

Jiří Kylián

Jiří Kylián

Jiří Kylián (2020)

Born 21 March 1947 (age 77)
[Prague, Czechoslovakia](#)
Nationality Czech
Occupation contemporary dance [choreographer](#)
Partner Sabine Kupferberg
Website [jirikylian.com](#)

Jiří Kylián (born 21 March 1947) is a Czech former dancer and contemporary dance [choreographer](#).^[1]

Biography

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Family

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Jiří Kylián was born in 1947 in [Prague – Czechoslovakia](#), as one of two sons to his father Václav who was a banker and to his mother Markéta, who was as a young teenager a dancer-child protégée.^{[2][3]}

Education

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

During the years 1962-1967 Kylián studied at the Prague Conservatory.^[4] One teacher of the Conservatory, who left a deep mark on Kylián's professional development, was Zora Šemberová, known for her world's first interpretation of Juliet (1938) in Prokofiev's famous ballet. In 1967 Kylián had received a scholarship to study at the "Royal Ballet School" in London,

Stuttgart Ballet

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

He met John Cranko, choreographer, there, who offered him a contract, to become a member of his acclaimed "Stuttgart Ballett".^[5] Before taking up his contract, Kylián shortly returned to Prague, but on August 21st, 1968, the invasion of the communist "Warsaw-Pact " forces began. On the 28th of

August, after taking part in many demonstrations against the occupation, Kylián left for Germany.^[6]

In Stuttgart Cranko asked Kylián to create choreographies for the company. His first work was "Kommen und Gehen", created with Marcia Haydée and Richard Cragun. In the early 70's Cranko invited Glen Tetley to become resident choreographer in Stuttgart. Tetley's work made a great impression on Kylián, namely Tetley's understanding of movement, and its relation to space, was a revelation for Kylián.

Netherlands Dance Theatre

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

In early seventies, Kylián was invited to create his first choreography for the Netherlands Dance Theatre ("Viewers-1973"). Having created two more works for NDT ("Stoolgame" 1974 and "La Cathédrale Engloutie" 1975) the offer to become artistic director of NDT together with Hans Knill, was extended to him.^{[7][8]}

The creation of "Sinfonietta", to music of Kylian's co-patriot [Leoš Janáček](#) for the "Charleston Festival" in the USA in 1978 led to international recognition of the company.^{[9][10]} Subsequently many important international tours of NDT have taken place incl. Metropolitan Opera House in New York, the Paris Opera etc.

During Kylián's engagement in NDT (1975-2009), he has created more than 75 choreographies for the company. Further pieces he made for other worldwide companies, such as the Stuttgart Ballet, the Opéra de Paris, the Munich Bayerisches Staatsballett, and the Tokyo Ballet.^[7]

Realizing the importance of education of young dancers, Jiří Kylián and Carel Birnie, the managing director of NDT, have decided in 1978 to create a new company - NDT II, in which young people would get the opportunity to develop their skills and talents. After many years of directorship, Kylián saw the departure of many fine and interesting performers. It was in 1991^[7] that he decided to create a small group for dancers, who find themselves in the precarious age between "forty and death". The world premiere of this "Senior Company" was created by choreographers: Hans van Manen, Mats Ek, William Forsythe and Jiří Kylián. The original dancers were: Sabine Kupferberg, Alida Chase, Gérard Lemaitre and Niklas Ek. The importance of this new development in dance was instantly recognized by the public as well as by the media.^[11]

This unique,^[9] three-dimensional structure, NDT I - mature dancers, NDT II - young dancers, NDT III - senior dancers, residing in its own theater, designed and built by architect Rem Koolhaas in 1987, placed NDT in a totally new category. It has become different from any other dance company in the world, and was recognized as such by being given various prestigious awards.

Further activities

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

In the recent years Kylián's creativity is focused on film,^[7] video and photography. The films "Carmen", "Schwarzfahrer", "Between Entrance and Exit", "Scalamare" and the photo installation "Free fall" were all created in collaboration with his lifelong partner and muse Sabine Kupferberg.

In 1988 Kylián established the Kylian Foundation in The Hague (originally named as "Kylián Choreographic Archive"). In 2008 the Kylian Production BV was set up in the Netherlands and in 2017 Kylián Fund Prague was founded in the Czech Republic.^[12]

Selected works (choreography)

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Theatre works from 1973 to 2019:^{[9][13]}

- *Paradox* (1970) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Kommen und gehen* (1970) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Incantations* (1971) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Der Einzelgänger* (1972) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Der stumme Orpheus* (1972) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Viewers* (1973) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Blaue Haut / Blue skin* (1974) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Der Morgen danach* (1974) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Stoolgame* (1974) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *La Cathédrale engloutie* (1975) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Rückkehr ins fremde Land / Return to a strange land* (1975) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Verklärte Nacht / Transfigured night* (1975) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Torso* (1975) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Nuages* (1976) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Elegia* (1976) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Symphony in d* (1976) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *November steps* (1977) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Ariadne* (1977) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Kinderspelen* (1978) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Sinfonietta* (1978) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Intimate pages* (1978) Sabine Kupferberg
- *Rainbow snake* (1978) Nederlands Dans Theater
- *Psalmensymfonie / Symphony of Psalms* (1978) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Glagolitic Mass* (1979) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Dream dances* (1979) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Soldatenmis / Field Mass* (1980) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Overgrown path* (1980) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Forgotten land / Vergessenes Land* (1981) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *Nomaden / Nomads* (1981) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)

- *Svadebka* (1982) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen / Songs of a Wayfarer* (1982) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Stamping Ground* (1983) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Dream time* (1983) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Curses and blessings* (1983) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Wiegenlied* (1983) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I and II)
- *Return to a strange land* (1984) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Valencia* (1984) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (1984) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Heart's labyrinth* (1984) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Heart's labyrinth II* (1985) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Piccolo mondo* (1985) Scapino Ballet
- *Silent cries* (1986) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *L'Histoire du soldat* (1986) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Sechs Tänze / Six dances* (1986) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Frankenstein !!* (1987) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Sint joris rijdt uit* (1987) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Evening songs* (1987) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Kaguyahime* (1988) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *No more play* (1988) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Tanz-schul* (1989) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Falling angels* (1989) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Sweet dreams* (1990) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Sarabande* (1990) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Feuillet d'automne* (1990) Ballet de l'Opéra National de Paris
- *Un ballo* (1991) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT II)
- *Petite mort* (1991) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Obscure temptations* (1991) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *Stepping stones* (1991) Stuttgarter Ballett
- *As if never been* (1992) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *No sleep till dawn of day* (1992) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *Whereabouts unknown* (1993) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Tiger lily* (1994) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Perfect conception* (1994) The Tokyo Ballet
- *Double you* (1994) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *Arcimboldo* (1994) Nederlands Dans Theater I / II / III
- *Bella Figura* (1995) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Anna and the ostriches* (1996) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Tears of laughter* (1996) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *Trompe-l'œil* (1996) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT II)
- *If only...* (1996) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *Compass* (1996) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *Wings of wax* (1997) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *A way a lone* (1998) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)
- *One of a kind* (1998) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Indigo rose* (1998) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT II)
- *Half past* (1999) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Doux mensonges* (1999) Ballet de l'Opéra National de Paris
- *Arcimboldo 2000* (2000) Nederlands Dans Theater I / II / III
- *Click - pause - silence* (2000) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Birth-day* (2001) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT III)

- *Blackbird* (2001) Saitama Arts Theater
- *Claude Pascal* (2002) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *When time takes time* (2002) Saitama Arts Theater and Nederlands Dans Theater III
- *Far too close* (2002) Saitama Arts Theater and Nederlands Dans Theater III
- *Last touch* (2003) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Il faut qu'une porte* (2004) Ballet de l'Opéra National de Paris
- *Sleepless* (2004) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT II)
- *Toss of a dice* (2005) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Chapeau* (2005) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT II)
- *Tar and feathers* (2006) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Vanishing twin* (2008) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Last touch first* (2008) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I)
- *Gods and dogs* (2008) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT II)
- *Zugvögel* (2009) Bayerisches Staatsballett München
- *Mémoires d'oubliettes* (2009) Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT I) (Kylián's last piece for the NDT) ^[7]
- *Anonymous* (2011) Kylworks
- *East shadow* (2013) Aichi Mini Theatre
- *Fortune cookies* (2014) Kylworks

Selected Awards

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

During his career, Kylian has received many prestigious, international awards and honours, such as:

- 1983 Carina Ari Medal, [Stockholm](#)
- 1986 VSCD Dutch Theaters Award for Choreography, [Maastricht](#)
- 1989 Sonia Gaskell Prijs, [Amsterdam](#)
- 1991 Dutch Theatre Critics Award
- Premio Internazionale Gino Tani, [Rome](#)
- 1993, 1999 Benois de la Danse, [Moscow](#)
- 1994 *Dance Magazine Award* [New York](#) ^[14]
- 1995 Award for Outstanding Achievement of Cultural Merits by Soka Gakkai, [Japan](#) ^[15]
- 1995 Premio di Teatro di Roma/City of Roma ^[15]
- 1995 *Decoration of the Royal Dutch order of Oranje-Nassau* ^[16]
- German Critics Award for the creation of NDT III
- 1997 Honorary Doctorate, Juilliard School of the Arts, New York ^[7]
- 1997 [Edinburgh Festival](#) Critics Award
- 1997 Joost van den Vondel Prijs from The Alfred Töpfer Stiftung, Hamburg
- 1997 Golden Medal for Outstanding Merit from President [Václav Havel](#), Prague ^[15]

- 1998 Honorary Prize for Dance and Choreography from the Institut del Teatre Barcelona
- 1999 Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, [Paris](#)
- 1999 First Cultural Award of the City of [The Hague](#)
- 2000 *Sir Laurence Olivier Award*, London ^[4]
- 2000 Arch Angel Award, Edinburgh International Festival ^[4]
- 2000 Honorary Doctorate, Music Academy of [Prague](#) ^[15]
- 2000 Three „*Nijinsky award*“, [Monte Carlo](#); in the following categories: as choreographer, for choreography, for company (for unique structure of NDT: NDT I, NDT II, NDT III) ^[9]
- 2001 *Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, Paris ^[17]
- 2001 Porselli Award, [Reggio Emilia](#)
- 2002 VSCD Dutch Theaters Oeuvre Award, [Maastricht](#)
- 2004 Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur', Paris ^[4]
- 2004 La Medaille d'Or de la cité de Lyon
- 2005 Knights Cross from the President Kwasniewski of [Poland](#)
- 2006 Jiří Kylián Ring - an award in a form of a ring, ^[9] which the new recipient can pass on to any artist in the 'Dance Field'. The recipients will receive a sum of €5.000 provided by the Kylian Foundation (2006)
- 2006 Premio Dansa Valencia
- 2006 *Thalia Award* - College Special Award (Czech Republic) ^[18]
- 2007 Silver Medal of the City of Prague
- 2008 *Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement*, Biennale Venezia ^[2]
- 2008 Highest cultural award for 'Art and Science' of the order of Oranje Nassau by [Queen Beatrix](#)
- 2011 *Award for exceptional achievement in the field of Dance and Choreography*, Czech Ministry of Culture, Prague ^[19]
- 2011 Golden Prague Award for the film *Mémoires d'Oubliettes*, Prague
- 2013 Dvořák Award, Prague
- 2015 László Seregy Award, Budapest
- 2015 Jovan Cirilov Award, Belgrade
- 2016 Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences Award
- 2017 Honorary Citizenship of the city of The Hague ^[20]
- 2017 Premio Positano alla Carriera Lifetime Achievement Award, Positano
- 2018 Honorary Citizenship of the city of Prague
- 2018 *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Member of Institute Français, Académie des Beaux Arts*, Paris ^[10]
- 2019 Benois de la Danse Lifetime Achievement Award, Moscow
- 2019 Golden Prague Lifetime Achievement Award, Prague

Films

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Films from 2006 to 2017: [\[21\]](#)

- *Car-Men* (2006) [\[10\]](#)
- *Between Entrance & Exit* (2013)
- *Schwarzfahrer* (2014)
- *Scalamare* (2017) [\[22\]](#)

Further reading

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

- Isabelle Lanzová, Dorota Gremlicová, Elvíra Němečková, Roman Vašek: *Různé břehy / Choreograf Jiří Kylián mezi Haagem a Prahou*, issued by Institut umění – Divadelní ústav (IDU) v Praze (2011), Prague, Czech Rep., [ISBN 978-80-7008-267-6](#)
- Raimon Àvila: *Jiří Kylián : somniador de danses*, Barcelona : Institut del Teatre de la Diputació de Barcelona, Spain, 2003, [ISBN 978-84-7794-960-2](#)
- Vaccarino, Elisa (2001). *Jiri Kylian*. [ISBN 978-88-8302-180-0](#).
- Dana Paseková: *Jiří Kylián*, NAMU 2001, issued by Akademie múzických umění v Praze, Praha, Czech Rep., 2001, [ISBN 978-80-85883-77-0](#)
- Jiří Hlaváč: *Jiří Kylián, Doctor Honoris Causa*, issued by Akademie múzických umění v Praze, Czech Rep., 15.12.2000, [ISBN 978-80-85883-62-6](#)
- Marie-Noël Rio: *Bon qu'à ça*, Les Éditions du Sonneur, Paris, 2016 (translated into Czech by Michal Lázňovský sen., issued by [National Theatre](#) in Prague in 2019 under name *Budižkněcemu*)

References

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

1. [↑](#) "Jiri Kylian," *Almanac of Famous People* (2011) Gale Biography In Context
2. [↑](#) [2.0 2.1 Jiří Kylián in Czech National Theater Archive](#) ^{[\[permanent dead link\]](#)}
3. [↑](#) Novinky.cz: ČTK: *Ve věku 104 let zemřela meziválečná tanečnice Markéta Kyliánová* (4.12.2016): <https://www.novinky.cz/kultura/422614-ve-veku-104-let-zemrela-mezivalecna-tanecnice-marketa-kylianova.html> [Archived](#) 2016-12-05 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
4. [↑](#) [4.0 4.1 4.2 4.3](#) Dans, Magazine. "[Choreografen en dansers: Jiří Kylián](#)". *Dans Magazine*. Retrieved 15 August 2019.
5. [↑](#) The Stuttgart Ballet: <https://www.stuttgart-ballet.de/schedule/a-z/one-of-a-kind/> [Archived](#) 2019-08-14 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
6. [↑](#) Official web of Jiri Kylian: "[Official website](#)"
7. [↑](#) [7.0 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5](#) "[Discover: Choreographers: Jiri Kylian](#)". *Netherlands Dance Theatre*. NDT. Archived from [the original](#) on 22 January 2017. Retrieved 20 August 2019.
8. [↑](#) Encyclopædia Britannica. "[Ballet](#)". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. Retrieved 15 August 2019.

9. ↑ [9.0 9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4](#) GB Magazine. "[Jiří Kylián, Choreographer, Czech Rep](#)". *Grand Ballets Canadiens de Montréal*. Grand Ballets Canadiens de Montréal. Retrieved 11 August 2019.
10. ↑ [10.0 10.1 10.2](#) Académie des Beaux-Arts, Membres étrangers. "[Jiří Kylián, danseur et chorégraphe](#)". *Académie des Beaux-Arts*. Académie des Beaux-Arts, Institut de France. Archived from [the original](#) on 15 June 2018. Retrieved 11 August 2019.
11. ↑ [Rockwell, John](#) (22 December 1992). "[Jiri Kylian Starts a Company for Dancers Young at Heart](#)". *The New York Times*. Retrieved 19 August 2018.
12. ↑ Official web of Jiri Kylian: [Jiří Kylián](#)
13. ↑ "[Jiri Kylian creations theatre repertoire](#)". Kylian Productions.
14. ↑ "[Dance Magazine Awards](#)". *New York Times*: 17. April 16, 1994. Retrieved 10 August 2019.
15. ↑ [15.0 15.1 15.2 15.3](#) Česká divadelní encyklopedie (Czech Theater Encyclopedia). "[Encyklopedie IDU](#)". *Česká divadelní encyklopedie*. Institut umění - Divadelní ústav. Retrieved 20 August 2019.
16. ↑ Digidance. "[Jiri Kylian´s Biography](#)". *Archive.today*. Archived from [the original](#) on 2011-12-11. Retrieved 10 August 2019.
17. ↑ Janeček, Václav. "[Jiří Kylián](#)". *CATALOGUE GOLDEN PRAGUE ZLATÁ PRAHA INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION*. Česká televize (2004). Retrieved 15 August 2019.
18. ↑ ČTK (2007-03-24). "[Noví držitelé ocenění Thálie 2006](#)". *Týden.cz*. Týden.cz. Retrieved 15 August 2019.
19. ↑ Divadelní noviny, (28 Oct.2011). "[Z divadelníků získali ceny Martin Hilský a Jiří Kylián](#)". *DN Divadelní noviny*. Divadelní noviny, Praha. Retrieved 11 August 2019.
20. ↑ Dans magazine: Jiri Kylián Ereburger van Den Haag (28 March 2017): <https://dansmagazine.nl/nieuws/jir%C3%AD-kyli%C3%A1n-ereburger-van-den-haag>
21. ↑ "[Jiri Kylian creations film repertoire](#)". Kylian Productions.
22. ↑ ExploreDance.com: Helma Klooss: *Jiri Kylian talks about his film Scalamare* (31 March 2017): <https://www.exploredance.com/article.htm?id=4646>

Other websites

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

- [Jiří Kylián in Czech National Theater Archive Archived 2020-08-10 at the Wayback Machine](#)
- [Jiří Kylián on Česko-Slovenská filmová databáze \(Czechoslovak film database\)](#)
- [Jiří Kylián on Filmová databáze \(Film database\)](#)
- [Official website](#)
- "[HSC Online](#)". Archived from [the original](#) on 2011-09-27.
- [Nederlands Dans Theater – Finale from *Petite Mort*](#)
- [Aspen Santa Fe Ballet – Stamping Ground \(Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2011\)](#)

Retrieved from "https://simple.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jiří_Kylián&oldid=9705168"