

D&D AWARDS 2021

An annual prize-giving appointment to recognise and celebrate excellence on the Italian dance scene



**CONTEMPORARY
PRODUCTION** ex-aequo

Triptych

Peeping Tom

Room with a View

RONE & (LA)HORDE

SPECIAL PROJECT

MicroDances

FND/Aterballetto

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Principal dancer Wiener
Staatsballett

Breanna O'Mara

Freelance dancer

Michele Satriano

Principal dancer Rome Opera
Ballet

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Emio Greco –

Pieter C. Scholten

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Soloist La Scala Theatre Ballet

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Denis Bruno

ICK-Dans Amsterdam

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Stuttgart

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Zerogrammi Dancetheatre
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PREMIO

DD

MARIO BEDENDO

JURY

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

© Stefano Mazzotta

CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTION ex-aequo

TRIPTYCH PEEPING TOM

Made up of pieces created for the Nederlands Dans Theater, based on three Freudian 'rooms', Peeping Tom's *Triptych* takes us into the landscape of the subconscious where, among murky Kubrick-style corridors, smothering bedrooms and dining rooms invaded by natural catastrophes, creatures resembling ectoplasms wander, crushed by the weight of pain and disappointment in their past (ultimately, the weight we all bear). This powerful, original production evokes distant reminiscences, hypothetical flashbacks, dreamlike atmospheres and film references, with stunning performers capable of shifting from the most ordinary movement to full-fledged acrobatics, keeping us enthralled right up to the very last second of the performance.

ROOM WITH A VIEW RONE & (LA)HORDE

A political, social urgency, confrontational and powerfully fresh in its direct style of expression, pulsates throughout *Room with a View*, the work created by the (LA)HORDE collective for the Ballet National de Marseille in



© Aude Arago

collaboration with RONE, a leading French electronic music producer. Presented as the closing show of the Venice Dance Biennale, *Room with a View* was outstanding for the bodies' ability to express the human conflict and violence of our times as they moved against each other; but also, the beauty of combat, rediscovering the meaning of being together. This work makes no concessions to romanticism; it speaks to the audience through a whirlwind of choreography and music, on a stage transformed into a vast marble quarry. The keen gaze and hope of the younger generations is palpable in this piece.

SPECIAL PROJECT MICRODANCES FND/ATERBALLETO

The FND/Aterballetto's *MicroDances* project has travelled through Europe, changing along the way. After its premiere in Athens, among the bas-reliefs of the Parthenon (a joint venture with the Greek National Opera), and the presentation within the contemporary art exhibition *Orizzonti del Corpo* in Reggio Emilia, it landed in Brussels for the season at Les Halles de Schaerbeek. It is poised to continue its journey in 2022, moving through public art and urban landscapes. Conceived by FND artistic director Gigi Cristoforetti and co-produced with the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani in Reggio Emilia, *MicroDances* involved twelve choreographers in creating brief performances for small spaces; this was a way of responding intelligently to the limitations posed by the pandemic. Here, dance is made to dialogue with others and with itself, defying genre categorisations; it interacts



© Virginia Rota



© Valeria Isareva

with both the creative inventiveness of visual artists, and cinematic VR technologies, to present innovative formats and ways of watching.

DANCERS

DAVIDE DATO

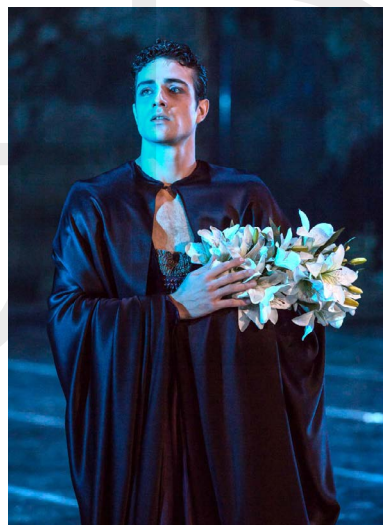
Dato has been the favourite artist of the audience at Wiener Staatsballett since 2008 and was promoted to Principal dancer there by Manuel Legris in 2016. The company's current director, Martin Schläpfer, is also focusing on him, and cast him in the Baryshnikov role in *A Suite of Dances*. Having watched him in several performances streamed from Vienna, in Italy we were delighted to see him take on a considerable challenge: the solo version of *Rite of Spring* by Uwe Scholz. The piece was remounted especially by Giovanni di Palma as part



© Missana

of the *Stravinsky's Love* evening curated by impresario Daniele Cipriani for the Nervi Music Ballet Festival and Ravenna Festival, which went on to feature in the *Soirée Russe* programme performed in various theatres around Italy. Dato gets under the skin of the choreographer's experience, which translates the sacrifice of the Chosen One into the "artist's pressure to constantly prove himself to the audience". It is a physical score lasting more than thirty minutes, during which the charismatic, vigorous Dato displays a blend of musical, technical, personal and dramatic sensitivity, entering a sort of trance that lasts until the final breath.

MICHELE SATRIANO



© Yasuko Kagayama

Recently appointed Principal dancer at the Rome Opera Ballet, in Roland Petit's *Notre-Dame de Paris* Satriano proved his dramatic talents in the role of Quasimodo. As the introverted Hunchback, a courageous soul trapped in a hunched body, he expressed the character's humanity, goodness and generosity through dance, in a poignant, richly nuanced performance. Thirty-year-old Satriano was born in Potenza and trained at La Scala Ballet Academy in Milan. Having begun his career working with international companies, he gained significant experience with Florence

Opera House company MaggioDanza under Francesco Ventriglia's directorship, and was chosen by Sylvie Guillem as her partner for Forsythe's *Steptext*. Then, in 2013 he joined the Italian capital's ballet company, where he immediately shone in lead roles. These include Don José in *Carmen* by Roland Petit, a role that earned him a nomination at the 2018 Prix Benois. He possesses technique and lyricism in classical and contemporary ballet alike, and is excellent at character portrayals. While his physique is perfect for princely roles, he is equally capable of tackling more complex and elaborate characters, expressing their human contradictions and dark sides. An all-round artist, who promises to surprise and impress us for many years to come.

BREANNA O'MARA

What do we remember best about Breanna O'Mara in *Transverse Orientation* by Dimitris Papaioannou? A host of images come to mind, the most unforgettable perhaps being when she is lying on the back of the bull, as Europa after being kidnapped by Zeus. When asked why his latest work features all male performers, Papaioannou replied "But there's Breanna! She's the best, beautiful and dazzling". O'Mara was born in Detroit, and after a stint at the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch, she now lives in Vienna where she works as a freelance. Her diaphanous complexion and auburn hair make her look like a Botticelli Madonna. Or an art deco statue, in the scene in Papaioannou's work where she is at the centre of a fountain. Here she is again, forced into



© Julian Mommert

contortionist positions as she is trapped in the frame of a folding bed. Breanna, after all, is the 'fil rouge' that joins two masters of dance theatre, Pina and Dimitris; the Greek dancemaker also cast her in *Seit Sie*, the show he created for Tanztheater Wuppertal.

CHOREOGRAPHERS EMIO GRECO AND PIETER C. SCHOLTEN



© Alwin Poiana

This duo's artistic partnership has lasted more than twenty-five years, an anniversary which they celebrated in 2021 with the creation of two densely significant new works. The first, dedicated to the complexity of these pandemic times, *Blasphemy Rhapsody*, was seen in Italy at the Teatro Comunale in Ferrara and the Teatro Sociale in Trento. The other, *We Want It All*, was shown outside Italy at the LAC in Lugano, Switzerland, and was a celebratory journey through the 'finales' of their creations (of which there have been more than sixty since 1996). In just over an hour, this smoothly combined collage of endings reveals to the audience every facet of Greco and Scholten's research on the body. The dance pulsates with 'bodies in revolt',

© Brescia-Amisano/Teatro alla Scala



shaped by contrasts, tensions, rhythm. Dance, pure and simple, which knows no genre definitions, and is grounded in the present day while already looking to the future.

NEWCOMER DANCER AGNESE DI CLEMENTE

Several roles gave Agnese Di Clemente a chance to shine in 2021; an artist at La Scala Theatre Ballet, she was made Soloist by Manuel Legris in July. She showed beautiful sensitivity and syntony with her partner Timofej Andrijashenko in the pas de deux from John Neumeier's *Spring and Fall*, danced as part of the *Great Choreographers Evening*; and impressive stamina in the dynamic cult piece *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude* by William Forsythe, which made a fine finale for the *Contemporary Evening*. In the classical repertoire, Di Clemente reprised her virtuosic role as Cupid in the Nureyev *Don Quixote* in October; and as the Manu dancer in the 21/22 season's opening title, *La Bayadère*. Her flourishing career has also included lead roles in previous seasons, such as Sally in *Wolf Works* by Wayne McGregor, and Olga in John Cranko's *Onegin*.

ITALIAN DANCERS ABROAD DENIS BRUNO

Since 2019 he's been working at ICK-Dans Amsterdam, the centre and company directed by Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten in the Netherlands; but Denis Bruno, born in Turin in 1988, had already appeared in two of



© Marco Caselli/Nimral

Greco and Scholten's works when the pair were directors at the Ballet National de Marseille. Other international companies where he has danced include the English National Ballet and the Ballet de la Generalitat Valenciana. In Spain he won the prize for best dancer at the Artes Escenicas de Valencia. In autumn we saw him in Greco and Scholten's *Blasphemy Rhapsody*, as a sort of young alter ego of Greco. His impetuous energy and dynamic verve made him a standout presence who gave a truly intense performance. In the past we had already praised his performance in *Passione*, which came to Italy with the Ballet National de Marseille. Back then, dazzled by Greco and Scholten's work, he said, "When I think of the 'body in revolt' I compare it to an iconoclastic approach. Breaking aesthetic canons and going further, thanks to a movement that is guided by thought".

GIULIA TONELLI

This season she dazzled in several titles at Christian Spuck's Ballett Zürich, where she is Principal dancer: notably in the European premiere of *Crystal*



Pite's *Angels' Atlas*, and in *Almost Blue* by Marco Goecke. Giulia's small frame and radiant face are matched by her extreme determination. She moved to Switzerland in 2010, continuing a brilliant career that began at the Vienna Opera and the Royal Ballet of Flanders. When the pandemic darkened theatres, she promoted the digital project *RE-SALIRE*, where she danced Cathy Marston's work *In our Wishes*. We were moved by her work of inward searching in the role of leader in *Winterreise* by Spuck; in this journey to decode the unknown, Tonelli dances blindfolded almost throughout. She returned to live performing in May 2021, appearing in the intense third duet from *Walking Mad* by Johan Inger, when theatres reopened for audiences of just fifty people. She can currently be seen as the Chosen One in Edward Clug's *Rite*.



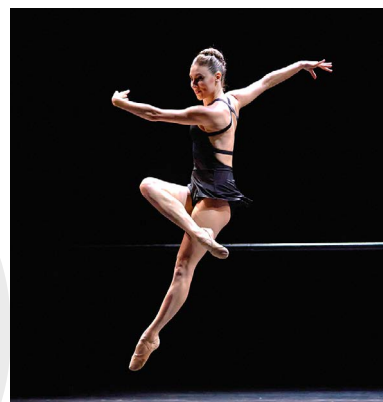
DAVIDE LORICCHIO

Born in Bergamo, Loricchio fell in love with dance as a young boy. At fifteen, he auditioned and was accepted at the Vaganova Academy in Saint Petersburg, where he attended classes with the ballet master Fethon Miozzi (another winner of the Danza&Danza Award for Italian Dancers Abroad in 1997). He immediately stood out in the Academy's repertoire ballets, including Bournonville's *Konservatoriet* and the pas de deux *La Nàiade et le Pêcheur* by Petipa. In 2018 he was a finalist at the Prix de Lausanne, and did an apprenticeship at the Royal Ballet in 2019, before joining the Mikhailovsky Ballet in Saint Petersburg. There, despite the crisis brought on by the pandemic, he has danced some weighty virtuosic roles including the Golden Idol in *La Bayadère* and the Jester in *Swan Lake*, as well as some buffo roles such as Alain in Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée*.

ITALIAN PRODUCTION BAYADÈRE. IL REGNO DELLE OMBRE

A fresh take on a classic: Marius Petipa's iconic nineteenth-century ballet has been given a new lease of life. On stage with Cristina Bozzolini's Nuovo Balletto di Toscana, the bayadères dance a memory, a sentiment of regret. It is for them that Michele Di Stefano devised his *Bayadère. Il Regno delle ombre* ('Bayadère. Kingdom of the Shades'), which draws out their spirit. Pointe shoes and

tutus are nowhere to be seen in his contemporary reimagining. Picking up the classic theme and breathing new life into it, rewriting it with the tools of contemporary dance, is an incredible challenge. The twelve shades (excellent dancers from the NBdT) scatter across the stage; each moves following her/his own, inexorable choreographic destiny. Often they line up, platoon-like, striking poses that recall the original ballet. Everything is relived as if it were a memory, a sense of regret, a psychedelic reminiscence, as though the shades yearned to return to their world.



DIGITAL BROADCAST THE BARRE PROJECT/BLAKE WORKS 2

How the most tedious ritual can become an enlightened experiment in choreographic creativity: we're referring to *The Barre Project/ Blake Works 2*, a video work produced under lockdown through Zoom meetings



© Roberto De Biasio

between William Forsythe and Tiler Peck, Principal at the New York City Ballet. The project revolved around the dancer's daily barre routine, which turns into a flow of choreographic instances, revealing the endless potential of techniques, classical and otherwise, when one has full command of the methods coupled with an inspired vision. Filmed live by Devin Jamieson, and produced by CLI Studios and Forsythe, *The Barre Project* is proof that no special effects are required to capture the audience's attention, even on a screen. All that's needed is an open-minded, bold creativity and four stunning performers who are capable of channelling moments of consolatory beauty through the cold screen of a computer.

DANCE FILM

ELEGIA DELLE COSE PERDUTE



© Stefano Mazzotta

Zerogrammi Dancetheatre company's productions always transport us to a poetic, otherly world, permeated with memories, nostalgia and dreams that materialise in the aching or joyous bodies of characters who seem plucked from photo albums in some dusty attic, and resurface in the present. They seem to tell us who we are today, what we have lost, and what we can still be. This same lyrical style can be seen in the film *Elegia delle cose perdute* ('Elegy for Lost Things'), inspired by the novel *Os pobres* by Portuguese writer Raul Brandão. Created by the choreographer Stefano

Mazzotta and filmmaker Massimo Gasole, it is part of a broader project of the same name, which includes a show that was unveiled at the Oriente Occidente Festival. The film was shot over several artistic residencies in the stunning landscapes of Sardinia, which provide the backdrop for a poignant cinematic tale about eight marginalised, solitary creatures with an awkward, clownish demeanour, who share the same feelings of melancholy, nostalgia and a yearning for redemption.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

VLADIMIR DEREVIANKO

With his authentic Russian accent, his hair combed into a centre parting, Vladimir Derevianko 'is' Igor Stravinsky. In *Stravinsky's Love*, devised by Daniele Cipriani and Vittorio Sabadin, the composer is presented as a master of ceremonies who leads the audience into the world of the Ballets Russes. This is the crowning glory of Derevianko's career, during which he arrived in Italy as an extraordinary young dancer from Russia, where he was already a top-tier star at the Bolshoi. His versatility and adaptability as a performer have allowed him to tackle a vast range of roles. He has worked with all the great choreographers of our time. And his performance as King Ludwig of Bavaria in John Neumeier's *Swan Lake* remains unforgettable to this day. Derevianko has also revealed his



talents as a choreographer, a company director (from the Dresden Opera to the Florence Opera House company Maggiodanza), and an in-demand ballet master at the world's leading theatres, not least La Scala in Milan.

MARIO PASI AWARD

THE DYING SWANS PROJECT

This year, the Mario Pasi award for the promotion of dance culture goes to *The Dying Swans Project*, a multimedia project devised by Gauthier Dance in Stuttgart, inspired by the iconic *Dying Swan* solo choreographed by Mikhail

© Jeanette Bak



Fokine for Anna Pavlova. The idea came about due to social distancing rules; it was created by commissioning sixteen new solos from sixteen different, well-known choreographers, and sixteen videomakers, for all the sixteen company's dancers. The brief pieces that resulted from it are multi-faceted and curious; all of them are beautifully filmed and free to view on the Theaterhaus Stuttgart YouTube channel. The solos were also presented live in the show titled *The Dying Swans Live Experience* (seen at the Bolzano Danza Festival), merging both live and video genres; this gave Eric Gauthier, as master of ceremonies, a chance to explain the origins of the project to the audience. •