

BIOGRAPHY

MINNA TERVAMÄKI

DANCER-CHOREOGRAPHER

Minna Tervamäki is a dancer-choreographer with a magnificent career background as étoile dancer at the Finnish National Ballet. Nowadays her activities emphasise in interdisciplinary collaborations as choreographer. The core of her artistic expression is the opening up of her perfected technique into new directions — whether it comes to conversation with jazz, flamenco, circus or visual arts.

During the course of several years, Tervamäki has collaborated with e.g. saxophonist Timo Lassy, accordion artist Kimmo Pohjonen, new media artist Marita Liulia, flamenco dancer Kaari Martin and visual artist Hannaleena Heiska. In her works, the choreographer examines the smooth flowing movement arising from ballet, combining it with strength, relaxedness and unpredictability.

In interdisciplinary creative encounters, Tervamäki wants to challenge herself to internalise new ways of perceiving the dramaturgy of dance. According to the choreographer, one body can accommodate several ways of creating movement. The more open-minded you are to mix different ingredients and see what becomes of them, the more interesting the result may be at its best. In her visual works, Tervamäki might change the pointe shoes for high heels or bare toes according to the mood, or she might be lifted on an aerial hoop to spin at great heights.

Ever since the start of her dancing career, Tervamäki has felt the need to create and bring forth personal movement as well. The short dance works that the young dancer full of

ideas created for corporate events and fashion shows formed the growth platform for her to find her own movement and proceed to work as choreographer. Tervamäki's relationship with artistic creativity was also enriched by her opportunities in the National Ballet to dance on a wide scale in the works of top choreographers such as Jorma Elo, Mats Ek, Jorma Uotinen, Ohad Naharin and William Forsythe.

Tervamäki debuted as choreographer with the premiere of *Something Else?* in 2005. She has created more than twenty works since.

DANCER

During her dancer contract of 25 years at the National Ballet, Minna Tervamäki performed in the leading roles of almost all of the most esteemed classical ballet works.

Even in her twenties, the dancer did the challenging double leading role as Odette and Odile in *Swan Lake*, performing with vibrant expressivity in spite of her young age.

Tervamäki has acted in leading roles in several full length ballet works such as *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle*, *Onegin*, *La Bayadère* and *Raymonda*. In addition, she has danced in central roles in works of top international choreographers such as William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin, Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, Jorma Elo and Jorma Uotinen. Tervamäki has also collaborated closely with choreographer Robert Sherman and performed in his works in New York, Boulder and Helsinki. She was the first dancer in the National Ballet to receive the title of *Étoile* in 2009.

During her dancing career, Tervamäki has received recognition from many directions. The audience and critics have praised her strong, expression-rich and wide-ranging

dance as well as her precise movement. When she received an award from the Finnish Musicians' Union in 2011, she was commended for her brilliance as a dance artist, creativity as choreographer and exemplary supportiveness as colleague.

Minna Tervämäki retired from the National Ballet in Spring 2012, but she continues to work intensively as dancer-choreographer.

AWARDS:

- Honourable mention for positivity in 2017
- Knight, First Class, of the Order of the Lion of Finland in 2011
- Finnish Musicians' Union recognition award in 2011
- Imatra Ballet Gala recognition award in 2009
- Libris award in 2006
- Edvard Fazer award in 2000
- Tanssin kukka award at the Finnish National Ballet 75th anniversary gala in 1997

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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