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PINA BAUSCH 1940-2009

German choreographer used drama

By Daniel J. Wakin

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

2:00 a.m. July 1, 2009

Pina Bausch, the German choreographer who combined potent drama and dreamlike movement to create a powerful form of dance theater that influenced generations of dance makers, died yesterday in Wuppertal, Germany. She was 68.

The cause was cancer, said her company, Tanztheater Wuppertal. She received the diagnosis in the last week, company spokeswoman Ursula Popp said. As recently as June 21, Bausch stood on stage after a performance of a new, untitled work, Popp said.

Bausch, whose roots were in prewar German expressionism, helped change the perception of what could be brought into a dance performance. Her shows featured a deep sense of theatricality; disconnected and sometimes absurd episodes; and elaborate, unusual sets, like carpets of carnations and peat moss or a collapsing wall.

Her base was in Wuppertal, an industrial city near Dusseldorf in northwest Germany, but the company was often at Sadler's Wells Theater in London, the Theatre de la Ville in Paris and at festivals. This summer, the company is to appear at Italy's Spoleto Festival.

Bausch won the 2007 Kyoto Prize for arts and philosophy. She delivered a Kyoto Prize lecture last year featuring demonstrations by dancers at the University of San Diego. She told the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, "We're all full of fear, but don't forget the beauty of what can happen between people and what you see in the world."

Pina Bausch was born July 27, 1940, in Solingen, also near Dusseldorf. She started dance study at 14, at the Folkwang School in Essen, which was directed by Kurt Jooss, whose anti-war masterpiece "The Green Table" (1932) is still performed. After graduating in 1958, she received a scholarship to continue her studies in the United States, working with Jose Limon, Antony Tudor and others at the Juilliard School.

Bausch is survived by her companion, Ronald Kay, and a son, Salomon Bausch.

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