



COLOURS INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL 2025

Dear journalists,

A glorious comeback: after three pandemic-induced years of waiting, the Summer of COLOURS 2025 proved just how much this dance biennial has become a part of Stuttgart. People flocked to the events, to COLOURS in the City as well as the shows at Theaterhaus. Why was that? Apart from the obvious explanation – the artistic quality of the programme – there is probably a second one. Visitors seemed to sense how much humanity, joy and positivity dance in particular can bring to these troubled times. Choreographer Akram Khan got to the heart of it when he addressed the audience at the opening at Theaterhaus: „COLOURS – what a beautiful name for a festival in a world that is increasingly becoming black and white“.

The team made indeed sure that the 24 days of the festival were filled with dance and colours. **The programme on the Theaterhaus stages featured no fewer than 15 stage productions from all over the world, including four European and three German premieres** as well as two contributions from the hosts: the **world premieres of Akram Khan's *Turning of Bones* for Gauthier Dance and the family production *Barker* by Barak Marshall for Gauthier Dance JUNIORS.**

Add to this the comprehensive, mostly free programme of **COLOURS in the City**, with plenty of opportunities to dance along at the COLOURS Playground, the COLOURS Pop-Ups with Eric Gauthier's dance pick-up in the city districts and the COLOURS Family Day at the zoo Wilhelma. Another instant hit was the new **COLOURS Collaborations** format in co-operation with key players from the Stuttgart cultural scene, such as the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film, EXOgallery, Arthaus Kinos Stuttgart, Kessel Festival, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart and jazzopen. It wasn't just the figures that showed how much the two artistic directors Eric Gauthier (Concept & COLOURS in the City) and Meinrad Huber (Stage Programme) had got right:

At a conservative estimate, **over 16,000 people** took part in the **city events**, including about 3,000 participants in the COLOURS Playground and 1,250 dancers at the COLOURS Pop-Ups as well as 2,000 children and 3,000 adults at the COLOURS Family Day plus the audiences of the COLOURS Collaborations. The statistics for the stage programme were no less impressive. **Over 17,000 visitors attended the 42 performances**, equivalent to **92% of the seats sold**. During the festival, the team also received the news that COLOURS had made it into the prestigious selection of „Booming festivals of the 2024/25 season“ in the critics' survey of tanznetz.de, the leading German online medium on dance.

Perhaps the greatest success of COLOURS: the international artists and organisers who met at Theaterhaus, made friends and partied until late into the night, enjoyed their time in Stuttgart to the full and are now taking the COLOURS spirit back home. A cheerful, heartwarming atmosphere and a sense of community that will probably be reflected in future programmes – in the form of numerous touring invitations, engagements and choreographic assignments.

We look forward to your coverage of COLOURS 2025. Please let me know if you would like to get in touch with the artistic directors of COLOURS, Eric Gauthier and Meinrad Huber.

Best regards,

Nicola Steller
Press Relations COLOURS International Dance Festival

PS: And this figure is also part of the balance sheet: the **25,000 COLOURS fans** commissioned by the organising team as giveaways. They proved immensely popular in the midsummer temperatures and have since been spotted all over the city. But then, „COLOURS in the City“ was literally unmissable anyway. With posters and banners throughout the city, the colourful pillars on the Königsbau and the flags on Schlossplatz, the whole of Stuttgart shone in the COLOURS look.

Looking back at the 5th COLOURS International Dance Festival

The stage programme

For the radiant 2025 line-up, programme director Meinrad Huber had selected companies from Australia, Belgium, Germany, France, Great Britain, Israel, Italy, Canada, Cuba, Portugal and the USA. As always, he focussed on a mixture of famous names and rising stars. In the 2025 edition, a sense of socio-political urgency was unmistakable, notably in *Theatre of Dreams* by Hofesh Shechter, *Nomad* by Eastman / Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, *Burn Baby, Burn* by Guillaume Côté, *NEW EARTH* by Shahar Binyamini, *Until We Sleep* by Botis Seva / Far from the Norm, *CARCAÇA* by Marco da Silva Ferreira and a creation by Ephrat Asherie and Michelle Dorrance with the telling title *The Center Will Not Hold*. The defiance, humanity and virtuosity of these productions will stay with us for a long time.

However, the search for community, love, solidarity and freedom also ran like a common thread through the programmes, which at first glance seemed less political, like the works by Marie Chouinard, Amala Dianor, OtroLado, the Dance On Ensemble, Virginie Brunelle and the fabulous acrobats of Gravity & Other Myths. Wonderfully expressive and deeply moving, they bore witness to the longing for a better world that seems less attainable than ever – and yet, for brief moments on stage, within reach.

Meinrad Huber comments: „Diversity, concern for nature and our common future – the topics that the companies explored were not always easy. This makes me all the more pleased with the curiosity, joy of discovery and openness with which audiences embarked on their COLOURS journey. Again and again, the artists told me how unique they found the warm reception and the high level of interest here in Stuttgart. The great atmosphere this created was infectious. There were nothing but happy faces throughout the festival, especially in the Theaterhaus courtyard where the companies met and celebrated.“

So it's good to know that COLOURS will continue even after July 13, 2025. With a three-week residency in co-production with the festival, Italian choreographer Sofia Nappi and her company KOMOCO laid the groundwork for their next production *SORA*. Just like her predecessor Shahar Binyamini, who used the COLOURS 2022 residency to develop his piece *NEW EARTH*, Sofia Nappi will hopefully present her finished work at the next edition of COLOURS.

What's more, the two Theaterhaus productions premiered at COLOURS are guaranteed to return in the 2025/26 season. The celebrated dance evening *Turning of Bones* by Akram Khan will be added to the repertoire, as will Barak Marshall's *Barker*, the new hit by the Gauthier Dance JUNIORS.

COLOURS in the City 2025

It's not just the kick-off in the city that is a tradition at COLOURS. The start of the festival always seems to coincide with a heatwave, just like this time. But Stuttgart took it cool. At the **COLOURS Playground**, open classes in a wide variety of dance styles encouraged hundreds of people to join in and, by the time the sun went down at the latest, it was possible to experience a true summer fairytale. Accompanied by live music, the Playground dancers turned Stuttgart's Schlossplatz into an atmospheric ballroom.

Eric Gauthier also braved the heat. On his three-day **COLOURS Pop-ups** tour, he got nine Stuttgart districts moving. Wherever his dance mobile made a stopover, he was met with packed squares and great enthusiasm.

However, the heart-warming highlight of the COLOURS in the City activities was, as always, the **COLOURS Family Day** at Wilhelma, Stuttgart's zoological and botanical garden. Eric Gauthier came up with twelve short choreographies for twelve different animals. All members of Gauthier Dance and the JUNIORS were on hand to show the young visitors how to transform into these animals. It was great fun for the children, who were even able to take home a small gift afterwards: the specially produced Pixi book *The Zoo is Dancing*.

An additional format was introduced in 2025: the **COLOURS Collaborations**. Eric Gauthier's idea of making the festival even more present in the city through short performances at the events of leading players in the Stuttgart cultural scene worked wonderfully. He deliberately focussed on other artistic genres and combined them with dance in various ways: Gauthier Dance performed Hofesh Shechter's *Bonus Track* before Jean-Michael Jarre's concert at the [jazzopen](https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-jazzopen/982) (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-jazzopen/982>) and energised the [Kessel Festival](https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-kessel-festival/981) (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-kessel-festival/981>) with a show plus dance-along activities. In co-operation with [Arthaus Kinos Stuttgart](https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-arthaus-kinos-stuttgart/980) (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-arthaus-kinos-stuttgart/980>), Meinrad Huber put together a series of dance films, followed by Q&As with guests from the world of dance, and Eric Gauthier's dance-along choreography *Dance Without Borders* was premiered at the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-ifts/978>). Marie Chouinard and her company brought the participatory cult piece *In Museum* to the [Staatsgalerie Stuttgart](https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-staatsgalerie-compagnie-marie-chouinard-in-museum/983) (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-staatsgalerie-compagnie-marie-chouinard-in-museum/983>). Last but not least, art collector Eric Gauthier gave his debut as a curator at the EXOgallery (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/program-tickets/colours-x-exogallery/979>). The group exhibition *The stage is yours!* also inspired some Gauthier Dance members to create new pieces and perform them amidst the artworks. The exhibition will be wrapped up on July 26, 2025, with a finissage concert by Eric Gauthier and the cellist Nadja Krasnovid.

Without exception, the cross-genre partnerships have met with a great response. The prediction for COLOURS 2027 should not be hard to guess: to be continued ...

More information: www.coloursdancefestival.com

Photos Jeanette Bak

We are happy to send you high-res versions on request!

For your captions

COLOURS 2025. Atmosphere in front of Theaterhaus Stuttgart

COLOURS Playground on the Stuttgarter Schlossplatz

Open class with Eric Gauthier on June 20, 2025

Evening dance Swing – Lindy Hop on June 22, 2025

COLOURS Pop-Ups with Eric Gauthier

Lukasplatz in Stuttgart-Ost on June 24, 2025

COLOURS Family Day on July 6, 2025.

The Apes – dancers of the Stuttgart breakdance crew TRU CRU

COLOURS Collaborations

Performance Gauthier Dance in the EXOgallery on July 5, 2025. Shori Yamamoto and Sidney Elizabeth Turtschi

Gauthier Dance performing Hofesh Shechter, *Bonus Track* at the Stuttgart jazzopen on July 11, 2025. Concert Jean-Michel Jarre

Press releases, logos, portraits of the artistic management team and a selection of impressions of COLOURS 2025 can be found in the [press section](https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/press) (link to <https://www.coloursdancefestival.com/en/press>) of www.coloursdancefestival.com. There are also download links for the images of the stage productions in the respective announcements.

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COLOURS International Dance Festival 2025

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Dank an die Stihl AG
