

**E D N**

**Fit for the Future**



# Global Dance

EDN's Work Across Borders



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**Title** Global dance, EDN's work across borders

**Text** Fanny Bouquerel, Cristina Farinha

**Coordination** Yohann Floch

**Data collection for the 'Fit for the future' research** Kathy Lawson, Arne de Vliet (BECCA Europe)

**Editing** Jordi Baltà Portolés (Trànsit Projectes), John Ellingsworth

**Pictures** Muljil by Elephants Laugh © Riccardo Panozzo, Centro per la Scena Contemporanea – Bassano del Grappa

**Graphic design** Marine Hadjès-Glatard

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### About the author

#### Fanny Bouquerel

PhD, researcher, lecturer and consultant in the field of cultural policies and advocacy; international cooperation and mobility; and professional development in culture and the arts. Throughout over 20 years of experience, she has worked with European cultural networks, independent theatre companies and festivals, private entities, public institutions as well as European, national and regional authorities in Europe and the Mediterranean area. In parallel, she has developed a series of publications and academic writings. She is presently professeure associée at the University Paris 8, Institute of European studies where she teaches European policies and project development in culture and the arts.

#### Cristina Farinha

Independent policy expert and researcher specialised in heritage, culture and the creative industries. She has worked extensively in the last 25 years, from local and regional to international level in the conception, implementation, and evaluation of diverse policies, projects and organisations. PhD in Sociology, she has been also lecturing in the field of creative industries, cultural management and internationalisation. Her areas of work specialisation are the role of culture and creativity in governance and development; the promotion of international cooperation and mobility; and the building of capacity, advocacy and entrepreneurship within the sector operators.

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## FOREWORD

Because of its transnational history, education and practice, the dance field has always nourished international relations and dance ecosystems are strongly interconnected. Mirroring the practices of many dance stakeholders, the European Dancehouse Network (EDN) has embraced an international perspective by cultivating relationships with artists and contemporary dance professionals outside of Europe.

EDN members have a long tradition in reaching out to as well as supporting a variety of players across the world: from hosting residencies to commissioning and presenting international works, facilitating the circulation of knowledge and documentation to contributing to reinforcing a global artistic community with skills and opportunities.

Long before the Covid-19 crisis, through regular international relations, formal and informal collaborations, the European dance field has been exchanging continuously with international artistic communities and together addressed key sustainable issues such as fairer global ecosystems, greener approaches in relation to cultural mobility and key conditions for more inclusive, accessible and equal exchanges.

However, the current crisis accentuated the strong imbalances within European countries as well as between Europe and many international contexts, and had dramatic impacts on the situation of the dance field. The crisis emphasises structural weaknesses at global level, lack of recognition of the art form, the worrying working conditions of artists and dance professionals among other issues.

These past years, interesting policy development took place at European level and lead to raise the awareness of cultural exchanges between Europe and the rest of the world. As part of its 'Fit for the Future' series of publications, EDN commissioned researchers Fanny Bouquerel and Cristina Farinha to investigate the key conditions for more sustainable international relations in the dance field and how dance could contribute to EU's external relations. This first overview builds upon the various existing studies carried out by colleague organisations as well as the many conversation happening in the dance field, and draw recommendations for public authorities and the dance sector.

We hope you enjoy reading!

Yohann Floch *Secretary General (Feb - July 2021)*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review aims at contributing to explore how the dance field reflects and engages at the international level nowadays. This international action is illustrated by the European Dance Network's (EDN) work across borders and is inscribed within ongoing EU and international policy agendas.

Indeed, over the past decade, a range of civil society and political initiatives at the EU level have served to connect cultural work with international affairs. They include the two European Agendas for Culture published by the European Commission in 2007 and 2018, as well as the 2016 Communication on International Cultural Relations. Furthermore, international commitments derived from the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the UN 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have also emphasised how international cultural cooperation is relevant to the achievement of several European and global objectives.

The EDN defines itself as a 'European network active globally', and indeed it has been acting at a wide international scale, putting forward a multitude of actions across all continents since its very beginning. Activities realised in all continents mostly include: exploratory trips/encounters; participating or organising regional platforms for networking and mutual acknowledgement; atelier/residencies for artists, touring/artistic exchanges; design and implementation of projects taking place in Europe and beyond its borders.

These initiatives serve to illustrate how dance organisations have integrated international reflections in their work, and how international collaboration is an integral part of professional and institutional development in the field of dance. Evidence presented in this report draws on an analysis of initiatives implemented by EDN and its members in Europe, Asia, the Americas, and Africa. A new set of interviews with representatives of EDN members has also been conducted, which serves to shed light, among others, on the underpinning reflections and challenges encountered, including those that result from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional references from contemporary literature on these matters is also included.

Following a general introduction to the arts and policy context, chapter II of the report addresses the factors that motivate artists and dance operators to engage in cultural relations and cooperation, and how this commitment is translated into practice. Elements identified in this area include the broadening and shifting of

individual and community perspectives, the connection with global challenges, the building of a global dance community, the development of professional careers, and the provision of inspiration, openness and diversity to local audiences.

Meanwhile, chapter III addresses the challenges and opportunities identified in the international dimension of dance. A range of factors in the artistic, digital, political, social, environmental and administrative domains are identified. While the Covid-19 pandemic has substantially opened opportunities for cross-border work online, this also raises questions concerning the digital divide (at home and abroad), the quality of collaboration, privacy and the need to find sustainable business models. Other challenges and relevant questions include how to find a right balance between local and international work, the ways in which dance may, or may not, foster more balanced global relations, the need to navigate simultaneously the environmental crisis and social inequalities, and administrative issues related to visas, among others. Supported by an array of quotes and examples, these pressing issues are explored in search of new ways ahead.

Finally, chapter IV puts forward a set of policy recommendations to encourage the international dimension of the dance scene, addressing the following issues:

- \* **Fostering a more sustainable and fairer dance community**, by, among others, acknowledging inequalities and finding ways to address them, and by seeking ways to reduce organisations' carbon footprint and fostering greener practices.
- \* **Envisaging mobility under a multiple and green approach**, which requires rethinking cooperation dynamics and formats inside and outside Europe and fostering more ethical, "fairer" approaches which allow interactions between territories and seek to mitigate inequalities and brain drain.
- \* **Promoting peer learning and developing capacities**, by strengthening capacity-building components based on peer-to-peer learning, enhancing skills related to innovation, investing in digital literacy at different levels, and revising dance and arts education curricula to make them more holistic and representative of current debates and trends.

\* **Developing research and a joint monitoring and evaluation approach**, through mapping, documentation and other forms of research, as well as by making monitoring and evaluation of sector activities and dynamics more structural and systematic.

\* **Developing tools and supporting intermediaries for the dance ecosystem as a contributor for international relations**, through the provision of specific incentives to enable the participation of dance agents in international activities, particularly for those who are underrepresented, by fostering dialogue and collaboration between the European Commission, EU Delegations in third countries and European cultural networks to capitalise on the latter's expertise and potential, and by taking advantage of how culture can be connected to health and well-being.

These general recommendations have specific implications for a range of stakeholders, including EU institutions, national, regional and local governments, European cultural networks such as the EDN, dance organisations and professionals, and other stakeholders related to the fields of dance and international relations.

# I. INTRODUCTION

In a moment where the world stood still due to the Covid-19 pandemic, live arts and dance hypermobility practices were highly impacted and put into question. This pause has actually accentuated former ongoing trends while highlighting existing unbalances and disparities of dynamics and flows.

Commissioned by the European Dance Network (EDN), this review is meant to reflect on the dance sector's practices, expectations and contributions to international cultural relations and its nowadays challenges in view of current EU and international agendas.

Methodologically, it started with an extensive analysis of all activities and entries published on the EDN website related to the "Internationalisation" theme. It focuses on cultural relations beyond the EU borders as well as takes into account initiatives that have involved international artists taking place at European dance houses or in the framework of cultural events in Europe. Additionally, five interviews were conducted with European dance houses representatives, all members of EDN, as it was considered most relevant to voice the sector, especially in view of the current pandemic that has so much influenced the nature of international cooperation and the very basis of the dance field itself. The review uses examples and quotes from both sources, the EDN website and the interviews. In parallel this text refers to the literature on current policy documents in the field of international cultural relations, aiming at inscribing this action within a broad political frame.

Right from the first European agenda for culture published by the European Commission in 2007, external relations have been included as one of the main three sets of objectives of the EU cultural action<sup>1</sup>. Over the last ten years, a series of initiatives has shown the increasing commitment of the EU to international cultural relations: in 2013-14, a preparatory action promoted by the EU Parliament endorsed the necessity to set up a strategic

framework and allocate financial and human resources to this component.<sup>2</sup> It also recommended designing a flexible governance to foster coordination between the involved stakeholders, including civil society organisations.

In 2016, the publication of the first EU Communication dedicated to international cultural relations supported culture as a vector for sustainable development and a way to promote intercultural dialogue, diversity, and peaceful inter-community relations.<sup>3</sup> It also adopted a new approach focusing on partnership between the parties involved, that include the cultural and creative civil society organisations and the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC).<sup>4</sup> This approach and priorities were confirmed in the New European Agenda for Culture in 2018.<sup>5</sup>

A number of players have been involved in designing and implementing the resulting EU Strategy on International Cultural Relations, namely the European Commission's Directorate-Generals dedicated to culture, development and neighbourhood<sup>6</sup>, as well as the European External Action Service (EEAS), which acts as the EU's diplomatic service and combined foreign and defence ministry, and the EU Delegations operating locally from all around the world. The EU-funded Cultural Relations Platform is another key player supporting international action for culture, facilitating cooperation between the EU institutions and European and global cultural and creative sectors.<sup>7</sup>

At the operational level, a series of instruments and programmes, both bilateral and at the regional scale, have allocated specific resources to fund cultural projects in line with this agenda, with a focus on the neighbourhood regions and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Endorsed in March 2021, the new instrument regulating the EU's global action (Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, NDICI<sup>8</sup>), shows the will to coordinate and maximise this goal. Some programmes supporting culture during the cycle

1. European Commission, A European agenda for culture in a globalizing world, COM(2007) 242 final. European Commission. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0242:FIN:EN:PDF> [22/7/2021]
2. Isar, Y.R. (principal writer). (2014). Engaging the World: Towards Global Cultural Citizenship. Preparatory Action 'Culture in EU External Relations'. EU. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/33a11d23-a7e7-11e7-837e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> [22/7/2021]
3. European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. (2016). Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations. JOIN(2016) 29 final. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=JOIN%3A2016%3A29%3AFIN> [22/7/2021]
4. See <https://eunicglobal.eu/> [22/7/2021]
5. European Commission. (2018). A New European Agenda for Culture. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Commission, COM(2018) 267 final. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2018:267:FIN> [22/7/2021]
6. DG for Education and Culture (DG EAC), DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), DG for International Partnerships (DG INTPA, formerly known as DG DEVCO)
7. See <https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/> [22/7/2021]
8. See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/global-europe-neighbourhood-development-and-international-cooperation-instrument\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/global-europe-neighbourhood-development-and-international-cooperation-instrument_en)

2021-2027 are currently being prepared through a series of consultations involving the sector; other opportunities are offered through the broadening of EU programmes to international players and themes. Indeed, internationalisation is a priority of Creative Europe or Erasmus+, opening new opportunities for the cultural sector to develop its activity globally.

In parallel with the EU framework, other international documents have contributed to build a global policy framework in support and recognition of the importance of international cultural cooperation and the broad role of culture with regard to territorial and societal development. They include the UNESCO Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Cooperation (1966)<sup>9</sup> and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).<sup>10</sup> The former stresses the importance of international cultural exchanges, whereas the latter emphasises the need for international solidarity in the field of culture, the importance of public cultural policies and the need to strengthen the capacities to create, produce and disseminate cultural expressions, particularly in the Global South. Meanwhile, the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015), which includes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), should also be mentioned: while the document makes limited explicit references to cultural aspects, some elements are included and there is an understanding that culture and cultural diversity are important for achieving the SDGs.<sup>11</sup>

The role of civil society organisations has been instrumental in some of the aforementioned processes, including the integration of a cultural component in the EU's external relations and the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. More recently, a range of initiatives have emphasised the need to foster 'fair' or 'ethical' approaches to international cultural relations, based on balanced exchange, mutual respect and the avoidance of neo-colonial approaches.<sup>12</sup>

Based on this political background and the review of the dance sector's current challenges regarding internationalisation, this document is structured in three main parts:

- 1/ The dance sector's international remit: EDN's practices and outcomes
- 2/ The current dance sector's new challenges and opportunities and
- 3/ Policy recommendations to encourage the international dimension of the dance scene.

9. UNESCO. (1966). Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Cooperation. UNESCO. Available at [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13147&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13147&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) [22/7/2021]

10. UNESCO. (2005). Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. UNESCO. Available at <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/passeport-convention2005-web2.pdf> [22/7/2021]

11. See <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/> [22/7/2021]

12. van Graan, M. (2018). Beyond Curiosity and Desire: Towards Fairer International Collaborations in the Arts. IETM. Available at [https://www.ietm.org/en/system/files/publications/ietm\\_beyondcuriosityanddesire\\_2018.pdf](https://www.ietm.org/en/system/files/publications/ietm_beyondcuriosityanddesire_2018.pdf) [22/7/2021]; Bul, M.K. (Lead writer). (2021). An exploration of possibilities and challenges of fair international cultural cooperation. DutchCulture. Available at <https://dutchculture.nl/sites/default/files/2021-05/DutchCulture-Publicatie%20Fair-2021-DEF.pdf> [22/7/2021]



## II. THE DANCE SECTOR'S INTERNATIONAL REMIT: EDN'S PRACTICES AND OUTCOMES

### II.1. The dance sector's action beyond the EU borders: the case of EDN

The concept and scope of what 'international' means nowadays differs according to one's perspective thus it often provokes doubts regarding what terminology to use. From an EU position it means all relations taking place outside of its borders and/or involving those coming from outside; while from other geographical perspectives or adopting a national point of view, it spans all cross-border initiatives and relations. Nowadays, the term 'global' is also increasingly used in the frame of cultural relations, as capable of encompassing a variety of cumulative realities.

The dance field has anyway been very much international for a long time: dance professionals are busy with an international agenda of events such as training, master classes, workshops and touring; they are also part of a multitude of cross-border co-creation and co-productions as well as networks, festivals and platforms. Moreover, dance houses' programmes and festivals' international connections followed the intents to internationalise European artists; but were also built after the wish to bring non-European artists and ensembles to Europe:

#### The experience of the international, as a "quality stamp"

'In the early 90's, the term 'international' was a quality stamp, which is not what the word means. The world was shrinking in that period, and it became clear that artists needed to consider themselves outside of the borders of their own countries. The reasoning was 'If I am international this means I am excellent' which was not always the case. With other members of IETM, we formed the Junge Hunde, exchanging young artists, to give them access to the experience of the international.'<sup>13</sup>

In line with their members' dynamics, European cultural networks operate within an international (that is, global) remit. On its website, EDN introduces itself as a 'European network active globally', and indeed it has been acting at a wide international scale, putting forward a multitude of actions across all continents since its very beginning. Activities realised in all continents mostly include: exploratory trips/encounters; participating or organising regional

platforms for networking and mutual acknowledgement; atelier/residencies for artists, touring/artistic exchanges; design and implementation of projects taking place in Europe and beyond its borders.

Working internationally also answers a strategy to develop the membership scope and its activities, exploring under-represented territories or following opportunities of the market and of political and social contexts. Indeed, as it is the case for other cultural networks, EDN is instrumental in developing international relations for its members. Though many of them were already active at the international level, first within Europe and then globally, EDN has contributed to boost their activity on other continents.

#### An array and diversity of international initiatives all over the globe

The table presented in the following pages lists some main features of EDN's initiatives taking place beyond the EU borders and/or involving artists and cultural professionals from other continents. It shows both the quantity of initiatives implemented beyond the EU borders and the variety of these actions, in terms of places/geographical position, format, scale, people involved, and profile of partners with whom they have been implemented. It is interesting to note that this broadening of the geographical scope of activities is similar to that which other European cultural networks, including IETM and ENCATC, have experienced over the same period. In this respect, these developments could be seen as a precedent to the integration of a cultural dimension in the EU's external action.<sup>14</sup>

#### These are some of the main features identified in this network's international activities:

\* The EDN members participating or organising international events include **large European dance houses as well as smaller scale organisations** that are less connected to international markets. Indeed, cultural relations may offer interesting opportunities to small organisations to develop their activities, all the more so when local funding may be scarce and uncertain.

13. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

14. Indeed, it is worth recalling that the integration of a cultural dimension in the EU's external action was initially a request of some civil society organisations, including Germany's Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) and the European Cultural Foundation. See e.g. Dodd, D.; and Dittrich van Wering, K. (2006). A Cultural Component as an Integral Part of the EU's Foreign Policy? Boekmanstudies; and Fisher, R. (2007). A Cultural Component to the EU's External Policies: From Policy Statements to Practice and Potential. Boekmanstudies and European Cultural Foundation.

\* These actions **took place all across the world**, investing in all the continents and exploring well connected large capital cities but also more remote places. In other words, EDN members have reached out to places where the state of the arts may differ substantially in terms of development and structuration of the dance field, raising different questions and issues and enlarging horizons.

\* The initiatives span **from short visits with a couple of guests to longer stays involving larger groups of EDN representatives and local professionals** who developed mentoring activities, co-organise meetings and workshops, or even projects. Different formats have been experimented to facilitate connections and collaborations.

\* In terms of time scale, the table shows another distinctive feature: the **building and development of partnerships over long periods of time**. The Asian continent, for instance, offers striking examples of long-lasting collaborations with a series of partners based in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, India, and other cities for over 10 years. Most of the events taking place in Asia had a regional dimension and gathered some common players, giving the opportunity to develop sustainable relationships.

\* Last but not least, **the profile of international partners vary from middle scale events to very large markets** - such as BIPOD (Lebanon), TPAM Performing Arts Meeting in Yokohama (Japan) or the Performing Arts Market (Korea); brand new and large scale cultural venues and districts - West Kowloon Cultural District (Hong Kong China); festivals and biennales - Festival Contemporâneo de São Paulo (Brazil), Festival Danzalborde (Chile), Attakaliri (India); or educational entities - Institute of Creative Arts, University of Cape Town (South Africa).

The following table shows examples of the diversity of organisations with whom EDN has partnered over the last years on a variety of continents. Additional information about the activities presented in the table has also been included in subsequent sections, to illustrate how EDN's work has addressed a diverse range of issues.

## II.2. The rationale: goals and outcomes of operating internationally

### II.2.1. Exploring artistic expressions across the world: broadening and shifting perspectives and connecting to global challenges

Exploring artistic work at the international level is driven by various motivations, among which the will to broaden one's artistic horizons and keep the pace with current global trends; shift one's perspectives and get inspired by other practices; expand one's activities and reach out to less connected areas.

There is a need to explore and acknowledge what is being done throughout the world, to get to know artistic content and materials being produced within the diversity of cultural and artistic expressions. It is also crucial to understand the contexts, the situation in which the works have been created, to grasp the spirit, the practice and the content. As highlighted by some interviewees, dance collaborations can serve to explore that which is common, while also arousing curiosity and self-exploration:

#### Finding a common ground, and reflecting about ourselves

'I wish to connect our citizens to the world by the presence of artists, to have a journey around the globe to understand who we are. This mostly comes out from a mutual interest, from a connection with artists or organisations with whom we share common grounds and long-term relationships - it is not a political mandate. These relations are based on human connections.'<sup>15</sup>

Getting other perspectives on one's work and being inspired by colleagues are also strong motivations as peer to peer exchanges are key to nurture one's professional practice. Ambitious and successful cultural initiatives in other countries may also be useful to advocate for the development of one's project locally:

**Table 1: EDN activities involving collaboration beyond Europe, 2008-2021**

Name of initiative	Date	Place	Focus	Activity	Partners	Objective/outcome
Chin-A-moves	2008-2009	China/Europe (Düsseldorf, Shanghai, Beijing)	Asia	Performances/artistic exchange, co-productions, workshops and conferences	Dansens Hus Oslo  NO, Mercat de les Flors Barcelona  ES, Borneoco  NL, CCN Roubaix  FR, Living Dance Studio and Crossing Festival  Beijing, CN, Fringe Festival Shanghai, CN, Internationale Tanzmesse NRW  DE, Julidans Festival  NL, Künsterhaus Mousonturm  DE, Tanssin Tiedotuskeskus  FI, van Baasbank & Baggerman  NL	Building deeper connections between younger independent artists from both Europe and China/ successful model for developing strong relationships.
Kore-A-moves	2010-2013	Korea/Europe	Asia	Performance programme tours with Korean artists and several venues in Europe, Workshops/exchanges, international dance forums	International Performing Arts Project (IPAP), Tanzhaus NRW DE DeVIR/CAPa Centre Black Box  PT Dansens Hus  SE, The Place  UK, International Performing Arts Project  Seoul, KP, Pumpenhuis  DE, Stadsschouwburg Amsterdam  NL, Melkweg Theatre  NL, Olhao Municipal Auditorium  PT, Teatro Jofre  SP, Festival Madrid en Danza  SP, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm  DE, Nokia Concert Hall  EE, Russian Drama Theatre  EE, Pavilion Theatre  IE	Introduction of Korean dance art in Europe, set up of reliable network between IPAP and European partners
Outreach India	February 2015	Attakalari India Biennale, India	Asia	Showing works of young emerging choreographers in South Asia, Meetings/encounters	Mercat de les Flors Barcelona  ES, HELLERAU, European Centre for the Arts  DE, DeVIR  CAPa, Algarve Centre for Performing arts  PT, Dansehallerne  DK, Dansens Hus  SE, Dance House Lemesos  Cyprus	Showcasing, discussing and engaging with works of contemporary dance and movement arts from south Asian region
Dance Connect	Sept-Nov 2015	Barcelona, Montemor-o-Novo, Dance Umbrella festival	Asia	Artistic and technical residency + visit to some festivals and encounters with local artists, workshops, amongst others	Mercat de les Flors Barcelona  ES, Espaço do Temporal  Montemor-o-Novo, Portugal, Dance Umbrella  UK, and more	Facilitating the mobility of Indian emerging choreographers within European institutions (residency and presentations)
Encounter Japan	February 2017	Yokohama, JP	Asia	Participation in Symposium, special meeting with Japanese artists	TPAM  JP, Sadler's Wells  UK, Kino Šiška  SL, Tanzquartier Wien  AT, Tanzhaus nrw  DE, Mercat de les Flors ES, Dansens Hus Oslo  NO, Centre National de la Danse  FR, Centro per la Scena Contemporanea  IT	Introduction to representatives of Asian funding bodies and supportive organizations, follow up of early development of Asian network AND+, bases for collaboration Japan
Working together transnationally	March 2017	Hamburg, DE	Europe	Atelier Structures, Conditions and Artistic Practices, with 70 participants to discuss and practice models of solidarity within and between production structures and artists	K3 Zentrum für Choreographie  DE	Investigating possible media of collaboration and exploring artistic collaboration
Migrant bodies - moving borders	2015-2017	Italy, France, Croatia	Global	Two years project. Research and dance activities, focusing on identifying, developing and testing actions for the inclusion of refugees and migrants with dance and movement based initiatives.	CSC Centro per la Scena Contemporanea  IT, La Briquerie  FR, HIPPT The Croatian Institute for Dance and Movement  HR, D.ID Dance Identity	Meeting, connecting and building new communities through dance
Talk in Hong Kong	May 2017	Hong Kong, CN	Asia	Meeting, presentation of EDN to Asian partners	Network Meeting and Forum (PNMF), Tanzquartier Wien  At	Connecting with early developments Asian Dance Network AND+
TPAM 2018	February 2018	Yokohama, JP	Asia	Meetings, public talk	TPAM	Continuing exploring the development of dance network in Asia
PAMS Seoul 2018	2018	Seoul, Korea	Asia	Participation in PAMS, intervention symposium	Performing Arts Market Seoul, European performing arts organisations	Europe as region in focus for the Performing Arts Market Seoul
AND+ in Taiwan	November 2018	Kaohsiung, Taiwan	Asia	Talk at the newly opened National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Wei-Wu-Ying), Participating in Open Talk series	Taiwan Dance Platform	Deepening knowledge contemporary Dance dramaturgy, presentation AND+ activities
Encounter Japan	February 2020	Yokohama, JP	Asia	Meeting	TPAM  JP, Centro per la Scena Contemporanea  IT	Continuation of international dialogue
International Cooperation in Dance	March 2020	Munich, DE	Asia	Panel organised together with AND+ and the European Commission about internationalisation in the dance field, cultural policies and cultural exchange.	Tanzplattform Deutschland  DE, Kino Šiška SL, Tanec Paraha  CZ, Tanzhaus nrw  DE, KLAP - Maison pour la Danse  FR, K3 Zentrum für Choreographie  DE, ICK Dans Amsterdam  NL, Centro per la Scena Contemporanea  IT	Developing Asian-European exchange and advocacy work towards the EU
Dance Dialogues Africa	2012-2014	Dusseldorf, Dresden, Hamburg, DE; Maputo, MZ; Bamako, ML; Tunis, TN; Kisangani, CD; Johannesburg, ZA	Africa and Europe	artistic exchanges, training seminars, co-productions and a touring festival	Tanzhaus NR  DE, HELLERAU-European Centre for the Arts  DE, K3 Zentrum für Choreographie - Kampnagel  DE, CulturArte  Maputo, MZ, Donko Seko  Bamako, ML, Ness El Fen  Tunis, TN, Studios Kabako  Kisangani, CD, and Vuyani Dance  Johannesburg, ZA	Initiating a long-term cooperative relationships between several dance centres in Africa and a number of key dance venues in Germany
Encounter Hong Kong	May 2018	Hong Kong, CN	Asia	Meetings, Presentation best practices EDN members, exchanges artists	Network Meeting and Forum (PNMF), West Kowloon Centre  CN, The Place  UK, Tanzhaus nrw  DE, Mercat de les Flors Barcelona  ES, Centro per la Scena Contemporanea  IT	Formal launch of the AND+ network

Name of initiative	Date	Place	Focus	Activity	Partners	Objective/outcome
Encounter in South Africa	March 2020	Cape Town, ZA	Africa	A mediated encounter with Cape Town dance scene and public events allowing to meet the local audiences	Institute of Creative Arts, University of Cape Town, ZA	Addressing mutual acknowledgment and context awareness to allow the encounter to take place; discussion of ethics and power relations; de-colonisation; investment in more sustainable relations and encounters to make a difference
Atelier Authenticity of expression in the local context	April 2018	Prague, CZ	Europe	Performances; introductions to the work of artists; and contextualisation of their works and of the various art scenes	Tanec Praha, representatives of the art scene of Slovakia, Hungary and Poland and artists from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine	Encouraging a deeper knowledge of very diverse contemporary dance scenes in Central Europe and closed post-soviet countries, the similarities and differences between them and their potential for international collaboration
Balkan Roadshow	March 2017	Vienna, AT	Europe	Performances; discussions; exchanges of artists and thinkers on the developments of the contemporary dance scene in the Balkans: Serbia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and Macedonia	Tanzquartier Wien, AT	Discussing positions and developments in contemporary dance, structures, aesthetic strategies and practices of diverse cultural contexts of South-Eastern Europe.
Balkan Encounters	April 2018	Ljubljana, SI; Zagreb, HR; Belgrade, RS; Skopje, MK; Sofia/BG	Europe	Travelling encounter: visiting places and getting to know people and structures and programmes	Kino Šiška; Tala Dance Center Zagreb; Zagreb Dance Center, Station Service for Contemporary Dance and Magacin, Belgrade; Lokomotiva, Center for New Initiatives in Culture and Arts & Kino Kultura, Skopje; Antistatic International Festival for Contemporary Dance, Sofia	Connecting with Nomad Dance Academy – Balkan network for contemporary dance and get acquainted with the potentials of the region
Norse Conference	April 2019	Ljubljana, SI	Europe	Convention. Part of Creative Europe cooperation project Life Long Burning (LLB) – Towards a sustainable Eco-System for Contemporary Dance in Europe	Nomad Dance Academy and Kino Šiška	Building a network of residencies in South-East Europe as a model of institutionalized and decentralized centre for contemporary dance
Outreach Lebanon	April 2016	Beirut, Lebanon	Middle East	Visit to Bipod Festival and Moultaqa Leymoun (Arab dance platform) and the Masahat Dance Network: performances and studio presentations; panel discussions	Maqamat Theatre, LB	Showcasing and promoting the work of 20 Arab choreographers from Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Iran.
Rencontres in Montreal	Nov-Dec 2017	Montreal, CA	North America	Discussions and visits to venues	CanDance Network, CA	Focused on how a dance house and/or institution mediates between artists and their audiences/communities
Emerging Encounters Canada	May 2019	Montreal, CA	North America	Emerging artists from Europe and Canada gathered in Montreal for a creative exchange focussing on sharing practice and engaging with new ways of thinking about dance making.	Centre de Création O Vertigo – CCOV	Sharing practices; encountering Canadian counterparts and international dance professionals
Outreach Chile	October 2015	Valparaiso and Santiago do Chile	Latin America	Performances; visit to few structures devoted to dance around Santiago. Bilateral meetings and visit of the School of Architecture: Directors of dancehouses and students shared conversations about the buildings for dance.	Festival Danzalborde	Meeting Danzalborde festival and exploring contemporary dance scene in Latin-American countries
Atelier The Missing Link	May 2016	Dresden, DE	Latin America and Europe	Presentations and discussions from Germany, Chile, Colombia and Brazil presented different models of transnational co-productions and networks.	Hellerau	Discussing on new models of artistic work in the frame of community work an today's shared economy values.
Forum Wake Up	2019	Paris, FR	Latin America	Debate with the situation of Brazilian artists while imagining together how a solidarity can be invented so as to accompany these artists under threat.		Taking a global look at Europe and the world so as to understand better the realities of each country in danger and conceive more exactly spaces for international solidarities. Giving a podium for artists and groups committed to societal, intimate and political struggles
Encounter Brazil	November 2019	São Paulo, BR	Latin America	International performances, residences, workshops and lectures. Series of meetings between local artists and programmers from different countries	Festival Contemporâneo de São Paulo	Getting an overview of a Brazilian contemporary dance community, their artistic practice and of course get to know the local artists. Sharing processes, thoughts and experiences in creating artwork and inventing local contexts, as well as the experiences of the European Dance House Network

Source: Own elaboration, on the basis of information available on the EDN website

## International work leads to learning...

'How do I run an organisation? Finding this more experienced person in New York, when I was starting my career, realising that we shared many problems, convinced me that I needed to reach out beyond borders. Finding colleagues to learn from became a major motivation. Still today I like to know how others deal with issues.'<sup>16</sup>

## ... and it can also provide inspiration and foster advocacy

'Canada was a very strong discovery. In Montreal we saw this dream house that motivated us to create a similar one in Prague. I took pictures, documentation and brought them back for our advocacy. The 'Wilder Building' is a fantastic connection between Tangente/dance Agora /Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montreal and the Contemporary Dance Montreal School. Peer dance houses were helpful in lobbying/advocating for dance, so we could build good relations with our politicians.'<sup>17</sup>

The international expansion is a logical and wished way forward for the development and strategic reinforcement of the dance field. Artists and cultural operators speak the same languages and share common interests and issues despite a huge diversity of profiles and conditions.

To address these aims, EDN has organised visits for its members to international events, facilitating the exploration of faraway artistic initiatives. More specifically, EDN has organised a series of 'Encounters' to explore the dance field all across the globe. In certain places, it is structured to serve as a source of inspiration to develop best practices. In other areas, where the dance field is emerging, the 'Encounters' approach follows an appreciative inquiry: rather than focusing on what may be lacking, it identifies the existing potential for development.

## Some examples from past EDN activities:

### *Encounter Japan, 2017*

Encounter Japan gave the opportunity to be introduced to representatives of Asian funding bodies and supportive organisations, and put the basis for further collaboration. It took place in parallel with the TPAM, a large meeting of performing arts professionals from Asia and the world, where the sector gets together to exchange, to gain information and inspiration, to network, to attend diverse performances and events. After twenty editions, TPAM is internationally recognised as one of the most influential performing arts platforms in Asia.<sup>18</sup>

### *Balkan Encounter, 2018*

By taking part in a nomadic bus trip to several locations in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia and Bulgaria, EDN members connected with Nomad Dance Academy, the Balkan network for contemporary dance. Organised alongside EDN member Kino Šiška, Ljubljana, it was the first time most members visited and got to know the dance scene in this region. The idea of this Encounter was to share information and enable practical physical experience, by visiting places and getting to know people, structures and programmes. This way they got acquainted with the potential of the region as opposed to the idea of looking for what is lacking.<sup>19</sup>

### *Encounter South Africa, 2020*

This mediated encounter with the Cape Town dance scene aimed to open new forms of dialogue with artists, organisations and dance professionals based in the African continent, investigating new forms of relationship and collaboration based on ethical values, respect and sustainability. In a packed programme of meetings, visits to cultural and exhibition centres, dialogues with artists and scholars, lectures, presentations of programmes and projects that develop the culture of dance and support the growth of artists we were able to perceive the vastness of the cultural capital that was proposed, and the lack of information and knowledge which, from a European perspective, needs nourishment and accompaniment.<sup>20</sup>

16. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

17. Yvona Kreuzmannová | Tanec Praha

18. For additional information, read the report by Roberto Casarotto at <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/encounter-japan> [22/7/2021]  
Information about TPAM is available at <https://www.tpam.or.jp> [22/7/2021]

19. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/encounter-balkans> [22/7/2021]

20. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/encounter-in-south-africa> [22/7/2021]

## II.2.2. Promoting exchanges and knowledge to build a global dance community

Being engaged in international relations means sharing experiences and interacting with varied authors, aesthetics, practices and contexts. It contributes to develop and share knowledge on a series of topics such as artistic creation, cultural production, distribution and markets, communication and visibility, cultural policy and diplomacy, audience diversification or educational models. Knowledge transfer works in different directions and brings mutual benefit, all practices may be inspiring, and strategic thinking may be particularly acute for artists and professionals working in a poorly structured environment where this skill is key for their survival. As suggested by some interviewees, dialogue and collaboration around dance can, at their best, help to better understand and engage with diverse contexts:

### Sustained engagement can contribute to better understand creative work and its context

'Some artists come to perform only a few times, there is often also no relation between curator-artist. I want to present artists in relation to their generation, to the topics on which they work, the places where they live. In the frame of festivals we get to know the works, but miss the contexts. We need to understand the works in a given context, get to know more from where it is coming. Therefore in Mercat I develop focus programmes on specific artists for the sake of sustainability and to deepen knowledge of the work. With Lia Rodrigues, I asked her to curate other people too. So we may learn more about her references.'<sup>21</sup>

Over the years, the dialogue between artists, programmers and other dance professionals gradually builds a common ground that is instrumental to develop partnerships and cooperation: exchanging knowledge and practices is a way to get to know each other and to consolidate a basis to work on. These relations contribute to developing a sense of community both for artists and cultural professionals who feel they belong to a wider group of people beyond their country of birth; it also fosters dynamics of solidarity with peers working in less favourable conditions across the globe.

They may also inspire governance and practices of peer organisations in other parts of the world. For instance, EDN has inspired the setting of the Asia Network for Dance AND+ in 2018: its model has been adapted to try and fill gaps and challenges, like coordinating between new facilities for dance development on the continent; facilitating entry into markets for emerging artists; linking gatekeepers, artists and operators; advocating for social and working conditions and freedom of association and expression. All these processes require time and continuity to develop further, yet they have potential to eventually contribute to structural impacts on the global dance ecosystem.<sup>22</sup>

As the information presented hereafter shows, over the years EDN has engaged in several other initiatives aimed at promoting exchanges, knowledge and networking to build a global dance community, each addressing a diverse range of themes:

### Some examples from past EDN activities:

#### *Chin-A-moves, 2008-9*

This early initiative was aimed at nurturing connections between younger independent artists from both Europe and China. The project initiated and cultivated a network of European dancehouses and festivals and Chinese dance companies, theatres and performing arts festivals. It resulted in a successful model for developing strong relationships across very different cultural and political contexts, which has since been incorporated into other projects; 27 performances by independent artists from Europe and China were held at 14 partner venues; and several follow-up projects were initiated: co-productions, regular artistic engagements for Chinese artists and connections with other European festivals.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Dance Dialogues Africa, 2012-4*

This project set up a functioning network for future projects involving African dance centres. 12 new works were co-produced with the 5 African partners and toured in European and African venues and festivals, and a successful 2-way skills exchange model was organised involving European and African artists and partner organisations.<sup>24</sup>

21. Angels Margarit i Vignals | Mercat de les Flors

22. For additional information about AND+, see <http://www.asianetworkfordance.com/main> [22/7/2021]

23. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/chin-a-moves> [22/7/2021]

24. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/dance-dialogues-africa> [22/7/2021]

### *Migrant bodies - Moving Borders (Creative Europe funded cooperation project), 2015-7*

This project was an act of extending oneself into another person's situation. Dance was the means to meet, express, feel, break down barriers, connect and build new communities. The initiative aimed to promote respect and understanding for diversity, giving EU citizens the opportunity to discover and learn the values and cultures of people who, for a multitude of reasons, have become labelled as refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, illegal. The project implied the development of responsibilities and position taking. It was the acknowledgement that a public body, being a cultural and civic institution, must take care of all the citizens and inhabitants of its territory, despite cultural, national or ethnic origins. It highlighted the importance of connecting cultural initiatives and activities to reality and daily life. With the project, the EDN and its members were able to identify asylum seekers who had an artistic background and qualify them as dance teachers. They were the first dancers of colour who qualified as dance teachers. This status legitimises the person, who becomes an artist, and is no longer seen as dangerous.<sup>25</sup>

### *Working together transnationally, Germany, 2017*

The Atelier "Working together transnationally" organised by EDN member K3 Hamburg discussed and practiced different models of solidarity within and between production structures and artists, investigated possible media of collaboration and explored choreographic forms of collaboration. The opening speech was delivered by Janina Benduski, Chairwoman of the German Association of Independent Performing Arts, who raised a set of guiding questions: "One way to attempt to compare differences and working realities in Europe is to take a closer look at project budgets in different European countries. And what do we see? Precarious working conditions on all sides, massive inequality between partners and countries all artfully listed in columns and rows (...). So: what can we do about it? It's difficult to say, but there is one thing we can do: exchange".<sup>26</sup>

## II.2.3. Development of markets and opportunities for artists

The possibility to engage in international markets is for some artists a chance to gain scale and earn a living from their art. When talking about their motivations artists refer to visibility, to expand their audiences; the need to get to know and establish partnerships for future co-productions. Being connected and being part of a globalised world is also considered relevant. Mobility has long been acknowledged as a key component of artists' professional life<sup>27</sup>, as a unique learning experience and an opportunity for professional development: discovering and working on other continents inspire artistic work, enrich working methodologies, and entails reflecting on new ways to present and relate to audiences.

### **Broadening professional opportunities through mobility**

'The major impetus is to build opportunities for artists, help them to have an international perspective on what they do (...). [EU-funded, EDN-driven] Modul Dance<sup>28</sup> brought me in contact with several new artists: Alessandro Sciarroni and others who now have a place in the European scene and before were unknown. This extended network of people then allowed to create lots of opportunities for artists to get more work.'<sup>29</sup>

The aim to broaden professional opportunities is also visible in some of EDN's past international activities, as evidenced by the examples presented hereafter:

25. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/migrant-bodies-moving-borders> and <http://www.migrantbodies.eu/> [22/7/2021]

26. For additional information about the meeting and access to speeches and follow-up articles, please visit <https://www.ednetwork.eu/page/themes/professionals/working-conditions/working-together-transnationally> [22/7/2021]

27. Several documents commissioned by the EU have recognised officially the importance of mobility for artists' professional careers: ERICarts (2008). Mobility Matters - programmes and schemes to support the mobility of artists and cultural professionals. European Commission / ERICarts, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/policy/cultural-creative-industries/documents/mobility-matters-report\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/policy/cultural-creative-industries/documents/mobility-matters-report_en.pdf) [23/7/2021]; KEA European Affairs (2018). Mobility of artists and culture professionals: towards a European policy framework. European Parliament. Available at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/617500/IPOL\\_STU\(2018\)617500\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/617500/IPOL_STU(2018)617500_EN.pdf) [23/7/2021]; European Commission (2020). Artists abroad, i-Portunus the EU's First Mobility Scheme for Culture. European Commission. Available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fb0d6926-b1d2-11ea-bb7a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> [23/7/2021]

28. For additional information about Modul Dance, see <https://www.modul-dance.eu/> [23/7/2021]

29. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

### Some examples from past EDN activities:

#### *Kore-A-moves, 2010-3*

Kore-A-moves offered an intensive introduction of Korean choreographers' works to audiences in Europe, and gave the opportunity of deep exchanges between choreographers and companies, structures and models between both regions. The outcomes were twofold: it was an important step to bring Korean dance art towards European discourse on dance art and the world's variant aesthetics, and it built a new reliable network, formed between the International Performing Arts Project (IPAP), Tanzhaus NRW (an EDN member) and its European partners. As a side effect, it also opened opportunities for some European artists to show their work in Korea.<sup>30</sup>

#### *Working together transnationally, Germany, 2017*

According to the presentation available on the EDN website, "In the framework of this Atelier, we understand mobility to be something far beyond a simple tool. Mobility is one of the foundations on which much of the art is built. Artists were mobile long before the advent of globalisation: they have always taken the world as a scenario, as a springboard on which to develop their work. For the last three years, the festival organised at K3 Hamburg has adopted a dynamic and strategic attitude with the aim of generating two-way inter-connection and spaces for exchange, which encourage the movement of local, national and international artists and their contexts."<sup>31</sup>

#### *Emerging Encounters in Canada, 2019*

This meeting had identified four primary objectives, such as creating a dynamic artistic and cultural exchange between choreographers from Canada and Europe, allowing for a greater understanding of the realities artists face in different geographic locations; and provide space to share their work and practices with each other, as well as time to create/research collaboratively without the pressures of producing a finished product. It also aimed at building lasting relationships leading to potential future projects, and offered opportunities for artists to see shows and meet peers and presenters from the Canadian and international dance milieus during the Festival TransAmériques.<sup>32</sup>

### Some examples from past EDN activities:

#### *Outreach India, 2015*

One of the EDN members who attended the event described the experience as follows: "Most dancers and choreographers I met in Bangalore expressed their necessity for an exchange with professionals, not only in the studio (dramaturges, third eyes, composers, etc.) but also with other dance communities and professionals. Especially the younger choreographers who were in residency in Bangalore said that they would have wished to have more communication and exchange between the residents."<sup>33</sup>

#### *Encounter South Africa, 2020*

This Encounter engaged with the promises and pitfalls of African choreographers and artists touring European contexts. Many international institutions have not kept up with contemporary developments in the political, ethical and aesthetic expectations of African artists. In turn, Africans look at European tours to increase their audience base, interact with artists and producers globally, as well as experience the financial benefits these tours offer when compared with trying to stage works at home.<sup>34</sup>

For some artists, there is real dependence on the international scene to make a living: in these cases internationalisation is a survival strategy. In that sense, international relations may have a structural effect on the development of artists' careers, especially for younger ones, both in environments where the dance field is well supported and in places where it is developing.

30. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/kore-a-moves> [23/7/2021]

31. For additional information about the meeting and access to speeches and follow-up articles, please visit <https://www.ednetwork.eu/page/themes/professionals/working-conditions/working-together-transnationally> [22/7/2021]

32. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/emerging-encounters-canada> [23/7/2021]

33. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/outreach-india> [23/7/2021]

34. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/encounter-in-south-africa> [22/7/2021]



## II.2.4. Bringing the world to local audiences: developing openness and counteracting prejudices

Opening artistic programmes and festivals to international artists is also instrumental to foster artistic diversity in Europe. This endeavour has an impact on artists' careers, and it also benefits local audiences who have the opportunity to get a window on the world that may differ from what they are used to seeing in the media. It demands thoughtful and tailored mediation work, yet it is rewarding to see audiences eager to discover new talents and follow programmers' proposals. Dance operators have praised the importance of investing in longer-term relationships between artists, programmers and artists, artists and audiences as well as the need to integrate art works into their cultural, social and political contexts. On the other hand, paradoxically, the notion of cultural diversity is still very little understood and operationalised among the sector and the society in general, and this makes dissemination and access complicated.

### Presenting new, unknown artists is challenging...

'How to communicate unknown artists from unknown territories to the public? When artists are not present in media or social networks, we have to use other means of communication. We say that it is their first time in Slovenia, we may lower the prices. When there are good reactions from the audience, then we invite them back again, there are followers. Our audience is open and frank, but we always have to introduce the artist, notably by being present after the show.'<sup>35</sup>

### ... so new, different ways of presenting their work are needed

'Encounters with artistic works that are very different from what we know leads to the necessity to set some forms of introduction of the way artists work. Building activities around the presentation of an artist is key. The most exciting and challenging topic needs a tailored mediation. It also brings for our audiences the possibility of being informed by questions and challenges, to step into the unknown.'<sup>36</sup>

The presence of artists and the presentation of their work may be a powerful way to counteract prejudices and function as an eye opener on global current challenges. It is also a vector to enrich audiences' imaginaries and may encourage new cultural practices, answering some main challenges of cultural policies today:

### Presenting diverse artists enriches audiences' imagination and challenges stereotypes

'It is very important to bring artists from all over the world and audiences appreciate it a lot. There is little information about artists coming from other continents. The audiences have the opportunity to get to know a new dramaturgy and a different universe. Many people have a lot of prejudices about certain countries. With the presentation of a super powerful artist, performing at a very high level, we may break stereotypes and make audiences discover another Africa, for instance.'<sup>37</sup>

35. Mitja Bravhar | Kino Šiška

36. Roberto Casarotto | Centro per la Scena Contemporanea

37. Angels Margarit i Vignals | Mercat de les Flors

## III. THE CURRENT DANCE SECTOR'S NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section examines some of the challenges and opportunities encountered by the EDN and other dance organisations in the development of an international work. Items have been grouped on the basis of a set of major domains: artistic, digital, political and social, environmental, and administrative issues.

### III.1. Artistic challenges: in between the local, the regional and the international

The pandemic's severe travel restrictions increased financial risks to programming and booking international live acts. These new conditions have led some programmers to focus on showcasing local artists and national scenes. It became clearer, in several cases, how internationally busy many artists are, and how little they actually have been performing at home or in their region/neighbouring countries. The local and the international levels, opposing dimensions in the past, are now being put into new perspectives, and new balances and interactions are sought.

#### A new balance between the local and the international in artists' careers is needed

*'In Europe, some artists are just international, not local. It seems to me that artists will necessarily need to be more connected locally, to be in touch and build a relationship with their local audiences. Many artists from my country just perform abroad. In Mercat de les Flors, we need to work a lot in our country, to give larger access to artistic work, notably beyond big cities. On the other side, we also need to keep on making visible people that come from farther away.'*<sup>38</sup>

Still, contexts and conditions are disparate across the world, thus needs and consequent approaches to deal with these new challenges will necessarily vary and will require negotiation and attention to each particular case.

The connections between local and international contexts presented challenges already before the pandemic, as EDN discussed in 2018:

#### Some examples from past EDN activities:

*Atelier Authenticity of expression in the local context, Czech Republic, 2018*

According to Annette van Zwoll, in her report after the event, "The contemporary dance community exists by international relations and we often feel more connected to each other than we do to our neighbours, and sometimes that makes us forget that different histories have implications on current times and the future." Yvona Kreuzmannová, the founder and director of EDN member Tanec Praha, which hosted the event, argued that after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, mutual relations between the dance scenes of Central and Eastern European countries diminished. In this context, the Atelier reflected the need to encourage a deeper knowledge of the very diverse dance scenes in Central Europe and neighbouring Post-Soviet countries. The latest generations adapt a different bodily approach by going abroad, sometimes coming back, but sometimes not. Artistic drainage is real. It is important to lay the ground for a common future by knowing the different pasts in our shared contemporary dance community.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup>. Angels Margarit i Vignals | Mercat de les Flors

<sup>39</sup>. For additional information, see <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/authenticity-of-expression-in-the-local-context> [23/7/2021]

## III.2. Digital challenges: brand new world though reflecting the old one

During the pandemic, a great deal of international relations moved on to the digital world. Moreover, several funding programmes started to change to include the support of new digital mobility dynamics: virtual touring, virtual networking, virtual showcasing. Platforms promoted by organisations such as CINARS (Canada) and KAMS (Korea) are proposing digital programmes.<sup>40</sup> But the live experience, for many dance professionals, for whom the relation with the body and the physical displacement are essential, is still considered more relevant to pursue. Nevertheless, the development of digitisation led to the emergence of diverse new unforeseen opportunities. While, on the other side, it brought many new issues as well as reflecting older ones.

The content and activities that take place online 'go global': performances and showcasing, but also information sessions, training, conferences and debates. This allows for a wider outreach in terms of programming but also audiences. It is now feasible to have audiences and contributors from all over the world. It opened new opportunities to develop partnerships beyond Europe, paving the way for future collaborations. The numbers and diversity of those reached are much higher:

### The digital landscape broadens opportunities for dialogue

'Suddenly so many things became possible. It actually led to many creative outcomes. I asked our local artists, who would they like to have a conversation with outside of the UK. We organised 1 to 1 zoom based conversations between artists in Scotland and others in Australia, Indonesia, the West Coast in the US. This will continue.'<sup>41</sup>

The pandemic therefore ended up reinforcing the digital literacy of the global arts community. New experiences were developed through virtual reality tools that remain to be further explored, opening up even new possibilities. Travel budgets were transferred to commission digital art works; exploratory trips were done via podcasts, videos, interviews. New formats to showcase, discuss, learn from each other were developed over the internet: artists worked remotely

with local artists and communities in the framework of digital residencies. An added value is that streaming allows that contents remain online and can be used for further research purposes, widening accessibility:

### How new forms of collaboration, and different dynamics, may emerge

'With the pandemic many of us started to look into our localities, which represents a danger to become self-indulgent and enter the trap of local nationalisms. It is vital for us through the digital space to stay connected to the world, with artists and peer professionals. But how to keep on transmitting the work done elsewhere for those based in Bassano Del Grappa? We have involved in our digital exchanges artists from Israel, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Zimbabwe. We looked for different approaches to stay artistically/socially connected, also in terms of using the digital space as a creative space. The digital gives us the opportunity to work in a more collaborative way, putting on processes of co-creation and co-imagination. The majority of artists that have participated in our meetings were actually Asian. I had the impression that in the digital space they could take more agency, come with reflections, build connections that before they were more shy to share or put forward. It seems at first sight that the digital may give us the opportunity to work more on an equal level in terms of power and ways of working.'<sup>42</sup>

However, digital is not the only answer to current challenges and has got its costs. The wider accessibility of the digital means does not disregard the need to have entry points and mediators. There is still a digital gap even within Europe. It has allowed reaching out to more people, but the excluded remain outsiders. The resources and expertise needed to update digital tools and associated costs are high, thus hard to attain by freelancers and small organisations which are dominant in the sector all over the world:

### The digital divide and other imbalances

'Digitisation is not a given outside of Europe or some countries in Asia or North America. But what about Africa? Internet connections can be complex to keep up. There is a digital divide. The world is not balanced.'<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup>. CINARS is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to promote and support the export of the performing arts, through, among other things, a biennial international conference. See <https://cinars.org/en/cinars> [23/7/2021]. KAMS (Korea Arts Management Service) is a government agency in South Korea, dedicated to the development of the Korean performing arts. It hosts the Performing Arts Market in Seoul (PAMS). See <http://www.gokams.or.kr> [23/7/2021]

<sup>41</sup>. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

<sup>42</sup>. Roberto Casarotto | Centro per la Scena Contemporanea

<sup>43</sup>. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

Moreover, many operators ask themselves what remains from digital interactions and events? How to measure and monitor activities and impacts? In the digital sphere, conversations lose contexts and thus meaning and sense. Digital matchmaking remains for many less convincing means to build trustworthy social ties and confidence. There are also some fears and doubts regarding online safety and privacy: many do not feel safe to engage and be exposed online. Additionally, new technologies may also challenge, if not threaten, future economic models, notably linked to live arts and acts. How do you get paid for a virtual performance? Indeed, several recent studies have pointed to how the digital shift, which preexisted the pandemic but was accelerated in this context, challenges existing economic models in several cultural sectors.<sup>44</sup> Artistic wise there are also many issues raised by digital performances<sup>45</sup>:

#### Other risks and challenges: quality of collaboration, safety, privacy, business models

'Dance is an artform that needs the live presence of artists and the public. It is an encounter. Even if it is not a participatory act. The artists are in different positions when they dance for the camera or for the audience. What to choose when hybrid formats are promoted? Digital events are challenging in terms of communication but also technically wise. It is a totally different experience with video recording. We are guided by the look of the camera, not our own. We do not need just a choreographer, but also a film director, who suddenly becomes the most important person, the one that will determine how you see the show.'<sup>46</sup>

#### The pros and cons of dance film

'The dance film renaissance is great. Though digital representation of live works creates low engagement. Few moments I was satisfied, thus I have turned away from it as a place to watch dance.'<sup>47</sup>

### III.3. Political and social challenges: Contextualising approaches and projects

Shaped by history and socio-political contexts, artists' working conditions vary dramatically across the globe. Dance houses refer to the necessity to imagine new ways of dialogue and developing relationships, highlighting the need to exchange and share information to build ethical, sustainable bases on which to found their practices. Networks are raising questions dealing with reciprocity and equity in international exchanges in a post-colonial world. How to allow smaller, less resourceful and less structured organisations to participate actively and fairly? How to use international leverage to move issues further at the local level? How to take into consideration the regional scale specificities and needs?

These issues have been part of the arts sector's agenda for several years, as exemplified by previous EDN activities in Lebanon and Japan:

#### Some examples from past EDN activities:

##### *Outreach Lebanon, 2016*

In her introduction to the panel discussions on dance and activism, Mia Habis, the artistic director of the Beirut International Platform of Dance (BIPOD), wrote: "We gather around the artists and gather around BIPOD for the reason that we look for the light in this dark region, we look for a better future that is full of humanity. That is why BIPOD exists and that is why each one of us is part of this magic. We want this country to move..."<sup>48</sup>

##### *Encounter Japan, 2020*

Some excerpts from the report written by Roberto Casarotto: "It is essential to exercise the change of perspective in approaching the encounter between forms of artistic expression that have been developed

44. See e.g. IDEA Consult, Goethe-Institut, Inforelais, Values of Culture&Creativity. (2021). Cultural and creative sectors in post-COVID-19 Europe. Crisis effects and policy recommendations. European Parliament. Available at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL\\_STU\(2021\)652242](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL_STU(2021)652242) [23/7/2021]; EY Consulting. (2021). Rebuilding Europe: The cultural and creative economy before and after the COVID-19 crisis. EY and GESAC. Available at <https://www.rebuilding-europe.eu/> [23/7/2021]; and Dâmaso, M.; and Culture Action Europe. (2021). The Situation of Artists and Cultural Workers and the post-COVID-19 Cultural Recovery in the European Union. Background Analysis. European Parliament. Available at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL\\_STU\(2021\)652250](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL_STU(2021)652250) [23/7/2021]

45. For further discussion on the digital shift in dance, see EDN report M. Fol. Virtualised dance? Digital shifts in artistic practices. Available at <https://www.ednetwork.eu/news/edn-publication-virtualised-dance> [6/10/2021]

46. Mitja Bravhar | Kino Šiška

47. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

48. An extensive report of Outreach Lebanon, written by Arianna Economou, is available at <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/outreach-lebanon> [23/7/2021]. For additional information about BIPOD, visit <https://www.maqamat.org/> [23/7/2021]

in cultural, social, geographical and political contexts other than European. We discussed the importance of starting to work together in order to broaden the parameters with which we often define the concepts of beauty and excellence, avoiding to exoticize and to miss opportunities to know what, from a European point of view, may appear extraneous and incomprehensible. The need to recognise the slow processes of decoloniality undertaken in Asia and Australia, the different conditions for exercising power through the means of supporting culture, the urgency to activate research, residence, creative and performative formats that respond to non-Western ways has brought much food for thought.<sup>49</sup>

This goes with the necessity to counteract current political and social trends of turning inwards and allocating national and local support to home artists and cultural communities. If bigger national markets can survive within internal borders, this is not the case for smaller countries/markets. Additionally, many artists, organisations and ecosystems, mostly those outside of the EU, are highly dependent on the support from the Global North. The capacity to position and to respond to sensitive and turbulent contexts requires specific expertise and experience which is not always available within organisations. This last year, they substantially became more fragile in their status and conditions, and this is raising concern about their sustainability.<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, Europe is not felt as a cultural entity at global scale; outside of Europe, the references are mostly nation-states, especially if it involves former colonial countries. The logic of competition among states is still dominant, at least at the mindset level. The new EU framework programme, Creative Europe, brings a reinforced relationship between the EU and the rest of the world and the relevance of cultural relations. How can dance contribute to this agenda? What are the key conditions and enablers for this to happen? How to transfer knowledge to other actors, capitalise on what has been done and better coordinate our actions?

The relation between Europe and the rest of the world, how Europe needs to face its own contradictions as regards internal diversity and its role in colonialism, and the possible role of arts sectors in this respect, have been addressed in previous EDN activities, as the evidence below shows:

### Some examples from past EDN activities:

#### *Forum Wake Up!, France, 2019*

During a debate taking place at the Forum Wake up! South-African choreographer Robyn Orlin draws a parallel between current Brazil and Apartheid in South-Africa, but also reminds the West-Europeans in the room not to be smug and comfortable: her daughter, a young woman of colour, encounters as much racism in South-Africa as she does in Berlin. No false narrative on liberty and tolerance in Western-Europe should be created either. Through history, what is shared in many of these oppressive narratives is the contempt for art. 'Why do they (the people in government) hate art? Why do they hate artists?' asks Brazilian actress and stage director Fernanda Silva in an emotional and poetic statement on her contradictory feelings towards Brazil. She answers the question herself: 'Because we have power'; Another Brazilian artist, Marcelo Evelin, insists 'It takes a lot of strength to be optimistic, but it's also necessary'. Although there is a continuous threat of having to close down his space, he insists on creating a place where imagination can suspend beyond the realm of what is possible. It is his way of creating new narratives. There is an urgency.<sup>51</sup>

Engaging in these areas raises some questions as regards the role of artists, their willingness to address social and political debates, and their specific position vis-à-vis the broader themes addressed:

### The position of the artist vis-à-vis social and political debates

'How do we understand equity and what does it mean practically? What are we prepared to share that isn't about money? There is currently a desire for transparency and agency from artists. They want to have more say in what is going on. They want to know where the money is going and why. Yet not all artists have the choice and the possibility to ask questions out loud. So many are still looking for recognition and basic survival. On the other hand, it also requires questioning artists' expectations and sense of enlightenment. What is the function of the artist in society? What is art? How can art be community work? What is art if not for the community? Not all artists and societies are ready for this debate. Actually, the speech on inclusion comes from a position of privilege, 'I have the power to include you'. The minute you invite somebody in, your context will change. Are we ready to change?'<sup>52</sup>

49. Read the full report by Roberto Casarotto at <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/encounter-at-tpam-2020> [23/7/2021]

50. For more on how COVID-19 has impacted on the cultural and creative sectors in several regions outside Europe, read the report commissioned by the EU Cultural Relations Platform: Isernia, P., and Lamonica, G. (2021). The Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on the Cultural and Creative Sectors in the EU's Partner Countries, Policy Responses and their Implications for International Cultural Relations. Cultural Relations Platform. Available at [https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/cier-data/uploads/2021/02/CRP\\_COVID\\_ICR\\_Study-final-Public.pdf](https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/cier-data/uploads/2021/02/CRP_COVID_ICR_Study-final-Public.pdf) [23/7/2021]

51. A report of the event, written by Annette van Zwoll, is available at <https://www.ednetwork.eu/activities/creating-space-for-solidarity> [23/7/2021]

52. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

### III.4. Environmental challenges: finding ways to sustainability

The pandemic slowed down the pace of overproduction and over-mobility - which was damaging to the sector's carbon footprint - allowing time to invest on the quality and meaning of relations and collaborations. The awareness about environmental challenges related to mobility is being given more attention within strategic planning. There is nowadays a reflection at the level of the field on what are the impacts of this hypermobility and what is at stake regarding climate change.

Mobility is assumed to need better coordination. The number of physical meetings, tours and residencies can be reduced but each occasion can be longer, concentrating on diverse joint activities in the same location or region/time. Local artists might be involved. There are also differences between West and East, North and South. Those that are more resourceful are able to think about ecology and are willing to change models; others have to fight for survival and access to actual resources. The departure points are very different:

#### The need to address both environmental and social crises

'In regards to the greening of our sector, have you seen the response to Jérôme Bel from an artist from Mexico?<sup>53</sup> This is a challenge. We have at least 2 or 4 Europes within Europe. The commonality of understanding regarding ecological issues is difficult. How do we continue to exchange ideas across national borders while trying to preserve the planet?'<sup>54</sup>

#### Our international solidarity needs to remain, though in a different way

'From now on we will face higher expenses to travel, more complex procedures. We hope to find a way so that we can continue. Traveling regularly to Africa and South America is not sustainable. Yet we have to keep on inviting these artists. We have to work together, make sure they tour longer, work with complicity and give them visibility. The constellations we do in our programme are more sustainable, we bring artists for a while, we programme them for 2 or 3 weeks, we go deep into their work.'<sup>55</sup>

#### Those of us who have benefited from international experiences have a responsibility towards others

'I speak from a privileged position as I have travelled extensively. A lot of relations came from previous relations, it facilitated the development of new processes. I feel the responsibility to share this knowledge for those who cannot travel. I have invited Italian choreographers, dancers and programmers and facilitated online their international exchanges and connections. So that at the beginning of their career they can build their network even if they cannot travel. This is a major question for us: how to share and reach out to small localities with this international knowledge.'<sup>56</sup>

53. In his open letter to French dancer and choreographer Jérôme Bel (10 March 2021), Mexican actor Lázaro Gabino Rodríguez argues that addressing the environmental crisis requires tackling social imbalances as well, as otherwise existing national and international asymmetries may be widened. Open Letter to Jérôme Bel, by Lázaro Gabino Rodríguez <https://www.thegreenroom.fr/actualites/lettre-a-jerome-bel-par-lazaro-gabino-rodriguez> [23/7/2021]

54. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

55. Angels Margarit i Vignals | Mercat de les Flors

56. Roberto Casarotto | Centro per la Scena Contemporanea

### III.5. Travelling through administrative and financial burdens

'A lot of the obstacles are administrative: the passports, the borders, the taxes, this is a reality that is complex to manage with Africa, South America, Asia. Also financially, like in South America, where there is hardly any support from embassies. We work with partners, as we are able to pursue working in Africa only in a team. Only a collaboration made it possible, because there is a need to know the territory well and have people with experience.'<sup>57</sup>

Indeed, the sector organisations worldwide, in most cases of small and medium scale, struggle with administrative and financial burdens to be able to make it across borders. To go through this puzzle, one needs to have not only high motivation, but also special expertise and dedicated resources. When considering organisations outside of Europe, many also have a lot of issues in delivering according to EU standards - when funding comes from the EU - due to its intricate and demanding red tape and lack of specific know-how to tackle it. From reporting and auditing, to diverse or even absent cultural policies and status for artists, to unstructured markets, lack of intermediaries, or deficient infra structures, it is complex to grasp and deal with varied conditions and opportunities to work internationally. Moreover, as mobility is not free, a myriad of diverse visa requirements and entry logics make international relations a labyrinth only attainable for few privileged ones.<sup>58</sup>

Financially, all over the world budgets for culture and arts are being reduced, and the capacity to invite and host is diminishing. Thus exchanges, economies of scale, and co-productions are needed even harder in search for financial and human resources. It demands expertise and more specialised human resources to research contexts, to plan much in advance, to support members, to identify and engage with contacts, and to build trust. In this respect, intercultural competences and ability to deal with cultural differences comes up as crucial:

#### Some practical challenges of international collaboration

'We are inviting a Palestinian artists for a residency in Slovenia. How can he come? There is a need for a grant, a letter, an invitation... Now, flying becomes more expensive, connections are not good, we have only 3 regular flights per day. It is difficult to organise international guests to come (...).

Regarding work practices, when establishing initial contacts, some artists would send you the technical rider and financial conditions upfront while others would only send them at the end, after all artistic issues and travel practicalities are decided. There are also differences regarding the fees between the global North and South. Moreover, those coming from countries where travelling is difficult are very happy to present their work abroad even for a short stay: for them, it is worth traveling for 2 or 3 shows and then back, despite all the hassle.'<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup>. Angels Margarit i Vignals | Mercat de les Flors

<sup>58</sup>. With regard to visas and other obstacles to mobility see e.g. Di Federico, E.M and Le Sourd, M. (2012). Artists' mobility and visas: a step forward. Final report of On the Move's workshop on artists' mobility and Schengen visas. On The Move. Available at [https://on-the-move.org/files/Artists-mobility-and-visas-OTM\\_Dec2012\\_final.pdf](https://on-the-move.org/files/Artists-mobility-and-visas-OTM_Dec2012_final.pdf) [23/7/2021]; and Pearle\* (2020, updated). The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: Visas for Third Country National Artists Travelling to the Schengen Area. EFA - European Festivals Association. Available at <https://www.pearle.eu/publication/the-ultimate-cookbook-for-cultural-managers-visas-for-third-country-national-artists-travelling-to-the-schengen-area-update-2020> [23/7/2021]

<sup>59</sup>. Mitja Bravhar | Kino Šiška

## IV. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENCOURAGE THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE DANCE SCENE

The review of EDN'S international efforts clearly illustrates how the dance field is strongly involved within a wide global community. The pandemic has challenged the sector's practices and the cultural policies aiming at responding to the crisis<sup>60</sup>, still operators remain very much eager to keep on connecting and collaborating for the sake of artistic diversity and development but also economically.

There is also a clearer awareness about unequal circumstances and capacities to operate, and therefore the responsibility of the dance sector, and the arts and culture sector at large, to face and address them. In this new context the sector is well aware of the need to evolve and change its own practices, as well as take the responsibility to become an actor or change<sup>61</sup>. The overall expectation is that new visions and processes alongside new policies and supporting schemes are needed to address current pressing issues.

### IV.1. Foster a global fairer and more sustainable dance community

*'The cultural and solidarity goals of the EU need to be pushed within Europe and the rest of the world. We have to make further links and projects towards this goal. We have to work in collaboration and coordinate even more among peers, to make visible artists from outside of Europe, so they can come for a longer time, to extend their tours. We can try to collaborate by 5 or 6, choosing an artist, or a country.'*<sup>62</sup>

The dance and cultural sector is engaged in developing new visions for its international dimension in which physical mobility is one element among many others to connect, to engage with diversity and build up solidarities. This new ecosystem is not composed only of physical spaces where professionals come together and connect face to face but it is necessarily a more flexible space that can be built up according to their own needs, contexts and realities around the world. Moreover, the sector contributes to the global community in its quest to address current world issues that concern professionals and all citizens.

The involvement of the dance sector in addressing and trying to respond to these issues is in line with key strategic EU and international documents for the cultural field, including the European Agenda for Culture, the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations and the European Green Deal, as well as global commitments including the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and the SDGs.

The rationale and the expected reinforced international dimension of the Creative Europe programme - the framework EU instrument for the cultural and creative sector - should support European cultural operators, also from the dance field, to connect to the global arts and culture communities in their quest to address these current world issues.

Indeed, as the More Europe initiative has put it into its Letter: 'Cooperation opportunities for the European cultural sector depend on the global dynamics of the cultural sector and the partners' ability to interact e.g. co-productions and cooperation are strongly and globally intertwined. It is by acting collectively with a shared responsibility and solidarity spirit that we will move towards recovery and sustainability in the long term'<sup>63</sup>.

Gradually, sensitive societal, political and historical issues such as gender, decolonisation or minorities are being addressed when designing relations and implementing activities. Artists and programmers, educators, policy makers and funders can foster and contribute to continue these conversations and make them advance further into concrete answers. There is reinforced awareness that we operate in complex systems leading to the necessity to collectively acknowledge inequalities and find customized/differentiated ways on how to mitigate them.

This approach is also in line with the promotion of cultural diversity and the respect for human rights, introduced as one of the guiding principles of the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2016). This also echoes the concern about the fair remuneration of authors and creators, as stated in the New European Agenda for Culture (2018) as well as in other international documents, such as the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist.<sup>64</sup>

60. See IDEA Consult et al. (2021) and Polivtseva, E. (2020). The moment for change is now: COVID-19 learning points for the performing arts sector and policymakers. IETM. Available at <https://www.ietm.org/en/resources/reports/the-moment-for-change-is-now-covid-19-learning-points-for-the-performing-arts> [23/7/2021]

61. Bul (2021).

62. Angels Margarit i Vignals | Mercat de les Flors

63. More Europe (2020), 'Culture in EU's External Relations: the way forward?', available at <http://moreeurope.org/culture-in-eus-external-relations-the-way-forward-letter/> [23/7/2021]

64. See <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/governance/status-artist> [23/7/2021]



Finally, dancers and dance operators are addressing environmental challenges in the way they cooperate internationally, finding new strategies to reduce their carbon footprint and foster green practices. Inspired by these examples, this type of practice should be further researched and experimented, then integrated in projects and support policies and frameworks. As a matter of fact ecologically sustainable approaches and solutions need to be contextualised and adapted to the diverse territories and interlocutors.

## IV.2. Envisage mobility under a multiple and green approach

The promotion of the mobility of artists and cultural operators as well as of their works remains key in an international environment. In view of the present challenges, its concept, policies and supporting mechanisms would need to be revised.

Mobility is actually already being approached by the dance field and others in a broader sense, including but not limited, to physical displacement across national borders. It encompasses the capacity to move, both physically and virtually, in between territories (countries, regions, cities), languages, sectors, audiences. These new perspectives give space for the renewal of cooperation dynamics and formats inside and outside Europe, locally and cross-borders, also in regards to more balanced and inclusive mobility flows.

In that sense, mobility may effectively contribute to a sustainable and fairer ecosystem, allowing interactions between territories, and mitigating inequalities and brain drain. The possibility to engage in mobility across borders allows the sector professionals to benefit in a continuous way of working and learning opportunities overcoming territorial inequalities. As encouraging and removing obstacles to the mobility of professionals in the cultural and creative sectors is one of the strategic objectives of the New European Agenda for Culture (2018), and considering mobility has been deeply curtailed by the pandemic, special focus should be given to this topic.

## IV.3. Promote peer learning and develop capacities

*'There is a need to structure the exchange of information among the sector to make these flows of knowledge circulate more widely. If we manage to better coordinate, it can lead to more opportunities.'*<sup>65</sup>

Working internationally requires specific knowledge that dance operators and stakeholders have acquired and should be supported to share among their communities and interested shareholders. This is a role the dance field has already been playing for a long time and could be encouraged to develop further.

Artistic international collaborations are a vector for development when adopting a long term commitment. Approaches should envisage mutual learning and fair exchanges with local scenes, introducing capacity building components based on peer to peer learning. Experimental and tailored formats should be encouraged to answer the specific and plural needs of the artists and operators, with a focus on reciprocity, collective learning and facilitating solidarity dynamics within communities<sup>66</sup>.

In order for the arts and culture to play a consistent role also at the economic level, there is the need to improve its innovation capacity, including 'entrepreneurial, traditional and specialised skills'<sup>67</sup>. This is instrumental in equipping the sector to be able to play its role as an economic player, contributing to the jobs and growth goals, and fostering market opportunities at a global level.<sup>68</sup>

Digital technologies have opened new avenues to dance, arts and learning opportunities that might be more inclusive. However, accessibility and know-how differ significantly across the world, showing the need to further invest in digital literacy at different levels. Digital processes and practices need to be conceived and planned from scratch. New tools and skills are thus needed to prepare, produce, edit and make contents and processes more dynamic, livelier and with a wider outreach.<sup>69</sup>

Dance and arts education curricula should reflect the current debates and trends going on in the sector and the world, integrating and addressing issues such as cultural diversity, decolonisation, gender equality, climate change, political and social responsibility of art and artists. This should be taken into account by educational authorities and bodies at all levels of governance.

<sup>65</sup>. Roberto Casarotto | Centro per la Scena Contemporanea

<sup>66</sup>. See 'Foster Mutual Respect and Inter-Cultural Dialogue, Guiding principle of EU action' in the European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (2016) European strategy for International Cultural Relations p. 4

<sup>67</sup>. European Commission (2018).

<sup>68</sup>. European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (2016)

<sup>69</sup>. More Europe (2021), 'Position paper on Digital Cultural Relations', available at [http://moreeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Policy\\_Paper\\_Digital\\_Cultural\\_Relations.pdf](http://moreeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Policy_Paper_Digital_Cultural_Relations.pdf) [23/7/2021]

It also refers to how institutions active in the fields of education and learning develop more comprehensive, holistic curricula. A good example in this case may be that of the London Contemporary Dance School (LCDS), a partnership between the University of the Arts London and EDN member The Place, which recently announced plans to create a more diverse dance curriculum, through decolonisation, the broadening of the range of dance practices, processes and ways of creating knowledge and the aim to make access to the LCDS more inclusive and accessible for students with diverse backgrounds.<sup>70</sup>

#### IV.4. Develop research and a joint monitoring and evaluation approach

'How to evaluate networks?! I feel a truth deficit. The EU could be more flexible and realistic in terms of the outcomes it expects from projects. We need to be clear about our path, re-design, evaluate on the way, this process and attention to details takes time and decreases output. Legalities could also be more flexible. Evaluating is pretty much needed.'<sup>71</sup>

There is very limited information documenting the mobility of the dance sector as well as the international activities of networks and their members.

Research and documentation activities are key; for instance, to develop a mapping of actual international links and activities of dance operators to raise awareness and clarify what territories are covered. This documentation would allow drafting informed actions responding to the contexts and needs of the field, and could serve as a baseline for monitoring the sector impacts.

The monitoring and evaluation of sector activities and dynamics should be done more structurally and systematically. A specific set of criteria should be designed to capture the value of the sector's input. To this end, it could be useful to develop a joint participatory monitoring and evaluation between funders and grantees. In the case of the Creative Europe programme (2021-2027), the new international dimension should be experimented, tested and amended following the response of the sector and their performance in the mid-term. Proposed objectives and expected outputs should consider that in the international scope impacts take longer to be achieved and are more difficult to be measured.

#### IV.5. Develop tools and support intermediaries for the dance ecosystem as a contributor for international relations

'In the international cultural context, funding is foggy. For and from whom is it available? Developing sustainable relations requires time. We could work in a more systematic way if there were more consistent resources allocated. The EU Delegations are unfortunately not resourceful enough yet. There is a gap between policy and action: in regards to many existing agendas, there is poor support to translate policies into action, even when the sector is ready.'<sup>72</sup>

The international scope of the dance sector resulting from a long history showing its expertise in international relations, as well as its diversity and its capacity to bridge Europe with the rest of the world, make it a relevant actor for the EU to contribute and implement its strategy for international cultural relations.

Engaging internationally requires extra support resources, features and players, particularly to identify partners; cover specific costs and services when needed (trips, translation); deal with administrative procedures; have access to networking opportunities and joint exploratory visits. In order to ensure a wider participation in international relations, notably for those underrepresented in the market and the global artistic scene, specific incentives are needed. The criteria/conditions established by local, regional, national and European authorities, as well as other funding bodies, should consider the different frameworks and conditions existing worldwide. The supporting framework should allow them to build up more consistently at longer-term and to gain stability and sustainability.

Networks are specialised in diverse areas and are close to the field, so they can reach out to operators. It would be useful to capitalise on their expertise: in that sense, the European Commission and EU Delegations may work together with networks as brokers for cultural relations. The dance community should be able to rely on EU Delegations to find the institutional support they need and to act as resource and contact points. The EU Delegations are promoting a joint European approach, which is all the more important in political sensitive contexts. EDN's and other European cultural networks' willingness to open up new markets for artists expanding their geographical spread and enlarging their audiences is part of their strategy and development. Indeed most of the interviewees thought it was timely for the EU to foster its international dimension.

70. For additional information, see <https://www.lcds.ac.uk/news/london-contemporary-dance-school-announces-significant-changes-adapting-its-educational> [23/7/2021]

71. Bush Hartshorn | Dance Base

72. Roberto Casarotto | Centro per la Scena Contemporanea

Culture spans a wide range of policies and activities: indeed the EU promotes a cross cutting approach to culture, connecting it to fields such as development, human rights, social affairs and cohesion, education etc. Moreover, the potential of dance and arts in the world stage has been gradually recognised for its value in what comes to health and well-being - besides its economic impact -, as stated in the New European Agenda for Culture (2018). In this respect, EDN, dance and other cultural operators are already playing an invaluable role that needs to be recognised and supported.

As evidence presented throughout the report has shown, the current context is leading to extensive reconsiderations of the place of different artforms, including dance, in society, as well as how this relates to broader issues in international relations. Concluding reflections by some of the interviewees involved in this research report serve to illustrate this:

### The healing power of dance...

‘Dance can be a healing art form for us as social persons, as human beings. To calm you, intrigue you, to foster the way you observe and see art. There have been many great changes in dance throughout times, out of black boxes, into museums. What is next? Open air? Social and environmental friendly? Will dance change society and help it to overpass all these difficulties?’<sup>73</sup>

### ... and its broader role in individual and societal wellbeing<sup>74</sup>

‘Dance can play a role in a society that has been traumatised. What are we going to programme? How can we be more attentive to relate to well being, social cohesion, equity and justice? If we work on humanity, we shall address borders, taboos around the body. Dance is a practice with cultural artistic reference, but it is also a human right, that of expression. Our body connects us to the world, no need for medium. Dance and artistic practice can develop processes of psycho physical well being and cohesion.’<sup>75</sup>

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73. Mitja Bravhar | Kino Šiška

74. For additional information on the place of dance in the promotion of health, wellbeing and care, refer to the recent EDN report by Jordi Baltà (2021). Dance and Well-being: Review of evidence and policy perspectives. How dance can contribute to ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. EDN. Available at <https://www.ednetwork.eu/news/edn-publication-dance-and-wellbeing> [23/7/2021]

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### Interviews

#### **Angels Margarit i Vignals |**

Mercat de les Flors (Barcelona/ES),  
5/05/2021

#### **Bush Hartshorn |**

Dance Base (Edinburgh/UK),  
5/05/2021

#### **Mitja Bravhar |**

Kino Šiška (Ljubljana/SI),  
4/05/2021

#### **Roberto Casarotto |**

Centro per la Scena Contemporanea  
(Bassano del Grappa/IT),  
30/04/2021

#### **Yvona Kreizmannova |**

Tanec Praha (CZ),  
4/05/2021

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