Dance is a human right.
Dance changes people’s lives.
Dance empowers and dance builds new communities.
Dance is a medium to communicate among diverse people.
Dance expresses experiences not easily communicated through words.
Dance is the art form that connects people to their bodies and to humanity the most.
Dance as a creative practice supports the recovery from challenging and painful histories.
Dance helps fight fear, prejudices and stereotypes.
Dance is a pathway to discover how much we have in common.
Dancing together brings people into the present moment, creating a shared experience for feeling part of a collective, a group, a community.
Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders is a project supported by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. It is an international research project focused on identifying and developing new and relevant actions for the inclusion of refugees and migrants through dance and movement based initiatives. The project is an act of extending oneself into another person’s situation. Dance is the means to meet, express, feel, break down barriers, connect and build new communities. The initiative promotes 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 labeled as refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, illegal. The project empowers participants through sharing perspectives, practices and knowledge, with respect for the individual identity and cultural heritage that each person carries. It has become the starting point for many adventures in exploring how dance can be instrumental in shaping and developing society.

This publication is a collection of essays, practices, tools and interviews to share what we have discovered in our process. It is intended to support you in your own endeavors to build inclusive communities through dance. At the core is a polyphonic glossary – a collection of themes from our journey, written by 50 participants and collaborators as a way to capture and demonstrate the complexity and diversity of the numerous perspectives at play in such an endeavor.

This journey is about all of us. It is just as much about “you” as it is about “them”. Come with your knowledge and expertise and be equally ready to learn from every person you encounter.

– Monica Gillette
Editor, choreographer, dramaturg
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A POLYPHONIC GLOSSARY of Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders. The glossary is an outcome of the diversity and perspectives we encountered, encouraging multiple views and reflection on relevant themes.

ACCESS

- A VIP pass necessary for some to get clean water, useful to get the right to education or absolutely frivolous to get close to a celebrity, because not everybody is a Very Important Person.
  - Mélanie Demers
- New strategies must be invented to ensure everyone has equal access to the same opportunities and resources, otherwise inequality will continue into future generations. Access can be thought of in a physical sense, such as building a ramp or elevator where there are stairs, in order to have equal access on a physical level. It also must be thought about on a psychological level – what are the mental barriers, the cultural and historical blockades, that prevent access for EVERYONE.
  - Monica Gillette

ACTIVISM

- For me, the word “activism” represents a raising of consciousness – a consciousness that calls for a drastic change via a protest coming from below and involving a base for real progress. Inside me, “activism” recalls fear, danger and struggle for equal rights. Although today we can also do it virtually, such as Julian Assange with his Wikileaks platform, activism remains a dangerous mode, but necessary for accomplishing change.
  - John Mpaliza
- What do you want to be co-responsible for? Asking myself this question regularly deepens my awareness of the world I’m living in and gives my actions a clear focus. It makes me an activist.
  - Peggy Olislaegers
- Working and dancing – don’t always stay in the house.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

ARCHIVE

- Archive is a trace, a testimony of what was and what is. It is defined in part by events that took place and that are still going on, since the line between past-present-future is forever being redefined each second. What exists, or existed, is as such, an archive, whether or not one has proof or understanding of its existence. What exists for you may not yet exist for me, and vice-versa. The planet earth, DNA, knowledge, intuition, blood, bones, vision, light...
Dance is inclusive. For once I don’t need to be labeled or to enter in just one category.
- Francesca, 72

what exists is its own first and foremost archive. Should a previous question be: What exists?
- Ginelle Chagnon

• An archive is often thought of to be static and filled with objects and data. A personal archive can be all the knowledge, movement, ideas, experiences, culture and memories that a body, a person, can hold – and reinvent. When proposing a dance encounter, how can we invite the full archive of participants into movement, especially when it is so far from one’s own?
- Monica Gillette

▸ see KNOWLEDGE

ART
• It is the guardian of our freedom in modern day society. A powerful reminder of who we are as individuals, and the force that enriches our humanity.
- Tony Tran

• The most ultimate, deep and powerful expression of human beings. It is innate in every human being, and it is a need as fundamental to our species as food, warmth or shelter. Art can be seen as a universal and intrinsic human behavioural endowment that involves things being taken out of their everyday use and context. Of course art is also a form of intentional expression that includes creative, symbolic and aesthetic elements.
- Luisella Carnelli

• I believe Art empowers. Art makes one reflect, think, enjoy. It’s satisfying and annoying. Art is anger, and within that, art finds peace. Art has no real boundaries and no passport. Art is culture; it appears and disappears. Art is what makes you question and feel. Art is when delicacy meets substance embracing struggle. The making of art is responsibility and awareness. I’m an artist and therefore, I take action as art is life.
- Masako Matsushita

• Art gives hope, catharsis, inspiration and fantasy to create and dream. Art making is bubble time. Art gives a voice – especially when all participants are empowered to see themselves as artists.
- Monica Gillette

▸ see EMPOWER

ASYLUM SEEKER
• An asylum seeker is a person who has fled from her or his own country due to fear of persecution and has applied for (legal and physical) protection in another country, but has not yet had their claim for protection assessed. Asking for asylum also means that this person has lost faith in their own nation and for this reason, they must believe in another country, even though the new country is often far from their own culture and beliefs.
- Tania Reginato

• An asylum seeker asks for refuge in a country other than their own due to dangerous, violent or abusive conditions in their own country. Every country has their own regulations for granting asylum. Opportunities to seek legal asylum are becoming more and more limited, creating additional problems between border countries and sometimes forcing asylum seekers into dangerous and expensive pursuits of illegal entry. People seeking asylum usually can not work before asylum is granted, limiting their ability to take care of their own well-being while waiting.
- Monica Gillette

▸ see FORCED MIGRATION
Dancing together makes you feel part of a group and this creates a new strength that puts aside differences of gender, religion, age or health.

- John, 16
I think of a migrant body and I instantaneously see smugglers, containers, floatable boats, and abandoned suitcases. I think of impossible walkable distances. I think of modern slavery and human trafficking. I see insurmountable natural and artificial borders, customs officers, daunting paperwork. Although I can feel the stress of passport controls even when all the visas are in order, I could never fully grasp the fear and perhaps the excitement of the promise of a new life. I think of a migrant body and I see the intricacies of a personal story and the complexity of the great history that can bring a person to pack, to leave behind, to hope for the best, to regret, to expect.

I think of a migrant body and I see my unknown father who certainly tried to escape the tyranny of Port-au-Prince only to find cold and loneliness in Montreal. I think of the rage that transformed his supposed natural charm into ordinary domestic violence. I think of my mother moving from one city to another to escape the brutality of a man she truly loved and truly feared. I think of myself,

By Mélanie Demers
Canadian choreographer and artistic director of MAYDAY

What is a migrant body?
What is a migrant body?

whose first trip to Vancouver felt like an all-time achievement. Never having been on a plane before my freshly turned 20 years old, the plane ride was going to be the first one of many migrations. And I think of my son, whose young life has been a suite of field trips around the world, following the touring life of his artist mom. I imagine how mundane his idea of travelling is.

I think of a migrant body and I see romantic adventures. I see people crying or silently holding hands in airports, on train platforms, in bus stations. I think of a migrant body and I see the faces without knowing the names. I think of a migrant body and I see The Raft of the Medusa hanging somewhere in a museum. I think of a migrant body and I see people sitting in first class. I think of a migrant body and I see all the modern prisons, the ghettos, the reservations, the townships, the favelas, the slums, the shantytowns.

I think of Alan Kurdi and his 3 year-old migrant body lying dead on a beach. I think of his red t-shirt and blue pants. I think of his head in the sand and his palms lifelessly facing the sky. I think of the last minutes of his life. I think of his parents who believed that something better was on the other side.

I think of a migrant body and I see road trip movies. A vintage convertible. Hands playing with the wind. Hair lashing. The sun shining.

I think of a migrant body and I think about all the things we do for love, for sex, for freedom, for money or any kind of gratification.

I think of a migrant body and I see movement. Pointless movement. Just like a child running around. Or someone dancing. For the sake of it.

Unapologetically human.
Do you live in the city you were born? How many generations back? You came from somewhere. You were migrants. You tried to fit. Be here. Stay and stop migrating. Until the next future migration. Today you just migrate to your job, your relatives, vacation... And come back to the part of the planet you think is yours.

Philosophically, the whole life is a migration. The beginning of that migration is known, the end of that migration is known. In between are different processes of migration. Some processes have been influenced by society; some by state or tradition, and some are new and present a problem. Disease, misfortune, war. These are things we cannot influence and they accelerate our migration to the cemetery, make it difficult, lead to some new frameworks. They do not prevent migration, by the way. They design new variations of migration.
Animals migrate. Wild ones, at least. For the tame, people have built fences. Just as they put borders for other people. Because people love to own. To say this is mine. Separate it from the whole and accept all responsibility for that small part. Ready to defend it. And the right to set up a border, a barrier for others. The fence is here so no one can enter. When a person needs something for themselves, they are ready to open that fence and go out into the outer world. Very often only when THEY need something.

We agreed to live in a world where individual migration is viewed as something normal, because we are not accustomed to mass migration. We are afraid of it because of previous experience. We read about it in the history books. It was described as very difficult times. Periods of hunger, war, disease. Currently, none of that is present in our countries, so we are willing to accept that these things don’t exist and project the idea of our tidy world to absolutely every corner of the globe. And that, unfortunately, is not the case. Solidarity is a bit harder to find in a situation when you do not really know how it is when you are forced to migrate.

You are here. Not anymore. You migrated. Your body was displaced. Maybe you did not want that. Maybe you did. Now you’re a fact in another place. Ready for the new migration. Or ready to be here. Not there. And what’s happening “there”? At the place you used to be? Who is there now - maybe someone migrated and occupied it? Would you like to return - would the return be a migration?

And most importantly. What did you bring with you when you migrated. I’m not talking about moving trucks, or shoulder bags. I’m not talking about what can be lost, destroyed, sold, taken away, spoiled.

What you are. Each new migration enriches you. Changes you. You have new experiences, new knowledge, new acquaintances, and new situations. Your migration impoverishes the point A from which you left. You are not there.

But enriches the point B you’re going to. You are filling it with new content. Your own experiences. Habits. Everything that you are. Whatever the point B did not have without you. That is why there is a great responsibility on you. In something new, you represent the old. You’re someone to look at. Because of you, someone will say “they are that and that.” You are a representative of the point from which you migrated. Those who will come after you are also dependent on you. Because of you, it will be easier or harder for them to migrate. Fit into the new environment. Try to.
BEAUTY

• Beauty is embedded in many artistic traditions, works and interpretations, and valued because of this, but beauty has many different definitions philosophically, historically and across cultures, sub-cultures and class. This makes it a controversial term. It may be more helpful within a participatory arts context to think of beauty as a cluster of active elements, which affect everyone in the arts space: allowing dignity, feeling lovely, sharing joy, receiving warmth, moving honestly. Beauty affects people emotionally.
  - Sara Houston

• To see my mother just one more time, an old Ford Mustang.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Afghanistan

• My life in Austria and in the Diakonie Residence House, summertime.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

• Beauty is not ephemeral like the life of the butterfly, but it is a continuous search for harmony. It is a state of being in which you realize you know how to give, support and let yourself be passed through. It is a breath that if swallowed, swells the belly with emotions, not the chest with pride.
  - Eva Boarotto

  ► See ART

BELONGING

• Belonging is a notion that characterizes the human being. A person may belong to a family, to a group, to a society, to a nation. Everyone understands to be connected with someone else because of their feelings, ideas, perspectives, dreams. Everyone can succeed with the others.
  - Tania Reginato

• Dancing together creates belonging beyond legal status, documents, passports, nationalities and age.
  - Monica Gillette

• My first thought was things – belongings. All that we are carrying, what we have, what we are. Then I got a hint that this is actually about affiliation. To someone. Community. People. Someone else. How was that decided? By birth? We cannot get credit for that. Crazy roulette and luck are responsible for the decision of where we will be born and to whom we will belong. If there is free choice then it is definitely essential to get to know the community you want to join, to understand what you are becoming a part of and to share the same values within that group. To expose yourself and, in time, maybe find a new group.
  - Antonio Gabelić

  ► see STATUS

BEGIN

• Beginning is always the hardest, especially when it is a new situation, a new group of people, a new theme, or something that I feel is outside my realm of exciting. But that is exactly when the adrenaline starts to flow and you feel the essence of living in the moment – and I totally tap into that. I tap into what is called ‘Manodharma’ the ‘rightness’ of the moment, an idea that tells you to draw upon the state of your heart and mind RIGHT NOW!! However much I structure my workshops, I know I need to live in the moment, look at the people around me, feel the flow of energy, what is it they need (not what is it I want to give) and sometimes I completely break away from what I planned to do. For me, Manodharma is the most important concept that can create a powerful, transformative experience that exists in the moment - ephemeral, transcendent.
  - Sangeeta Isvaran

• There are always layers of information coming along with each group, both personal and collective, which are important to address at initial meetings. It is important to have that information in mind, while simultaneously perceiving what is needed in the room in the actual moment. This means cultivating a higher sense of listening to the information that is showing up directly on the surface, as well as to what is subtly arising within the space, and to find appropriate responses.
  - Gary Joplin
♦ Very often I start with dancing, not talking. It’s my attempt to “levelize” the room, to bring everyone into their bodies and to begin to connect to a feeling of humanity rather than other daily-life signifiers, such as job status, roles, hierarchy, legal documents, trauma, a diagnosis, nationalities, bank accounts or degrees.
- Monica Gillette

▶ see MOTIVATION

BLACK

♦ Black is spoken about in many ways and is often used to refer to identity, color, race, heritage, origin, culture or lineage. While all of these interpretations are valid (and I am sure there are more), to me, black is an experience. The black experience will vary due to many factors, including cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, class, and education. What remains the same amongst all these varying experiences is that there are automatic assumptions placed upon blacks just by the appearance of their skin. These preconceived ideas feed into the stereotypes that exist towards black people and communities and create barriers for blacks in environments where they wish to excel.
- Carolyn Bolton

♦ Black is not a label, it’s a fact. White is a fact, but it’s very rarely a label. Once people start to filter black and white out of their general perception, they lose the so-called label. Dance is a great medium to practice the filtering of social information, so, whether black or white, one can see the whole rather than the color. There is no judgement, no fear, just an innate understanding through the perception of body language of our common origins.
- Liz King

BORDERS

♦ Borders are the imaginary line you hit when birth privileges, money and private jets don’t allow you to fly over. Borders are, on one hand, what separate us. On the other hand, it might be the only thing we have in common, like a party wall. And if we listened well enough, our backs against the tapestry, we might hear sex noise, intimate conversations, conspirator’s whispers or the silences of an empty room.
- Mélanie Demers

♦ Frustration, fear, tired, police + military, broken hand.
- Unaccompanied minor from Afghanistan

▶ see FEAR

BRIDGE BUILDERS

♦ Bridging gaps between people from different cultural backgrounds is a great challenge. It has to do with welcoming, meeting, talking, listening, sharing, and in the end learning how to live all together. The main point of bridge building is about setting up strategies to generate empathy. Games, role plays, cultural events, artistic workshop, sports or dance are working as ice breakers. They bring security, restore self-confidence and lead to respect. Little by little fences are falling down and people learn about each other with tolerance. Equality does not mean that we are all the same, it means that we achieve to know how to share our differences and how it makes us richer from the inside.
- Gabrielle de Preval

♦ Working in communities is not a solo show. You need to extend your hands out and bring people along with you. You also need people in the community you wish to enter, to reach their hand out and bring you along, to build a bridge to that which you do not yet know or understand. Bridge building is built on trust, taking the time to listen and the changes you make to the presumptions you brought with you.
- Monica Gillette

CARE

♦ Care is when someone acknowledges someone else’s need for help through actions that aid them, at the same time as sensitively respecting that person’s vulnerability and personhood. Good care requires the carer to be aware of their own power and dominance in the caring relationship, as well as acknowledging that the cared-for should still have a sense of agency.
- Sara Houston

♦ Care is about having the ability to sense when a group, or individuals within a group, have stepped into a zone where a greater sense of physical or emotional holding...
is needed. It is also then the creation and maintenance of a relational space between the participants that is responsive to those needs in an empathic way - Where does the highest point in my development or evolution meet my deepest humanity? - This creates emotional safety and allows what could be seen as volatile information to gently unfold and be revealed within the arc of a creative process.
- Gary Joplin

♦ Care is putting another person before yourself. Taking a risk for another and for the other. The highest act of humanity.
- Antonio Gabelić

▲ See HELP

**CHALLENGE**

♦ An opportunity to grow. A confrontation with what may not be there yet and with what is needed. Challenges are linked to effort, to obstacles you want to overcome and to changes of perspectives that may be needed. Challenges are work, discomfort, and they can also be pleasure. They are a way of getting closer to yourself. They are an opportunity to assess and to value where you came from, where you are currently and where you want to be.
- Katharina Senk

♦ While trying to find an individual and collective ability to come together on a common level, we might find many obstacles (personal, social, cultural...). The situation can easily become confronting and blocking, but succeeding to create a proposition that allows both STRUGGLE and PLEASURE to be present, may help turn a confronting situation into a positive one.
- Jordi Gali

**CHANGE**

♦ We change through our collaborations both within and across species. The evolution of one’s self is polluted by histories of encounters, even before a collaboration is started. Collaboration is work across difference. Often the diversity that allows us to enter collaborations and change, emerges from conflicts, histories of displacement, histories of transformative ruins, histories of extermination, imperialism, colonialism.
- Roberto Casarotto

♦ Change (verb + noun) is a process of transformation of beliefs, patterns of decision-making and values from former life experiences into current ones. In any encounter an individual confronts their former knowledge within exceptional contexts. In order to negotiate the content of a change, the persons who experience it need to be open minded and to accept their current position, the new situation and their transformative dynamics. When two parties come together, reciprocal attentiveness is necessary for a mutual growth.
- Einav Katan

**CLASS**

♦ A dance class is a physical and/or mental space where awareness and physicality are practiced.
- Clint Lutes

♦ Class can mean the lesson which you attend. It can also be understood as a division of social levels, as in upper, middle and lower. In a dance class there is no place whatsoever for social class.
- Liz King

**COLLABORATION**

♦ Trust, sharing values, sharing passion, togetherness, sharing responsibility, grow together, work together, care, sustainability, playfulness.
- Roberto Casarotto

♦ Collaboration is about being engaged through shared imaginations. Collaboration needs trust among engaged personalities and flexible, open minds to invent new approaches together.
- Monica Gillette

**COMMUNITY**

♦ Community is what happens when togetherness becomes practiced.
- Clint Lutes

♦ A space where diverse identities meet through sharing.
- Ilaria Corsi
A community can be seen as a group of people that care about each other and feel a common sense of belonging, share common perspectives, and engage in joint actions in a real or virtual place or setting. Communities are shaped around common interests, such as goals, ways of thinking and artistic interests.
- Luisella Carnelli

**CONTAMINATION**

- A vehicle for knowledge, an element of the continuous process of moulding one's identity.
  - Giovanna Garzotto

- We are contaminated by encounters that change who we are, as we make way and create space for others. Every human being carries a history of contamination, purity is not an option. Part of living and staying alive requires livable collaborations. Collaboration means working across difference, which leads to contamination.
  - Roberto Casarotto

**CONTEXT**

- The context is ever-changing. Asylum seekers are in a transit zone made of waiting. Pascale, who is a volunteer at Centre d’Hébergement d’Urgence Migrants Paris-Ivry (CHUM) beautifully said, « We try to propose something in order to let them take care of their own present. » Proposing artistic projects should arrive as a possibility, a moment to do something together, for the wait to stop for just a bit. What we can offer is an attempt. Sometimes the attempt in itself is where things happen. It does not mean that one shouldn’t expect much, because it’s the other way around. You can set high goals and have great intentions, but the important thing is to go with the flow of what happens in the now. Take care of the people present, welcome the energies and learn and be prepared to deal with a lot of the unexpected. People may or may not come, skip a day, new people may arrive on the third day, etc. There is a pretext - dance - as a creative ground for encounters to happen, which creates a context that is flexible, adaptable, mobile, gentle and careful.
  - Maire Pons

- Culture, history, location, codes, values. The circumstances that form or shape an idea or belief system. Inform yourself of the context you wish to enter and be working in.
  - Monica Gillette

**CREATIVITY**

- A generating act propelled by curiosity.
  - Ilaria Corsi

- Creativity can lead to reparation. It is so deeply linked with expression that it helps to heal the wounds from the inside. Focus on the right to express oneself, to speak up, to let the feelings go, to let imagination take the power over bad and saturated thoughts. To get out of the emergency to regain the taste of life. Eyes opened towards art and creation. Creativity has the power to give life back to people who have suffered too much.
  - Gabrielle de Preval

- The ability to make or bring something inventive and new into existence, like a solution to a problem, new method or a new artistic object or form. Creativity is associated with many factors including conducive environments, ideal collaborators, personality traits, serendipity and can even be a quest for spiritual muses. Although creativity is complicated and wide, we use imagination and original ideas to create and be inventive.
  - Lamin Suno

**CRIME OF SOLIDARITY**

- A new legal status in some European countries, a new context in which we can find ourselves when we offer help, assistance, comfort to human beings who settle without a permit in a territory and live in a state of necessity. It is also a question that can buzz in my mind for an entire car trip, at night, when I accompany a young African man and his bicycle to his home, after the set return time. The young African man who spent a day with international dance artists, sharing his personal story and art, who otherwise would have had to ride his bike for 37 kilometers.
  - Roberto Casarotto

- Basic acts of assistance and support for undocumented people are increasingly being criminalized. Acts of solidarity, which
Culture isn’t just the art we make and see, it’s the habits and ways of doing things that make up our daily lives. Culture is embedded within our bodies, the way we move, the way we act and communicate, the objects we make and use. It makes up our assumptions and priorities. These elements shape how we see the world, they are within how we see ourselves too. We usually take our culture for granted until we are uprooted, or we live in a place where another culture is dominant. Then, we may feel isolated, even alienated. In thinking about culture, if you live and work where you feel comfortable, where your culture is dominant, it is useful to think about how you may welcome in the alienated and under-represented, as well as those who feel threatened, and how you celebrate our multicultural melting pots.

- Sara Houston

When occurring between two people seem like basic acts of humanity, can land people in courtrooms, and possibly jail, when occurring between local citizens and asylum seekers.

- Monica Gillette

When I dance I am the same person, but I can express more emotions because I don’t need to talk. When you dance in a group you don’t know, stereotypes start to fall away as everybody moves together.

- Abdel, 15
In my 25 years of using dance in communities, across 35-40 countries and in situations of conflict and abuse, I am constantly amazed at how many techniques of communication and empathy are embedded in the arts. I started studying Bharatanatyam (a southern Indian classical dance form) at the age of 5 and over the next 20 years my teacher basically taught us how to use this art form to connect – with oneself, with the spectator, with the space. This is an ideology called rasa that permeates many Indian (and south-east Asian) art forms, going back at least 2 millenia. Today, the method I have developed, called Katradi, is inspired from techniques that I learnt as a child – rasa (an ideology of empathy), abhinaya (techniques of communication through the body, speech, colour and spirit), manodharma (techniques of improvisation tapping into the profound sense of being in the moment) and so much more. Dance engages the body and the senses, the mind, the heart and our intuition – they all have a part to play in achieving empathy and creating understanding. Transformations, personal and societal, happen in spaces infused with high levels of empathy. This is especially true when exploring themes rooted in conflict and polarized identities that generate strong negative emotions like anger, fear and shame.
During a dance workshop with girls who had been rescued from sexual trafficking and sexual abuse, Maria-Guadelupe* started talking to me. She told me that her parents had sold her sister every night to different men. I listened. That her sister had been beaten, starved, drugged. I listened. She described to me all that her sister had suffered, all the kinds of abuse. I listened. Then at the end, just before she left, as I hugged her, she passed a slip of paper into my hand. It said, “Yo tambien” (Me too). She has been talking about herself as well.

Fatima* says, “You killed my father, I watched him die in my arms.” Ronald* replies, “You killed my brother, he bled to death.” In this gathering, Muslim and Christian youth came together in an Indian dance workshop. Dancing to funky Bollywood songs, playing ridiculous games, creating role-plays with powerful Indonesian masks, soon lead to intense, intimate conversations of hatred, conflict, pain and loss – and finally the understanding that each one in that room could understand what the other had been through, since death has no religion, pain no gender, grief no separation.

Antonella* sits beside me at dinner at the end of a long day of workshops, talks and performances, and she tells me in a mixture of Italian and broken English that she thinks she has Parkinson’s because she was severely abused as a child. In spite of knowing that my Italian is rudimentary, she spends one hour earnestly sharing her horrific story, a story that fills her with shame and anger, fills me with pain as I respond in halting Italian, trying to convey my love, my understanding with my eyes and hands. In the end she says, “When my husband touches me I start trembling because his touch reminds me of the violence”. Then she adds, “I don’t know why I tell you this, maybe because I felt that love this morning when we danced…”

2007
CAIMEDE, Merida, México

2008
Youth Leader Workshops, Maluku, Indonesia

2018
Dance workshop, Italy
Two days ago I facilitated a workshop at a parent-teacher meeting in a low income school in a high risk area to talk about child abuse and how to protect their children. In half an hour, parent after parent came up with stories of abuse they had gone through as children, at the hands of fathers, uncles, neighbours; an astounding outpouring of pain that led to an incredible feeling of lightness, to a pledge to do better by their children. After 3 hours, parents still didn’t want to leave. Hindus, Christians, Muslims communities that normally held themselves apart came together in this incredible sharing.

I could give so many more instances of such open-hearted sharing of very taboo subjects buried under layers and layers of shame, fear, anger, sadness and impotence. Why did they choose to share? Because of the dance, because of the games, the joyful movement exercises that happened in each workshop that created a feeling of complicity among relative strangers, created a space of non-judgement, of empathy. A regular parent-teacher meeting or a typical conflict mediation session had not produced such results; but using dance-theatre, simple games of eye contact, exercises using physical touch to build trust, storytelling, mirroring each other’s joy and pain, we created a space that said you are not alone, I am with you, me too.

I have realized through the years of community work that the ideology of rasa approaches empathetic understanding in a unique way. For example, society today places emphasis on the intellectual approach – many school systems focus on it to the exclusion of all other types of understanding. But the root of conflict, abuse and discrimination, is not a rational one. It is usually sensory, emotional and intuitive factors that trigger violence. This laid the foundation of the Katradi method, which is based on five mediums of understanding: physical, sensory, intellectual, emotional and intuitive. This is not just a theoretical construct; each module of Katradi design is a blend of activities that work through these five mediums of understanding.
We create innovative, out-of-the-box strategies to jolt people out of their comfort zones and search within for the biases that create fear and separation. We constantly strive to nurture the empathy within ourselves and infuse it in every aspect of our work, creating powerful spaces of transformation.

In 2012 Sunita* confided in me about being abused repeatedly for more than 3 years since the age of 8. During those painful moments of trying to find the courage to talk about it for the first time, she could not even find words to explain what had been done to her. She just repeated in Tamil, ‘He did it! He did it!’ Only by her pain, fear and shame did I understand that she meant that she had been raped. This incident made a deep impact on me that the child was so helpless - her community had let her down, we, her teachers had let her down, even her language had let her down. Shame and fear, fear and shame – this is the one constant in all the workshops. We humans construct huge barriers to hide our shame and fear. We hide it behind anger, intolerance, blame and victimhood. Dance, indeed any art form, has the tools to cut through those suffocating layers and create a space of positivity, acceptance and non-judgement. This is my truth as I have seen it and experienced it. And I say with conviction – Me too. In your pain I see mine, in your joy my heart rises.

*All names have been changed for privacy
DANCE

- Using dance is strategic. Dance is a universally shared art form that is able to communicate, include, educate, enlighten, entertain and overcome languages and cultural barriers through body and movement. Dance is a way of returning to ourselves, of re-appropriating our own body (maybe a traumatised body), of reconnecting and listening, of tuning, of observing ourselves through and with others, of starting over, of opening up communities and creating new ones, of making us conscious of the differences and to live them as opportunities for empowerment. Dance can make us enter a new state of understanding. It’s about communication, involving different levels at the same time: physical, mental, analytical, emotional, intellectual, intuitional and sensation. Because of this multilevel exchange, the use of the body and dance are powerful tools that allow us to dismantle prejudices and preconceptions and to perceive from different perspectives. Dance is a key to create bridges through instant and deep connection, also between people that are not used to relating with each other.
  - Andrea Rampazzo

- Dance is a safety anchor, a reason to feel beautiful again, an opportunity to be yourself and to be able to show it to others without masks. Dance is an opportunity to embrace life instead of punching it. It is bare strength and fragility.
  - Eva Boarotto

Dancing in a group makes you discover new sensations and recover old ones. The interaction helps get rid of the disturbing feeling of shame.
  - Camilla, 16

- Thoughts and emotions released by the fully articulate body.
  - John Ashford

- Dance is the art form that connects people to their bodies and humanity the most.
  - Roberto Casarotto

DIGNITY

- The right to be silent – the right to opacity – the right to refuse to answer to anything.
  - Nora Chipaumire

- When all the people know my name.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Afghanistan

- Something that is defended. What no one can take away from you, though many are trying. Something you can sell, but that money is tainted. What should always be acknowledged by others. What should never be taken away. Something that many people value more than their own life. Something that is, to many people, synonymous with life itself.
  - Antonio Gabelić

- See HELP
**DISPLACEMENT**

- Displacement is the consideration of an object’s start position in relation to its end position. It considers how far out of place that object has become. Used in physics, it is also a term that applies to many geographical and social issues. It is used as a term to talk about people who have fled their homeland, but we can also think of it as internal displacement from psychological comfort to trauma; from being whole in one’s body to a place of pain. How might we move forward from this place of deficit and discomfort to an enriching end point?
  - Sara Houston

- Displacement is an act of restoration. It becomes necessary when a sudden vision, a new panoramic point of view or a blood oxygenation after a blood apnea occurs. It is necessary when we realize that the world went through a mutation and our place is lost in new balance. If the poles collapse, we must rearrange our landscapes (or remove them), our horizon line, and affirm again the identity of our bodies and thoughts. What can we do if a place for us does not exist in this new world? We will offer ourselves in the kinetik force so that our bodies will not be ignored ever again.
  - Chiara Bersani

- uiuiui...so many problems, I am now in Austria. If it was good for me in Somalia, I would not be here.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

**DISORIENTATION**

- Imbalanced action during times of difficulty, it brings the body out of place and reduces the freedom to experience life.
  - Roberto Casarotto

- The feeling of being lost. State of confusion regarding time, space or self identity. The loss of one’s sense of being and existing.
  - Giulio Ferronato

**DIVERSITY**

- Diversity is a fact, an evidence – something that does not need to be justified as its own essence makes it stranger to the moral world. When notions of variability are blooming, we have diversity. When the DNA of nature expresses itself, we have diversity. When the talent of genetics shapes bodies, we have diversity.
  - Chiara Bersani

- There is no right or wrong way to dance. There are unusual places where to dance from. In the Migrant Bodies project, we witnessed what it means to bring together people of different age, gender, background and experience. Diversity means adaptation. Adaptation means flexibility. Flexibility means openness.
  - Elisabetta Bisaro

- It is the border that we trace to exclude what we do not consider part of our identity or of our being. It is a mobile border, which according to the context, can include or exclude, and is a consequence of the elements that constitute my own identity. Based on the source of these elements, each individual authorizes themselves to label diversity.
  - Giovanni Cunico

**EMPATHY**

- The mental and physical act of trying to understand someone else’s experience. When you feel as if it happened to you.
  - Monica Gillette

**EMPOWER**

- In a general sense, ‘empowerment’ is defined as a process, a mechanism, by which people, organisations, and communities gain mastery over their affairs. In this way it refers to the capability of people to access and use their personal and collective power, authority and influence, and to employ that strength when engaging with other people, institutions or society. The ultimate goal is to authorize everyone in the room to feel, to think, and to understand.
  - Luisella Carnelli

- To see, hear and embody a variety of perspectives that may not be your own. Embrace all of them to re-assess everything; opinions, attitudes, feelings, mind-set, drive, motivation and so on and so on, to be able to empower the self and the other.
  - Kristin De Groot
Creating a safe and open environment in which people feel empowered to show up more fully, especially in aspects of themselves that might normally remain hidden. Engendering a re-awakening of somatic curiosity that slowly allows people to step outside of the physical, mental and emotional boxes they have created for one reason or another.

- Gary Joplin

**ENCOUNTER**

- An encounter is a fortunate or unfortunate meeting with someone, something; the proof that everything is randomly orchestrated by an unexplainable force.
  - Mélanie Demers

- An encounter is an opportunity, an experience. It can be both exciting and confronting. Dance can create encounters outside of the everyday, both with oneself and others. How one handles an encounter determines the shape of their future.
  - Monica Gillette

- See ACCESS

**ETHICS**

- Engaging in community projects with asylum seekers demands a great deal of focus, presence and attention from the project bearers and the participants involved. We are in the presence of human beings for whom many aspects of their lives are changing all the time. Be content with the very little things. A gesture, a name, a smile, a look, something learned. All we can try to do is be humble and centered, opening a possible space where anyone can feel welcome.
  - Marie Pons

- Ethics is concerned with what is just and fair. It is concerned with the moral values that may guide our behaviour towards others and the environment in everyday life. Ethics is about giving others respect and dignity; being mindful of their humanity, like your humanity. Ethics above all is about recognising power. It is about recognising the power you hold and the choices you make in how you use your status in relation to others.
  - Sara Houston

- See ACCESS

**EXCELLENCE**

- Excellence has many definitions. Primarily the word refers to achievement. However, when a person comprehends in a moment of recognition, that person has excelled in understanding. Excellence is not to be judged or to be used in competitive acts, rather it is a moment of surpassing the norm.
  - Liz King

- A quality aiming to shine and pave the way for new accomplishments and best results. Excellence shows the way.
  - Mirna Žagar

- See ACCESS

- Remember the child in you. You knew the difference between good and bad without someone telling you. You knew how to ask the right questions yourself. What happened to that child? Life? Material assets that we don’t want to jeopardize? Are we afraid the collapse of the world as we know it will result in anarchy? How come ethics can endanger the world? What kind of world is it then? Ethics seeks for the right decision. A decision which can be defended, for which we will never be sorry for or be ashamed of.
  - Antonio Gabelić

- See CARE
Dance is universal, but how you want to engage a specific community with dance is not. Every situation has its own unique factors that must be considered before you begin. It takes time to understand where your skills and interests overlap with the needs and desires of a community, particularly if they are people dealing with displacement and forced migration. Where to begin? A dance class? A party? Cooking together? Creating a performance? Dance in private? Dance in public? Do you teach your dances? Do you learn theirs? Separate the men and the women? Dance with children? All of the above, and more, happened over the course of Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders, and the answers for how you will do it depends on your interests and skills and the desires and the needs of the people you wish to engage with.

A key element to our process was identifying the role of the dance artist as one of facilitator, which revealed many layers: facilitating encounters between local citizens and newcomers; facilitating encounters between residents within a refugee center; creating opportunities for each participant to encounter themselves with pleasure and joy; designing activities where dances from everyone’s heritage could be shared between participants; creating and mediating performative encounters with the public. We aimed to remove any possible hierarchies or identification based on status and to meet person to person. To be people devoid of labels, such as refugee, asylum seeker, documented, undocumented, illegal or migrant. To be equal. To be dancers. To learn from each other and create together.

To begin, it is important to identify with whom you are interested to dance. Children? Women only? Mixed groups? Residents that live together at a refugee center? Second generation migrants? In collaboration with a language school? People who identify as queer? To invite immigrants to classes you are already offering?

By Monica Gillette
American choreographer and dramaturg living in Germany
Do you want to work towards a performance? Or weekly or monthly gatherings? What is the best pairing of your practice and skills and the communities around you? What is it about your dance practice that can enhance the quality of life for people dealing with forced migration, on both a physical and social level? How can your proposal support locals without migrant backgrounds to feel confident to interact and engage newcomers with respect, empathy and openness?

To better understand the needs of the community, a first bridge can be created through an organization specialized in working with migrants and refugees. Discuss with them what they might want your project or classes to achieve. To help the asylum seekers to learn the language? Meet locals? Discover the city or territory where they are currently living? Build better communication between the residents? To foster pleasure, focus, joy and positive social exchange? When the interests are more clear, then understand together when the best time is to meet the community and to offer your activities. If you want to work with children, when are they done with school? Are there festivities that make your proposal untimely, like Ramadan? Do they need to travel to attend your dance proposal? Are there transit restrictions based on bus or train schedules? What is the timeframe and day of the week when most of your intended participants would be available?

Following are some components to think about while preparing and structuring your proposal, drawing upon your own artistic practice and thinking about what you want to offer. You don’t need to have experience working with migrants or refugees to begin:

- **Introduction** How do you want to introduce yourself? Your artistic practice? How do you want to share who you are in a way that opens and invites participants to join you in your proposal? Every new group and situation is different. When there is a language barrier, perhaps sharing a dance or mini-choreography is a way to introduce yourself. Other times, meeting more informally and sharing your project idea verbally is the way to go.
Invitation What is the best way to extend an invitation to the target participants? Inform yourself about the community you are interested to meet and imagine what would make them feel interested and welcome to your proposal.

Ice breakers How can you help people land in the room (and their bodies) with playfulness? How can you help people to open up to dance and everyone in the room.

Trust There would be no dance activities without the will to participate. Building trust is at the foundation for people to feel the will to join your dance proposal. What do your intended participants need in order to have a safe space, emotionally and physically?

Relationship to one’s own body What tools do you have in your practice to bring people into their bodies? Into their full selves? How can you guide people to their bodies as “home” among all the pressures, worries and distractions? How can you, through the body, activate new possibilities to regain autonomy, competence and personal capacities?

Identity How can you invite elements from people’s own heritage, such as music, photos, stories, objects, imagination?

Touch and contact The use of touch can be a great tool for many to access release and comfort and to gradually establish trust, but it can also create a blockage, or make people close up, if it is against religious beliefs or cultural codes, or if people are carrying traumas and abuse. Consider ways of introducing touch and contact that begin slowly and with familiar gestures, building gradually based on the comfort level in the room. Eye to eye contact is also a form of contact. If you introduce touch and contact, also introduce opportunities to talk about it and to learn about each other’s cultures, codes and personal borders. This is how we learned from two of our participants that in their cultures, eye
contact is a sign of respect or disrespect, thus making eye contact harder for them than physical contact while dancing.

- **Listening and Tuning** How can non-verbal physical tasks build a group with heightened ability to listen to one another with their whole body? How can you tune their awareness and perception skills, like radars extended in all directions, to bring a group into synchrony?

- **Non-verbal expression** Develop as many tools as you can to work with non-verbal exchange. Not only does it help surpass language barriers, but it also creates a different type of focus and “reading” of each other’s bodies.

- **Building a group/a new community** How can you create a participatory environment that is non-hierarchical? What kind of patterns, repetitions or rituals can you establish to develop a communal physical vocabulary? Creating and repeating new choreography in a group can be held like a ritual and something to hold onto when the facilitators are no longer there.

- **Sharing Leadership** How can you foster and develop opportunities to pass on the act of leading or teaching movements? When can you be the follower and the participants the leaders?

- **Transformation of state** Joy! How can you connect your participants to a feeling of vitality? To their heart’s pumping and to excitement and positive energy flowing through their bodies? How can you also explore other sensations and states in the body, such as focused stillness, anger, strength or softness?

- **Ownership in creating movement** Let your dancers capture, create, identify and remember their own movement, movements that come from their own expressions, their own stories, their own physical language.
Dance tools
Identify tools in your dancer’s tool box that may nourish the group you are working with: approaches to improvisation, a sense of feeling grounded, ways to be present, how to listen and respond physically, to practice being seen, how to be an active viewer, etc. (While these are useful skills to share, also remember they are most likely coming from a Western dancer’s trained perspective.)

Location
The space where an activity takes place can have a big impact and all options should be considered. Sharing invitations to each other’s spaces (when possible) creates a friendship built on interest and invitation. Dancing in public spaces, like museums or parks, not only assures refugees and migrants that they are welcome, but also gives positive visibility to their livelihood within a city center or neighborhood.

Community to Community
If you already have a steady dance group, whether it be composed of dance professionals or a steady group of non-professionals, see if you can engage that community to open its doors to the new community you wish to work with. We witnessed this happen to great effect with Dance Well, an open dance group for Parkinson’s movement research in Bassano del Grappa, Italy, as well as in the Burgenland region of Austria with Liz King’s Bodyfocus group of local non-professional dancers. In both cases, one well established group with an accumulated dance knowledge created a perfect environment to welcome and dance with people new to the region.

Performance
Creating a performance with refugees and migrants can be instrumental on multiple levels. Not only does it develop confidence and pride in the participants, but it also allows them to become role models. It allows for their universe to be shared with a public, bringing visibility and empowerment. It also helps progress the art form of dance by enriching the existing practices with new imaginaries, new rhythms, new dynamics, new languages, new people coming from different cultures.
• **Unstructured time** While dance may be your main vehicle for encounters and expression, it is important to spend time together that is also unstructured in its aim. Hang out. Cook a meal. Go for a walk, maybe showing each other your favorite places in the city or neighborhood. Invite them to cultural events.

• **See dance together** Another opportunity to share time is to attend dance performances together, which also contribute to an inclusive environment in a location where it most likely wouldn’t exist otherwise. When we see a show together, we experience sharing emotions while sitting together in the dark. Taking the time to sit next to each other and to feel each other’s reactions, is an opportunity to learn from each other. Encourage a conversation. You yourself will also see the show differently as you imagine what your companions’ eyes are seeing. The physical state a mixed audience brings makes one more aware of the cultural diversity (or lack thereof) in an audience. Many art institutions are keen to create more inclusive environments; request donated tickets or passes on behalf of the asylum seekers you wish to invite.

Above all, what is most important is to stay reactive and flexible to the people in front of you. Despite the evidence of impact, there may be moments of frustration or disappointment due to inconsistency or late attendance. You will be meeting people who have different codes and cultures than your own and who have larger worries and concerns than you can understand or imagine. Connect to the participants who are more instinctually responsive to your proposal and see if they can help build additional bridges to their community and inform you more about what is needed or what you may need to change about your approach.

And finally, how will you, as an artist or institution, let yourself be affected, shaped and altered by the encounters you seek? Are you willing to share your practice with people who are far removed
from it? Are you aware that what for you is art/work, for others, could be leisure? Are you prepared to shift and adapt your role or position? How can you deal with moments that don’t make sense? Or don’t go as planned? These experiences will probably shake you in some way. It is ok to cry, feel frustrated and scream. How can you take care of yourself on this journey? Most likely the endeavor will need more planning, processing and reflection than you imagined. Allow the time and create the openness to learn and receive from the people you seek to engage with.
FACILITATOR

♦ A person who is there to help and support. A facilitator is like a farmer: creates the field for letting things grow.
A facilitator is available to connect on a physical, emotional, analytical, intellectual, intuitional and sensitive level.
- Andrea Rampazzo

♦ Someone who can meet a group of people about particular issues. One who does not necessarily lead, but takes care that the activities go in the direction of the reason to meet as a group.
- Žak Valenta

FAMILY

♦ I have a lot of stress in my head, I saw my mother shot, I have a grandpa, but what does he have to eat? No water, no rain. I have a dad, a big brother (18), a sister (11) and my little brother (12). They’re all in Somalia, but I do not know if they are alive or dead, I miss my family - I need them here.
- Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

♦ Dance unites people in a basic, almost primordial nature, inducing familiarity through a common stamping ground. Building a strong and regular dance community enables a strong and regular substitute family. Migrants, who may no longer have the infrastructure of their own family, will experience empathy in the new environment whilst sharing common challenges in the dance lessons with local citizens. Often these bonds continue over months and years, developing into friendships beyond the dance lessons.
- Liz King

► See COLLABORATION

FEAR

♦ I have the feeling fear is a central topic while trying to bring different communities together and while trying to create encounters between local and migrant populations. We need to find strategies to reduce fear so empathy can begin to work at the origins of a new relation, where a person is just a person, beyond his or her legal status.
- Jordi Galí

♦ A contraction in the soul informing your body that you are in danger. Like any wild animal, it can be partially tamed, but it might occasionally destroy your furniture just the same.
- Sara Lando

♦ Fear is when I don’t know something or I don’t know how it will make me feel, and because of this, I don’t want to face it. It is the sensation of powerlessness that leads you to run away from someone or something that makes you feel inferior or inappropriate. Fear is the opposite of joy.
- Giulio Ferronato

► See DISORIENTATION

FLEXIBILITY

♦ The ability to adapt to a force without breaking under its pressure. Letting go, release.
Moving in response to the environment with respect for both yourself and what’s around you.
- Sara Lando

♦ To move with harmony and good timing in your body, but also your mind. Flexibility is being able to shift your point of view about different people and circumstances in order to build, exchange and have understanding of one another.
- Giulio Ferronato

♦ We should be very flexible in whatever we are doing. To advance in dance, sometimes one must stretch and become more flexible to be able to accomplish certain movements that the mind wishes to achieve. In this regard, flexibility is the soft movement of our body from one angle to another with the help of the mind. It can also work the other way around and the body can help open the mind. It’s all about opening your mind and to stretch your position.
- Lamin Suno

► see CHALLENGE

FORCED MIGRATION

♦ It is a complex phenomenon, which changes through time and history. It is a migratory movement that involves force, compulsion or coercion, because people aren’t free
to choose to move. Armed conflicts, environmental disaster, political crisis and systematic human rights violations force people to leave their own land and their loved ones.
- Tania Reginato

**GLOSSARY**

**FEAR**

• The possibility to do, to think, to enjoy, to laugh, to cry, to aim, to pursue, to love, to learn and yearn, to choose, to like, to hate, to pray, to be loved, to be respected, to be heard, to be amongst others, to be able to communicate, to be able to work, to be able to earn a decent living, to be able to move, to teach, to be listened to. To be able to say we’re ok and actually mean it.

- Ginelle Chagnon

• It is an act of resistance, always.
- Roberto Casarotto

**FREEDOM**

• The possibility to do, to think, to enjoy, to laugh, to cry, to aim, to pursue, to love, to learn and yearn, to choose, to like, to hate, to pray, to be loved, to be respected, to be heard, to be amongst others, to be able to communicate, to be able to work, to be able to earn a decent living, to be able to move, to teach, to be listened to. To be able to say we’re ok and actually mean it. Freedom may be the absence of fear but it is certainly having the strength to respect and to take responsibility over any living matter.
- Ginelle Chagnon

• A social construct that may be based on biological sex, social structures, norms, or self perception.
- Giulio Ferronato

**GENDER**

• In the context of the Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders project, I experienced the necessity to be extra aware and sensitive to the topic of gender and the role it plays in the interaction with people coming from very diverse backgrounds. Sometimes we felt the need to actively address gender specific topics within the project, such as the implementation of a women only dance class. And at other times, the mere act of staying aware and alert for gender related topics was enough. We allowed ourselves the flexibility to react and adapt when sensitive situations were coming up, instead of neglecting, overemphasizing or reinforcing stereotypical roles of masculinity or femininity.
- Katharina Senk

• A social construct that may be based on biological sex, social structures, norms, or self perception.
- Giulio Ferronato

**GEOGRAPHY**

• Geography is about describing a territory. Territories often have to conform to maps and the lines that separate nations from each other. Maps depict the world not as it is, but as it is decided according to specific points of view, points of perspective, points of power. The lines draw geographically cohesive territories, define spaces, and should inspire the territory’s understanding of itself, its identity. When the line becomes a border, identities can be formed according to its positions. Rights and restrictions are imposed upon people, as well as possibilities to move freely from one territory to another. Documents are needed – they contain people, their identities, their bodies. Historically, when borders are redrawn, shifted arbitrarily or a new wall is erected, the nature of a border and its effects on the bodies that cross it complexifies exponentially.
- Roberto Casarotto

• Geography is about the study of spaces, places and environments. It is the study of processes, systems, forces and relationships that affect the earth and humankind. Geography is sometimes seen as choreographic – the exploration of the movement of people through space and their relationships to that space and each other. The choreographic is political because our relationship to others is bounded by assumptions, prejudice, policies, colonization, ignorance, favouritism, love, curiosity, violence, good and bad experiences. Space will change according to how our relationships are coloured by these elements.
- Sara Houston

**GESTURE**

• From Latin: carry-care. It is a movement of the body that is an expression of values. It remains in the body despite aging and neurodegenerative diseases, when all the rest is forgotten.
- Roberto Casarotto

• Physical, non-verbal expression of thought and emotions.
- Ilaria Corsi
HABITS

• A habit is like a muscle that needs to be trained and put into a practice, before it can be alive.
  - Tony Tran

• Something you wear and feel comfortable with. Habits act as facilitators in the struggle to fit into a complex world. They facilitate, but also over-simplify. As with clothes, dismissing old ones can be a way to move into new ones.
  - Giovanna Garzotto

▶ See GEOGRAPHY

HEALTH

• Health is a constantly changing assumption. Disability is more and more relatable to the level of access, or lack of access, to society that a person lives. By this definition disability is not a condition, but rather a state and being of good health is relative to access.
  - Roberto Casarotto

• Health is a state of balance that involves the body and its vital functions, as well as its mental and emotional element. It can vary from individual to individual, and it is not always measurable in an objective manner, precisely because it relates to the emotional and mental element of a person, as well as to their self-perception. This state of balance is continuously under threat, and it is also influenced by external – social, economic, and political – factors.
  - Francesca Foscarini

• Health ‘is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.’ – World Health Organization (1946). Health means to be in balance with yourself and your environment. Dance is beneficial for your health not only because it is a physical activity, but because it also addresses the emotional, cognitive, psychological and mental forces in you. Dance for your health, dance for your life!
  - Edith Wolf Perez

HELP

• What might be good for you, might not be good for others. When the act of helping is only a one-way street or done without listening to the real needs of the people you are working with, the potential for arrogance, disrespect and unwanted hierarchies grows. Only being allowed to receive and not also give, can rob people of their dignity.
  - Monica Gillette

• Giving and receiving; Solving problems/difficulties; Finding solutions together.
  - 張欣怡 Gwen Hsin-Yi Chang

• Help is the word to explain friendship. You can help me, but I can also help you. It’s life. It’s what’s good in life. It’s important as you don’t know what can happen. Once day you know, one day you don’t know. You don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow. When you see a poor person, you can help. It’s good for you. It’s the one quality that makes a difference.
  - Modibo Traore

HINDSIGHTING

• The practice of observing and looking back at a specific situation that happened in the past, with he use and inclusion of present-day knowledge, insight and experience. A process of reflection, realisation and cognition, which will make advancement possible.
  - Katharina Senk

Dance is a powerful means: it allows you to move and stay healthy, but it is also socially important. When you dance together, you can free your mind and therefore yourself.

- Sulayman, 28
Hindsighting is exactly that – looking back and figuring out what happened in the class or workshop that I proposed. It is a process of reflection where I evaluate what worked and what didn’t. They say hindsight is 20-20, and sadly, often I find that frustratingly true. I see more clearly what I should have done – maybe an opportunity to get participants to open up that I lost, or where I lost the flow. But hindsighting is also important to acknowledge what worked, so that you keep it the next time. I tend to hindsight on physical, emotional, intellectual and intuitive levels –I try to look at energy flow, emotional and physical contact, knowledge acquired and potential change in attitude, all of which contribute to the success of a workshop.

- Sangeeta Isvaran

Hope is what makes the human being move forward, that unknown energy in all of us that gives a person the power to endure when it becomes too difficult. That wish that tomorrow won’t be worse than today. In Croatian we say, “nada umire zadnja” (hope is the last to die). After hope dies, the one who hopes also dies. Hope is a good projection for our future – something without an expiration date.

- Antonio Gabelić

HOPE

- That I can live together with my family here in Austria. That I can still learn a lot and work a lot.

- Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

- In working with migrant associations, you experience waiting. Migrants have to wait for their papers, wait for news to come, wait for somebody to give them hope. How can we make this waiting active? For me, being part of this project is a constant learning in dealing with the everyday uncertain living of these people and the waiting imposed on them. All we can do is create togetherness in the waiting.

- Elisabetta Bisaro
Dance is an opportunity to open my eyes, to learn from others and to gain confidence.

Lali, 25
The ethics of working with people who have gone through forced migration

Ethics is concerned with what is just and fair. It is concerned with the moral values that may guide our behaviour towards others and the environment in everyday life. It is about making choices that affect others in specific cultural contexts. Ethics is about safeguarding the rights of participants. It is about care for the other, about making sure others can come to no harm through your actions. Ethics is about giving others respect and dignity; being mindful of their humanity, like your humanity. It is about justice within the context for people with whom you engage. It is about being reflexive, thinking about your decisions to act and speak, reflecting on your own actions and those in your employ, and deciding to change behaviours that do not seem morally right. Ethics above all is about recognising power. It is about recognising the power you hold and the choices you make in how you use your status in relation to others.

So you want to work with people who have gone through forced migration? You’ve got a great artistic idea? You want to do some good? Then think about your own privilege. Think about your intentions. Why do you want to do this work? Remember, if thinking ethically, this isn’t about you and your career and what is the hot topic of the moment, what is ‘sexy’ and what enables you to feel good about working in the arts. If these are your intentions, don’t work in this area. Migrants are people. Migrants are people without the privilege and power you hold. If you are the focus, go do a solo, or at least take a step back from the space you are colonising.
So you want to create awareness about the plight of refugees? Take time to reflect on the artistic process and product. Are you reducing dance participants to the sum of their label as refugee/asylum seeker/(ex-)detainee/displaced person/migrant/(il)legal settler? Being a refugee or asylum seeker is not the only facet of a person’s identity and so ask yourself whether participants are being restricted by their identity as a forced migrant in your work. Understand that creating participatory dance work around the topic of forced migration may induce tokenism and be disempowering or condescending to your participants. What power do participants have over their representation? Think about your own artistic and procedural demands on them, about the frameworks for creating art that you impose. Think about the implications if you are mining participants for stories. Think back to what being ethical means. Think, reflect, change, act, reflect, change, act.

Whose voices get heard in your work? Is it your voice? Is it the voice of your funder? Are you really opening a space for the voices of your participants? Are you allowing a space for them to present themselves (their ideas, their art), or are you representing them or what you think is them? Whose voices are not heard or whose bodies are not seen? Think about the local community. How are they served by you in this work that focuses on “other” people? Are spaces given to “non-plight” experiences?

Ethics are challenging. Ethics force us to re-evaluate ourselves as artists and as human beings. Ethics remind us to be continually reflecting and thinking about our artistic practice, our choices and assumptions. Ethics are not easy because we need to destabilise our cosy place of privilege. Think, reflect, change, act, reflect, change, act.
If a dance artist or cultural institution is interested to create a dance activity for migrants and refugees, what recommendations do you have for them? Who should they approach?

In almost every country, migrants and refugees are accommodated, cared for and regulated by organizations (NGOs), government offices, and police. Make contact with an organization and find out what is and is not possible for the realization of your idea or project. (For example, find out what regulations are in place for classes or training sessions migrants and refugees must attend, or for overnight stays away from the residence due to your project). If necessary, make written agreements. Sometimes special permits are needed, which the NGOs and social services can inform you about. Often the first contact will be with volunteers who help migrants and refugees. Be aware that while volunteers are very committed, they often lack the legal know-how and do not hold any power or legal mandate. In their function as volunteers, they do not need to maintain the same professional distance that social workers and
others working in similar roles must have. There could be situations where this can be problematic in the course of the project.

**How should dance artists and cultural institutions prepare and inform themselves for the community they are entering?**

What I would say to the artists is this: In the beginning, the project idea is YOUR construct in YOUR head. Your head is probably white, educated and formed from a Western world. Like it or not, part of you is racist, colonialist and your unconscious attitude is that you come with your project idea to do something good for the “poor” migrants and refugees. Forget it. That’s more presumptuous, old school, developmental colonialism. They feel this immediately! And are definitely not interested in being treated that way. The fact is, the vast majority of people from “Third World” countries experience us this way, historically and also due to the current, global situation – and rightly so!

To be clear, migrants and refugees are survivors. They are strong. They are heroes. Treat them like that. Compassion, yes, pity - NO! Migrants and refugees have a biography and had a whole life BEFORE they became migrants and refugees. They have had to experience things that you and I cannot imagine. Migrants and refugees are waiting for asylum, for a better life, and have existential needs. Your expectations, worries and motivations are 100% different from those of migrants and refugees. You will be working with non-professionals in the context of your field. You will work with people who have different values and norms than you regarding discipline, punctuality, motivation, etc.

At the beginning of your idea, there was most likely no interaction or communication with migrants or refugees. To change that, and before you go into an interaction or realization of your project, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is your real motivation to do this project?
- How important are the migrants or refugees in the project?
- How important are you in the project?
- What difficulties might you be making for the migrants or refugees?
- What difficulties might they have in the project?
- What is your benefit in the realization of the project?
- What is the benefit for the migrants and refugees in the realization of the project?
- Why do you think they should participate?
- What can you learn about this project from them and are you open and ready for it?
- Can the participants even work in a group, or are there ethnic groups who are possibly hostile in their home countries?
And now, go engage! Share with them your idea. Open yourself and your proposal and develop a COMMON idea and project. Let migrants and refugees channel their dignity, self-determination and power into the project.

If you can not do that, then you are doing one more project that is really only a charity charade, meaning migrants and refugees who are trying to be “seen” in hopes of obtaining a certificate for “successful integration”, a recommendation for the asylum authority, a little money or simply a “bus ticket” to another town. Do not let that happen. Do not let migrants or refugees dance, paint, make music without “soul”!

Are there any “Do’s” and Don’ts”?

Do’s:

- Develop a selection process (such as a casting or introduction workshop) to find out who has real interest.
- Make clear the question of publications, pictures and video. Migrants and refugees have often been followed in their country. Do you want to be on social media, or too dangerous?
- Bring lightness, joy and humor.
- Communicate at eye level
- Allow participation
- Say goodbye to your original idea – it will certainly be different.

Dont’s:

- Never, ever promise something if you are not 100% sure that you can keep the promise! Migrants and refugees are people who have lost almost everything and have experienced big disappointments in life. Often only hope remains. A broken promise weighs much heavier in these situations. Every promise is a straw to which people who have lost everything cling.
- Migrants and refugees have enough worries and little to laugh about. Are you a difficult person, problem-oriented and serious? Then do your project with someone else.
- Do not think that you know better what is good for migrants and refugees.
- Migrants and refugees often have a tragic history. Do not ask for it, do not be a misery voyeur – not as a person, not with the project.
- Do not turn migrants and refugees into victims. They are heroes.

If a social worker is interested to offer more activities for their residents or community and is interested to bring dance, what should they do? How should they prepare?

Make contact with a dance company or choreographer. Evaluate the ideas and possibilities. Evaluate administrative and financial options. Then evaluate if there is interest on the part of the migrants and refugees you are working with. Start the process with a presentation or info event with the migrants and refugees. Begin (see above).
IMPROVISATION

- The physical and mental actions of readiness; reacting (or not) to or in the present moment; how we survive.
  - Clint Lutes

- Improvisation means to go on an unpredictable journey. How can you navigate in a culture which is foreign to you? In a language you barely understand or speak? In a new situation where familiar references are missing, you will find your way by improvising, by finding creative, spontaneous, new solutions. Improvisation is also key to a (dance) creation. How could you arrive at a form without trying a number of ways that might lead you astray, in opposite directions or to the centre of your (artistic) concern?
  - Edith Wolf Perez

  See VERSATILITY

INTRODUCTION

- It’s the very first “Ciao, nice to meet you”. It’s how we decide to present ourselves. In the introduction, we are usually deciding what we want to share or hide. What if we put ourselves in a different position to start the conversation? The sharing of something we care about and that portraits us (a personal performance/a practice/a song/a picture) puts us in a state of vulnerable exposure, of honest fragility, of openness and generosity that can invite the others to do the same.
  - Andrea Rampazzo

  It is also about presenting our skills if we are asking people to follow and trust us.
  - Andrea Rampazzo

INSTITUTION

- An institution governs the behaviours of individuals belonging to a territory with a given community, reflecting human psychology, culture, habits and customs. It is a shared responsibility to ensure that institutions stay connected to socio-cultural changes and respond to the dynamic ethnic, economic and environmental demographic transformations of their territory. An institution must ensure various and diverse development possibilities for the future of its communities. I believe it is an individual and personal responsibility to not disconnect the human component and to maintain integrity and values in the face of complex mechanics of bureaucratic and political functioning. Where there is no time and space for change, it is sometimes more effective to create something new, applying creativity and learning to look at the limit as an opportunity.
  - Roberto Casarotto

- It is a subject that represents a human group, a community, a social organization. The institution represents and preserves the values and interests of those who founded it, and it does so by exercising the power received by proxy.
  - Giovanni Cunico

INSTRUMENTAL

- Dance is instrumental in building confidence, creating empowerment and building bonds between people. A dance performance can bring visibility to a marginalized group, making it harder for them to be forgotten, ignored or abused. Dance is instrumental in helping shift perspectives and perceptions. Dance is instrumental in creating more inclusive societies by leading the way in breaking down perceptions of who is “allowed” to dance, to express, to be free.
  - Monica Gillette

INTUITION

- Protecting action from language.
  - Jordi Galf

- It’s knowledge (created by the archive we all have in us), it’s understanding, it’s conscious and unconscious, it’s not logical, it comes as a spark, it’s instinctive, it’s surprising, it’s about allowing and welcoming.
  - Andrea Rampazzo

JOY

- The moment a huge smile suddenly emerges on someone’s face, their eyes become a bit bewildered, and they lose themselves a bit.
  - Clint Lutes
Joy is our birthright. It is a state of mind every person has access to. But it is also the secret behind every great work - to do something well is to enjoy it.

- Tony Tran

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge (noun + verb) is the schemata of perceptions, beliefs, theories and techniques according to how we approach life. The knowledge people have is valuable to them because the validity of their life experiences leads individuals to perceive their knowledge as the truth and gives meaning to their existence. Additionally, the knowledge a person has is situated in their social practices. For that reason, knowledge is both personal and cultural. Different cultural contexts develop diverse know-hows, theories and epistemologies (or 'knowledge-systems'). New experiential engagements shift and develop what and how a person knows.

- Einav Katan

Knowledge is a big word: “I know that I know nothing”, said Plato. Still, I may know some things. I may know a poem, for instance, but there might be meanings in it that I do not recognize. Knowledge is not an absolute entity, it depends on the information, on the person giving as much as on the person receiving this information. That’s why the classics in the arts, in literature, dance, theatre, and music, remain alive: the knowledge is transmitted through the interpreter in new ways every time, through a modern body, and a mind shaped by contemporary thinking. The knowledge of old times transmitted and received thus becomes contemporary.

- Edith Wolf Perez

Knowledge in the body. Knowledge in the mind. Knowledge from the East. Knowledge from the South. Knowledge from the street. Knowledge from a disease. Knowledge from the nuances of a baby’s cry: hungry, wet, tired, needing affection. Knowledge from traversing multiple landscapes and encountering languages and codes you don’t know with nothing but your instincts. Dismantling knowledge hierarchies is a step towards inclusion.

- Monica Gillette

See: CHANGE
When you start to work in new communities, what do you find most important to begin? How do you begin?

It’s important to know the community one is asked to interact with - one cannot enter a community without asking what, who and where the community is. Sometimes multiple communities are brought together in knowledge sharing, or knowledge gathering situations - in this case it is necessary to know all the histories in the room - age, gender and racial composition is essential. Additionally, it is important to know the experience | expertise composition, should the gathering include people from different worlds | language abilities in the room.
In my own practice, I find it useful to know why the community would need this type of gathering and why they would ask me to be a part of it – I believe in empowering the community first, ensuring that the community is in charge of its own needs and wants. I have found it opens up dialogue if the participants (community) knows it has power.

Typically the “expert” is asked to lead information sharing – the assumption is that the expert knows everything. The expert may know something, but would not know everything about that specific community. The expert needs to be adept | adaptable and allow the community to find answers to questions that are revealed through the process – the community must define its own questions and needs.

My own practice is focused on the horizontalization of knowledge sharing – In this way I have found that the community can in turn teach or broaden the expert’s knowledge and teach | empower itself in the process.

How do you approach the dance already living in each of the participants? What is your way to bring participants into awareness and dialog with their own bodies and physicality?

I come from a culture that accepts and assumes that each human is born with its own dance – this dance is within the DNA and has lived for as long as that species has lived – the Shona (largely rural people of Zimbabwe) would simply encourage movement from an early age – since dance is not learned in art schools, it is an expression that is encouraged as a way to build social intelligence | dignity | humanity.
Nhaka | animist technologies is the name of my practice – it is an effort on my part to study the science of animist religion – animism is the belief in the livingness of all matter and ancestral presences. As an art dance maker | art dance theorist, I accept that each person has their own innate dance.

This awareness is at once liberating (for the expert) and empowering (for the participant).

My experiences in the "west" have taught me that many western art dancers arrive with philosophies utterly opposite from mine – it frequently appears as if the body is empty of any dance knowledge or practice prior to the encounter with the academy. Acquisition of such practice and knowledge must take years of study with masters – masters who pour | press | hammer knowledge into that body, until one demonstrates creating abilities that are quantifiable.

The WORK for me is how to encourage the body to open to its own dance – its own mother tongue – a tongue which is accompanied by its own mother sound.

This work (Nhaka) requires deep listening and loads of time attuning and attending to one’s natural cadence, speech patterns, grammar and vocabulary.

Once a body can identify its own self, then discipline must be applied daily to build a practice and a process of listening and doing. It is my firm belief that this is how individual “language” can be born. The more we are attuned to our very own selves, plus whatever else the academy has taught those who arrive at dance through studios, etc. – the more we give life to a living dance! In the beginning, a teacher or encourager is necessary – but as the individual gains security and agency in how they
feel and what they can make with their own grammar and vocabulary, the less a leader is needed. It is important for leaders to be relieved of the responsibility of guiding, so that individuals can take on personal responsibility of their own practice.

In my own work, the participants are lead through ideas and philosophies – several stages | phases | de codes are shared – durations are open to each participant, therefore process time can range from three to five hours. Much of the work is done in silence to encourage listening.

The rest of the practice is done with sound that each participant identifies as vital to them. For example, the mbira is a scared instrument for the Shona – it inspires a transcendent state for me – but this is not the case for everyone.

The truth is each human functions on a specific vibration ( sound ) – when one is attuned to this vibration or frequency, the best of the mother dance is awakened.

What is an emancipatory practice for you?

A practice that allows for independent thought, democratic participation, purposeful wellbeing, agency, individuality and meaningful collective effort! A practice that allows for liveness and happiness ( joy ). A practice that allows for information sharing and the ability to question. A practise that allows for thinking and questioning of methods and results.
LANGUAGE

- Language is not a barrier for communication in a dance workshop. On the contrary, not speaking a common spoken language enhances the process of learning by doing. Very often a sensitive approach to defining a person’s body language will in fact open parts of the brain for the receptive process of understanding onomatopoeically. In other words, with the sounds of words.
  - Liz King

- Language is a constant stream of different verbal and non-verbal languages, definitions, translations and realities, as they unfold through the words that shape them. It is a constant, and sometimes very pleasant, struggle to name feelings, thoughts, actions and impressions, that maybe you have no words for because they escape the realm of letters and lines. It is a constant practice of listening, understanding, translating, adapting and being generous. Language is an invitation to yourself and others to become lost in translation.
  - Katharina Senk

LOCATION

- The location can be neutral, or it can present elements of an identity for a community. It can therefore be a place for comparison, challenges and exchange between different identities. If the spirit of the institution that manages the location is open, this will become a place dedicated to cultural exchanges, and therefore to individual growth.
  - Giovanni Cunico

- To decide where and how someone places her/himself, or an object, or a specific event.
  - Which aspects do we consider? What affects us? When we choose where to sit, or in which place we are standing, which pose are we choosing? When we choose where we are going to live, to eat, to take a class, to feel safe?
  - How does a place affect our body attitude, or the way we move, or the way we think?
  - Lara Crippa

  [see page 75 for a more in depth processing of location and space]

LOVE

- Gesture/act against despair.
  - Roberto Casarotto

- Love softens our most hardened features.
  - Monica Gillette

MIGRANT BODY

- Thinking about “Migrant Body” I imagine a borderless world, where human rights are globalized and where people can move freely, just as it happens for products and goods. The Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders project causes people to meet and work together for a world in color, where people are not judged by the color of their skin, but rather are considered for their humanity.
  - John Mpaliza

- A circle of life experiences that support, encourage, share, hold hands.
  It’s a series of:
  Where do you come from?
  I come from...every place in the world. And, I love you.
  - Eva Boarotto

MISINFORMATION

- Misinformation is information which creates confusion and irritation and needs work and effort to be clarified. Sometimes misinformation can lead to the (temporary) standstill of a project. Misinformation can produce struggle, insecurities and obstacles for the project participants. A possible way of dealing with misinformation is transparent and direct communication formats, such as round table discussions, where one tries to create an encounter between everybody who was affected by the misinformation.
  - Katharina Senk

- Very dangerous thing – leads to conflicts and can have serious and even mortal consequences for people involved. It is important to notice it and correct it in all situations.
  - Žak Valenta
I don’t care about the location I am dancing in, as long as I feel together with the group.
- Aisha, 26

MOTIVATION

- It is the drive that leads to action, defines choices, directions, the quality, the nuances of being and of doing. It is the thought that underlies existence.
  - Francesca Foscarini
- To look for my family.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Afghanistan
- To learn German.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Somalia
- Long distance desire. Desire can be static and can burn you out. Project it into the future and it becomes dynamic, it moves and gets you going, it turns into motivation.
  - Giovanna Garzotto

MOVEMENT

- The act or an instance of moving; a change in place or position over a period of time. The act of transmitting motion. Stepping into something and being together with others. To speak for, not against, others.
  - Roberto Casarotto
- An action. A wave of change by a group of people. The physical and mental act of transformation. A shift in thinking, a gesture, a trigger for momentum.
  - Monica Gillette

NAIVETÉ

- Whose? EveryBODY is born with knowledge. Privileging book, academic, acquired knowledges over innate or blood knowledges, suggest a naiveté that those with dominant (English, French, etc., etc.) languages have.
  - Nora Chipaumire
- Maybe the positive side of being naive is accepting things as they are. A smile is a smile, a no is a no. Take what is given. And give what you feel is important to give.
  - Jordi Galí

OBJECTS

- The use of objects can be a very strong strategy in bringing different communities and groups of people together to share time and create a feeling of belonging. Building together with objects can become part of the tasks or pedagogical propositions to think of. The group attention and energy can be focused into a very precise and concrete doing, and it allows collaboration and complicity among the participants to arise in a very natural and organic way. Collaboration then starts working by itself - on the base of a concrete exchange, more complex and subtle relations among participants can begin.
  - Jordi Galí
- In the example of Babel (see page 58), objects are at the same time the core of the project and a binder between people. An object is a point of focus, a shared external presence that can be held, manipulated, passed around with a common purpose. It is not a problem to not speak the same language to collectively handle an action. In a very concrete way, objects can build the strength of a group by initiating a common know-how (tying, building, moving in the space).
  - Marie Pons

"I don’t care about the location I am dancing in, as long as I feel together with the group." - Aisha, 26

"Motivation" is the drive that leads to action, defines choices, directions, the quality, the nuances of being and of doing. It is the thought that underlies existence.
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  - Marie Pons
Reflections from the partners and choreographers of Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders

**Why use dance in this context?**

**Elisabetta Bisaro:** Dance has no language barrier. Dance has an artistic value, but also a social and political impact. Dance allows for a space of freedom, for people to experiment and go beyond their social norms and habits. It is an affirmation of oneself and using dance in this context shows how to valorize the richness of dance beyond the artistic.

**Jordi Gali:** By dancing, we can easily activate a common belonging, the joy of being together, and go beyond our limitations and the barriers that languages impose on us. Dance and music are languages common to all cultures, and each one of them can offer us rich and specific examples.

**What was your main interest in joining the Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders project?**

**Andrea Rampazzo:** To challenge and reinvent the knowledge I have as a dance artist and understand how those skills could be used to bring the conversation about migration issues back to a human dimension.
**Katharina Senk:** I wanted to be part of a group that is deeply convinced about the transformative power of dance and the (social) impact this art form can have on societies.

**Jordi Gali:** Migration is an ancient phenomenon – it has always existed. But today, at the heart of the news, is the question of how we welcome new people and how we generate a sense of common ownership. Attempting to provide an answer from our dance and artistic practices feels urgent.

**Why is the Migrant Bodies - Moving Borders project important for your institution?**

**Roberto Casarotto:** It is a project which implies the development of responsibilities and position taking. It is 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 enhances the relevance of dance in one of the most discussed and challenging topics of the beginning of the twenty first century in Europe. It highlights the importance to connect cultural initiatives and activities to the reality and daily life in order to create, in the present, the conditions to develop better and alternative futures for humanity and multiculturalism.

**Mirna Žagar:** It resonates closely with the values that our organization endeavors to represent in areas of basic human rights and supporting equitable treatment of all peoples. The project also asserts the power of dance to bring different communities together. Through the project, we contribute to a better understanding of our differences and to the overall sense of wellbeing in society in general. It also allows us to learn and to empower our artistic community to look beyond the obvious and find inspiration in human experiences around them.
How has it impacted you and your institution?

Mirna Žagar: We have learned patience and the power of engaged communication with those who administer and control access to those that the program aims to engage with. It has empowered us to prevail and sustain our efforts even when it seems that it is impossible to penetrate the significant barriers and the challenging conditions that we often find ourselves dealing with as we endeavor to engage with children and youth of migrants in refugee centres.

Anaïs Hamard: The project requires a certain reactivity, which in turn requires a good degree of adaptability. This means that a big institution is slowly adapting its way of operating to enable this project. It’s beneficial as it obliges an institution to challenge its way of working.

Roberto Casarotto: Through the project, we became aware of the almost total absence of role models for people who are not white and Italian in the educational, artistic, cultural, political and economic fields, which impacts the content of programs and initiatives that are brought forward. The encounter with the associations and cooperatives that work with migrants expanded our context of dialogue and impact. It has also empowered the already existing communities in our territory, introducing awareness and curiosity towards multiculturalism and solidarity.

What did you find to be the most challenging in the process?

Elisabetta Bisaro: There are the numbers you read in papers of how many people arrive or die and then there are the people you meet during the project, whose story you don’t know. What is most difficult to know is that many who joined the project at any given stage, you will not see anymore.
Žak Valenta: Being confronted by a political situation that does not support the positive outcome of the migrants’ situation.

**What did you find to be the most rewarding?**

Liz King: By far the most rewarding is the sense of self esteem and recognition that each person gains as an individual through a dance practice, as opposed to being seen as a faceless group.

Katharina Senk: The love. The dances. The certainty of never being alone. The vibrant and glowing energy of human beings when they connect with each other and themselves.

Andrea Rampazzo: Realizing how much relevance and power there is in what we do through the medium of dance. To give an example, I share the story of Lamin, a participant in the project coming from Gambia. I remember him in the first week of the project in Bassano del Grappa: eyes down, hesitant to be engaged in the proposals, constantly on the periphery and stuck to the walls of the room. After a few months, he was conducting a dance class in Arte Sella in front of fifty people and beginning the course to become a teacher for the Dance Well program, which does movement research for Parkinson’s. Maybe it is just a drop in the ocean, but being a witness of that transformation has been a huge reward. He has become a model for me. He has empowered me.

**What would you do differently now after what was discovered in the first year of the project?**

Roberto Casarotto: I would try to know better the people who arrive in our territory from other continents. I would try to inform myself about their habits, beliefs, social behavior and their concept of privacy. I would explore the dance knowledge that they embody and how it expresses itself. I would search for ways to build a common ground for trust and understanding.
Katharina Senk: I would invest more effort in creating and enjoying “un-scheduled time” with the participants right from the beginning. I would try to find better coping mechanisms with my personal emotional stress, which was triggered by some of the events and stories I encountered during the project.

Liz King: I would make better known to governments the impact of dance as a tool for socialisation in diverse communities.

What would be your main advice for dance artists and institutions if they want to create dance activities with migrants and refugees?

Andrea Rampazzo: Don’t think only about migrants and refugees. It’s about bringing people together and creating the conditions to have a shared experience, to open the door, to invite, to create occasions for meetings. It’s about creating a space where people feel free to express. As most of the migrants and refugees are constantly dealing with shifting circumstances, that can radically change from one day to another, it’s crucial to create ongoing activities and opportunities for meeting, something stable that continues over time.

Jordi Gali: Be precise in the proposals that you make and always start from the specificity of your own practice. We can more easily convey and share what we truly understand and love. Be ready to receive too.

Katharina Senk: Don’t do it on your own. Find like-minded artists, make them your “allies”, collaborate with already existing institutions, build a network of supporters to exchange and share your experience and the challenges you are facing. Take one (dance) step at a time. Dream big and never forget: it’s a process and frustration and setbacks are an important part of it.
Žak Valenta: Be well informed about the situation in your environment, both at home and globally. Find out more about centers for migrants, governmental institutions and civic initiatives that exist for assistance and support. Meet leaders, employees and other people who help migrants and asylum seekers in a specific organization where you want to offer activities. Get to know and talk to individuals and find out more about the people you are interested to dance with by sharing activities and socializing.

How did your involvement in the project impact your artistic practice?

Katharina Senk: It made me rethink what the art form of dance means to me. It made me reshape my artistry in how I think of audience, audience involvement and accessibility. It made me research how the artistic and the social dimension of dance can always be part of my work. It made me reflect on the political dimension and transformative power of moving and dancing bodies.

Andrea Rampazzo: I found myself thinking more about how to make a dance proposal accessible, simple and meaningful.

Žak Valenta: The project, in a very unexpected way, returned me to me as a person and a dance artist and started me thinking about basic life issues. It has triggered a process of self-scrutiny and a questioning of my own attitude, values and artistic courage to face the gravity of the situation created by the recent wave of migration.
PERFORMANCE

- Any situation where someone or something is being observed.
  - Clint Lutes

- Gesture of hospitality, it teaches how to be together, how to experience together.
  - Roberto Casarotto

- Aiming towards a performance is both challenging and gratifying to the individual and to the group as a whole. The process itself needs time, but the reward is one of empowerment and pride for everyone. Performing in public not only underlines the achievement, but evokes an emotional response in the audience which resonates on an empathetic level. Whilst working with any group of non-professional dancers, whether local citizens, asylum seekers, or ideally a mixed group of both, the somatic process of integrating the information is essential. People learning dance need time to digest the information given to the body through the brain. To push the process too quickly whilst retaining that which is being learned can be detrimental to cognitive recognition in the body.
  - Liz King

PERIPHERY

- Whatever stays outside or around a main spotting area. It's interesting how it's neutral, original meaning is “circumference” (from Greek), therefore relating to inclusion, has nowadays a negative meaning of not being in the mainstream, not living in the centre, not having enough attention. It can also be a comfort zone where one can easily hide or witness what’s going on.
  - Lara Crippa

- There is a principle of working with a group that is ever-changing throughout the time together, where we need to take care of the periphery. Families attracted to what is going on and curious women taking a look from afar – they are involved because they care. It is up to the project members to be open to these presences moving in between the periphery and the centre of action, so that the option to come into the circle and pick up upon what is going on can always be a possibility. This means that the structure of what one proposes should remain open enough in order to integrate people at any stage. A challenge that in a very humble way somehow balances out the reality of living in the peripheries, the unwanted spaces, outside from the center of society.
  - Marie Pons

PLAYFULNESS

- The way to take things seriously
  - Andrea Rampazzo

- Playfulness is a powerful tool to work on happiness. It’s a way to share strategies for how to find joy in action, in movement. It is knowledge. I can share with you how I can be playful and you can share it with me, and we can learn how to play, be happy together. If you are in a creative process, playfulness can help you bring back energy in the room. In that case, it is really important to use objects. Objects can be: toys, music, light, books, food, water, phone calls.
  - Marco D’Agostin

POLYPHONIC

- The word comes from the term polyphony, used in music to refer to autonomous melodies intertwined. In Western music the madrigal and the fugue are examples of polyphony. These forms seem archaic and strange to many modern listeners because they were superseded by music that has a unified rhythm and melody holding the composition together. Polyphony can bring a revelation in listening: one is forced to pick out separate, simultaneous melodies and to listen for the moments of harmony and dissonance they create together, this noticing expands the attention to the different perspectives and may generate appreciation for the multiple trajectories of the singular sounds and rhythms.
  - Roberto Casarotto

POWER

- The ability to humiliate – the ability to OUT someone – the ability to take – the ability to GIVE – the capacity to stand with – the obligation to stand with.
  - Nora Chipaumire

- See EMPOWER
PRACTICE

- It is an action. A way of working. It is learning by doing. A physical practice uses the instincts, senses and knowledge of the body to approach a topic, to stay reflective, to materialize new strategies, to engage the body with the mind while responding to a task or invitation.
  - Monica Gillette

- The continuous application of an idea or a belief or a method that informs the way we see reality. It is shaped over time through encounters with other practices. The repetition of a practice without change (or additional input) inhibits movement. Practice makes permanent.
  - Sara Lando

- The effort that we need in our ordinary life to make something difficult become easier for us.
  - Giulio Farronato

PRECARITY

- Life without the promise of stability. A space where the body needs to find balance on a non stable base, and therefore be in a constant state of alertness to be ready to reposition itself. Precarity is the position of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters transform people, who are not in absolute control, even of themselves, when unable to rely on a stable structure of community.
  - Roberto Casarotto

Through dance you can better know your body and its limits; you can come in contact with another part of yourself where you can free your worries and concerns.
  - Maria, 14

PRESUMPTION

- We never know the full picture. We are informed by media, headlines and our own privileged comfort. Be aware of the presumptions you make and dismantle them as soon as real life presents itself. It is quick and easy to presume the young asylum seeker who is selling her body for sex has no respect for herself. Or we can learn more about her situation and that she doesn't have the right to work legally and has turned to any means possible to support her family struggling with the unimaginable back home.
  - Monica Gillette

- To presume is to give space to our own projections before actually going through the real experience. While preparing an encounter it is important to assume those personal projections may be right or wrong. Our presumptions may help us to anticipate the real situation. Or may stop us from seeing clearly what is actually going on. In any case, it is important to be aware of our own point of view before hand, so we acknowledge that we are never neutral.
  - Jordi Galí
PRIVACY

- Privacy is a luxury commodity. Only privileged or distracted bodies can abuse it. For all the others, the voice of political awareness is so strong that it is impossible to ignore it. Its call has no boundaries, as every act, from the act of crossing the road to the act of making love, forces these bodies to deal with their own shape. Obviously these bodies, that I cannot call the unlucky or the chosen ones, cannot be saved from themselves. No alternative is left to them, no second opportunity. And in front of so much vividness, they will ask themselves: “Do I want to follow the unattainable dream of bourgeois privacy or do I prefer to devote my life to the political cause of my body?”
  - Chiara Bersani

- A state that seeks to be sensitive to the other and to not reveal or pry or be intrusive to another person’s space and integrity.
  - Mirna Žagar

PROTECTION

- The way to take care of “the other” - person, body, rights, etc. In some cases, protection can be a movement of opening to take care of another. In another case, it could be to close ourselves. Protection could be a continuous movement to open and close, a movement based on feeling, perspective, cultural approach, body condition and mental approach. Protection could be both the best and the worst way to guarantee freedom and space to the Other. The balance and the capacity to realize this could make the difference in the context of being what we are, what we want and where we want to be.
  - Claudia Pretto

- The condition of security and trust an individual feels while relating to a certain space and to the individuals inhabiting it. Protection, trust and security are the necessary prerequisites of free expression for an individual and their right to exist.
  - Francesca Foscarini
Within Migrant Bodies - Moving Borders, Jordi Galí’s project titled _Babel_ relies on a group of strangers to work in collaboration to achieve a project together in just a few days. 

_Babel_ is an object, a tower, made out of wooden sticks tied together by black ropes. To build the tower that is ten to twelve meters high, the participants must first build modules in small groups. They then assemble the modules through a choreography that brings everyone together in the space, giving form to the whole piece.

_Babel_ is not a set project, but a work in progress. From the first day of meeting at La Briqueterie, choreographer Jordi Galí shares a process with the group, actively looking for solutions and adjustments as the work unfolds and in response to the needs of the tower and participants. During the workshop sessions at Vitry-sur-Seine, the principles of building _Babel_ have become a mirror image, a reflection, for the many questions arising during the research process that is Migrant Bodies - Moving Borders: How to meet? How to behave in a group to make room for everyone? How to find your place as a participant, artist or facilitator? How to make a group work together? How to build trust among people without using language? How to achieve something together, regardless of one’s abilities, and create a shared ground of common knowledge?

**Common knowledge & shared resources**

There is a horizontal process at work in _Babel_, during which a proposition made by an artist becomes our material to work with. It is an example of how a collective
action of learning a new-skill set creates equality and inclusion from the very start. You don’t have to know beforehand how to dance, draw, cook or craft, but everyone is invited to learn and practice in the here and now.

To build the tower in *Babel*, everyone must learn how to tie different types of knots. At first glance, only Jordi and Katia, who are making the proposition, appear to be experts. They must first equip all the participants with the same tools and the principle of action is simple: observe the gesture, try, try again, help someone along the way - so that the action is inscribed in everyone’s gestures. At its core, this simple action of tying a piece of rope around a stick quickly erases a form of hierarchy between who is knowledgeable, or skilled, and who is not. Anyone can become a teacher or receiver of information quite rapidly. During the workshops at La Briqueterie, Khademullah knew very well how to tie knots and the techniques Jordi was showing us. Khademullah immediately became a resource, in spite of the fact that we could not really communicate in French or English with him, and Jordi quickly engaged Khademullah to help share his knowledge with the others.

Throughout the Migrant Bodies - Moving Borders research process, there was a recurring interrogation among the choreographers: How can we put ourselves in a non-dominant position? How can we spark an idea, set something in motion without imposing anything? *Babel’s* construction process suggests some leads. Start simple. Propose something that is very concrete and very clear. Repeat, repeat, repeat. Rely on people skills. Be very patient. Show the gesture, the movement with your hands and your body, without explaining it with words. Gather everyone in a circle, make sure everyone can see you. Show and repeat. Then let people organize themselves
and teach each other. Some people will be able to take over, becoming anchor points for the group. Slowly, your shared resources, like a bunch of sticks and ropes, become a common knowledge. There is something invisible at work here that is being interwoven as the knots are being tied one by one - the trust between people is gluing the group together.

**Tensegrity**

Migrant Bodies - Moving Borders is about assembling various elements together. It begins in Jordi’s workshops with the diversity of people participating, each carrying with them different stories, backgrounds and concerns. The group is composed of families and children currently living at the Centre d’Hébergement d’Urgence Migrants (CHUM) and the other participating local citizens and dance enthusiasts. Humans, wood, rope, space and time – *Babel* resides in finding ways to combine these elements. Long before the question of how high to build the tower, came the question of how we should organize ourselves in the space in order to build it. How to distribute our forces in order to make something happen collectively?

In *Babel*, the necessity to work together to accomplish a task isn’t an abstraction or a metaphor, but a physical need of joining forces to share the load between the participants, so that this dream of building a twelve meter structure from the ground up can become a reality. There is a principle at the heart of Jordi’s work called « tensegrity », a physical law in which a structure stands because forces joined from opposite directions. This is how our body is structured – the bones from our skeleton are held together in compression by soft tissues and fascia organized in a dense and ever-evolving network that allows the whole structure to be in place.

Tensegrity is the structure of *Babel*. Both workshops we experienced in Vitry-sur-Seine were the physical embodiment of tensegrity: finding ways of joining forces from different directions in order to hold something in the center. It means that the « integrity » of the structure comes from the « tension » that is holding its parts together. All the forces may not be equal, but the smallest action contributes to the whole. In order to raise the massive structure from the ground up, a choreography was initiated by Jordi as the group built up the modules from the center, stabilizing the structure with strings held by each person as it grew. The high and frail tower must be taken care of with subtlety. It is only through the sensitive network of communicating bodies and everyone’s attention that the attempt can be made.

In *Babel*, every presence and action has a consequence on the construction and choreography. Everyone is involved and feels as such because the project’s aim and articulation is not only seen, but also felt and understood physically through the body. If the establishment of a common know-how generates the possibility of building on common ground, learning how to organize within a group, thinking of tensegrity, make us all tension-bearers and co-responsible for the greater good.

**Patterns of a collaboration**

At the core of the project are three principles: to listen, to engage and to release. Three concrete actions and movements that each participant, artist or facilitator, is somehow experiencing as the stepping stones of a cooperation scheme. To be able to listen means being in tune, paying attention to each other, to the group’s energy on that day for instance. It is in part listening to people’s stories and concerns, but it also means paying attention to who seems comfortable or lost with the propositions, who may seem put aside or fully present. Other noticeable patterns of collaboration were at work. For instance, working in a circle is an easy yet efficient tool based on the simple fact that everyone can see everyone. It allows a warm up to be proposed without words, to spread a movement around and to engage someone who is across the circle or by your sides. The circle is also a useful tool to build a network.
QUALITY
- A seal of excellence determined by the people who benefit from it.
  - Mélanie Demers
- It is a consequence of respect. As well as it commands/causes respect.
  - Ginelle Chagnon

REFUGEE
- Refugee is a label, an identifier of a drastic situation. It is a status carrying both safety and harm. When granted by the powers that be, it validates a person’s crisis, giving them legality and support to stay. It can also become an identity where they are known as nothing else but their refugee status. Refugees had lives before they became refugees.
  - Monica Gillette
  - see MIGRANT BODY
- A human being whose integrity, dignity and human rights were threatened or attacked by external circumstances, conflicts or violence in their home country, and who are forced to live through the experience of flight and displacement in order to guarantee their personal safety or the safety of their family.
  - Katharina Senk

RHYTHM
- What is the rhythm of a culture? Many people who have landed in Europe in search of safety, opportunity and freedom, come from cultures where dance is very much a social and community experience. Each dance has its own identity and if that identity is lost upon migration, the dance, and ease to join in dancing, may be too. How can a diversity of rhythms, especially polyphonic rhythms familiar to many cultures outside of the traditional European context, open more bodies to dance? How can the exchange of rhythms unlock inhibitions, create encounters and enhance artistry?
  - Monica Gillette
  - blowing in
  - blowing out
  - blowing an air balloon.
  - making a step
  - turning around
  - look at the sky with the moon.
  - walking back
  - finding a hand
  - ----------hold it.
  - letting it go
  - sitting down
  - touching the ground
  - looking around
  - closing your eyes
  - hearing a story
  - falling asleep with a smile on your face.
  - Beatrice Bresolin
  - A given pace that marks time and life through a regular sound. A heart beat is the first rhythm we acknowledged, the sound that calms us or reminds us of our vitality.
  - Lara Crippa

RISK
- We are experiencing the risk to experiment with what it means to work with urgency. Working with migrants and refugees may bring challenge and conflict in our activities when, for example, what we thought would happen does not follow the anticipated schedule. There is risk in experimenting with formats that are not defined and with a group of participants that are labelled as being “at risk”. Risk is an integral component of the Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders project and one that can, at times, create that crack, an opening, where people can experience freedom.
  - Elisabetta Bisaro
  - Necessary for any change, essential in artistic work. Risk strengthens courage.
  - Žak Valenta
  - Fear can lead individuals or societies to stand up to conservative positions, rejection, hate, violence... It seems important then to remember that transformation and change are deeply rooted in the nature of life, any life. Things are constantly moving. In our practices we can try to couple
up both RISK and TRANSFORMATION as a positive association of ideas while working on overcoming FEAR.
- Jordi Galí

ROLE CHANGE

♦ Exchanging your current role (perspective, expertise, task) with another.
  - Clint Lutes

♦ SEE (OBSERVE) things in different ways from subjective (our own perspective) to objective (others’ perspective); THINK what the goal is and how to make things move forward smoothly; DEAL WITH different contexts in terms of culture and politics; UNDERSTAND the differences and accept it; CHANGE our own mindset and take it into action. When you change your own role, you shall consider and observe things with different perspectives, even analyse it in multiple layers.
  - 張欣怡 Gwen Hsin-Yi Chang

ROLE MODEL

♦ A person who someone admires and whose behaviour they try to emulate, copy, reproduce. A hero, a star, a person who inspires with integrity and values. It is a collective responsibility to generate and offer a diversity of role models in as many professional contexts as possible, in order to respond to the demographic, ethnic and cultural changes in the societies in which we live and to remain inclusive.
  - Roberto Casarotto

♦ Recently I performed a work in London at Sadlers Wells Theatre where I was portrayed quite differently than the roles I normally do. In this role I was not sexualised, angry, or undoubtedly strong, but was soft, feminine, light and joyful. After the performance two black female audience members spoke to me with smiles on their faces and tears in their eyes, and thanked me. They thanked me because it was the first time they had seen a young, black female represented in that way on stage. For them I had provided an alternate narrative to the far too common stereotypical black female. An action that for me that evening, which was just a role, just my job, had a positive impact on these women. Sometimes you can be a role model without meaning to be.
  - Carolyn Bolton
Today I heard (from UN source) that 258,000,000 people are in the migration process. This number does not refer to daily migration to work, school or seasonal migration for vacation. It pertains to changing your own environment, your own routines, and your own self, which inevitably changes in the course of that migration. My family survived that process, a large part of my extended family was forced to take this step also, so I am able to observe this phenomenon from the angle of a migrant.

Nature would say: nothing easier, it’s seasonal migrations in search of better conditions. Birds do this every year, don’t they?

History would say: it repeats. The civilization we know today did not exist yesterday. Someone came and built it, gave his contribution, built himself into it. He will go elsewhere and build it again.

But, it is strange to live in the exact moment of that process. Capture fragments. Be on the VERGE.

This is crucial for Croatia and what distinguishes us from the other participating countries in the project. We are just a part of the map that migrants want to cross. They don’t want to stay here. We are dead space, mowed lawn before the fence. Well lit. Covered with search lights, alarms and loud dogs.

Instruction for the social worker: we are just a waiting room. Entrance hall. In which they are nervously waiting to solve their problems. We cannot help them. We can be their water machine. The newspaper. Toilet. View through the window. Everything that helps shorten their time to the solution located in the next room. That makes their wait easier.
What about the life on hold? How does a migrant do it? How much time do they give themselves? Actually, for what? The goal is to cease the termination of the “migrant” status. And, their children will be migrants too. That’s how they’ll call them. It turns out they have time. And by the amount of things they carry with them, time is all they have.

After they lower their bag in one of the EU suburbs, a much longer journey begins. They stop wandering geographically and the search within commences. Searching for the ME who has arrived. Soul searching. Integrating into a new culture. Drawing from the new culture. A makeover, using today’s phrasebook.

But this is something that Zagreb is still not concerned with. We are a way station where nobody gets off. They hurry onwards. Those caught without a ticket are taken off the train. And they are already catching the next train.

People inside our shelters are quickly disappearing. They go to the borders. Some come back, but only because they did not succeed. They will try again. Modern Sisyphuses. They don’t stay. Legally or illegally, they cross on. It is very difficult to include them in any projects. Unless they are children. Because children will always be kids. Unconscious of the situation, with plenty of time to play and imagination as big as the lands they walked and seas they crossed over.

The adults see us as a barrier. The obstacle they have to skip. New, unforeseen costs they will have. We are that petrol station you hate. You stop because you have to. You’re not happy about it.

The mental circuit of migrants in Zagreb is completely different from the migrants I met in Austria and Italy. There are other numerous problems there. There is only one problem in Croatia - they are not yet in Austria or Italy. Some even saw participation in the project as a possible escape to the West.

And it frustrates me a bit. Why do I live somewhere they do not want to stay? I feel like I’m living alongside a very fast motorway.
Will this line of separation shift closer to the west so we from Zagreb can also stand in a line? Migrate? More and more people from my generation are deciding to work abroad. Is there a place for all of us in the top 5 countries? What if all of us go somewhere else?

Croatians are known for their great emigration. It is estimated that more Croats live outside of than in Croatia. They were migrants. They left because of the grapevine diseases, wars, better living conditions. But never so massively, never organized like this, never by force across the border. Never like the people I’m watching on television or in the neighborhood.
From my perspective there are several stages of migration:

Decision to migrate

The first and crucial element of each migration. Whether by free will or under duress, it includes visualization of the end of migration. There is a plan. There are calculations. There is an idea of how we want it to end. In the head of an individual, after a decision, migration has already taken place. He’s already elsewhere. His body is at point A, but his mind is already in point B. Ready for transition.

Migration in the Physical sense

In today’s time it’s about logistics. Everyone who has traveled somewhere wanted to travel as quickly as possible, as safe as possible, and as cheap as possible. That’s what the travel advertisements tell us. Physically it is the most dangerous part of any migration. Potentially the most danger lies in this step. If it were about dancing, there is a danger of sprain and falling. If we talk about refugee lines, in this step we are talking about a route. The route on which my country is located.


The first step is often just dreaming of “what would be”. This step is converting it into practice. This is a jump. Action.
Arrival  A moment that means a lot. First of all, “the landing”. End of movement. Safety. Physical peace. False termination of migration. The idea that everything is over. That it is done. And it’s not. The transition in awareness of where I am is still needed.

Integration  The hardest step of migration. Encountering different and new. Challenges you did not meet before. Effort and openness to the new. At the same time, you offer what you brought with you. You are experiencing an assessment of how applicable yours is in the new. How much it fits. How it enriches. How it protrudes. How it encumbers. How ... many questions. If the arrival is dangerous to the physical, this part is dangerous to the mental part of each individual. In constant doubts, dilemmas, uncertainties, conflicts between similar and different. Between those who are more similar to you and those who are new. Ones you are yet to meet. And those who need to meet you.

It is extremely important not to ghettoize when trying to integrate, because then we are not talking about integration. Ghettoization negates migration in the physical sense (point 2). It erases it and does not offer a chance for true integration.

Decision  Only after all these, an individual can be ready for the last in a series of steps. Now he is ready for new migrations. Now he is ready to return to where he has migrated from. The place he left may be the same, but he is not. Behind him is the experience of the previous steps. Behind him is a migration experience. He is now ready for new efforts. For new challenges. And only now he can choose whether to move forward or deliberately refute further migration.
**Score**
- A set of instructions or guidelines that one can improvise within, in order to discover new ways to move, act and feel.
  - Monica Gillette
- A collection of specific instructions (ordered or random) defining how to move, act, watch, speak, listen, etc.
  - Clint Lutes

**Share**
- It is an act of generosity, humility, enrichment. It is a common situation in a physical or emotional state. It is giving knowledge, or life experiences. It is learning how to shift perspectives and understand each other. It is telling a story. It is occupying the same space or possessing something in common.
  - Roberto Casarotto
- In the act of sharing, very often my understanding of my own being, and the being of others, grows. I’m convinced that we all want to share our experiences, thoughts, knowledge! Sharing is a human need. But we all have to be really curious to learn more in order to have an honest exchange.
  - Peggy Olislaegers

**Show**
- Often used as a synonym for Performance or Play, in general, a show is the act of displaying something to someone. In a society based on images and on showing our lives off, is showing also sharing? Or is it just throwing images in an ocean of other – almost meaningless – images? How can we invite the others to our show, starting a conversation, rather than considering them as followers? How can we include audiences in a showing rather than feeding them with the artists’ reflections? All this showing is not purely negative, if we combine it with the idea of sharing. How important is it to show - to make visible - all those who are not under the spotlight (or under the right one)?
  - Greta Pieropan
- What are you allowed to, or able to show? In your private life? In public space? Which powers, both mentally, socially and politically are influencing that? Why are some people more visible than others?
  - Peggy Olislaegers

**Space**
- A place where I can stay, or decide to stay, an habitable place. It can be personal or shared, it can be created, modified, adapted, small or large, comfortable or uncomfortable, bright or dark. Every day and every moment I occupy a space.
  - Anna Bragagnolo

**Status**
- The perception of inner space provides the physical grounding and coordinates from which other forms of space either arise or are perceived. By cultivating the awakening of this inner sense of space, there is a reciprocal deepening of awareness in the space around me, or between others and myself. The relative richness of inner perception then affects not only what I perceive, but also the depth of transmission of information into the space around me. More complexity arises when this sense of inner space meets the added information of the space around me and other bodies, giving rise then to the space between.
  - Gary Joplin

**Status**
- Status traps human beings into the fences of legality, carrying in itself the threat of falling into clandestinity. Status is unfair as long as it gives some people from some specific countries the right to live their life freely, crossing borders with visas and no suspicion from any authorities whatsoever. Meanwhile, others can’t save their own children from war and poverty, trying to get a better life somewhere else. It forces human beings to leave everything behind, not for a better life but for a life of struggle and injustice. Status has nothing to do with humanity – it expresses the right of domination of the rich over the poor. It will stay this way as long as neo-liberal interests of the rich comes before the life of the people.
  - Gabrielle de Preval
GLOSSARY

- It is a “declaration”, that cloth given by persons looking at you from an eternal position. Status is “the place” given by others in the society space. The “status” is how we are considered in the world by society. The status then is a type of pass to have access, to take part, or the border to have access to the rights, to the possibility to enter and to take part. Status is something that is just a declaration by others, but this declaration could stop our access to the freedom to be what we want to be and what we are inside. - Claudia Pretto

SOLIDARITY

- Solidarity without flexibility and respect towards the individual leads to dictatorship. Solidarity can harm when it is a forced and rushed process. It should be a “coming together” that emerges over time. A consensus. We have to act and we have to also wait, with all of our awareness open while taking action. Bit by bit. Take care of each other as we go. Solidarity is not the goal. When we see a common future, when people gather willingly together for a vision, then solidarity comes along. - Yen-Fang Yu

- Solidarity represents the protection of human dignity – we lean towards the need of the other and we try to solve the problems they are carrying. Solidarity is a movement with which we approach the need of the other, be it a person or a state, in difficulty. Solidarity is a movement that allows you to open, to break a limit between yourself and another. Solidarity connects human beings, states, and places, putting everyone on the same level of openness, union, cohesion. Solidarity is a chance to dance in unison. - Claudia Pretto

STORYs

- Personal storytelling can be a tool for connection. Like me during my journey to Italy, I experienced a lot of things that are completely different from my home country. In the case of asylum seeking, it is very difficult for us and for people to understand the information we are giving about what we experienced in life and during our journey. Some of the things we normally tell them is close to our cultures and traditions, but they don’t know much about those things – it becomes hard for them to believe because they don’t have any experience with it. In that case, personal experience can be more effective than imaginary, fictional stories. - Lamin Suno

- Stories make “history”. Every human being is a step on the roads of the world. Their actions, or silence, are gestures that mark human beings going through life, making it choral. Stories are like steps of a continuous dance that could change the landscape of the planet. Every single story could make the difference in changing history and the reason for history itself. - Claudia Pretto

- See TESTIMONY

STRATEGY

- The response to a contingency. It is the ability to generate, shift and create perspectives so that a limit becomes an opportunity. - Roberto Casarotto

- The ability of an individual or a group of people to design a method suitable for solving a problem. Attempts to design a strategy also count! Testing can help in developing and improving the strategy. - Žak Valenta

SUSTAINABILITY

- Sustainability to me is very simple: When you leave, do the participants have enough tools to go on without you? Does the project have enough steam without you in the picture? Often when people talk about sustainability, it is in terms of finances; for me sustainability is in terms of energy, or even the strength of a ripple effect that creates waves long after one has left. Yes, money is important to continue a project, but that is not the only criterion to judge the long-term impact of a project. A question to you: Does presence continue to flow in absence? That is sustainability. - Sangeeta Isvaran

- Sustainability is an active presence of a body, of a person in support of another body or of itself. Sustainability is being able to hover, exist, be alive, present and
be there again, without limit – a constant and possible flow of self in balance with the world.
- Claudia Pretto

SYNCHRONY
- Social gesture, tendency to move together over a period of time. It creates a temporary community and prepares for a dialogue, reminding us how much we are related to each other. It helps develop a shared way of thinking and to shape interactions.
- Roberto Casarotto
- When dance happens in a group, or all following the same impulse or task, a feeling of togetherness emerges. That oneness can be a bridge to accomplish something together, which can not be accomplished alone.
- Monica Gillette

TESTIMONY
- A testimony is an act with which one certifies the existence and veracity of one or more facts and, because of this definition, personally, today, I find it very difficult to use this word because it has been repeatedly abused.
- John Mpaliza
- Giving testimony is about giving a statement of proof, often in a court of law. Many testimonies are given, but not all are believed, recognized or remembered,
- see WITNESS

TOUCH
- Physical contact between 2 things; how we sense things through our skin; the feeling of being positively emoted by a situation or action.
- Clint Lutes
- Katharina Senk
- The first step for communication is to consider that the person we have in front of us has a mind, a body, feelings and thoughts. Simple touch situations like shaking hands, or more complex ones like embracing or dancing together, give a very strong foundation to realize otherness. The sensorial experience of a simple touch is common to all humankind, no matter from which culture we are or what language we have. Touching especially when their only outlet is a legal one. The dancing body can uncover the unheard, the shy, the scared, the forgotten testimonies. The act of dancing and the dance community of witnesses can testify for the validity of human existence in all its pain, celebration and diversity, no matter what legal status that body might be bestowed or denied.
- Monica Gillette

Dancing allows you to get in touch with your inner self and to name different emotions. When music is involved, space becomes a utopian place created by my imagination.
- Massimo, 16
and being touched by someone are different sides of the same act. And it can be a good starting point for a meeting to happen, for a communication to start.
- Jordi Galí

- The use of touch and contact as experienced in the dance field can be a great tool for many to access release, comfort and connection. It can also create a block if it is against one’s religious beliefs or cultural codes, if people are carrying traumas or abuses, or if they simply aren’t as comfortable to touch or be touched by people they don’t know. If it is a tool you want to use, engage with it gradually and in accordance with the comfort level in the room.
- Monica Gillette

TRANSFORMATION

- The new use of knowledge, information, body languages.
- Anna Bragagnolo

- The whole world without war.
- Unaccompanied boy from Afghanistan

- Having a good life – now I have a school, before I had no school - thank God!
- Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

- Dance is transformation. Your state, your body, your soul, your psyche are the not the same as when you began.
- Monica Gillette

TRUST

- Dialogue
- Sharing
- Time
- Research
- Exchange
- Relations
- Confidence
- Process
- Inner smile
- Tuning

Find yourself blind and willing to be blind.
- Andrea Rampazzo

- The ability to lower one’s defenses, exposing vulnerabilities, due to the belief that we will be taken care of and not be taken advantage of. It can come from experience or faith.
- Sara Lando

- Being able to completely share yourself without being judged or discriminated against. It can not be forced on anybody.
- Giulio Farronato
In the field of Community or Participatory Arts the question of the impact on the participants is often raised. Even if it seems obvious that dance is beneficial on a personal and on a social level – if only because it is a physical activity – the demand for evidence is raised by funding bodies, health institutions, or social services.

The evaluation model on ‘5 Ways to Wellbeing’ offers a method to determine the effect of community dance practices on the participants. To look at the five activities for wellbeing means to ‘move beyond the narrow focus of what can go wrong in people’s lives and look at what makes it well’ and what is empowering them. In the case of the participants in the project ‘Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders’, there is no doubt that trauma, stress, and anxiety are constant companions of migrants and refugees.

The method ‘5 Ways to Wellbeing’ was originally devised by New Economics Foundation (NEF), UK, to assess the impact of arts interventions in health services. In recent years it has been increasingly used to evaluate and document community arts projects also outside the health sector. It looks at how an activity helps people to connect, to be active, to take notice, to learn and to give.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Way</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connect</td>
<td>With people around: building connections supports and enriches people’s lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Active</td>
<td>Exercising lowers anxiety and reduces depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Notice</td>
<td>Being curious and remarking on the unusual followed by reflection helps people to appreciate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Learning</td>
<td>Being set a challenge, learning something new encourages confidence in people as well as being fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give</td>
<td>Neuroscience shows that social cooperation is intrinsically rewarding and increases a sense of purpose in community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th way:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming Visible</td>
<td>Stepping out of the anonymity, being acknowledged as an individual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term ‘wellbeing’ is based on the definition of health by the World Health Organization: ‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.’ WHO (1946). NEF states that: ‘Evidence suggests that a small improvement in wellbeing can help to decrease some mental health problems and also help people to flourish.’ ³

In the project ‘Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders’ we used ‘5 Ways to Wellbeing’ as a matrix to assess the impact on the participants.* Sources were feedback from the participants and qualitative interviews with the creative and organisational team.

During the analysis of the material we identified a factor that was not covered by ‘5 Ways to Wellbeing’, but made a considerable impact on the participant: to be seen by an audience. We therefore added ‘Becoming Visible” as a 6th category of the impact assessment.

* Full report and other outcomes can be found on the website: www.migrantbodies.eu


When you dance in a group, you create an emotional link with the others, which goes beyond appearance. You find connections and it helps against isolation.

- Mauro, 14
Reflections on the topic of space in relation to culture and proxemics

By Lara Crippa
Writer and dance artist living in Italy

Space. How many philosophical talks and writings on a topic throughout the centuries has defined the western concept of the physical universe? After the workshops led in Italy during the Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders project, it was evident that the concept of space changes not only from culture to culture, but also according to a specific environment, and most of all according to our own personal experience of every specific moment. Watching the development of the first dance practices, it was immediately revealed how crucial it is to start with our own self, from our own needs, fears and personal perception of humanity, before proposing an activity.

Why have I been so attracted by this concept? I grew up in Italy, fed by dance and literature, so interested in the world to travel at every possible break. A shy person who has met, from time to time, in dancing or writing, a sphere to regain herself. But at the same time a curious person keen to observe the human behaviour and its relation to space, either in personal and physical distances, or in shared spaces. When I tried to write about the project, I was getting lost in the relativity of the world and in all the multifaceted aspects that were coming out. I finally landed in the following schematic map, which has helped me trace some paths in my migrant mind.

This map doesn't want to be exhaustive, but to give some clues on what can be considered when proposing a practice. Space is seen
and considered through various perceptions, as the awareness of space raises a notable amount of non-verbal communication aspects to consider. The map can be read either horizontally or vertically. From left to right follows the definition of space according to three different theories. In the columns the space concept is examined from the most personal and private to the most outer and world-wide. At the end of each column are listed some important hints that came out during the various practices—additional aspects to think about at different steps of the proposal.

The Proxemics strips are based on the anthropologist Edward Hall's\(^1\) theory that considers space as a “specialized elaboration of culture”, which means that distances vary from one society to the other. Every aspect always has more than a single interpretation. For example, the vertical distance we put between the facilitator and the participant can be easily subverted just by exchanging the roles. The spatial planning, which takes some references from Henri Lefebvre's\(^2\) urban theory, uses instead the words “territory”, “property” and “ownership” to bear in mind that space is not only an abstract border we put between ourselves and others, but it’s a tangible territory that we own as long as we physically occupy it. During the dance practices these first two lines were particularly evident at the beginning: from the distances observed according to race, gender, age or disability, to the body attitude and behaviour according to the space lived in a specific moment.

Dance is the landing zone, the practice where all these concepts can find a body and be experienced. It’s a powerful means that crosses almost all borders, starting from the language barriers to the physical contact, as well as hierarchies. It’s a means of communication everybody has and that allows people to express and free their inner fears, while at the same time understanding, respecting and learning from this mutual exchange of space and time.

The starting kinesphere comes from Rudolf Laban’s\(^3\) definition of “space harmony”, a sphere that includes our spacial movements in all directions and levels. A bubble to discover in all its shapes and dynamic possibilities, which you can then combine with those of others. A physical practice can then become an important means that, going beyond verbal language, makes the body the first tool to investigate. Through exploring who we are, we get to know our uniqueness and regain our individuality.

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1 EDWARD T. HALL, The Hidden Dimension, Anchor, 1966
2 HENRI LEFEBVRE, The Production of Space, Blackwell, 1991
3 RUDOLF VON LABAN, The language of movement; A guidebook to choreutics, Plays inc, 1974
Consider that the concept of space changes according to culture, environment and personal experiences. Edward Hall (proxemics), Henri Lefebvre (urban theory) and Rudolf Laban (space harmony) have been just the reference starting points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROXEMICS</th>
<th>INTIMATE SPACE</th>
<th>PERSONAL SPACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Space that allows physical contact with people we are very familiar with.</td>
<td>Space we share with people we know well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPATIAL PLANNING</th>
<th>BODY TERRITORY</th>
<th>HOME TERRITORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical area we claim to, and defend against other.</td>
<td>A safe zone where we can control our individual territory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DANCE PRACTICE</th>
<th>KINESPHERE</th>
<th>COMFORT ZONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                  | The space surrounding the body in stillness and in motion. Body posture and facial expression express personal moods and emotions. | Body spacing and body postures are reactions to non-verbal communication:  
  - sight (e.g. eye contact)  
  - touch (e.g. haptic code)  
  - taste (e.g. regional cuisine)  
  - smell (e.g. home odors)  
  - sound (e.g. voice, rhythm, music) |

<p>| HINTS            | Body is a container: be aware of what we embody ourselves before encountering others, as it affects our approach. Build trust to motivate people to be with you in class, creating intimacy. Physical contact as body acceptance. | Create a safe zone, where we can privately explore personal interactions according to our own values and boundaries. A comfort zone to step in and out, where we are allowed to say “no”; but also a discomfort zone to be challenged. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROXEMICS</th>
<th>OUTER SPACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL SPACE</td>
<td>Space we share with acquaintances and strangers. Evaluate how people interact with others in daily life. Consider that social proximity can be disturbing (e.g. crowded place) but also that social distance can refer to hierarchy (e.g. teacher/student).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUBLIC SPACE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where we address or are addressed as a group (e.g. lectures, speeches, shows).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPATIAL PLANNING</th>
<th>PUBLIC PROPERTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTER-ACTIONAL TERRITORY</td>
<td>A further extension of ownership where people gather and interact. Consider that physical distance can refer to isolation (e.g. apartheid, ghetto) while physical proximity often enhances people's ability to work together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>URBAN TERRITORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The architectural and artistic design of buildings, from farms to towns, from religious to cultural structures. The layout of places where we can freely enter, and therefore we might feel to temporally own.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DANCE PRACTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CROSS-PERSONAL ACTION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A place where the work done is shared with and showed to an audience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIRTUAL SPACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success due to the perceived proximity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLOBALIZATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide social space with strong centers and weaker peripheries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MIGRATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never be in the final place.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where does a practice should take place? A neutral space, from open air to public places, where we can get rid of hierarchy by sharing expertise (offer and learn). An inclusive space that mix people with different backgrounds, helps to realize and recognize personal preferences and cultural differences improving cross-cultural understanding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artistic presentation:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• being seen means to have an identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Moreover to make participants input-givers and co-creators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• enhances the proud of achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to give visibility means that you are accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• and that you belong to a community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNSTRUCTURED TIME

- An important time that offers spontaneity and ease, but also the possibility of enhancing relationships one by one in a non-predetermined situation. The possibility of creative chaos and improvisation, which can result in interesting suggestions outside of the usual frame.
  - Žak Valenta

- Time you spend together or on your own that is not predetermined or structured by a time-table, by a choreography, or the ideas of a facilitator. Time you allow to unfold and to be adapted by the needs of the community and the group itself – as it is in process. The paradox about unstructured time is that you somehow also need to schedule it; to give space and importance to the activities you maybe at first wouldn’t identify as part of the project. Examples are common activities, like cooking and enjoying meals together, watching performances, or exploring your environment together – basically sharing life. All these actions allow people to bond with one another, on different personal levels, whilst simultaneously enhancing the artistic part of the project by this deepened connection.
  - Katharina Senk

VALUES

- Expressions of what one holds dear as a way to journey through the challenges of the world. Being true to one self and respectful of the other.
  - Mirna Žagar

- Helping other people.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Afghanistan

- My life.
  - Unaccompanied boy from Somalia

VERSATILITY

- It is the ability to be perfectly aware about the plan B while embodying the plan A. Imagine: you are dancing within a specific space, timing, quality, state of mind, temperature. But in every second of that dance, you know you could switch in one moment into another version of yourself where space, timing, quality, state of mind and temperature are completely different. You don’t need to do that, just to be aware you could. It’s the possibility of change in real and short time. It is a perspective of things where at least two versions of the same object are always coexisting in your mind.
  - Marco D’Agostin

- The ability to adapt or be adaptable to many different functions or activities.
  - Lamin Suno

VERSATILITY

- Andrea Rampazzo

VITALITY

  - Monica Gillette

- Let’s dance and never stop dancing.
  - Kristin De Groot

VIRTUOSITY

- Virtuosity should never be a way to establish a distance between the viewer and the doer. Virtuosity should not be a comfort zone for the doer (nor the viewer). Virtuosity should always enlighten something, but never make it appear superior to something else. Virtuosity is not the better among abilities, but the one where the doer recognizes her/himself the most. Virtuosity is about faith and duration; it is the tool to transform something you really care for into something that lasts.
  - Marco D’Agostin

- The most difficult act of virtuosity in contemporary dance is the attempt to be human and express humanity with the body.
  - Roberto Casarotto
WAITING

- A limbo.
  An in-between. A state of non-existence. Neither allowing departure nor arrival. Time that could be used, but you’re busy. Waiting.
  - Katharina Senk

- A gap in time, usually towards an expectation, which faces you to different inner emotions.
  - Lara Crippa

- The act of doing nothing while expecting something to happen.
  - Giulio Ferronato

WITNESS

- Being a witness puts you in the moment. Being a witness acknowledges another’s existence, their story, their dance. You can also be a witness to your own actions and to the dialog you have with yourself as you encounter the experiences of others. Institutions can be valuable witnesses in how they acknowledge and actively welcome all people, regardless of race, age, gender, legal status or ability.
  - Monica Gillette

- During the building of Jordi Gali’s Babel (see page 58), I saw that there were at least two possibilities: to observe from very close or to take some steps back in order to look at the whole picture. While tying knots with other participants, we focused on each other’s hands, on details. While doing, it was possible to exchange and talk about where we come from or our children’s names. The proximity allows bits of stories to be exchanged in the meticulous choreography of fingers tying and untying black ropes, making mistakes and starting again. But Babel also demanded to be attentive to a collective action and allowed us to witness what we are capable of when we meet and decide to put all of our efforts in one direction.
  - Marie Pons

WORKSHOP

- Short term opportunity for exchange of knowledge, skills and ideas. Depending on the expertise present, a non-hierarchical approach can be a very inspirational and important moment to raise awareness for every individual involved.
  - Žak Valenta

- A space that is full of potential and allows people to bring, intersect and share their different perspectives and experiences. It’s a place for suggesting opportunities, without knowing exactly what will happen next, which can surprise. An open activity that can create/aris feed motivation.
  - Andrea Rampazzo

XENOPHOBIA

- The fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign. It is what we wish we would never encounter or experience in our lives. It is a curse that cyclically afflicts humanity, emerging in moments of crisis, feeding itself by manipulating ignorance and fear, while utilizing the most advanced means of persuasion and communication.
  - Roberto Casarotto

YOUTH

- Youth is the moment between childhood and adulthood. It is often the beginning of discovering identity, bravery, independence, responsibility, preferences, purpose and meaning. When youth unfolds in a nourishing environment, the future looks good. When it unfolds in poor conditions, hopelessness and mistakes can negatively shape a person, a community, a lifetime.
  - Monica Gillette

- It is the time when vitality, courage, hope and passion start to grow and blossom. I see the strength of youth in the gaze of the heroes who, at a young age, cross deserts, prisons, mountains and seas in search of a place in which to grow, to express themselves, in which to contribute. I see how youth brings a regenerating energy to the territory in which I live, the land that has one of the highest aging rates and the fewest newborns born in Italy.
  - Roberto Casarotto
**ZOO**

- A facility where living, typically wild animals are kept especially for public exhibition. The word is also used to describe a place, a situation, or a group marked by crowding, confusion, or unrestrained behavior. In the context of people crossing borders towards ‘our’ side, humans are sometimes referred to in animal terms: gosfand (sheeps) for those crossing the borders between Afghanistan and Iran, pollos (chickens) and cockroaches for those crossing between Mexico and the United States of America, to name some examples. In the 21st century it is still not uncommon to hear, see or read that migrants are held in inhumane conditions (worse than animals) in camps, cages, trucks, boats, centres or reception facilities.
  - Roberto Casarotto

- From zoo to zoom. Will you stay a spectator, observing others from a distance as they are locked in their cages and restrictive conditions? Or will you zoom in on what we share, making the effort to learn about their dreams, desires and wishes for the future?
  - Monica Gillette
Comune di Bassano del Grappa - Centro per la Scena Contemporanea and Operaestate Festival

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Andrea Rampazzo

**Writer**
Lara Crippa

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- Associazione Casa a Colori Onlus - Bassano del Grappa
- Cooperativa Sociale CON TE Onlus - Quinto Vicentino
- G.A.G.A Vicenza - Gruppo ascolto giovani arcobaleno
- IIS A. Scotton indirizzo Moda - Breganze
- Liceo G. B. Brocchi indirizzo economico sociale - Bassano del Grappa
- Nolimita-c-tions
- S. G. A. Remondini - Bassano del Grappa

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Croatian Institute for Movement and Dance (Hrvatski institut za pokret i ples)

**Dance artist**
Žak Valenta

**Writer**
Antonio Gabelić

**In collaboration with:**
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- Živi atelje DK
- Zagreb Dance Centre

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D.ID Dance Identity - Choreografisches Zentrum Burgenland, Austria

**Dance artist**
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**Writer**
Edith Wolf Perez

**In collaboration with:**
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- Volksschule Pinkafeld
- Neue Mittelschule Pinkafeld
- BIP Begegnung in Pinkafeld

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La Briqueterie - CDCN du Val-de-Marne

**Dance artist**
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**Writer**
Marie Pons

**In collaboration with:**
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- Conseil d’Architecture, d’Urbanisme et de l’environnement Val-de-Marne (CAUE 94)
- Centre d’Accueil Thérapeutique à Temps Partiel (CATTP) Vitry
- Association Pass’âge
- Groupe Hospitalier Paul Guiraud Villejuif
- Palais de la Porte Dorée – Musée National de l’Histoire de l’Immigration
- PoP Moves

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