

My name is Sharon Barbakov and I'm from Israel. I spent one semester as an Erasmus student in the Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy. My home academy is the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. There I'm studying for my B.A. Dance in the Dance faculty

The experience of being an Erasmus student was one of my meaningful and influential I ever had. The opportunity of being far away from home in another study environment is very helpful in develop of the field we are studying.

In my academy, I was focused on the performing direction. Most of my studies included repertory classes with Israeli and international choreographers, technique classes as ballet and modern dance and choreography classes. In the Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy, I was exposed to other directions as: Hungarian Folk dance, Contact and Parkour. I also took part as a dancer in the final performance based on the "Beatles" subject. I found these differences very interesting and enriching.

Budapest is a beautiful city with many activities going on all the time. The dance scene in Budapest is developed and varied. Easily you will find yourself involved in the local happenings, taking part in workshops and watching many good performances mainly in the Trafo - house of contemporary art and Mu Szhaz.

The school itself is very small and intimate. At this moment, it contains around 30 students. The atmosphere between the students is pleasant and close and this is a great platform to get into interactions with local and international students and of course, to meet many new cultures. The building is nice and well maintained. With 5 wide and comfortable studios, open kitchen and buffet for lunch or short rest, comfortable showers and dressing room, library and classrooms

Every day in the schedule there is a set time for individual work. At that time, the students should go into the studios and work mostly by themselves. This is a time for going throw the material they learned, strength necessary contents and of course create and dance. I found this time significant and very valuable. I can point the big progress I made thanks to that framework.

The semester was divided into 3 periods which in each one every student should either work on a creative piece made by himself or participate in other pieces. The creation is mainly free and you can get a professional accompaniment if you are interested in. For me it was a very nice experience. I worked first on my solo that becomes a duo for the next period and I wish to keep on working on that in my home academy.

Ballet classes are held three times a week and are divided into three levels. So, easily can find an appropriate level for everyone. I attended the Tibor's ballet classes in the advanced level. I really enjoyed Tibor Kovats's classes. They were professional, comprehensive, and the atmosphere was pleasant. Folklore classes are also a fixed part of the schedule for twice a week. The classes are unique and can give a lot in the context of movement vocabulary and rhythms. I have also found great value on the stage-managing experience of the director of the school, Dr. Angelus Ivan.

The hard things I had to deal with regarding mainly to the treat from the system. The school has a strict policy rules. Sometimes I went through stressful and unpleasant situations that I consider as disrespectful. Regarding to problems of bureaucratic and administration I felt that the school takes responsibility and helps me to cope. But when it comes to personal situations I felt there is no willingness to listen. The school is not familiar enough dealing with external students and their special issues. And it can create disappointment and frustration. In general, I use to work in environments that allow more independency, it was missing for me since the system is very strict.

From the other hand, I understood that even from difficult situations you can learn a lot. As you know, the dance field is not easy and it is very demanding, therefore the experiences that require effort are very constructive and I feel I develop in that direction.

There are few tasks that I found very helpful in directing me as: Writing a work plan at the beginning of the semester and a working plan summarize in the end. Teachers feedback is also needed to be submitted in some point. In general, I recommend for those who will arrive to make a conversation in the beginning to clarify all these issues with Petra Péter (international coordinator) or with one of the students.

For any question or consultation, I will be glad to help. You can ask school secretariat how to contact me.



