

## DANSENS HUS – STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

**Key Words:** by habit | by choice | place | organisational change | economic sustainability | digital

### *Synthetic data sheet*

Full name	Dansens Hus
Address	Barnhusgatan 14 SE-11124 Stockholm, SWEEDEN
Legal status	Foundation, founded by Swedish national and regional institutions with own permanent dance-companies, a national centre for dance (Danscentrum) and a national dance-museum
Year of establishment	1993
Website	www.dansenshus.se
Social Media	Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Twitter
Area of activities	Dance DH is a guest stage theatre for contemporary dance. With one main stage (750 seats) and one small stage (black box type stage with about 100 seats)
Kind of activities	Productions, touring performances, residencies, workshop
Total amount of budget	about 5.000.000 € annually
Sources of funding	The financing is public, subsidized by the State (Kulturrådet) and the municipality (City of Stockholm) plus own ticket sales and other revenues. Around 75 % (50% from the state, 25% from the municipality). Self-financing about 25% over the years, which has diminished in recent years
Number of employees	25 employees/duties, including the head of theatre/artistic leader, a program department with 4 in the staff and a communication department with 5 in the staff
Number of annual attendances	DH presented in 2015 in total 41 guest productions, intentionally slightly diminished in number during last years, with a total of 137 performances and more than 50.000 visitors/spectators. Diverse public activities with an outreach of about 12.000 participants (after-performance talks, seminars, lectures, hands-on workshops, exhibitions and events) strengthen the program and the participation

Data refer to 2015

### ***Background information***

DH is a contemporary dance guest stage, presenting international as well as national artists and companies, including associated forms of stage art, like street dance and contemporary circus. DH has the art form, contemporary dance, and its contemporary enlargement as, as its primary mission.

The AD priority for DH is to promote accessibility to contemporary dance, by presenting high quality national and international dance, supporting, developing and renewing the art form. This includes giving choreographers the possibility to work in residencies and networking the dance sector for increased touring nationally. DH functions as a national hub for contemporary dance.

DH is actually trying to develop a more sophisticated AD, in theory and in practice. There is a strengthened focus on AD today, in programming and in the organisational structure. The strategy increasingly uses an enlarged spectrum of surrounding/linked activities, supporting the mediation and a deepened understanding of programmed performances.

DH envisions different kind of audiences attending different kinds of performances. Therefore, they seek to reach to target audiences depending on the program and its relevance for the chosen group.

### ***What do they want? Goals and achievements***

The core AD focus for DH is Audience by habit. Dance as an art form is at the centre and maintaining the already engaged audience is the central objective. At the same time, they have increased efforts to broaden the audience with challenging work, extending the audiences tastes, Audience by choice. The diversification is connected a broader definition of what contemporary dance means, including street dance and other forms of urban dance culture as well as interdisciplinary projects.

### ***How do they do it? Making it happen***

The main DH strategy is that all surrounding activities should support programming as the Core activity. Programme decisions and mediation to audiences are the central cogs in the AD machinery. DH programming is defined through a close network and knowledge base within the international contemporary dance landscape. Because of the demand for increased self-financing, DH programming is always done with a sales perspective.

DH collaborates with many public, private, institutional and third-sector associations, networking for more visitors and a deeper engagement. One of the primary objectives is also to improve conditions for artists and dance companies, professionally and regarding outreach and visibility. DH is actively involved in international and intercultural platforms and networks, exchanges and cooperation.

DH works with campaigns and special offers for target groups, using side activities. For example, when programming the festival Urban Connection, since 2006 a festival of urban dance and hip hop, they engage directly with young audiences to guarantee the

relevance of the program. This is an attempt to enlarge the contemporary dance field, presenting urban culture for a young and mixed audience, within the official season, rather than as a "side" project. Broadening the definition of contemporary dance doesn't just re-vitalize the art form but also connects to new audiences who have little previous experience of dance on traditional stages.

DH is conscious of gender issues when choosing choreographers and guest productions, as well as confronting other values/norms that limit diversity among performers and subsequently excludes target visitors.

DH offers audio descriptions at 2-3 performances each season, for those with sight disabilities.

DH is trying to make communication more systematic, strategic and targeted. One tool, among others, uses box office lists with special invitations connected to previous performances. This allows DH to follow up audiences with connected tastes. The digital infrastructure is updated and gathering of audience statistics is high on the agenda.

DH has recently implemented an organizational change due to its AD ambitions. AD was earlier implemented under the Head of Communication but is now placed under the Program department, with the intention of integrating communication and programming into a totality. A halftime (50%) staff position with the title Producer of Audience Activities has been created. More measures are on the agenda for this organizational transformation, necessitated by an audience-centric approach.

DH makes outreach efforts with the ambition to increase ticket sales by presenting popular dance productions proven as box office successes. In the coming season 2016/17 DH has planned for 2 such productions, altogether up to 80 performances. This can in the long run, if the programme would become too unbalanced, be a risky business. The challenge is to uphold the quality brand connected to the DH legacy, a legacy of presenting high quality international contemporary dance productions.

**Interview:** Ida Burén - Head Program Department

**Interviewer:** Lars Göran Karlsson – Intercult (Stockholm)