

POLICY PLANS 2009–2012

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INTRODUCTION

A little over two years ago, Danshuis Station Zuid was set up in the Dutch South to secure a position within the national and international field of dance. We have committed ourselves to reinforcing the dance climate and its infrastructure, taking on a broad set of job responsibilities – apart from producing dance we also focus on education and promotion. With undiminished energy and ambition we enter into a new phase with the Cultuurnota period 2009–2012.

Our ambitions as one of the five dance institutions within the basic cultural infrastructure in The Netherlands are to provide the Dutch South with dance repertoire; to get settled in the region; to focus strongly on innovation and talent development; to enter into (inter)national collaborations from an artistic starting point while retaining an eye for cultural entrepreneurship. We will provide the conditions for creating a high-quality artistic product for which there is public interest, or for which we will need to create public interest. In order to be able to realise our ambitions we need our financial basis to remain constant. Because we were able to spend the four-year budget for the past *Kunstenplan* period (2005-2008) in three years, for 2009-2012 this means an annual increase of the subsidies from each partner.

Different research (from the Social and Cultural Planning Office of The Netherlands and Hans Abbing, through the Boekman chair) has shown that public interest in the arts and especially art as night-time entertainment is on the rise. This is caused to some extent by overageing, because of the fact that seniors go out more often than they used to. But public interest in high art (i.e. dance) is relatively on the decrease and becoming more marginalised. The supply of leisure time activities is increasing and people are more and more culturally omnivorous in their leisure consumption. Young people especially attend fewer and fewer regular performances.

Dutch dance may be very high standard, but artistically there have not been any great new innovative forces at work in The Netherlands to create a new dynamics in the field of dance over the past decade; instead, there is talk of an artistic status quo.

Do we feel pessimistic about these developments? On the contrary! But they do call for a review of the current conventions in the production and supply of dance art and the amount of attention that is devoted to talent development. With renewed energy and a sense of reality we will commit ourselves to strengthening the position of dance in society and reinforcing public interest in dance that lets tradition and innovation go hand in hand. Departing from the strength, the long-standing dance tradition and the high standard of artists and dancers we must hold on to what is good to follow new roads from there. We are open to new impulses from outside dance art, including the creative industry. These could generate new forms for our product and thus new audience groups. All of this will lead to parallel supplies with productions rooted in tradition and projects originating from innovation; to use Abbing's definition given: alongside high art there is new art.

Based on this view Station Zuid has been working toward the concept of *DANSHUIS*, or dance house, over the past two years.

CORE VALUES

Danshuis Station Zuid represents the core values *connection, diversity and quality*. Station Zuid is a house of contemporary dance where artists from different backgrounds come together. We regard the field of dance as a palette that from a rich variety of manifestations continues to generate new forms with a unique expressiveness. We like to keep our minds open to other art disciplines. Quality is Station Zuid's guiding concept in producing work, with professional skill, a sensitivity to new forms and authenticity as its main pillars. With our main regional partners in the field of dance, the Danshuis commits itself to building a stronger dance climate.

MISSION

'Station Zuid intends to be an initiator for the development and production of contemporary dance, based in the Dutch South, emphasising artistic quality and audience development.' This means presenting, facilitating, and developing a range of dance projects from the South and interacting with our surroundings on a collaborative basis.

DANSHUIS CONCEPT

Station Zuid is a *danshuis*, or dance house, based in the South of The Netherlands that produces professional dance, committed to audience development, allowing for a wide range which will stimulate the participation in and experience of contemporary dance. A variety of activities takes place within the *dance house*. Selected artists with whom we have long-term relations will (co)produce dance productions. We also offer them opportunities to work on research projects and if they want to, present the results. From Tilburg/The Southern region we have set up an exchange between artists and their activities. The *dance house*' function as a centre for development is not just aimed at dance productions, but also at other dance-related forms of expression and at our audience. We support professional dancers and choreographers in their artistic development and stimulate them to make contributions to the regional dance climate. This makes it appealing for artists to settle in the region.

DANSHUIS

Station Zuid also wants to be an international hub of artistic expertise, know-how and experience in the field of contemporary dance; a place for formulating a dance discourse and for conducting research and developing theories that apply to the realities of dance. Within the Dutch infrastructure there are *werkplaatsen* (theatre facilities that focus on research, experiment and coaching), *productiehuizen* (production houses), *productiekernen* (small companies e.g. small groups based around one artist) and companies. In other countries there are *danshuizen*, or dance houses, as well: institutions where production, education, presentation and encounter come together, such as the Tanzhaus NRW in Düsseldorf. It is a name that we feel more comfortable with considering our vision and mission. In an environment where public interest in dance as an art form is marginalising and where there is an artistic status quo, Station Zuid is developing a two-track policy aimed at both *tradition and innovation*.

Dance has a long-standing history and tradition and is produced according to fixed conventions. It is presented in the traditional circuit of the theatres and studio theatres where it generally finds its existing audience. Station Zuid produces performances for both types of venue based on this tradition. But we have observed that (at the moment) artistic innovation and audience development show only marginal growth within this environment. We try to bridge the gap between dance tradition and contemporary dance forms, technology and the creative industries, expressly seeking to connect with newer and younger audiences that have developed different codes and conventions for their cultural consumption. Our aim is to produce a variety of high-quality dance products and to reinforce public interest in dance. Because of this we will have to invest specifically in creating parallel supplies of high art and new art, allowing room for research and the development of new forms alongside the more

traditional productions. We literally have to look across the boundaries. Approaching both forms on an equal footing will enable a mutual influence.

IDENTITY

Station Zuid is led by a general director who is responsible for both the artistic and business policies. We choose artists who have developed a dance vocabulary of their own, whose careers are in (or coming into) full bloom, whose choreographic strengths lie in form and texture, who have a high degree of musicality, and who have a unique story to tell. Our choice of artists has ranged from Edward Clug's formalistic academic dance vocabulary to André Gingras' dramatic performance-style dance. With these, Station Zuid has marked out its intentions, steadily continuing to build its own identity; an identity that fits in well with the Southern climate and is nourished by the unique specific way of working in the Dutch South. It is a great place to be. There is peace and quiet here, a relaxed work atmosphere that brings out the best in our artists. In an artistic sense this translates into an open dance vocabulary that allows ample room for individual human stories and the personalities of the artists and dancers. Various breeding grounds for the visual arts, multi media and music offer plenty of opportunity for exchange with other art forms. Dance from the Southern Dutch soil often offers drama, carries weight, and likes to move outside the boundaries of academic convention. One senses that this dance has been created at a place where three countries meet, interacting with strong traditions in theatre dance across the borders in Belgium (Flanders) and Germany.

Station Zuid chooses dance in which artists' technical skills and high-quality content are the foundations for the creative process. We value the aesthetic component of the productions highly. A high technical standard plus a strong personal contribution from the artists should lead to dance of great professional skill, quality, perfection, and expressiveness. Station Zuid's dance should move you and be human; it is allowed to chafe and alarm.

It takes time to develop a strong identity. The *dance house*-concept will offer us the opportunity to attract various artists over the coming years and enable them to continue their personal development within the framework of Station Zuid. In doing so, they will lend colour to the *dance house*.

➔ DEVELOPING AND FACILITATING

Station Zuid has chosen to expand both the demand and supply of dance from its base in the South—in relationship to the (inter)national and the regional infrastructure of artists, dance institutions and venues. By investing in continuity at the base we have become an inspiring breeding ground for dance artists and dance audiences. So what does this mean in practice? What is it that Station Zuid develops and facilitates, and why?

STATION ZUID DANSHUIS OF THE SOUTH

Station Zuid believes that ‘theatre dance will benefit from a continuous dialogue within the broader field of dance, ranging from professional to amateur, and with society in the broadest sense. Thus dance as an art form will win ground and contribute to a lively cultural climate that stretches across the boundaries’ (from sector research theatre dance). Station Zuid connects its artistic product with its audiences through such intermediaries as venues, festivals and educational institutions; embodying the metaphor of the dynamics of a train station where lines converge, connections are made to other destinations, and incorporating the anticipation associated with travelling.

Station Zuid builds a creative and professional environment

Station Zuid consists of a small professional core of organisational and production staff, which support artists and allows them to thrive. But above all else, it is a place that stimulates new collaborations between artists and disciplines. Station Zuid works with a pool of lighting designers, composers, set designers and costume designers, multi media artists, and of course dancers and choreographers. This constitutes the creative environment in which artists can grow and create.

Station Zuid invests in talent development

To be able to create interesting, unique productions of a high standard which will generate a good audience range we will need talent that has the potential to grow further. There is talent on all kinds of levels, but top talent is very rare. Discovering top talent and binding it to our organisation requires, aside from a nose for talent, investments in talent development. Talent is the ability to develop a certain aptitude to a high level. The real art is in charting a person’s abilities and training them so that these eventually manifest themselves in that person’s behaviour, which should then be reflected upon and developed further by incorporating knowledge, skills, attitude, and personality traits to arrive at self knowledge, personal skill and a unique personal style. In close relationship with the Southern and the (inter)national infrastructure we will develop the broad base from which top talent can grow. Station Zuid focuses on professional choreographers and dancers, offers new artists and trainee dancers room to develop, and specifically seeks the connection with top amateurs.

To be specific, Station Zuid annually creates about three *laboratory projects* that offer artists in their prime the opportunity to do research. Research that, if successful, may serve as a preliminary study for a new production. So far a number of different research projects have been accomplished, such as the study into the interaction between video and dance in Stephen Shropshire’s *‘What its like’*. This research is being developed at this very moment into *‘Sonata’*, a production for a studio venue. And the three laboratory projects *‘Arr. 1, 2, 3’* (a collaboration between Productiehuis Brabant, Muzieklab Brabant and Station Zuid), aimed at the dialogue between composer and choreographer, also allow room for research which will eventually be developed into a presentation. In anticipation of artistic exchange and impulses Station Zuid is establishing an international network, which will serve as a framework for these laboratory projects and help connect them to existing international expert programmes. A first step has been taken with the Tanzhaus NRW Düsseldorf by inviting one of their choreographers (Ben Riepe) to come to Tilburg to interpret *‘Arr. 2’*.

BULLS EYE STATION ZUID

INPUT OUTPUT
KNOWLEDGE,
CREATION &
DEVELOPMENT
PRESENTATION &
EXPERIENCE
STATION ZUID
DEVELOPING
FACILITATING
PRESENTING
 PRODUCTIONS
MAIN STAGE

STUDIO VENUE
SPECIFIC SITE
 DANSWEEK
BRABANT
LIMBURG
ZEELAND
 COPRODUCTIONS
 FESTIVALS
 DANSGALA
 WEBSITE
 GAMES
 TV/MEDIA

PUBLICATIONS
 INTRODUCTIONS
 E_CULTURE
 CHOREOGRAPHERS
CONTEST
AMATEURS
 INITIATING
 EXCHANGE
 AUDIENCE
DEVELOPMENT
 RESEARCH
 LABORATORY

CREATING
 DANCE TRAINING
SESSIONS
 COOPERATION
 ENCOUNTERS
 SUPPORT
 CREATING
DISCOURSE
 COACHING
 INFORMING

Another, even further-reaching form of exchange is our annual place for an *artist in residence*. An artist from our international network will settle in Tilburg for a month, will be offered the opportunity to do research and create a presentation, but should also be prepared to invest in the regional infrastructure. The choreographer will have a role in coaching regional artists and will be giving masterclasses to professionals and students.

A large number of professionals have committed themselves to Station Zuid as a knowledge centre and an interchange for dance. Their knowledge will be used for talent development, e.g. by offering regional artists *coaching sessions*. Joost Vrouwenraets for example, a choreographer from Limburg, was coached by the ballet Master Andrew Greenwood for his production *'I have a dream'*. We collaborate with the Theater de NWE Vorst/Makershuis *werkplaats* in Tilburg in coaching and mentoring new dance artists. Professionals and amateurs work with each other in the *'Go with that flow'* project, which offers amateurs and artists the opportunity to study a professional dance company's repertoire, and to adapt and present it. In the *'Choreografenconcours voor amateurs'* (*Amateur choreographers' contest*) the emphasis is on the creation and presentation of dance, and the reflection upon it. Amateurs will construct dance based on concepts and artistic motives. They will create new dance material, deconstruct and reshape existing material and play with composition and choreographic laws. All of this embedded in tailor-made coaching sessions.

From 2009 our ambition is to establish a *training centre* for professional dance training sessions at our new accommodation. At the moment, the daily dance training sessions that the Productiehuis Brabant facilitates in Tilburg are combined whenever possible with the lessons Station Zuid organises for its dancers. Our aim is to start organising the daily classical and modern dance lessons for professionals from 2009 when we move into our new accommodation which will give Station Zuid the additional function of a meeting place. We will continue as well as reinforce our collaborations with Productiehuis Brabant and the Fontys Dance academy, with whom we organise regular in-depth masterclasses, like we did during the Dansweek Brabant.

Station Zuid invests in innovation

We will need to invest in new product forms if we want to create new artistic developments and stimulate audience development based on dance tradition. From an artistic viewpoint we keep an eye on developments in society so that we can establish links with the creative industries and technologies from dance tradition. Digitalisation and a growing use of mass media will expand our audience range. The possibilities for reflection are endless within the digital domain: artistic innovation, experiment, digital supply, making culture accessible, and the expansion of our audience range.

Apart from productions for larger and smaller venues we are developing a range of different product forms: performances at specific sites, dance films, dance games, websites.

Station Zuid invests in audience development

We are abandoning the term education; to us, the connotations are too restrictive. We prefer to speak of audience development and audience participation. Especially with young people, other dance forms besides academic dance play a more important role. We are convinced that young people are able to make substantial contributions. Both the new products that we are going to develop (dance game, websites, Station Zuid TV) and our new ways of communicating around our productions (blogs, forums, podcasts) will strengthen our connections with the amateur field, schools, and the cultural sector.

With its partners, Station Zuid wants to spark and fuel the debate about audience development and participation in dance over the coming years with workshops, lectures, essays, talks, debates, and internet platforms.

PRODUCING AND PRESENTING

All our investments in people, artists and audiences, our new product forms, and talent development are aimed at creating a broad range of high-quality dance productions for which we can find a broad public interest. Over the past two years, Station Zuid has grown into a place where productions of a high artistic standard are created: one per year for studio stages, one for the main stages and one for summer festivals/specific sites. Aside from this core activity we have developed a broad set of activities such as the *Dansweek Brabant*, the *Nederlandse Dansdagen choreografen concours*, and educational projects such as *'Go with that flow'* and *'Dansdummies'*.

Because we want to invest both in tradition *and* innovation, we will continue to produce our 'regular' productions for the main and studio stages each year, but we will also be making marked investments in new product forms. Although The Netherlands has a strong dance infrastructure, it is not easy finding strong, self-willed, communicative choreographers who will fit in with Station Zuid's mission. For Station Zuid's productions, we will search the region, the country and abroad. We have chosen to work with a new crop of choreographers, who have already demonstrated their potential, e.g. through the *werkplaatsen* and *productiehuizen*, and who are about to take the next step in their development. The *Danshuis* chooses artists who have the same drive and ambition as Station Zuid and who are aware in their artistic process of the relationship with their prospective audience. We have had the pleasure of working with people like *André Gingras*, *Stephen Shropshire*, and *Sylvain Énard*, and we will be continuing our collaborations with *Václav Kuneš*, *Edward Clug*, *Pia Meuthen* and others. As a regular guest choreographer with Station Zuid over the past few years, Stephen Shropshire has been able to refine his idiom, a musical and aesthetic dance style to classical compositions. This has been an important factor in his appointment as artistic director of the Noord Nederlandse Dansvoorziening (Dance facility for the North of the Netherlands) starting from the next Kunstenplan-period (2009-2012). His departure means we will have to revise our plans, including one for a main stage production by Stephen in collaboration with the Brabants Orkest.

With its surroundings, Station Zuid is building a strong dance climate for the long term. This requires an investment that ensures the development of a broad base that gives talented choreographers the opportunity to grow and that guarantees a constant supply of new artists.

Because of the existing chain of production (Centrum voor Amateurkunst, Fontys Dansacademie, de NWE Vorst/ Makershuis, Productiehuis Brabant, *productiekernen* and Danshuis Station Zuid) and the cooperation within it, this has been secured now more than ever.

Aside from the production of dance with a (n) (inter)national orientation, Station Zuid focuses on the continued development of regional dance professionals. In addition to or in collaboration with our partners in the regional field, Station Zuid organises a range of activities: the training centre offering daily dance training sessions and regular masterclasses, the opportunities for coaching such as with *Joost Vrouwenraets* (Heerlen) and *Arno Schuitemaker* (Tilburg), platforms for artists and audiences such as the Dansweek, (co)productions with for example Pia Meuthen, and the gala of Southern Dutch dance (with *T.R.A.S.H.*, *Helma Melis*, *United C*).

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Station Zuid focuses on product as well as on audience development.

In the performing arts, marketing often only focuses on two of the P's, 'promotion and price'. Marketing departments intensively promote their productions and regularly offer tickets at stunt prices. The two P's for 'product and place' are less apparent in dance marketing, because of the predominant notion that this would compromise the autonomy of the arts. Within its two-track policy of tradition and innovation, Station Zuid intends to focus attention on these two p's, product and place, as well. Station Zuid believes that in essence, dance is interesting to broad sections of society, but that dance is struggling with an image of inaccessible intellectualism. *"There should be no art form more accessible than dance, yet no art is more mystifying in the public imagination. Dance is simply the refinement of human movement, walking, running and jumping. We are all experts"* (Twyla Tharp).

We will focus on two target groups; an existing audience that visits dance performances at theatres and studio theatres, and a potential audience that is interested in dance, but does not feel attracted to these venues or the conventions that apply to experiencing dance there. We focus particularly on two target groups that can be distinguished by 'lifestyle': the majority of the existing dance audience have a background in higher education, are financially affluent and take a broad interest in art, culture and society. They lead an active lifestyle and seek a high standard of living. A target group which will increase its visiting frequency over the next ten years and therefore, provided it is approached in the right ways, offers growing potential. Our potential audience often lead socially active lives which gives them a substantial (digital) network. They go through life searching and surfing, keep track of current affairs and trends, want to stand out from the crowd. Their attention span is often short and they are culturally omnivorous. We cannot naturally reach this group with our regular theatre programmes; it demands different products or different ways of communicating. In the development of our productions we take our target audience into consideration. This does not mean Station Zuid performances are request programmes, but that our artists possess an awareness of *what* to communicate to our audiences. Station Zuid has chosen a wide range of productions with site-specific performances at summer festivals and various other types of performances alongside the regular productions for the main and studio stages. With its site-specific performances at summer festivals in the Dutch South, educational projects such as *'Go with that flow'* and festivals such as *Dansweek Brabant*, Station Zuid has succeeded in getting new audiences interested in dance in general and Station Zuid productions specifically.

In our policy plans for 2005 -2008 we quoted Letty Ranshuysen. She pointed out the importance of creating local and regional dance networks that connect theatres, regional dance companies, dance schools (amateur as well as professional), educational institutions, supportive functions for art education, and local art circles. Both the long-range vision that we have developed within Tilburg Dansstad and our collaborations with a restricted number of core cities in the South of the Netherlands express the way Station Zuid subscribes to this view. Station Zuid develops its marketing based on the three tracks of presentation & experience, creation & development, and inspiration & knowledge. This will highlight the colourful palette of the Danshuis's activities and make them visible to audiences.

ORGANISATION

The founding board consisted of Gert de Kok (mayor of Drimmelen and former member of the provincial executive for Culture for the province of Zeeland), Ine Timmers (self employed management consultant for art institutions) and Ruth Giebels (self-employed marketing expert). In 2007 it was expanded when Bart Logghe (Senior Director IKAM Competence Centre, Philips International) and Marc Goossens (dance programmer CC Antwerpen-Berchem) joined.

The management is responsible for the day-to-day policies; the board operates from a distance. Station Zuid's artistic director is Marc Vlemmix. He is responsible for the artistic course, developing and guarding policies and employing and inspiring artists. We specifically ask the artists he invites to commit themselves to the region and the infrastructure. We have had an artistic council advising Station Zuid since 2007, consisting of Laurien Saraber (arts consultant, member until 1 February 2008), Allies Swinnen (dance consultant Centrum voor Amateurkunst, and from 1 February 2008 senior staff Research and Development Station Zuid), Alex Mallems (artistic director Productiehuis Zeelandia and school for scenography Antwerp) and Guido Wevers (manager Theater aan het Vrijthof Maastricht).

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE STATION ZUID

STAFF STATION ZUID

MANAGEMENT MARC VLEMMIX _GENERAL/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR_, ANKIE TIL _BUSINESS DIRECTOR_

COÖRDINATION SIMONE KRAMER _MARKETING_, ALLIES SWINNEN _RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT_, REMKO ROMERS _TECHNICAL & PRODUCTION UNIT _

EXECUTIVE FAYE DANAË LEIJTENS _MARKETING_, FLORAIN VERHEIJEN, FEMME VAN DEN BERG _PRODUCTION_, ANNE_MARIE VAN DEN BERSELAAR _SECRETARIATE_, DENNIS DE BURGER _ADMINISTRATION_

FREELANCE CHOREOGRAPHERS, DANCERS, DRAMATURGES, COACHES, DESIGNERS, DANCE TEACHERS, TECHNICIANS, PRODUCTION STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

ARTISTIC

MARKETING

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

TECHNICAL UNIT

PRODUCTION

GENERAL DIRECTOR

BOARD

DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT

ARTISTIC COUNCIL

ADMINISTRATION / SECRETARIATE

Our artistic staff has a flexible set up. Station Zuid is a house where for each project we invite a small group of choreographers, composers, lighting designers, set designers, costume designers, video artists, ballet masters, dance teachers and dancers. Over the past two years we have built relationships with several artists that we will continue to build on over the coming years.

Station Zuid consists of a small basic staff. The day-to-day management is in the hands of general director/artistic director Marc Vlemmix and business director Ankie Til. They are assisted by a management team consisting of three people who head units for research/development (Allies Swinnen), production/technical staff (Remko Romers) and marketing (Simone Kramer), and who help define the organisation's strategy and content on a part-time basis. Our executive staff are marketing and communications (Faye Danaë Leijtens), secretariate (Anne-Marie van den Berselaar), administration (Dennis de Burger), two production staff (Florain Verheijen and Femme van den Berg), technical (vacancy) and audience development (vacancy). The team is completed with freelancers for each project.

ACCOMMODATION

In order to be able to develop all these activities and to take up a prominent position within the local, regional, national and international networks, adequate accommodation is essential. Dance is winning ground in Tilburg and the city has strong ambitions, which is expressed in part by the fact that city of Tilburg will be projecting itself as Dance Capital of the South over the coming years and by its intentions to create prominent accommodation for as part of this concept. Station Zuid will become a part of the proposed cultural cluster at Tilburg's Spoorzone. This will give Station Zuid a place in the heart of the city. The Spoorzone is the area directly behind the Tilburg Central train station, which will be redeveloped over the next 15 years into a new urban centre combining new-builds and redeveloped industrial buildings, combining the functions of living, working, and culture. Right now, people are working on a concept for the 'koepelhal' or domed hall, where different functions and institutions will come together. Station Zuid will be one of the major players here. Apart from Danshuis Station Zuid, the Fontys University for Arts (dance, drama and circus), the Nederlands Instituut voor Animatie, Theater de NWE Vorst, and the library are involved in this project.

This location will contribute to the appeal of the city and the region and will offer Station Zuid the opportunity to increase its audience-building efforts. There are opportunities for initiating new projects and benefiting financially from them. In anticipation of this cultural cluster at the 'koepelhal', the city council aims to let Station Zuid take up residence at the former steam boiler factory in 2009. This is a part of the Spoorzone area that can be occupied in advance of the cultural cluster. This will make Station Zuid the first prominent 'resident' of the new area, giving Station Zuid a pioneering role as it were. In and around the former steam boiler factory the city intends to develop various studios, offices and warehouses that can serve as production space, knowledge centre and meeting point for artists and audiences. Until then, Station Zuid will continue to use the studios of the Makershuis Oost in Tilburg. The city council is planning a short-term expansion of the complex (early 2008), adding one large studio, to be able to continue to guarantee available studio space in 2008/2009. For now, our offices are a short distance away from the Makershuis, on the Textielmuseum grounds. Here, Station Zuid has limited opportunity during the daytime to use the small Factorium studios (school for dance and music), which is housed in the same building.

Having been established by the *convenant Zuid-Nederland* (a contract between the government and the cultural sector in the South of the Netherlands), commissioned and funded by the ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the provinces of Noord-Brabant, Limburg and Zeeland and the municipality of Tilburg, Station Zuid has nestled itself in the region over the past two years. A broad support and an extensive network have grown, from which we have developed and created activities with various partners. In order to be able to flourish as a (new) *dance house* and to be able to take up a unique position within the (inter)national field of dance, a thorough network is indispensable. Over the past two years we have invested intensively in our network in which the city of Tilburg, the core cities in the region and the international networks of the artists who have worked with Station Zuid play a

prominent role. From this basic set-up Station Zuid is working on a unique signature and a distinctive position within the Dutch dance infrastructure.

TILBURG DANCE CAPITAL

As a *dance house* with a regional function, Station Zuid is stationed in Tilburg. Tilburg is the only city outside the Randstad area to have all the links in the 'dance chain' within reach: a bustling centre for amateur art, a dance academy with an international outlook (Fontys dance academy), a training centre (Danstrainingen Brabant), a studio theatre (theater De NWE Vorst) with a 'makershuis' (production facility for dance artists), idiosyncratic dance companies and artists (e.g. T.R.A.S.H), and a well-equipped theatre. This chain has been complemented with the arrival of Danshuis Station Zuid. Station Zuid has taken the initiative over the past year to arrive at an integrated view on dance production, presentation, promotion and education in a city, which has resulted in the collaboration 'Tilburg Dansstad'.

Station Zuid has made the express choice to function as the dance facility that ensures the production and development of contemporary dance in our region, the so-called *instandhouding-functie* within the basic infrastructure: our *dance house* will provide the southern region with repertoire, will collaborate with Theaters Tilburg and De NWE Vorst theatre on a regular basis, and with its partners will develop additional activities that will contribute to creating a better dance climate.

INFRASTRUCTURE

All the partners share the ambition that Tilburg and dance will become two concepts to be mentioned in the same breath over the coming years. All of the city's supporting dance institutions together will act as a magnet to audiences from Tilburg and the South of the Netherlands (and preferably also from outside the region), to professional dance artists and amateur dancers, to foreign choreographers and visitors. In a flexible, welcoming environment the meeting of dance artists from different backgrounds will spark artistic activity. Innovation and tradition, large-scale and small-scale, each have their own strengths but will also reinforce each other. The audience and the artists will be quite close to each other and enter into a dialogue. Dance will find its way in the city, and the city will find its way to dance.

CORE CITIES IN THE SOUTH OF THE NETHERLANDS

In the 2009 – 2012 period, Station Zuid with its broad mission intends to get more settled in a restricted number of cities in the South of the Netherlands, and with these cities' (dance) infrastructures make shared intensive investments in reinforcing the dance climate. In the rest of the cities in the region and the rest of The Netherlands we will focus mainly on presenting Station Zuid productions. In the core cities we will seek, in line with our approach to Tilburg Dance Capital, collaborations with these cities' main stages, complemented with their professional artists and companies, art schools, festivals, amateur dance groups, educational institutions and active secondary schools and other creative industries and organisations. By offering tailor made programmes we hope to create a better embedding of dance in these cities. In doing so, it is vital to have a well-balanced overall supply of dance-related activities: regular performances; educational projects such as workshops, masterclasses, coaching schemes and talent development; innovative projects and activities that will promote dance.

CORE CITIES AND PARTNERS

Noord Brabant

Apart from *Tilburg* Dance Capital:

Eindhoven: Parktheater Eindhoven, Plaza Futura, United C, Festival Dans in den Elzent, St. Joriscollege, Amateurdanswerkplaats Eindhoven.

Breda: Chassé theater, De Stilte, Amateurs: Nana van Moergestel.

's-Hertogenbosch: Theater aan de Parade, Verkadefabriek, Theaterfestival Boulevard, Productiehuis Brabant, Helma Melis, Panama Pictures/Pia Meuthen

Limburg

Maastricht: Theater aan het Vrijthof/AINSI, Nederlandse Dansdagen, Vakopleiding-dans.

Heerlen: Parkstad Limburg Theaters (Heerlen, Kerkrade), Festival Cultura Nova, Joost Vrouwenraets, amateur dance festival in collaboration with Huis voor de Kunsten (Roermond).

Venlo: De Maaspoort theatre, Vooropleiding dans (preparatory dance school).

Zeeland

Middelburg: Theaterexploitatie Zeeland: Middelburg and Goes theatres, Zeeland Nazomerfestival/theaterproductiehuis Zeelandia;

amateur dance companies: Dazzle (Middelburg), Free (Goes), Danzee; Scoop (support function); secondary school Nehalennia (CIOS/ROC Goes, vmbo).

NATIONAL

In The Netherlands Station Zuid will be one of the five 'companies' that belong to the basic infrastructure. As regards the quality, Station Zuid will have to (want to) measure up to and distinguish itself from its colleagues. Within the Dutch dance infrastructure Station Zuid will establish a house where artists with a unique signature will be able to grow. Artists like André Gringras and Stephen Shropshire have shown that the *Danshuis* is a place for growth, without it having to be a final destination. On a national level Station Zuid has been able to perform its productions at different theatres across the country. Although the market for dance has not expanded, we strive for a strengthening of our position on the national stages and in the national market. Our innovative approach of product and audience will open up a host of possibilities.

INTERNATIONAL

The dance world is a singularly international world. Station Zuid's stationing in the South of the Netherlands and its strong links to the southern network of artists, stages and audiences does not make it provincial, but makes it a strong and creative interchange with which we can present ourselves internationally. We focus on artistic exchange. We invite choreographers, dancers and other artists to come and produce, dance, or do research with Station Zuid. One important condition is to do so in relation to the Southern Dutch network. We have for example worked with Edward Clug (Slovenia) and Sylvain Émard (Canada) over the past period. They gave workshops at dance academies and to amateurs. Working with people from different cultural surroundings will enrich your own surroundings and give access to an international network of fascinating artists, teachers, and institutions as well. This international network offers opportunities to play at international stages and to create co-productions. We are for example preparing an international co-production involving choreographer Pia Meuthen as part of Nordrhein-Westfalen European Capital of Culture 2010. Station Zuid looks for international links in two ways. Firstly we establish links with artists who can relate to our mission and the environment within which we wish to accomplish our mission. This then opens up the way for establishing contact with the people they have worked with. Through Sylvain Émard we have had the pleasure of working with ballet mistress Ginelle Chagnon (who worked as a teacher for Danstrainingen Brabant and continued her collaboration with André Gringras in Canada). Through her we established contact with

Guy Cools (a dramaturge with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui). Together they will give a series of masterclasses in the spring of 2008 for a number of Southern Dutch choreographers. There will also be a co-production with Sylvain Énard Danse.

Through Edward Clug we were able to work with British ballet master Andrew Greenwood (who also worked for Station Zuid coaching Joost Vrouwenraets, giving masterclasses at the Amsterdam and Tilburg dance academies and giving workshops with amateur dance group Dazzle in Zeeland). Station Zuid will now be employing internationally operating dance teachers at Station Zuid's dance training sessions whom we have contacted through Andrew's broad network (Wolfgang Stollwitzer, Michael McClain, Raymond Chai, and others). Andrew Greenwood will remain involved with Station Zuid, for example coaching Joost Vrouwenraets and as a ballet master with Václav Kuneš. Thanks to our collaborations with Edward Clug and Maribor Danse we are now working on European tour of our production of *'Sacre du Temps'* and presenting it at the Tanzmesse in Düsseldorf.

STUDIO VENUE	NIJMEGEN	GRONINGEN DRACHTEN	HELMOND
PRODUCTIONS	BREDA	HOOGVEEN	WEERT
TOURING CITIES BY VENUE	MIDDELBURG	EINDHOVEN	VENRAY
TYPE	VLISSINGEN GOES	ROSENDAAL	VENLO
SITE SPECIFIC	SPIJKENISSE	OSS	HASSELT_BE_
PERFORMANCES	TERNEUZEN	ROERMOND	GOUDA
MULTIPLE TYPE VENUES	TILBURG	SITTARD	AMSTERDAM
MAIN STAGE PRODUCTIONS	'S_HERTOGENBOSCH	ROTTERDAM	ZAANDAM
	DELFT	LANDGRAAF	HAARLEM
AMSTELVEEN	LEIDEN	HEERLEN	IJMUIDEN
ARNHEM	DORDRECHT	MAASTRICHT KERKRADE	
TOURING CITIES STATION ZUID			

Apart from this, Station Zuid will join an international network of *danshuizen* or dance houses: European Dancehouse Network (EDN), which consists of: Centre National de la Danse (Paris), Dansens Hus (Oslo and Stockholm), The Place (London), Tanzhaus NRW (Düsseldorf), Tanzquartier Wien (Vienna), Mercat de les Flors (Barcelona). A shared project for artistic exchange is IDEE (Improvement of Dance through European Exchange).

This network connects *danshuizen* that are embedded in their regions with each other, each stimulating and inspiring the others with its own uniqueness. Station Zuid's specific positioning in the South of the Netherlands combined with its global outlook makes it an attractive partner in the network. The first steps towards collaboration are made at this very moment with the Tanzhaus NRW. Choreographer Ben Riepe will be doing a laboratory project with Station Zuid, which will be presented at the Festival Cement and Theaterfestival Boulevard 2008.

PLANS 2009–2012

Production plans

Based on our ideas for the development of parallel productions, with innovative art forms alongside the traditional high art, Station Zuid will be developing a series of products of great diversity over the coming years.

Annual Station Zuid main stage production

In 2009 choreographer Václav Kuneš will be creating the performance *Neen-Ya +*. With eight dancers he will be creating a musical dance production departing from the life and music of Nina Simone. A new composition based on her music and other jazz music from the 1900 – 1940 period will be composed and performed live.

Annual Station Zuid studio venue production

In 2009 we will be creating a new co-production with Pia Meuthen, *Bedrog (Deception)*. A performance based on Philip Roth's novel 'Deception'. In *Bedrog* two lovers meet in a room on a regular basis. In this isolated place, far removed from their daily lives, they share an extreme intimacy. To them, their deceit is an opportunity to reinvent themselves, to be seen differently, to break free from their everyday existence. Until this adventure, too, becomes something ordinary.

Annual Station Zuid production at specific site

In 2010 choreographer Pia Meuthen, with Ruhr 2010 (European Capital of Culture), will be producing the performance *Gedankensprünge* (working title). In *Gedankensprünge*, four characters search for intimate encounters in an urban environment, making frantic attempts to come into contact with each other. The audience will be seated in a semi-circle around the performing space, wearing earphones that allow them to listen to the dancers' thoughts. As soon as the dancers come close, it will seem as if someone were whispering into their ear. The audience will also hear a composition of music and sounds through speakers placed in the room.

Three annual Station Zuid laboratory projects

Over the past three years Václav Kuneš, Stephen Shropshire, Pia Meuthen, Ben Riepe and Helma Melis have done laboratory projects around a wide variety of research questions. We are planning new projects with Pia Meuthen, Joost Vrouwenraets and Yens van Daele. We will be collaborating with Productiehuis Brabant and Het Brabants Orkest (as part of the Badingsfestival).

Every year Station Zuid initiates and organises Dansweek Brabant, Limburg en Zeeland with its regional partners; regional platforms filled with dance productions, education, presentation and promotion. The aim of these platforms is to generate more attention for dance in (potential) audiences and to improve the visibility of dance in the region. Following on from the Nederlandse dansweek, we generate (media) attention for dance in general and the professional dance institutions and artists working in the South especially.

The Gala van de Zuidelijke Dans (Southern Dance Gala) is a festive programme of short new pieces (max 15 minutes) from various new Southern Dutch artists. It is a platform for talent development from the South for main stage performances and serves as an introduction of these artists into the theatres.

We will be developing a broad range of innovative dance productions over the next four years.

Station Zuid will be developing a digital platform and specific websites. Through these we will be able to report about dance, choreographers, show repertoire – from tradition and innovation- but we can also offer tools and e-coaching as a first aid kit for creating dance. With young artists and companies, Station Zuid intends to explore the possibilities for developing dance games and interactive installations. These will not just be geared at education but also at the cultural sector and possibly companies too. Together with a communications agency and a group of young people we intend to draw up an involvement campaign aimed at broad groups of young people. This site should become a repository of statements, ideas, and proposals for projects and should ideally lead to a community of young people who are willing to help build up Station Zuid. Over the coming years, Station Zuid will be developing a variety of productions in collaboration and/or co-produced by various (inter)national partners: Tilburg Dance Capital, Productiehuis Brabant, Panama Pictures, Zeeland Nazomerfestival, Cultura Nova, Parktheater Eindhoven (festival Dans in den Elzent), Parkstad Limburg Theaters, Het Brabants Orkest, Het Zuidelijk Toneel, Huis voor de Kunsten Limburg, Stichting Danzee. We will be producing three shows each year and develop new products aside from these as well. A dance house such as Station Zuid wants to continue to grow and does not want to board things up in advance.

StationZuidcreatesroomfornewtalentandnewplans.

ACTIVITIES STATION ZUID

TIMELINE ACTIVITIES

PRODUCTION STUDIO VENUE

PRODUCTION MAIN STAGE

SITE SPECIFIC PRODUCTION

LABORATORY PROJECT

COACHING

FESTIVAL

COPRODUCTION

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP

OCT NOV DEC

2007

□□ MIND THE GAP

□□ WHAT IT'S LIKE _SONATA 1_

□ I HAVE A DREAM

□□ SONATA 3

□□ SEVEN BY 2

□□ CHOREOGRAFIECONCOURS □□ SACRE

DU TEMPS □ DANSWEEK BRAB, LIMB, ZLND

□□ POINT OF DEPARTURE _SONATA 2_ □

PROXAMICS/PROZACTION □ ARR.1

□□ OPEN HOUSE

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP

OCT NOV DEC

2006

□□ REQUIEM FOR TWO CHAIRS

□□ FIRST PAGES

□□ THE RECITAL

□□ RADIO & JULIET / REQUIEM

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP

OCT NOV DEC

2008

□□ SONATA 4

□□ NEWBODIES

□□ ARR. 2 □□ DISAPPEAR HERE

□□ ARR. 3

□□ ARR. 5, 6

□ NEEN_YA +

□ DANSWEEK BRABANT

LIMBURG, ZEELAND

□□ SONATA 1_6

□ PARLANDO

□ MELT

□□ ARR. 1, 2, 3

□ OPERA ERIC DE VRIES