

Biographies: Fast Forward

Intendant

Guy Coolen is deeply rooted in the world of music theatre through his roles as the artistic director of festival O. (previously known as Operadagen Rotterdam) and the Belgian production house Muziektheater Transparant. He is also the chairman of the worldwide network Music Theatre Now (part of the International Theatre Institute), which stimulates the development of new forms of opera and music theatre. Guy brings together artists from all over the world and guides them in their artistic endeavours. Having previously done so as a scout for Fast Forward, he now acts as the programme's intendant.

Scouts

Jolanda Spoel graduated from HKU in 1997 and has since performed and danced with various companies, ultimately focusing on directing productions. Until 2003, she was the programmer for Cosmic Theater in Amsterdam. In addition, she was the artistic director of the Rotterdam youth theatre group Rotterdam LEF! and the youth theatre group Theatergroep Siberia. She currently works as head of theatre, programmer and director at Maas theater en dans in Rotterdam. She is also on the board of the Amsterdamse Kunstraad and is chair of the professional committees for Dance and Cultural Houses.

Martijn Buser studied Cultural and Social Development at Hogeschool van Arnhem-Nijmegen. From 2005 to 2011, he programmed contemporary music for Theater Kikker in Utrecht. Since January 2011, he has been the programmer and coordinating producer for the Gaudeamus Music Week in Utrecht and the year-round concert series. Since 2015, he has been a co-curator for Rewire Festival in The

Hague and in 2016 he was the Music Chair for the International Computer Music Conference in Utrecht, organised by Gaudeamus and HKU Music & Technology. He was a performance visitor for the Raad voor Cultuur for two years and also acted as a committee member for the Amsterdamse Kunstraad and Performing Arts Fund NL.

Piet Menu is the artistic director of Het Zuidelijk Toneel (HZT). His career path led him from Vlaams Cultuurhuis De Brakke Grond, Festival Cement and Huis van Bourgondië right back to Vlaams Cultuurhuis De Brakke Grond. He's been working as a Belgian in the Netherlands for almost his entire career, meaning he's used to reaching across borders. The makers he works with at HZT come from both the Netherlands and Belgium, from within the world of theatre and outside it.

Samuel Wuersten has enjoyed a diverse career as a dancer of modern repertoire, creating self-produced and commissioned works as a choreographer, and is still a much sought-after teacher of modern dance around the world. He is the artistic and executive director of the renowned Holland Dance Festival, executive co-director of Codarts Hogeschool voor de Kunsten in Rotterdam and artistic director of the bachelor's and master's programmes in dance at Zurich University of the Arts in Switzerland. He is a regular jury member and advisor for various dance and art organisations. He was the artistic co-director of the Steps International Dance Festival in Switzerland for ten years and a member of the artistic committee of the Prix de Lausanne, where he also worked as a modern dance teacher. Wuersten was the international curator of Diana Vishneva's CONTEXT festival in Moscow and St. Petersburg from 2013 to 2018. He was born and raised in Gstaad, Switzerland and received his formal dance training at the Balletschule der Hamburgischen Staatsoper and the Codarts Hogeschool voor de Kunsten in Rotterdam. He currently works from the Netherlands. In 2011, he was honoured with a knighthood in the Dutch Order of Orange-Nassau. That same year, he was admitted to the French Order of Arts and Letters as Chevalier dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Judith Blankenberg works as a programmer and house dramaturge at Grand Theatre Groningen. After obtaining her master's degree in Theatre Dramaturgy at Utrecht University (UU), she started her programming career in Rotterdam at the former festival De (Internationale) Keuze, organised by De Rotterdamse Schouwburg. During her master's programme at the University of Antwerp, she did an internship at Noorderzon Festival Performing Arts & Society and wrote her thesis on programming international festivals in the Netherlands. From 2014 to 2020, she worked as an advisor for the Performing Arts Fund NL. Since 2016, Judith has been living and working in Groningen. In addition, she works as an independent dramaturge with various artists in the north. She is the secretary of Club LinC, the alumni association of the UU programme Leadership in Culture.

Wendy Moonen graduated with a degree in Cultural and Social Development in 1999 and immediately began working in the sector at Vondelpark Openluchttheater. In 2001, she became programme coordinator at Theaterfestival Boulevard in 's-Hertogenbosch, and after six years, she decided to work on a project basis as a freelancer. From that moment on, she worked as a creative producer and programmer for various festivals and companies, mainly in site-specific theatre, dance and circus. Since 2012, Wendy has been the artistic director of Festival Circolo, the circus festival in Tilburg, where she is responsible for the festival's circus-related programming and talent development. In addition to her work for Festival Circolo, she is responsible for programming mainly circus performances at various festivals such as Oerol and Theaterfestival Boulevard. In 2019, she was one of the initiators of the circus platform BURO PIKET, which focuses on collaboration with and between young circus talents.

Frank Kimenai is an Amsterdam-based music ecosystem researcher and advisor. He specialises in popular music and its idiosyncratic actors, infrastructure and value chains. Frank feels most at home at the intersection of culture, economy, policy and the social domain. He has a healthy dose of grass roots ethics, an entrepreneurial

mindset and an international gaze. He likes innovation but dislikes speculation, loves Excel sheets and listens to Black Flag. Currently, Frank's main activities are his research on the resilience of music ecosystems at Erasmus University and his job as head of the public funding and development department of Web3 music & tech start-up Copyright Delta. Frank is frequently asked as a public speaker, moderator and curator at conferences like SXSW, ADE, ESNS and Reeperbahn. He is also involved in several European and national music policy developments.