

FROM: **AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE**  
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## **JIRÍ KYLIÁN**

Born in Czechoslovakia in 1947, Jiří Kylián started his dance career at the age of nine, at the School of the National Ballet in Prague. In 1962 he was accepted as a student at the Prague Conservatory. He left Prague when he received a scholarship for the Royal Ballet School in London in 1967. After this, he left to join the Stuttgart Ballet led by John Cranko. Kylián made his debut as a choreographer here with *Paradox* for the Noverre Gesellschaft. After having made three ballets for Nederlands Dans Theater, *Viewers*, *Stoolgame*, and *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, he became artistic director of the company in 1975. In 1978 he put Nederlands Dans Theater on the international map with *Sinfonietta*. That same year, together with Carel Birnie, he founded Nederlands Dans Theater II, which served as a bridge between school and professional company life and was meant to give young dancers the opportunity to develop their skills and talents and to function as a breeding ground for young talent. He also initiated Nederlands Dans Theater III in 1991, the company for older dancers, above forty years of age. This three-dimensional structure was unique in the world of dance. After an extraordinary record of service, Kylián handed over the artistic leadership in 1999, but remained associated to the dance company as house choreographer until December 2009. Kylián has created nearly 100 works of which many are performed all over the world. Kylián has not only made works for Nederlands Dans Theater, but also for the Stuttgart Ballet, the Paris Opéra Ballet, Bayerisches Staatsoper München, Swedish television, and the Tokyo Ballet.

Kylián has worked with many creative personalities of international stature, including composers Arne Nordheim (*Ariadne*, 1997) and Toru Takemitsu (*Dream Time*, 1983) and designers Walter Nobbe (*Sinfonietta*, 1978), Bill Katz (*Symphony of Psalms*, 1978), John Macfarlane (*Forgotten*

(more)

*Land*, 1980), Michael Simon (*Stepping Stones*, 1991), Atsushi Kitagawara (*One of a Kind*, 1998), Susumu Shingu (*Toss of a Dice*, 2005), and Yoshiki Hishinuma (*Zugvögel*, 2009).

In the Summer of 2006, together with Film Art Director, Boris Paval Conen, he created the film *Car-Men*. It was choreographed “on location” on the surface brown coal mines of the Czech Republic. In 2010, Kylián served as Mentor in Dance in the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. In 2013, together with NTR, he created the film *Between Entrance and Exit* which was nominated as one of the contestants for the ‘Gouden Kalf’ award during the Dutch Film Festival 2013 in Utrecht. For the Aichi Triennale in Nagoya, Japan, he created the full-evening dance/film production *East Shadow*, which was dedicated to the victims of the Tsunami in Japan in 2011.

Over the course of his career, Kylián received many international awards including Officer of the Orange Order (Netherlands), Honorary Doctorate from The Juilliard School (New York), three Nijinsky Awards for best choreographer, company, and work (Monte Carlo), Benois de la Danse (Moscow and Berlin), Honorary Medal of the President of the Czech Republic, and Commander of the Legion d'honneur (France). In 2008 he was distinguished with one of the highest royal honors, the Medal of the Order of the House of Orange given to him by Her Majesty the Queen Beatrix from the Netherlands. In 2011, Kylián received the Lifetime Achievement Award in the field of dance and theater by the Czech Ministry of Culture in Prague.