

## EDN Seminar: Equity in Dance Production

Summary written by Carmen Amme

In the context of the [Ice Hot Nordic Dance Platform](#) from 29 June – 3 July 2022, in Helsinki, Finland, the European Dancehouse Network co-organized a seminar about equity in dance production, which took place on 1 July 2022, at the Theatre Museum, Helsinki. Participants could either join in-person or via online live stream. 'Equity' will be EDN's theme for activities in 2023. To prepare and share first ideas, Eva Broberg, EDN's Network Manager and moderator of the seminar, talked to six guest speakers about their way of building structures to strengthen equity in the dance sector.

**Jane Gabriels** is the executive director of [Dance West Network](#), located in Vancouver, Canada, where many BIPoC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) dance artists are based, often from communities where dance is an integral part of their culture. The main aim of her work is to support, connect and cultivate artists by providing resources to increase their visibility, as well as strengthening what is already there. **Destiny af Kleen**, freelance dancer, choreographer, and the director of [DansPlats Skog](#), creates production and stage spaces for dance in the rural areas of Sweden. In her own work and productions, she realised that it always came down to a lack of production space. She and her wife decided to buy a church in the middle of Sweden that can now be booked as a production and stage space. 'This helps productions being made that otherwise would not happen, and that feels important', she says.

**Veera Suvalo Grimberg** is the founder and artistic director of [Danskompaniet Spinn](#) based in Gothenburg, Sweden, that consists of dancers with and without disabilities. The company challenges stereotypes when creating and presenting dance. In 2016, they held a five-day long artistic lab called 'Lab Sweden' for disabled and non-disabled artists that was part of the two-year project '[Moving Beyond Inclusion](#)' to support the development of skills in the professional inclusive sector. Spark Lab Vara (2019-2021) included seven European countries to encourage already existing networks, share knowledge and create better mobility for inclusive dance companies.

Together with his arts collective [W A U H A U S](#), **Jarkko Partanen**, choreographer and curator based in Helsinki, Finland, creates lectures, workshops, performance, dance and contemporary theatre. The collective's aim is to create art together, while leaving space for the individual artist. Connecting and supporting each other's work is a crucial part for everyone in the dance sector, and meaningful structures are important for that. He stresses that in every collaboration, agreeing on structures and evaluating the progress is necessary, as well as sharing this information.



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**EDN Seminar: Equity in Dance Production**  
**1 July 2022, Theatre Museum, Helsinki & online**

**Àngels Margarit**, dancer, choreographer and director of [Mercat de les Flors](#) is working for more equity in the dance sector in Spain. There are very few places that co-produce dance in Spain, so creating equity already starts with giving opportunities and resources also to less-known dancers and choreographers. Her work also focuses on educational programs, because this will create accessibility in the future. In equity, it's important for her to hear more voices and invite independent artists and curators to have the discussion together and share knowledge.

**Christina Elliot** is senior producer at [The Place](#) in London, UK, a center for contemporary dance that offers a studio theatre, an art development program and a degree level program for dancers and choreographers. To increase equity, The Place introduced access riders where the artists performing at their space describe what they need to present their best work. They developed a template with an artist in consultation, which is also a statement about the social model of disability. Another approach to make their program more equitable is the invitation of collaboration coaches for co-productions. Because there is an imbalance in the relationship between organisation and independent artists, it's difficult for artists to raise issues. When they are producing relationships with artists, they invite coaches to mediate and support both side to facilitate conversations.

The seminar showed that many inspiring approaches to increase equity are already being put in motion. Still, there is a lot more to discuss and many ideas are not yet shared. EDN's activities for 2023 in the context of 'Equity' will provide a space to tackle issues and share knowledge about how to make the dance sector more equitable.



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