

## Croatian Dance Festivals

**D**ance audiences in Croatia have a choice of 3 annual events that offer dance and movement-based performances. The festival season starts in May with the Young Choreographers Platform in Zagreb, it continues a month later with the Dance Week Festival when the dance season reaches its peak, and in July the dance community moves to „magical“ Istria for the Dance and Non-Verbal Festival in Sanvincenti.

**YOUNG CHOREOGRAPHERS PLATFORM** presents the youngest generation of Croatian choreographers. From a single-evening event in 2000, the Young Choreographers Platform has grown successfully into a week-long event, with national and international selection, dance and choreography workshops led by internationally renowned teachers, round table discussions and accompanying events such as exhibitions, open improvisations etc.

Initiated and organized with great enthusiasm by Larisa Lipovac and Tamara Curić, founders and leaders of the Tala Dance Centar, the Young Choreographers Platform manages to fulfil its goal of promoting young dance, to give an opportunity to newcomers, to energise the Croatian dance scene with new ideas and, maybe most importantly, to create a warm and friendly atmosphere for young artists to meet and interact.

National participants are selected by a board of renowned Croatian choreographers, dance writers and selectors, and the international selection is made by organisers after the international call for entries.

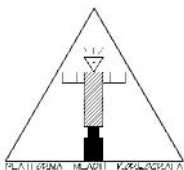
[www.inet.hr/~tala](http://www.inet.hr/~tala)

**DANCE WEEK FESTIVAL**, started in 1984, is the longest standing project of the Croatian Institute for Movement and Dance (Hrvatski institut za pokret i ples), an organization instrumental in pioneering and enhancing conditions and opportunities for the development of the independent contemporary dance, movement and mime scene. Both the Institute and the Festival are founded by Artistic Producer and Director Mirna Žagar. Already as soon as the second Festival in 1985, the programme included international artists, becoming the central event for the Croatian dance community. Today, each year during the first week in June, the Croatian dance community, along with international dance artists, occupy the city centre theatres, with an „overdose“ of three to four performances per evening. In its 20 years it has grown into the essence of the city, attracting various audiences, international guests and extensive media attention. With its international reputation as being one of the strongest festivals in region, Dance Week Festival has put Zagreb on the map of internationally important cultural events.



Mirna Žagar, together with her co-selector Edvin Liverić, choose to show performances that in their artistic expression vary from mainstream dance such as Ballet Preljocaj to new „thinking dance“ performances by Xavier Le Roy or La Ribot. Among the several hundred

featured internationally acclaimed artists are: Susan Linke, Josef Nadj, Wayne MacGregor, Trisha Brown, Thomas Hauert, Gilles Jobin, Vera Mantero.... and dance companies which, among many others, include Batsheva Dance Company, Nederlands Dans Teater, Sankai Juku.... alongside Croatian based artists and those working in the region.



For its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Dance Week Festival started its own projects: *Movement Gallery*, in which a select number of Croatian artists created short works for specific art gallery spaces, and *KASP Revival* - restaging performances by Milana Broš, one of the most important Croatian choreographers in the 70s and 80s.

Dance Week Festival, which has been the only exclusively dance festival in Croatia for over a decade, gives an important insight into the international scene for many generations of Croatian dance artists. Its various accompanying programmes with workshops, seminars, exhibitions, round tables and off-programme have served as the starting point for many new projects, international collaborations and careers. [www.danceincroatia.com](http://www.danceincroatia.com), [www.danceweekfestival.com](http://www.danceweekfestival.com)

**DANCE AND NON-VERBAL THEATRE FESTIVAL in SVETVINCENTAT**, a small renaissance town in central Istria (a peninsula in the westernmost part of Croatia), was initiated in 2000 by Snježana Abramović - dancer, choreographer and artistic leader of the Zagreb Dance Company. The choice of this tiny town in Istria has proven successful, since during the summer Istria is a destination for many who are looking for culture as well as holidays. The programme of the festival takes place in non-theatrical open spaces, such as the city

square, streets and in the „kaštela“ [castle]. Open-air events enhance the charm and unique atmosphere of this event.

The Festival gathers together the Croatian dance community as well as foreign dancers, choreographers, festival programmers, dance teachers in a relaxed, almost informal atmosphere. The selection for the Festival consists of the dance productions of European choreographers, productions of Croatian choreographers as well as street theatre production, mime theatre works and circus events. The off-programme includes various dance and theatre workshops with a final presentation, visual art interventions and visual artists' performances.

The final goal of the Festival is to make a Mediterranean Dance Centre a place of contacts that will establish links between the Croatian dance scene and international net of festivals. The Festival has been very prominently reported in the media and also extremely well accepted by its audience.

[www.festival-plesa-sanvincenti.htnet.hr](http://www.festival-plesa-sanvincenti.htnet.hr)

Other festivals that are regular dance and movement performances include the Biennale of Contemporary Music, EUROKAZ and the International Youth Festival in Pula.

