

**18.10.2019 - 08.01.2020**

I spent the last three months in Lisbon studying and continuing to study at Escola Superior de Danca. The academic school year begins on 30th of September. Unfortunately, I was late for two and a half weeks due to a visa issue. My school year began on 18th of October 2020. On the first day I arrived at school, Erasmus coordinator Ofélia had showed me the full territory of institution which is very big with a lot of students of various professions. People here are very kind and open, they explained me how the system and my schedule works. This kindness and openness set me on a good wave to get to know new people and gain a new

The school year is divided into blocks. Each block consists of five weeks and in each new block the class schedule changes. In the first block, we had classes and teachers such as: Contemporary Techniques - Christine Funsch, Repertory Studies - Viktor Garcia, Ballet - Kelly Nakamura, Composition - Francisco Pedro, Music Editing - Isabel Duarte.

### **Block 1**

Contemporary Techniques with Christine was a good start to begin the school year for me. This class consisted of two techniques - contemporary and modern. The quality of movement was quite soft, which helped my body smoothly prepare for further loads.

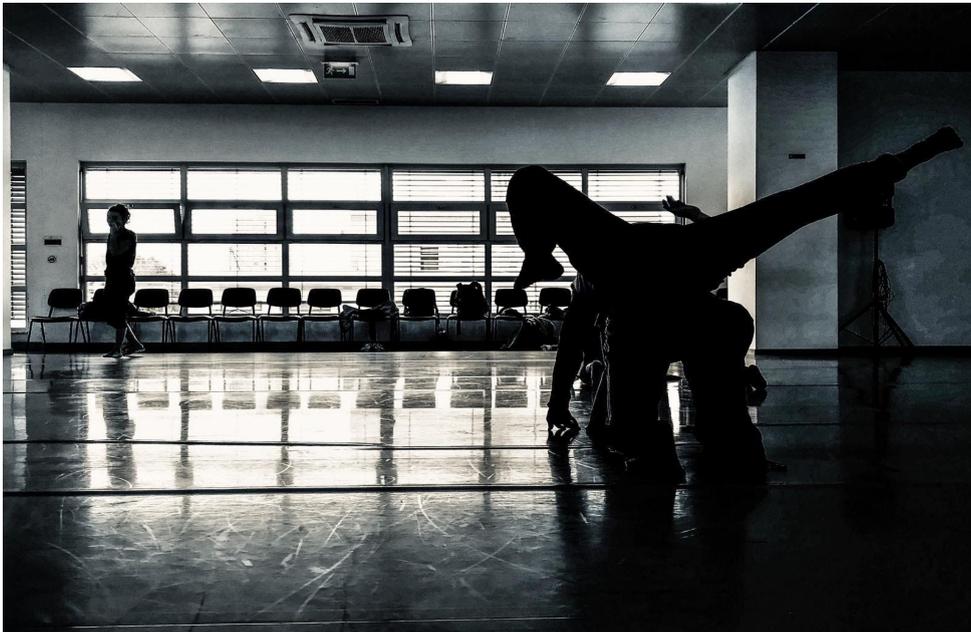
Repertory Studies was unusual for me. The task of this class was to learn a group piece by video, which was provided to us by Victor Garcia. Since I was late for a week and a half for the school year due to problems with a student visa. I had only a couple of classes to learn choreography. At first, it seemed to me very difficult, since I had never learned choreography by video recordings. But when I came to the second lesson, it turned out that I had learned more than my group. We had several group rehearsals and the presentation went well. I got a very positive feedback from my teacher about good job what I did.

Ballet class with Kelly Nakamura was hard for me. I had a big break in ballet. And in my first lesson, where the teacher didn't speak English, it was really hard to follow. So during all five weeks, it was difficult. And only at the end of the block was I able to remember all the combinations.

Composition. Each block on the composition class teacher gives us a task. In this block, Francisco Pedro gave us the task for creation by working with an excerpt from the text "THE MISSION MEMORY OF A REVOLUTION by Heiner Mueller, 1979". There were several guide lines in the task that we had to follow. This task was completely new to me, It gave me good experience.

Also, before the beginning of the school year, we had an audition for a project with dancer and choreographer Alex Miklosy from Hungary and stage designer Marta Carreiras. I was lucky to participate in this project and I was chosen. The project involved 8 dancers. Project residency took place in the last week of the first block. For five days we had contemporary classes (three hours) and project work / research (3 hours) every day.

Alex's Contemporary classes were quite prepared, structured and up-to-date, included several contemporary and modern techniques (improvisation, floor work, Limón technique, Flying-low etc...) in a well mixed way. He also had an understandable approach to explain the quality of movement.



The idea of the project was to interact with objects (chairs) and with people. There was a lot of improvisational research through work in space with an object, what meaning can we give to object, alone and in a group of people. Our piece was based on the exercises, up coming ideas and rules. The great interest was from the fact that you don't now what will happen next, what kind of reaction in the group will happen. On the fifth day, we had a presentation at the school, with a lot of people (students and people from outside) and feedback section with audience after. Most of people felt and saw what we wanted to convey through the objects and their observations were very different and interesting. Mostly I work and create without any objects. It was absolutely new and useful for me.



## Block 2

The second block turned out to be very intense.

Classes and teachers that we had: Contemporary Techniques - Angelo Neto, Interpretation - Christine Funsch, Ballet - Barbara Griggs, Music Editing - Esabel Duarte, Composition - Francisco Pedro.

Contemporary Techniques classes with Angelo were one of the best for me in these three months. There was a lot of practice on floor work, spirals in the body, feelings in the space, tricks, interesting combinations. There were many technical challenges for me, which I added to my movement vocabulary.

Ballet. Barbara Griggs is an amazing teacher of classical dance. We had well done structured class, with good explanation of exercises. The lessons were interesting as well as very difficult for me. There was always feedback during the classes, which helped me focus more on the details.

Composition. The task was to work with the object. The idea was to make an object as part of your body or partner without manipulating the object. As an object, I chose a wooden stick. The work was not easy and it was difficult not to manipulate, because from a real point of view it is impossible. This task turned on my imagination.

Music Editing. For two blocks we are working with the program Adobe Audition, an audio editor. Isabel gives us different tasks for creating new musical forms, editing and creating sounds which could be useful for me in my future work and creations.

Interpretation. We had an opportunity to make a piece with Christine Funsch. We worked on this piece for 5 weeks and we presented on 20-21th of December at the Belem Cultural Center. The workflow was based on various tasks (eye contact, inspiration from others, tango character) through which each dancer created an own choreography what was a spine of the piece.

An excerpt from my written work, which will reveal the theme of our production:

*«The base and material of our art is our body. Not paints, not wood, no materials thing. Simple sitting and looking at each other, interaction and feedback. Observe your reaction and the reaction of other people to a physical action. In this infinite circle, our action depends on the action of others. This is where the creation of our work began. This is not as simple as it seems at first glance, but it is part of our human being, which we later transmitted in our production.*

*In this production, the themes of ritual and trance was touched upon doing it through rhythm, repetition, circles, breathing. This is an approach which shows a way of supporting each other, not only moving together, but thinking together.*

*The different stories that our production consists of may seem unconnected. If you look closely, the same rituals and the communication of people in one space, show the features of human existence»*

The whole workflow was on a positive wave and I felt Christine's support. I was very satisfied with our performance and the coherence of the group. I really appreciate the work we have done, which gave me experience and different directions of thinking.

These three months were full of discoveries for me in all areas.



**09.01.2020 - 20.05.2020**

The last 4 months of study at Escola Superior de Danca in Lisbon have been unexpected and eventful. From January to mid-February there was a normal curriculum and my classes and teachers were consisted of: Contemporary Techniques - Maria Ramos, Ballet - Sylvia Rijmer, Composition - Francisco Pedro, Music Editing - Isabel Duarte. This was followed by a vacation and I visited my family in Italy, after which when I flew back to Lisbon, I had to remain in quarantine for two weeks. Then in one week, all educational institutions and public places in Portugal closed due to the coronavirus. For almost the entire second semester, I studied individually and adhered to my new regimen. Therefore, I will divide this report into two parts: January-February, March-May.

### **January-February**

Contemporary Technique classes with Maria Ramos were always very intense and full of energy. I liked the fact that we didn't stop during class and there was a continuous flow atmosphere. Information on this class had to be caught quickly. After several classes, I noticed positive changes that it's getting easier and faster for me to absorb the information. Which in the future gave me more time to focus on the quality of the movement. Maria's classes gave me the experience of studying the momentum in movement, working with the different speeds of the center, the basic technique of floorwork, which is always useful and where there is always something to work on.

Ballet. In my opinion, the classes were very productive. Sylvia is an excellent teacher who relies on the physiology and capabilities of the dancer. She is very attentive to all students and during the class I always received feedback. Usually after ballet classes, I often felt muscle tightness, but after classes with Sylvia there was always a feeling of an elongated body and that the muscles worked correctly on the lesson.

Composition. On the composition there was a group task of 13 students. The task was in the game - in the lesson the name of that dancer who must come up with dance material for the whole group within 20 minutes is randomly dropped out. Thus, during the studying block, we supposed to create a piece, which consists of various materials of the dancers. Initially, I was very interested in this work, but in the process I didn't see the full return from my colleagues, due to this fact it was quite difficult to concentrate on the task. Of course, I got from this research good experience, but I can't say that it was as productive as possible for me.

Music Editing. The teaching approach of Isabel is very conducive for learning and finding new musical taste. Theoretical classes gave a lot of information about how you can edit music and how I can use this skill in my profession.



## March-May

Due to the situation with coronavirus, everyone is forced to be isolated. Morally, this time was very difficult for me. In order to not get depressed and be productive, I made myself a schedule similar to my regime in life without quarantine.

From Monday to Friday (8am - 5pm) my day included: warm-up, 2 physical classes, improvisation or creation of my choreographic material, work on my thesis.

Mostly my physical activities included such practices as ballet, contemporary techniques, pilates, yoga, running and workouts outside. Being isolated, my space was limited, I tried to adapt to the circumstances what I have and look for new places for dance.

Link for video:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-2Qku8-bV-8GnsxnHkthPK2geJd1IVNK>

This period showed me how important it is to be able to work individually and there are no excuses about the lack of time. There is time for everything, you just need to know how to properly distribute it.

After studying for 2 years at BCDA where the big attention was paid to individual work and focus. Nowadays I realized how important this skill plays in today's life. The main instrument in my work is my body. The experience and knowledge that I have, provide me with the opportunity to take the time and work them out in more detail way.

How to find motivation being alone in one room? How to make a day that looks like one another not boring? How can you develop yourself in given conditions? How do you feel when you are alone with yourself for long time? During quarantine, I was in research of answers to these questions and I can say for sure that this gave me a useful experience to know myself better.

## 20.05.2020-09.06.2020

The last days of studying in Lisbon and my Erasmus mobility slowly comes to the finish. Unfortunately, in connection with the Covid-19 virus, school started to work only from the beginning of June. We (students) were supposed to come to the university in small group on different days to avoid contact with a lot of people. Each student gets two days of study per week. As a result, over the past week I attended two techniques classes like ballet and contemporary. At this time due to the situation with virus, the school has very strict rules about the distance between people, disinfection, the number of things each student has and we were constantly wearing the face masks.

Technical dance classes were also held in masks. It was hard to imagine how this would happen. During the class, there was huge discomfort because it was very hard to breathe in a mask. Especially if the dancer moves intensively. From the side it was clear that it was hard for everyone - for students and teachers. Definitely, It was a new experience for me, but I can't say that it was healthy, useful and productive.

During the whole time of my studying, the administration, teachers and students of the school were very responsive, polite and they were helping me with everything. They gave a positive vibes and big support during my staying. On the last day we said our warm «goodbye» but I promised that I would definitely come to visit them in the future.



These few weeks some of the quarantine rules were removed, so I was so happy to go for a walk and enjoy Portugal, which pleased me with a good weather. Also, for the last two weeks I have been surfing, and I found out that this activity is very useful for dancer, because the center is very involved and there is constant work with balance. This sport is a smart, interesting and useful bodywork.



To sum up my staying at the Escola Superior de Dança in Lisbon. There is always something good and not so good. It was an intense and interesting period for me. I am absolutely satisfied with the information that I received in this country, I am glad to the people whom I met, I am grateful for the experience that I've got.



Thank you Erasmus program for great experience!

