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WUPPERTAL AKTUELL

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Tanztheater Wuppertal:

New Directors to lead further development

Bettina Wagner-Bergelt and Roger Christmann will be the new executive team at the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch. On 1 January 2019 Bettina Wagner-Bergelt will take over as artistic director; Roger Christmann will become managing director at the same point. They will have equal status. The appointment has been agreed today by Wuppertal city council's finance committee following a meeting yesterday, 13th November, of the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch board, which consists of representatives of the city council and the Pina Bausch Foundation. Bettina Wagner-Bergelt and Roger Christmann will be employed on two-year contracts, till the end of the 2020/2021 season if necessary.

For Mayor Andreas Mucke it was important to choose two exceptional individuals for the transition period who will not only manage the company artistically and practically but also develop it further. "In the summer, together with the board, we initiated an organisational and artistic restructuring process for the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch. International experts are advising on the company's future direction and will be providing politicians, management and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia with an appropriate suggestion for its future organisational and artistic structure. The aim has to be, to keep Pina Bausch's legacy alive and further develop it. On the basis of the structure found for the Tanztheater Wuppertal, individuals will then be selected for the artistic and financial directorship. This process will take some while. I am therefore very grateful to Ms Wagner-Bergelt and Mr Christmann for accompanying and contributing to this process. The ensemble will also be closely involved," the mayor added.

Council chief executive Dr Johannes Slawig is also pleased about the



company's new directors. "The Tanztheater Wuppertal has begun a process of further development. In it the company's scope and artistic aims are to be defined, and from this the ensemble's artistic work determined and the future management and leadership structures devised. These questions need to be debated thoroughly, with external experts involved. This will take time and during this time the company needs competent direction. Through a selection process the appointments committee have succeeded in proposing two excellent, qualified individuals."

For council arts director Matthias Nocke the appointment of new directors at the Tanztheater Wuppertal is a crucial step forward for the company. "In the future it will need both continuity and fidelity to the oeuvre, as well as breaks with tradition and new productions. It is crucially important to the process of development now beginning, and the creative processes involved, that no leadership vacuum is created. The planned Pina Bausch Centre in Wuppertal must also be considered throughout. With Bettina Wagner-Bergelt and Roger Christmann the company have gained a crucial bonus in terms of expertise, experience and capability, which will allow this process to take place without time pressure."

All three have thanked the current managing director, Dirk Hesse, for his work. As previously announced, Hesse has said that he does not wish to renew his contract, due to expire at the end of the year.

The role of artistic director has not been filled since the previous intendant and artistic director, Adolphe Binder was dismissed in July.