

## **William Forsythe**

William Forsythe, who has worked internationally for the last 35 years, is recognized as one of the world's foremost choreographers. His early work is acknowledged for reorienting the practice of ballet from its identification with classical repertoire to a dynamic 21st-century art form, while his more recent works have further extended his research on the performative potentials of dance and his investigation of choreography as a fundamental principle of organization.

Forsythe received his first formal dance training in Florida from teachers Nolan Dingman and Christa Long. After further training in New York City, he danced with the Joffrey Ballet before being invited to join the Stuttgart Ballet, where he was named Resident Choreographer in 1976. Over the next seven years, he created new works for the Stuttgart ensemble as well as for ballet companies in Munich, The Hague, London, Basel, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, New York, and San Francisco. In 1984, he began a 20-year tenure as director of the Ballet Frankfurt, where he created many of the most celebrated dance theater works of our time, including *Artifact* (1984), *Impressing the Czar* (1988), *Limb's Theorem* (1990), *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991, in collaboration with composer Thom Willems and designer Issey Miyake), *A L I E / N A(C)TION* (1992), *Eidos : Telos* (1995), *Endless House* (1999), *Kammer/Kammer* (2000), and *Decreation* (2003).

After the closure of the Ballet Frankfurt in 2004, Forsythe established a new, more independent ensemble. The Forsythe Company, founded with the support of the states of Saxony and Hesse, the cities of Dresden and Frankfurt am Main, and private sponsors, is based in Dresden and Frankfurt am Main and maintains an extensive international touring schedule. Key works produced by the new ensemble include *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005), *You made me a monster* (2005), *Human Writes* (2005), *Heterotopia* (2006), *The Defenders* (2007), and *Yes we can't* (2008). Forsythe's most recent creations are developed and performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier works are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including The Kirov Ballet, The New York City Ballet, The San Francisco Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, England's Royal Ballet, and The Paris Opera Ballet, among many others.

Forsythe's choreography and his companies' performances have won the most prestigious awards the field has to offer, such as the New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award (1988, 1998, 2004, 2007) and London's Laurence Olivier Award (1992, 1999, 2009). Forsythe has been selected as "Choreographer of the Year" numerous times by international critics' survey. Additionally, he has been conveyed the title of *Commandeur des Arts et Lettres* (1999) by the government of France and has received the German Distinguished Service Cross (1997) and the Wexner Prize (2002).

In 1994, Forsythe virtually reinvented the teaching of dance with his pioneering and award-winning computer application *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*, which is used by professional companies, dance conservatories, universities, postgraduate architecture programs, and secondary schools worldwide. 2009 marks the launch of *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced*, an interactive web project developed in collaboration with The Ohio State University which offers extensive interdisciplinary insight into the complex structures of choreographic thinking.

As an educator, Forsythe is regularly invited to lecture and give workshops at major universities and cultural institutions internationally. In 2002, Forsythe was chosen as a

Founding Mentor for The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. He currently co-directs and teaches in the Dance Apprentice Network aCross Europe (D.A.N.C.E.) program, an interdisciplinary professional insertion program based at Dresden's Palucca Schule. Forsythe is an Honorary Fellow at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London, and holds an honorary doctorate from the Juilliard School in New York.

Forsythe's choreographic thinking has engaged with and contributed to the most significant international artistic currents of our time, from performance and visual arts to architecture and interactive multimedia. He has been commissioned to create architectural and performance installations by architect-artist Daniel Libeskind, ARTANGEL (London), Creative Time (New York), and the City of Paris. His installation and film works have been presented at the Whitney Biennial (New York), the Venice Biennale, the Louvre Museum, 21\_21 Design Sight in Tokyo, and numerous other key venues. In 2006, a major exhibition of his performance, film, and installation work was presented at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich. *William Forsythe: Transfigurations* at The Ohio State University's Wexner Center for the Arts in 2009 is the first museum exhibition to feature a significant body of his film, video, and installation work in the United States.