



Workshops European Summer Academy

European Identity in Times of Crisis (EITC)

European Summer Academy 2017: Myths of Europe – April 29th to May 8th

Title: Dance

Workshop Trainer: Eleonora Siavara

Workshop description

Dance is a meaningful and enriching possibility of human experience, an activity that combines creativity and physicality. It can be an accessible and empowering creative tool for individuals and groups to express their identity, feelings, histories and aspirations. At the same time it allows individual reflection while reinforcing the group cohesion. There is huge potential for dance to play an active and stimulating role in the development of ourselves, not only as individuals but also within the dynamic process of "community".

In that sense, the workshop proposed, as a **community dance project**, has three core areas of **aims** that is the Artistic, the Educational and the Social.

The *Artistic aspect* researches questions referring to the creation of a collective dance and **choreographic aesthetic**. It aims to develop knowledge of **dance vocabulary**, provide participants with an artistic experience and by exploring ways of expression to present what has been created in a form of a **public performance**.

The sessions are not primarily performance or product oriented-on the other hand the **emphasis is on process!**- but the aesthetic value of the dance that will be created always is a key point of consideration.

The *Educational aspect* highlights the educational character of community dance. It refers to the distinctive educational opportunities it offers to the participants - particularly with regards to personal **self-awareness**, social **interaction** and the emphasis on "doing".

My role in that context is going to be primarily the one of a 'facilitator' as opposed to a 'teacher'. The nature and progression of our activities must be a democratic and active process emerging from the group as a whole.

The *Social aspect* focuses on the importance of developing dance content and method that is appropriate to the specific needs of the group. It empowers the individual through empowering the group. By finding a meeting point with the group we interact with our own social boundaries are being extended, with dance as the catalyst for the creation of new



relationships and the destroying of established stereotypes.

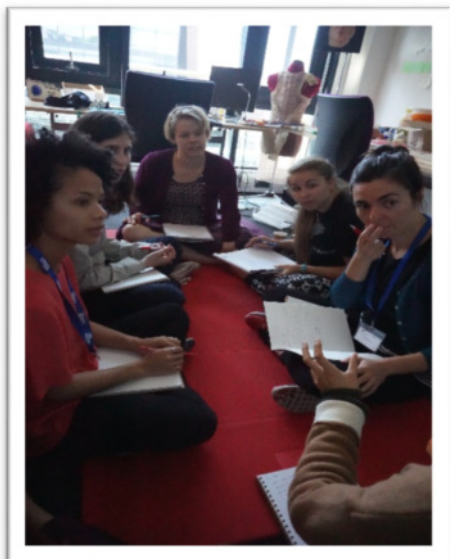
Exchange between individuals within this dance community and between various **cultures, values diversity** and promotes **equality**. Everyone can dance, and therefore everyone can have access to dance -regardless of age, physical or mental ability or background-, and promoting that can be even a 'political' statement.

Moreover, a relationship with ecology and *Environmental art* will be developed. As the workshop proposed takes place at a coastal region it will bring a **participatory consciousness to the environment** around us. Non-stylised movement scores will be used to explore the inter-relationship of moving bodies in space creating a constantly changing landscape. Incorporating breathing, sensing and seeing strengthens the capacity to be in touch with ourselves and simultaneously open and responsive to the surrounding. This cultivates an embodied sense of presence in relation to others, in performance and in daily life.

The workshop will consist of a blend of activities; both improvised dance and set moving material and patterns, solo, partner and group work, moving through levels and layers, with different dynamics, qualities and rhythms, from upright to the floor, from close to the body to the spaces between bodies, activities with props and without.

Pictures





Biography

Eleonora Siarava is choreographer, performer and dance researcher. She graduated with Distinction from Coventry University (UK) acquiring an MA in "Dance Making and Performance" with a focus on reflective methods of dance composition and on somatic practices. She has attended classes at the Choreographic Centre of La Rochelle (France) and she completed the on-line educational program of the California Institute of Arts "Creating Site-Specific Dance and Performance Works". She also holds a BA in Psychology from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece).



As a choreographer she has presented her work at Make>Shift Festival (Coventry 2010), Moving Out Festival (Coventry 2010), Espacio 3-Kodra Festival (Thessaloniki 2011), contACT#3-Cross My Art Festival (Thessaloniki 2011), Dance Days (Chania 2012), 11th and 13th Festival of Greek Choreographers (Athens 2012, Thessaloniki 2014), International Conference of Society of Dance History Scholars / Congress of Research (Athens 2015), Megaron Concert Hall of Thessaloniki (2016), 51st Festival of Dimitria (Thessaloniki, 2016).

As a performer she has worked with Meghan Flanigan in Making Space Festival (Coventry 2010) and with Cathy Washbrooke in the Dance Summer School of the University of Bedfordshire (2010). Moreover she participated in "Site Echoes" presented at Inside Out Festival (in association with Coventry School of Art and Design) at the Edge (Birmingham 2010). In Greece she has collaborated with Future Mellon for the 2th Dance Festival of Lazaristes and with Adrasteia Dance Theatre for the 2th Festival of Contemporary Dance of Thessaloniki. She also had a secondary acting as a dancer in the film of the awarded director Theodoros Aggelopoulos "The Weeping Meadow" (2004).

She has taught the course of Psychology/Pedagogy of Dance at the Higher Professional Dance School of Thessaloniki and she cooperated with the National Centre for Youth of Greece for an artistic project specialized in dance. Currently, she is PhD Candidate at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki-Department of Theatre researching "Expressiveness in Abstract Dance: The choreographic synthesis and the possibilities provided by the Psychology of Perception and Neuroaesthetics". Her research refers to the concept of visual imagery, the relationship between aesthetic forms and experiential awareness, the connection between cognitive principles, moving patterns and kinesthetic empathy. Her dance making vision plays on the edge of minimalism and exhaustion, of magical and scientific, of "being" and "embodying", of dream-like atmosphere and structure, of poetic and sensorial.

She has also been chosen for stART Fellowship Program (a program of the Robert Bosch Stiftung conducted in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Thessaloniki and the German Network of Community Art Centers) in Germany where she presented the community site-specific performance co-topia (September-November 2015). Moreover, she was offered a full scholarship to attend the summer school ColLaboratoire/CogNovo at Plymouth University/UK aiming to approach creativity through Interdisciplinarity (August 2016).

At the moment she is making part of her research at Giessen University and the Department for Contemporary Dance at the Academy for Music and Performing Arts in Frankfurt.

She is the artistic director of Per_Dance, a platform of choreographic research.

www.per-dance.com