649 • jonna.strandberg@kiasma.fi
www.kiasma.fi
Capacity: 200. Contemporary dance, performance/live art, site specific, performances for young audiences, contemporary theater, urban art.

Savooy Theater
Contact: Director Tapari Närhi
PO Box 4731, FI-00099 City of Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 310 36565 • tapari.narhi@hel.fi
Producer Anna-Liisa Tasaepuro
Tel. +358 (0)9 310 36566 • anna-liisa.tasaepuro@hel.fi
www.savooysteatteri.fi
Stoa the Center of Eastern Helsinki
Contact: Tel. +358 (0)9 310 84840 • info@stoa.fi
www.stoa.fi
Capacity: Theatre Hall. 245 seats. Music Hall. 74 seats. Contemporary dance, classical ballet, contemporary ballet, live art, performance for young audiences, music and theater.

Tampere Hall
Contact: Executive producer Marko Steenström
Yliopistonkatu 55, PO Box 16, FI-33101 Tampere
Tel. +358 (0)3 2500 111 • fax +358 (0)3 2500 197
marko.steenstrom@tampere-talo.fi
www.tampere-talo.fi

Professional Education

Finnish National Opera Ballet School
Kaikalukatu 4 A, FI-00530 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 4030 2417 • fax +358 (0)9 4030 2274
balettiopppaito@opera.fi • www.ooppera.fi

Movement & Performance Research Outokumpu – professional dance education
North Karelia College Outokumpu
Head of Education: Jyrki Haapala
Jyrki.haapala@outokumpu.fi
Lammenkatu 18, FI-83500 Outokumpu
Tel. +358 (0)50 571 1164
Contemporary dance, classical ballet, contemporary ballet, folk dance, flamenco, performance/live art, performances for young audiences.

Oulu University of Applied Sciences, School of Music, Dance and Media
Degree Program in Dance Teacher Education
Head of Degree Program: Niina Susan Vahtola
Kotkantie 1, FI-90250 Oulu
Tel. +358 (0)10 272 3362 • fax +358 (0)10 272 1220
niina.susan.vahtola@oulu.fi
\tanissa@oulu.fi
www.outokumpu.fi
Classical ballet, folk dance, social dance, show dance
www.oamk.fi

Savonia University of Applied Sciences, Kuopio Academy of Music and Dance
Degree Program in Dance, Dance Teacher (BA)
Head of Degree Program: Eeri Pihlajakari
Kuopionlahdenkatu 23 C, FI-70100 Kuopio
Tel. +358 44 785 7411 • fax +358 (0)17 2625 617
eri.eeri.pihlajakari@savonia.fi
Contemporary dance, classical ballet, dance improvisation, dance education, jazz dance
www.savonia.fi • musiita
Tampere Conservatoire,
Vocational Qualification in Dance

Head of Degree Program: Miika Riekkinen
FE. Siljanlaisen katu 9, FI-33230 Tampere
Tel. +358 (0)50 311 9980 • fax +358 (0)10 225 5859
toimisto@tampereenkonservatorio.fi
Contemporary dance, classical ballet, contemporary ballet, dance theater, folk dance, performance/live art, performances for young audiences
www.tampereenkonservatorio.fi

Theater Academy Helsinki
Haapaniemenkatu 6, PO Box 163
FI-00531 Helsinki
www.teak.fi

Department of Dance
Head of Department: Professor Ari Tenhula
Planning officer: Jan-Peter Kaiku, jkaiku@teak.fi
Tel. +358 (0)400 792 041 • fax +358 (0)9 4313 6200

Department of Dance and Theater Pedagogy
Head of Department: Lecturer Riku Saastamoinen
Professor Eeva Anttila
Planning officer: Justiina Westerinen
Tel. +358 (0)400 792 037 • fax +358 (0)9 4313 6200
rikusaastamoinen@teak.fi • justiina.westerinen@teak.fi

Arts Academy at Turku University of Applied Sciences,
Faculty of Performing Arts / Dance

Contact: Tarja Yoken
tarja.yoken@turkuamk.fi
Dance Teacher Education
Linnankatu 54, FI-20100 Turku, Finland
Tel. +358 (0)50 998 5232
Contemporary dance, jazz, ballet, improvisation, choreography, LMA, kinesiology, music, and dance for the camera are vital components of the four-year BFA level study curriculum.
www.taidekatemia.turkuamk.fi

Turku Conservatory of Music and Dance,
vocational degree in dance

Contact:
Director of Dance Department: Sari Hannula
Linnankatu 63, FI-20100 Turku
Tel. +358 (0)2 2507 621, +358 (0)2 2507 600
sari.hannula@turunkonservatorio.fi
Contemporary dance, jazz dance, classical ballet
www.turunkonservatorio.fi