



For immediate release: Friday 20 September 2024

Sadler's Wells, Pina Bausch Foundation and Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch to tour major new encounter with Pina Bausch's *Kontakthof* which reunites original cast from 1978 production

Sadler's Wells, the **Pina Bausch Foundation** and **Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch** today announce *Kontakthof – Echoes of '78* – a new encounter with Bausch's seminal work, conceived and directed by **Meryl Tankard**, who was one of the main characters in 1978. Tankard will reunite with other members from the original cast for this unique production, which receives its world premiere at the Opernhaus Wuppertal, Germany in November 2024. *Kontakthof – Echoes of '78* will then tour internationally from 2025, with performances at Sadler's Wells Theatre in Spring 2026.

Originally premiered in 1978, *Kontakthof* is one of the most important pieces in Pina Bausch's repertoire, created at a time when her work was beginning to receive international recognition. It is a key example of her long-standing collaboration with **Rolf Borzik**, who designed set and costumes and also documented the production.

During the creation of the seminal 1978 production, it is said that Pina Bausch often mused on the idea of seeing her original cast dance the piece when older. Now – 45 years after the premiere of the original production, *Kontakthof – Echoes of '78* features interactions between past and present. The production integrates live performance with projections of archival footage of the company as younger dancers and with members no longer with us on stage.

Kontakthof – Echoes of '78 is a Sadler's Wells, Pina Bausch Foundation and Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch production. It is co-produced with Amare-The Hague, LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura, Festspielhaus St. Pölten, Seongnam Arts Center and China Shanghai International Arts Festival and supported as a contribution to the preparation of the Pina Bausch Centre with funds from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and the City of Wuppertal

Kontakthof – Echoes of '78 will be performed at Opernhaus, Wuppertal from 26 November–1 December 2024, where it will play in repertory with Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch's restaging of the original production, which will be performed from 23 November–1 December 2024. Tickets will be available from 10am on Friday 27 September: www.pina-bausch.de

Meryl Tankard, Concept, Director and Dancer, said:

"Watching recordings from the premiere in '78, I was struck by the simple, but powerful and timeless quality of the footage that Rolf Borzik captured. It made me consider how to approach this project. Forty-five years on, we are older, a few of the original cast members are sadly no longer with us and there are limitations as to what we can do physically. But this is where the interest lies. Rather than replace our dear friends, I want their absence to be felt. We will play and dance with projections of our younger selves using the archival footage to bring these echoes of '78 to the fore. Kontakthof, as with so many of Pina's works, has such enduring relevance. It's a privilege to return to this iconic work."

Sadler's Wells Producing and Touring Department was established in 2005 and has since produced 89 works including 64 new full-length productions, which have performed to audiences of more than two million, touring to 51 countries. Earlier this year *Message In A Bottle*, a Sadler's Wells and Universal Music UK co-production, completed a 10-stop tour of North America, playing at prestigious theatres including New York City Center and the Hollywood Pantages Theater in Los Angeles. *The Rite of Spring/common ground[s]*, a Pina Bausch Foundation, Ecole des Sables and Sadler's Wells production, enjoyed sold-out runs in Europe and the United States, with performances at the iconic Park Avenue Armory and the Playhouse Theatre in Edinburgh as part of the Edinburgh International Festival in 2023. In 2025, Sadler's Wells, Universal Music UK and Extended Play Productions present Pete Townshend's *Quadrophenia, a Mod Ballet*, which will tour the UK with its official opening at Sadler's Wells Theatre on 25 June 2025. Since its inception, the Department has produced work by artists including William Forsythe, Sylvie Guillem, Russell Maliphant, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Michael Keegan-Dolan, Crystal Pite, Botis Seva, Ivan Blackstock, Kate Prince, Anthony Gormley, Hussein Chalayan, Thomas Ades, and Sting.

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More information about Pina Bausch's *Kontakthof* can be found here:

<https://www.pinabausch.org/id/kont>

Opernhaus Wuppertal		Kontakthof – A piece by Pina Bausch Kontakthof – Echoes of `78
23.11.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof – A piece by Pina Bausch
24.11.2024	6pm	Kontakthof – A piece by Pina Bausch
26.11.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof – Echoes of `78
27.11.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof – Echoes of `78
28.11.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof A piece by Pina Bausch
29.11.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof – Echoes of `78
30.11.2024	2pm	Kontakthof – A piece by Pina Bausch
30.11.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof – Echoes of `78
1.12.2024	2pm	Kontakthof – Ein Stück von Pina Bausch
1.12.2024	7.30pm	Kontakthof – Echoes of `78

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Sadler's Wells

Sadler's Wells is a world-leading dance organisation. We strive to make and share dance that inspires us all. Our acclaimed year-round programme spans dance of every kind, from contemporary to flamenco, Bollywood to ballet, salsa to street dance and tango to tap.

We commission, produce and present more dance than any other organisation in the world. Since 2005, we have helped to bring more than 200 new dance works to the stage, embracing both the popular and the unknown. Our acclaimed productions tour the world. Since 2005 we've produced 89 works, 64 new full-length productions and performed to audiences of more than two million, touring to 51 countries.

Each year, over half a million people visit our three London theatres - **Sadler's Wells Theatre**, **Lilian Baylis Studio** and **Peacock Theatre**. Millions more attend our touring productions nationally and internationally or explore our digital platforms, including Sadler's Wells Digital Stage.

Sadler's Wells East

In 2025 we're opening a fourth London venue in Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. **Sadler's Wells East** will house a 550-seat mid-scale theatre, as well as facilities for the new Rose Choreographic School and the hip hop theatre training centre, Academy Breakin' Convention.

Sadler's Wells East joins the rich cultural heritage of Stratford, opening in London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park as part of the East Bank development alongside the BBC, UAL's London College of Fashion, UCL and the V&A. Sadler's Wells East will support artist development and training, and the creation of new work. It will build the infrastructure for dance and make it accessible to more people. Sadler's Wells East will house a flexible theatre presenting a wide variety of dance performances. Community will be at the heart of Sadler's Wells East with a large open foyer that can be used by everyone as a meeting or performance space. There will also be dance studios and world-class dance facilities for dancemakers to train, create and rehearse productions.

Supporting artists

Supporting artists is at the heart of our work. We have associate artists and companies, which nurture some of the most exciting talent working in dance today. We host the National Youth Dance Company, which draws together some of the brightest young dancers from across the country. Sadler's Wells Breakin' Convention runs professional development programmes to champion and develop the world's best hip hop artists, as well as producing, programming and touring groundbreaking hip hop performances.

Learning and community links

Around 30,000 people take part in our learning and engagement programmes every year. We support schools local to our theatres in Islington and Stratford, designing experiences for children and young people to watch, explore and critically engage with the arts. We also run Company of Elders, a resident performance company of dancers aged over 60 who rehearse with renowned artists to make new work for public performances locally, nationally and internationally.

Sadler's Wells is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

www.sadlerswells.com

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YouTube: Sadler's Wells Theatre

About Pina Bausch Foundation

The Pina Bausch Foundation carries the artistic legacy of dancer and choreographer Pina Bausch into the future. Her son Salomon Bausch founded the non-profit foundation shortly after her death in 2009 to make her work accessible and tangible for dancers worldwide, diverse audiences, and new generations. The focus is on rehearsing and performing Pina Bausch's pieces and physically getting to know her work in workshop formats. For this purpose, the Foundation passes on Pina Bausch's choreographies to dancers and companies worldwide and collaborates with universities. It also develops a training process for rehearsal directors and artistic strategies to safeguard the unique knowledge of the choreographies and their rehearsal process for the future.

One of the Foundation's fundamental tasks is to make the extensive materials of Pina Bausch's artistic legacy accessible through digital archives. The Pina Bausch Archives, which include photographs and video recordings as well as written materials on the creation of the pieces, serve as a knowledge resource that is used again and again during rehearsals and restagings. Since November 2021, first materials are publicly accessible worldwide in the online archives at [pinabausch.org](https://www.pinabausch.org/). The online archives are constantly being expanded with new materials and pieces.

<https://www.pinabausch.org/>

About Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch

Pina Bausch wrote dance history. She not only founded the world-famous company in Wuppertal, she shaped a whole genre – dance theatre – and influenced countless other artists, choreographers and directors worldwide. For this she received a great many prizes, such as the German Dance Prize, Venice's Golden Lion and the Kyoto Prize. In 1973 the young dancer and choreographer (1940-2009) took over the ballet company at the Wuppertaler Bühnen (the combined municipal theatres) and soon renamed it the Tanztheater Wuppertal ('Wuppertal dance theatre').

She made forty-six works, and even decades after their creation they move us, stir us, touch a nerve. Many of the works are still in the company's repertoire and the company maintains and preserves this heritage with great devotion, care and energy. Every dancer brings their personality to the work. Three generations work on the pieces together; the older dancers pass their roles on to the younger dancers, sharing the experience inscribed in their bodies. In August 2022 the French choreographer Boris Charmatz took over the Artistic Direction of the company.

www.pina-bausch.de