

Sommer Ulrickson

Choreographer/Director

California-born choreographer/director Sommer Ulrickson graduated in Theater Arts from the University of California in Santa Cruz in 1995, winning both the Chancellor's and the Dean's Honors for her original theatre productions. Since then she has forged a career as choreographer, actor and director and worked in collaboration with composers, directors and actors throughout the US and in Europe. A renowned educationalist, she teaches and gives workshops to performers in all disciplines.

From 1995-1998 she was Choreographer for the award-winning "Fifth Floor Theater Company" based in San Francisco, and during this time also formed her own dance company "Torque". In 1998 she was awarded the Chancellor's Fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and moved to Germany. She worked with Johann Kresnik at the Volksbühne Berlin, and as physical dance trainer to the Sasha Waltz and Friends dance company and the Schaubuehne's Thomas Ostermeier Company. She co-founded the "wee dance company", creating works and touring throughout Europe. Sommer continues her work as director and choreographer, receiving state funding and commissions from various theatres for the creation of original works and for the development of new musical-theatre pieces, in collaboration with various composers.

In the opera house recent work includes *Jephtha* (director Claus Guth) for Dutch National Opera in co-production with Opéra national de Paris, where it was staged in January 2018, as well as Lachenmann's *Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern* (director David Hermmann) and *Salome* (also with Claus Guth) at the Deutsche Oper. Other projects that season included a new production of *Salome* at the Berlin Staatsoper, directed by Han Neuenfels. Recent work includes co-directing *Fidelio* at the Tiroler Festspiele Erl in collaboration with sculptor / stage designer Alexander Polzin, as well as *Ferne Naeh*, a new opera commissioned by Hellerau Festspielhaus in Dresden. Productions in 2020-2021 include *Salome* (with Claus Guth) at the Bolshoi Theatre.

Other recent work includes the co-creation of a new project entitled *Love in Fragments*. Working alongside Alban Gerhardt, Gergana Gergova and Alexander Polzin the artists investigate aspects of love through music, movement, and art. The production premiered at the 92Y in New York in March 2019. The European premiere will take place at Auditorium-Orchestre National de Lyon. Next season sees the premiere of *The Art of Being Human* at the Boulez Saal in Berlin. Music of the 16th and 17th centuries, dance and visual arts come together in this interdisciplinary performance created by Sommer Ulrickson, Alexander Polzin, and Laurence Dreyfus.

Her creations include theatre pieces for the Freiekammerspiele Magdeburg, Theater Osnabrück, Deutsches Theater Berlin, Sophiensaele Berlin and the experimental Neuköllner Oper Berlin, including *Wagner for Sale*, an original theatre piece commissioned for the Wagner anniversary year. Other recent

highlights include the creation of *Creatures of Habit* – an original piece for the Gerhart Hauptmann Theater, Goerlitz (2015).

Sommer has also worked regularly as choreographer and director at the Freilichtspiele Schwäbisch Hall, where recent work includes *Shockheaded Peter – A Junk Opera* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*.