

## Luxembourg

### Dance Initiatives

There are three theaters in Luxembourg offering national and international programs: the Nouveau Théâtre Municipal and the Théâtre des Capucins in Luxembourg City, and the Théâtre Municipal in Esch/Alzette. However, none of the three theatres has its own professional troupe. The Nouveau Théâtre Municipal only stages international guest performances, the other two theatres also offer national programs or co-productions with independent groups. The best known "Festival de Wiltz" includes ballet evenings in its program, but also only with international groups. A new festival was started up three years ago on the initiative of a private society and the Théâtre des Capucins which deals solely with dance and mime theatre. This festival, called "Cour des Capucins" takes place in the first two weeks of July and has so far been host to groups such as Le Cirque du Trottoir, Ballet Contemporain de Bruxelles, Compagnie Tendanse from Paris, Forum des Arts and Trans from Luxembourg.

Besides the various dance groups affiliated to the private schools there are two professional independent troupes. The first professional group of dancers and musicians was founded in Luxembourg five years ago. This group works under the name of "Forum des Arts" since they have an open mind for any kind of artistic experiment. Predominantly they perform modern dance, but expressionistic dance is also included, a folk dance group is linked to the company. Apart from their varied program (concerts, dance performances, video productions, collaboration with young composers, set designers, photographers, etc.) the Forum des Arts take on all kinds of pedagogic tasks. The percussionists as well as the dancers offer many workshops with interesting tutors from abroad. Since 1984 there has been an annual two-week workshop organised completely by the Forum des Arts for dance and percussion in which the participants are not only given instruction in their own subjects, but are also encouraged to discover new forms of expression. The advanced dance students can work on their own creation (assisted by the tutor) in a choreographic course which is then performed for other students at the end of the workshop. Forum des Arts perform not only in Luxembourg, but have tours in other countries scheduled.

The group, Trans, founded by a Luxembourg dancer who lives in Holland, mainly work in Holland, but are often in Luxembourg for guest performances.

Top of the list of training establishments is the Luxembourg Conservatory which offers a varied and comprehensive course of study. The practical subjects are classical, modern, jazz, historical, folklore, composition, complemented by the theory courses in dance history, movement analysis, dance notation and rhythm. It is possible for the students to combine their studies with a supplementary course in music. With such a wide range of courses and their own stage facilities, this could well form the basis for a professional troupe in the near future which would be a great advantage not only for the cultural life of the country, but also for gaining professional status.

Apart from the Conservatory, there are many other excellent private schools which should also be mentioned: Ecole de Danse Li Marteling, Ecole de Danse Helene van den Kerchove, Gymnastique Harmonique et Rythmique Françoise van den Broeck, Ecole de Danse Pascale Schmidt, Ecole de Danse Jaga Antony, Centre de Danse Christiane Königsberger, Ecole de Danse Juliette Deitz, The Merl School of Dance, Royal Dance Center Jewson Beverly, Académie de Danse Germaine Damar.

Further information may be obtained from: Forum des Arts a.s.b.l., Secrétariat: Luxembourg, B.P. 2124, L-1021 Luxembourg.

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...SST" Ch: Raffaella Giordano/Sosta Palmizi with/mit Paolo Velerio, Giuseppe Scaramella, Barbara Falco, Gianfranco Poddighe, Photo © Davide Peterle

## Modena (Italy)

### Model of a Festival

This summer visitors to Italy were presented with a full program: theatre holidays not in the usual sense of the word. The series "Viaggio in Italia" swept through the country from the Alps to the tip of Italy's boot. From 30 June to 6 September theatre, dance and concert programs took place in Naples, in Modena, Treviso, Arcade/Lecco, Trient/Dro, in Lovere/Bergamo, in Palermo, Cagliari and Turin. The northern Italian city of Modena (7-12 July) was the focal point of dance activities where a new festival model was being tried out. A program of European dance theatre groups was presented, compiled by Bruna Filippi and complemented by performances of the new Italian female dance. These young companies hardly ever have an opportunity of performing to a public and developing some artistic self-awareness. So it was that the dance critic from Milan, Marinella Guatterini conceived a festival within a festival which displayed the feminine choreography of this recent trend in Italian dance like a window dressing. This project was linked with readings by Italian female lyricists. Yet this interactive program of word and wordless art overstepping all type barriers is still in its early stages. The poetesses are going to create works together with the young choreographers which are to be presented to the public in February 1988. This is an opening from a world which has become all too enclosed - in order for it to unfold together there must be dialogue and interaction with other media.

It was a mammoth program with 17 performances on 6 evenings, some on the two small stages of the Teatro San Geminiano, some in the open court of the Santa Chiara church. Firstly it was the usual stuff all festivals thrive on, the general fashions of the year. The main highlights were the Bauschistic Joseph Nadj and the twosome Mathilde Monnier/François Durore, the interesting Sosta Palmizi project and La Dux - the two women from Spain, Maria Munoz and Maria Antonia Oliver. The rest,

rather shaky in their choreographic and general creative standard, displayed more of a workshop quality. But it was not supposed to be a parade of professionals, no conclusions were meant to be drawn. It was a case of giving encouragement for first attempts and the open-minded, critical, generally young audiences certainly gave their best.

With these programs, one was reminded again and again how great an influence Pina Bausch has on the dance theatre scene. Her work is cited repeatedly, sometimes all too obviously. This is the case with Canard pékinois by the French critics' favourite, Joseph Nadj. His theatrical dance variations often about nothing in particular get carried away in the imaginatively (over-)decorated stage, but also often dwindle away into a vacuum. One could wish for a more precise and better-defined concept. Similarly with Mort de rire by Monnier/Durore like Nadj this ensemble also survives on external effects and fills the stage up with everyday requisites letting a colourful mixture of human relationships work its way through the maze.

But in both cases, there is a lot more dance than in Wuppertal and it displays perfect precision. The highly trained dancers are in full command of their technique. This applied, for the record, to the entire festival - as if it had been taken completely for granted as a basis demonstrating a standard that many other events of this kind would do well to copy.

The most touching work of the series with very sparse sets was SST choreographed by Raffaella Giordano for a small group of dancers from Milan. Giordano is a member of Sosta Palmizi, probably the most interesting Italian collective body of dance artists. Occasionally they split up and create choreographies independently for new, unknown ensembles. This is the kind of choreographic promotion I would like to see practised among the prize-hungry companies in the Federal Republic of Germany. And if all the projects were as good as SST many of the stale competitions could quickly be forgotten. The young, highly trained performers portray the problems of human contact with tremendous sensitivity, making tentative approaches to each other and withdrawing just