

## **Press release**

Hamburg, March 26, 2018

### **John Neumeier: Artistic Director and Chief Choreographer of the Hamburg Ballet until 2023**

*The longstanding success story of the Hamburg Ballet will be continued*

The Supervisory Board of the Hamburg State Opera and the responsible committee of the Hamburg Senate have extended Prof. John Neumeier's contract as Artistic Director and Chief Choreographer of the Hamburg Ballet, which currently expires in 2019, for four years until 2023. Since 1973, the honorary citizen of Hamburg has been Ballet Director and Chief Choreographer of the Hamburg Ballet and has since 1996 also held the position of General Manager. By extending his contract, the Hamburg Ballet continues its longstanding success story.

Under John Neumeier's directorship, the Hamburg Ballet has become one of the most important and internationally renowned cultural institutions. Recently, John Neumeier and his company were enthusiastically received by Japanese audiences during a major tour of the country; last week, John Neumeier presented the premiere of his new ballet "Anna Karenina" on the Historic Stage of the Bolshoi Theatre Moscow, as a coproduction whose world premiere had been celebrated at the Hamburg State Opera in July 2017. The creative energy of John Neumeier and his company will continue to evolve within Hamburg and during its international tours as cultural ambassador of the Hanseatic city. In order to enhance the profile of the Hamburg Ballet, the number of dancers will be increased by three additional posts from the 2018/19 season onwards. Furthermore, the city will continue to establish a reliable institutional basis for the National Youth Ballet of Germany and ensure the long-term survival of the John Neumeier Foundation which houses one of the largest private dance collections in the world.

**Dr. Carsten Brosda, Minister of Culture and Media:** „John Neumeier and his company fascinate their worldwide audiences with unabated energy and creativity. They are unique ambassadors of the Cultural City of Hamburg. The sustained success of the Hamburg Ballet under the directorship of John Neumeier in Hamburg and its international reputation are truly

impressive, and both inspire us to continue the success story of the Hamburg Ballet. As a result, John Neumeier will complete half a century as Artistic Director of the Hamburg Ballet – this is an outstanding achievement which marks an artistically unique era.”

**Prof. John Neumeier, Artistic Director and Chief Choreographer, Hamburg Ballet:**

„Although I have been Ballet Director of the Hamburg Ballet for 45 years, I still consider this position an extraordinarily fascinating mission in life: for me as an artist and choreographer, as General Manager of the Hamburg Ballet and, not least, as Honorary Citizen of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. My mental and physical health allows me to develop far-reaching plans for the future. With my decision to prolong the period of my Artistic Directorship at the Hamburg Ballet for four years, I also meet various expectations, e. g. from our renowned tour partners in Tokyo, Moscow and Vienna. There is no doubt that the Hamburg Ballet’s main focus is to enrich the cultural life of its artistic home city. However, under my direction it has also developed into a significant part of the international dance scene. To continue this honorary mission, together with Lloyd Riggins as Deputy Artistic Director, until 2023, holds special significance for me.”

John Neumeier was appointed Artistic Director of the Hamburg Ballet in 1973 and is at present the longest-serving living ballet director in the world. He has been awarded numerous honours and awards, including being made an honorary citizen of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg in 2007. The repertoire of the Hamburg Ballet includes all 158 of John Neumeier’s choreographies, and his company has given over 1.000 performances during 331 tours in 30 countries on five continents.

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