

# performing arts in transition

if we trust that art matters  
if we can learn from everyone  
if we think artists contribute to shaping the world  
how will we act?

policy departure points  
2019-2024



Academy of Theatre and Dance  
Amsterdam University of the Arts

# policy departure points 2019-2024

## **The Academy of Theatre and Dance (ATD)**

With its fourteen bachelor and three master study programmes in theatre and dance, the Academy of Theatre and Dance is unique in the Netherlands and the world. The top-quality study programmes attract the best students and can boast teachers who are fully active in the practical field. Made to measure guidance helps train a generation of students to become individual artists.

The Academy of Theatre and Dance is situated in the centre of Amsterdam. The school is like a large theatre company with well-equipped theatre auditoriums, studios and work spaces. Students can rely on excellent technical support and have access to an interdisciplinary digital lab to undertake experiments.

# our vision

At the academy we engage in a passionate dialogue about our identity and direction. The professional field and the world at large are included in this discourse as much as possible. Inspired by the motto 'performing arts in transition', we ask ourselves what the role of an art school should be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **If we trust that art matters**

We are convinced that art does matter. Not only for art itself, but also beyond; as innovatory and creative processes in daily life. Art means power of imagination, curiosity, beauty and solace. Imagination allows us to progress and empathize with others. Imagination is what makes us special and life worth living.

## **If we can learn from everyone**

You can learn from everyone. That is our core vision. Experience, craftsmanship, in short - the whole world that our (guest) teachers but also our students bring with them - forms a point of departure for dialogue and life-long learning. Together we seek to invent theatre and dance for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **If we think artists contribute to shaping the world**

Artists make an essential contribution to our world. In a social, political, aesthetic, poetic or emotional way. Art looks to the future. We also expect this attitude from our students and teachers. They should dare to be authentic, enterprising and play a meaningful role in a changing world.

## **How will we act?**

What should we **do**? That's the most important question we ask our students, ourselves and the surrounding world. What can we do as artists, citizens and as academy? How do we lend significance to the world around us? What are our ambitions and how do we realize them? What sort of craftsmanship and entrepreneurship is needed to act?

By asking questions again and again, we keep art and education up-to-date and shape what is needed to realize our ideals.

# a school and laboratory for the future of theatre and dance

## → Everyone with talent should have access to the academy

This first and foremost.

For everyone with ambition, we want to be a school of life for the podium arts. We want to offer an *inclusive environment* in which everyone has the opportunity to develop themselves to an optimal degree. Barriers of language, culture, insecurity or background can be overcome.

## → Engagement with the city and society

Our modern world is characterized by social and technological change. Sustainability and solidarity are values we should cherish. This implies that the meaning and role of the arts is also changing. The ATD researches and develops a future for the podium arts in the city, nationally and internationally.

We connect with institutions that are focused on *positioning and expanding the acceptance of podium arts*. Not just well-known, established artists, ensembles and organizations but also individuals, collectives, cultural hotbeds or innovators and organizations who work together in other networks. People who collaborate on the basis of new values and perspectives in an effort to realize new forms of presentation, new stories, new repertoire and a new audience.

## → Differentiated and development-oriented

Our teachers are active in influential positions in the professional field and are invaluable for the development of our education. At the ATD, a student gains craftsmanship and experience at the highest level. But there is more. We think it's equally important for a student to personally determine the focus of his/her education. Our academy has a keen eye for ambition and the educational needs of individual talent. We are open-minded with regard to what possible implications this may have for the instruction offered. *Education development* connects all study programmes of the academy with each other.

## → Small-scale and intensive education

Our education has a small-scale, intensive character. *Students, teachers and researchers learn from each other*. Attention is devoted to developing the talent and personality of each student. In a secure learning environment, students are stimulated to set challenges for themselves, take risks and reflect critically. Not only about their own development, but also about that of their fellow students and how teachers contribute to fostering student talent.

## → Collaborating with others

Working together with others, in or outside your own discipline, in or outside the academy, is an important part of education. It helps students mature and become more professional. Our performers, teachers, makers and designers meet up in *creative teams*, collective projects and individual collaborative assignments.

→ **Digital and interdisciplinary**

In our *Interdisciplinary Digital Laboratory (IDlab)* students undertake experiments with work field innovators. Together artists and students investigate new forms of presentation and original modes of 'story telling' in image and sound. The IDlab works with disciplines inside and outside the podium arts. In this way the academy works towards *developing digital technology and interdisciplinarity in the podium arts*.

→ **Life-long learning**

Our students and alumni *are* the work field. They are the story tellers of the future. In addition to preparatory training and bachelor degrees, we also offer associate degrees, abridged programmes, masters and research to prepare our students for a diverse and hybrid professional practice. Our selection of study programmes is constantly being developed.

→ **Self-organisation and entrepreneurship**

We also provide a differentiated range of modules for students and alumni with regard to self-organisation and entrepreneurship: curricula and courses in arts advocacy, courses that focus on freelancing, communication and presentation training, self-organisation and entrepreneurship based on fair practice.

→ **Research and reflection**

Curiosity for the world around you is the basis of an approach shared by all podium artists. After all, the interaction between artist and audience is what makes the podium arts unique. An investigative attitude and the ability to reflect critically on collaboration, process and contents of a production is essential. *Artistic research oriented towards practice and design* is therefore a part of all our study programmes.

→ **Masters combined with research: DAS Graduate School**

DAS Graduate School is a combination of *master degree study programmes* with the lectorate *DAS Research*. We offer artists who are already active in the professional field an opportunity to deepen their knowledge by following one of our internationally renowned master study programmes for theatre, choreography or creative producing. Research focuses on own work but also on its significance for professional practice.

In DAS Research, *the lectorate* undertakes research based on the urgency to trace and identify radical processes of change in theatre and dance and subsequently implement these phenomena in the education we offer. In this way our curriculum remains relevant and up-to-date. At the same time the lectorate has an emphatic ambition to innovate professional practice and has initiated a unique programme called *THIRD* to conduct third phase research.

# key points for the coming years

**The Academy of Theatre and Dance is part of the Amsterdam University of the Arts, an institute for higher art education with six autonomous academies: Academy of Architecture, Breitner Academy, Conservatorium van Amsterdam, Netherlands Film Academy, Reinwardt Academy and Academy of Theatre and Dance.**

**Within the Academy of Theatre and Dance (ATD) the bachelor, master, associate degree and preparatory study programmes and the (research) lectorate are divided into three domains:**

**Theatre** The Amsterdam Academy for Drama & Contemporary Music Theatre, Theatre in Education, Mime, Production and Stage Management, Scenography, Design & Technology, Technical Production (AD).

**Dance** Dutch National Ballet Academy, 5 O'Clock Class, SNDO (School for New Dance Development), Dance in Education, Expanded Contemporary Dance, Urban Contemporary (JMD), Modern Theatre Dance. The latter two study programmes are currently in transition; their role will be taken over by Expanded Contemporary Dance.

**DAS Graduate School** DAS Theatre, DAS Choreography, DAS Creative Producing and DAS Research.

## High quality, intensive education aimed at developing exceptional talent

- We will continue to offer guidance and inspiration at the highest level to talented dancers, actors, makers, teachers, choreographers, designers, directors, producers and performers during their life-long learning path.
- In our undiminished attention for high quality education, we plan to invest in facilities, production and presentation, create opportunities for exceptional talent to follow intensive and modified courses, promote the professionalisation of teachers and staff members and stimulate the development and fine-tuning of curricula and collaborative projects in and outside the academy.
- We will devote attention to the increasing student demand for cooperative projects and exchange schemes and more personalized tutoring.
- This requires striking a balance between the diversity of education demanded by students and the quality of a coherent curriculum.

## A representative and committed academy at the heart of the art world

- We are a committed, open work- and learning environment that is representative for the diversity of the world around us.
- As learning community, we take active responsibility for debating the future of the podium arts.
- We stimulate and facilitate passionate and trend-setting artists to shape the diverse, international and vital artistic and social landscape in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Our policy and methods are geared to generating a more diverse teaching staff and student population at our school, a place where everyone is seen and heard and feels welcome.
- The academy seeks to connect with other disciplines and society by organizing talk shows and readings and developing an extensive selection of schooling and coaching for students and alumni.
- In our study programmes we focus specially on the integration of interdisciplinarity and technology. This is thanks to the IDlab, initiatives such as the VRacademy, Makerspace and ArtechLAB from other academies and collaborative partners.

## Sustainability and life-long development

- We help shape the future of the podium arts by enabling artists to pursue life-long research, education and experiment. We see engagement, sustainability and *fair practice* as conditions for strength, quality and a way for our alumni to develop their lives and careers.
- We strive to enhance the sustainability of our management and staff policy by ensuring we can continue to rely on the services of our best teachers and staff.
- We want to emphasize student health and well-being by setting up a Student Bureau and a Healthcare Advice Team. We aim to offer students added service and information to bolster their commitment to the academy. By working together with the AHK we hope to make student accommodation more accessible.
- We intend to offer graduates additional expertise and help them make choices.
- Via the third phase of the DAS Graduate School, we want to offer alumni and other representatives of the work field education and research opportunities.
- We also plan to provide advanced summer courses in various forms and disciplines - like artistic research in *THIRD* - for producers, cultural business managers, makers and performers from diverse disciplines.

### Academy of Theatre and Dance

Visiting address Jodenbreestraat 3,  
1011 NG Amsterdam  
Postal address Postbus 15323,  
1001 MH Amsterdam  
Phone +31 (0)20-527 7777  
[atd.ahk.nl](http://atd.ahk.nl)



**Academy of Theatre and Dance**  
Amsterdam University of the Arts