

**Maria Nurmela**

Dancer

Maria Nurmela studied classical ballet at the Finnish National Opera Ballet School in 1992–1997. She later continued her studies in contemporary dance and dance theatre at the Rotterdamse Danscademie in Holland and at Folkwang-Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Künste in Essen, Germany, graduating in 2002. In 2007, she received her master's degree in Dance Pedagogy from the Theatre Academy of Finland.

She has danced professionally in Finland with Aurinkobaletti and Hanna Brotherus Company, as well as abroad with various choreographers, including Alan Danielson, Piet Rogie, Malou Airaudó and Rodolpho Leoni. In 2007, Nurmela participated in the *Mayim Mayim* project in Germany as a representative of Tero Saarinen Company, with whom she has been dancing since 2003. In 2009 the Arts Council of Finland awarded Nurmela a one-year artistic grant for the year 2010.