

Press release

June 14, 2026



Strong Female Presence at the choreography40 Final

The final of "choreography40 – 40th International Competition for Choreography Hanover" took place on Saturday. Nine works by emerging choreographers had qualified through two preliminary rounds.

The jury, consisting of Roy Assaf (Roy Assaf Dance Company), Tú Hoàng (Artistic Director, Hang Thỏ Creatives), Sofia Nappi (Artistic Director, KOMOCO), Joel Toledo Mirabal (Ballet Manager, Hanover State Opera), Christiane Winter (former Director of TANZtheater INTERNATIONAL, Hanover), and Gregor Zöllig (Artistic Director of the competition and Artistic Director of Dance Theatre & Chief Choreographer, Staatstheater Braunschweig), awarded the following prizes:

Tanja Liedtke Award Choreography Hannover, 25,000 euros:
Jiani Wang & Weidi Feng, China, „Arrival at the Edge“

Dr. Christiane Hackerodt Art Foundation Award Choreography Hannover, 10,000 euros:
Zoe Ashe-Browne, Ireland, „Sibling“

Ruth Schwieger Award Choreography Hannover, 8,000 euros:
Boris Orihuela & Jessica Castellón, Spain, „Current Accounts“

Condor ChoreoVision Award Hannover, 5,000 euros:
Lou Cisnal, Amélie Delaunay, Elisa Picq & Marine Postel, France, „Gaua“

In addition to the four main awards, production and guest performance awards were presented by the artistic directors of the respective ballet companies. These awards enable the recipients to create a new choreography of at least 20 minutes in length—ideally for more than four dancers—under professional production conditions. The confidence expressed by the ballet directors once again underlines the competition's outstanding artistic reputation.

Staatstheater Braunschweig – Director and Chief Choreographer Gregor Zöllig: **Zoe Ashe-Browne** (Ireland) – „Sibling“

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b12 Festival Berlin – Co-Director Johannes Wieland:
Karim Khouader (France) – „Roses“

Theater Chemnitz – Director Sabrina Sadowska:
Jiani Wang & Weidi Feng (China) – „Arrival at the Edge“

Landestheater Linz – Musiktheater / TANZ LINZ – Director Roma Janus:
Zoe Ashe-Browne (Ireland) – „Sibling“

Nationaltheater Mannheim – Artistic Director of Dance Stephan Thoss:
Giovanni Napoli (Italy) – „Whispers of an Ending“

Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz Munich – Ballet Director Karl Alfred Schreiner:
(Ekleido) Hannah Ekholm & Faye Stoeser (United Kingdom) – „Femina“

Ballett Schwerin – Director Jonathan dos Santos:
Danae & Dionysios (Greece / Philippines) – „Fárisa“

Theater Magdeburg – Ballet Director and Choreographer Jörg Mannes:
Giovanni Napoli (Italy) – „Whispers of an Ending“

Ballett Theater Ulm – Artistic Director and Chief Choreographer Annett Göhre:
Boris Orihuela & Jessica Castellón (Spain) – „Current Accounts“

Tanzlabor Roxy Ulm – Director Pablo Sansalvador:

- **Giovanni Napoli** (Italy) – „Whispers of an Ending“
- **Danae & Dionysios** (Greece / Philippines) – „Fárisa“
- **Boris Orihuela & Jessica Castellón** (Spain) – „Current Accounts“

EISFABRIK Hannover – Director Bettina Paletta:

- **Daniel Dragomir** (Hungary) – „Femina“
- **Lou Cisnal, Amélie Delaunay, Elisa Picq & Marine Postel** (France) – „Gaua“

The **Audience Award**, endowed with 2,000 euros, went to **Giovanni Napoli** for „Whispers of an Ending“.

Helmut Jochheim, Chairman of the Board of the Ballet Society Hanover, highlighted both the international scope of the competition and the strong representation of female choreographers: “Forty years ago, the Ballet Society Hanover founded a choreography competition that has since become the most prestigious of its kind worldwide. We received nearly 400 applications from six continents. I am particularly delighted by the strong female presence: the four awards presented by the jury went to one female choreographer, one all-female collective, and two choreographic duos consisting of one woman and one man working together. Unfortunately, gender parity is still not the norm, even in the field of dance.”

Note to editors:

Further information about the competition can be found at choreography-hannover.de.

Press images are available for download at
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