

TanzArchiv Berlin

In a six-month process, we, the five-member steering group of „TanzArchiv Berlin“, together with the Berlin dance scene, have compiled the picture of a future dance archive for Berlin, to take up and summarizes the needs and wishes of the dance scene: What is available, what is missing, and what do we need for a future dance archive in Berlin? In order to develop a lively place of dance knowledge, dance mediation and artistic dance research, we preface our final report with recommendations for action that briefly and succinctly bundle the most important demands:

1. The TanzArchiv Berlin wants to enable the negotiation, the discussion and the expansion of the archive concept and the archive practice in dance in the connection of centralized and decentralized working methods.

- The TanzArchiv Berlin is a place of exchange, encounters, research and production for dance actors and the audience.
- It facilitates collaboration between artists, archive experts, researchers, teachers, mediators, and other interested parties in order to develop new archival practices. Artistic intervention and participation, moments of actualization, appropriation and re-appropriation keep the archive alive and open.
- In addition to a central location for the dance archive, funding programs for connecting the decentralized dance landscape with archival work practices will be central to the work processes in TanzArchiv Berlin. The question is how artists and established places (as well as underrepresented places) of dance come into connection, how the history(ies) of dance can be renegotiated through these encounters. The aim shall be to develop new artistic research and production programs: an archive on the move.

2. The TanzArchiv Berlin is conceived as a living place of collecting, preserving, mediating and transforming, as a “new space” of inclusive structures of working and experimenting in the art form dance.

- Besides the decentralized working processes the TanzArchiv Berlin must be conceived as an analog place of exchange, mediation and research. The aim is to understand the TanzArchiv Berlin as part of the concept of the new House for Dance and Choreography in Berlin, which shall integrate research and discussion spaces, practice-oriented studio spaces, a library and a documentation lab (see point 5). These places will enable the interweaving of dance practice and archiving practice within the House for Dance and Choreography from the very beginning. Storage spaces are included only on a small scale. A cooperation with existing memory institutions (e.g. Landesarchiv Berlin) will be strived for to receive storage spaces on a larger scale.

- The TanzArchiv Berlin will be developed as a place that considers from the very beginning inclusive work structures, changing team and management structures, a transparent horizontal system, as well as consultation and expert involvement to enhance the working transparency and inclusivity.
- The TanzArchiv Berlin sees the engagement with works and legacies of less established, younger and / or marginalized artists as an essential part of its concept.
- The TanzArchiv Berlin shall include perspectives of diverse artists and audiences as an important focus of its work. For this, it needs staff members who are trained to work with artists of different and diverse backgrounds.

3. The TanzArchiv Berlin is a place of artistic intervention as well as of artistic documentation and archiving processes.

- Self-empowerment, the self-determined archiving and shaping of the archive by dance makers, is an indispensable part of the TanzArchiv.
- In addition to the video documentation of dance realized as part of the Tanzforum Berlin project, funded by the Berlin Senate, the TanzArchiv Berlin will offer workshops and technical equipment to enable artists to independently and individually document and archive their work processes on film.
- For the work on their archive, artists must receive time- and personnel-economic support from the beginning. Supplementary funding, research and archive grants, as well as targeted and needs-based funding programs (archive funding programs) shall be established in close coordination with cultural policy and cultural administration.

4. The TanzArchiv Berlin is a laboratory where digital tools and new digital documentation methods are tried out.

- The interest in analysis, visualization and annotation tools for time-based media is evident in the artist community. Especially for the own rehearsal processes and for the mediation, possibilities have to be created in the TanzArchiv.
- The necessary infrastructure (server, recording devices, rooms) allows to document not only result-oriented, but process-related and on an appropriately high qualitative level. (the doc LAB)

5. The TanzArchiv Berlin is conceived as a joint hub of a networked, digital environment.

- The joint collection, recording, archiving and long-term storage of digital data on dance in a common data environment is missing (a desideratum) in Berlin. This concerns both archival and historical data on dance objects and collections, but also data from documenting processes.
- The development of a digital environment free of charge for the actors of the scene, in which they can document, archive and interconnect with the data of other artists, is essential.
- Digital networking with existing dance data, artists' and specialist archives, city archives, libraries, etc. is necessary to ensure interdisciplinary, multi-perspective access.
- Basically, legal and technical requirements must be developed in order to make content digitally accessible.

Contact: tanzarchiv@tanzbuero-berlin.de | Project management: ZTB e.V. / Tanzbüro Berlin
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