

BEIRUT _ LEBANON

the report

 *Mediterranean Dance Meeting*
From 9 till 11 November



DESCRIPTION

1. Name of partners in the Action

DBM - Danse Bassin Méditerranée

www.d-b-m.org

Maqamat Theatre Dance (Beirut, Lebanon)

www.fluidoffline.com/maqamat

La Mekanica (Barcelona, Spain)

www.lamekanica.com

ÇATI - Contemporary Dance Artists Association (Istanbul, Turkey)

www.catidans.org

2. Associated Partners

Al Madina Theatre

Metropolis Art Cinema

www.metropoliscinema.net

3. Title of the Action

DBM Mediterranean Dance Meeting, in Beirut

4. Start date and end date

From the 3rd to 19th of November, 2007

5. Country

Lebanon

6. Participants

50 people: dancers, choreographers, dance teachers, dance critics, researchers, cultural operators and arts students.

Activity 1:

DBM and Maqamat Theatre Dance Presentation | Metropolis Art Cinema | 9 November

By Mark Deputter and Mona Knio | Omar Rajeh

Mona Knio, Lebanese Board Member, welcomed all the participants and Mark Deputter gave a brief introduction about DBM for the audience. After that, Omar Rajeh presented Maqamat Theatre Dance.

Maqamat is a Lebanese contemporary dance company that has succeeded in a very short period of time to emerge as a functional organization in the creation and development of contemporary dance in Lebanon and its surrounding region. The company organizes one of the most important dance festivals of the Middle East, entitled the Bipod Festival (the Beirut International Platform of Dance). The festival always offers a rich international program of performances, debates, lectures and workshops.

Activity 2:

Lecture: Opportunities for the development of Contemporary Dance in the Middle East and its artistic, social and civic implications | Metropolis Art Cinema | 9 November

By Jana El Hassan | Lebanon | Actress, dancer and choreographer

The most important thing referred to in this presentation was the necessity to take the education of contemporary dance to a higher level, instead of being attached to a theatre major.

Activity 3:

Guided tour of the Beirut Contemporary Art Scene | 9 November

Participants visited the following cultural organizations, art houses, gallery spaces and theatres during the afternoon:

- Zico House, one of the first spontaneous and independent centers in Beirut. Zico House is a socio-artistic phenomenon in Beirut. It hosts several venues: the Beirut Street Festival and other avant-garde art festivals, as well as a hostel for artists. It is also the home of diverse NGOs such as Green Line, the Lebanese Association for Democracy of Elections, Helem (the only openly functioning gay and lesbian organisation in the Arab world), and Women in IT in addition to the artsy cafe-bar "Samra";
- Monnot Theatre, created in 1997, operates at the Saint-Joseph University and hosts several theatre and dance shows throughout the year, performances and festivals such as the BIPOD Dance Festival, *Irtijal* – the International Lebanese Festival for Experimental Music, and the International Festival of Story and Monodrama. www.usj.edu.lb/monnot/
- UMAM - Documentation and Research, a Lebanese Association for Cultural and Artist Exchange, founded in 2004 as a non-profit civil company, that deals with issues related to civil violence and war memories. UMAM D&R concentrates on themes of active memory by intentionally revisiting Lebanon's violent past, an undertaking fiercely contested among Lebanese. www.umam-dr.org
- The Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, Ashkal Alwan, a non-profit arts organization. Their aim is to initiate and promote critical artistic practices; and to document and build an archive of contemporary intellectual and creative activity. Since their launch in 1994, their activities have included a wide range of projects, from exhibitions, videos, lectures, performances and publications, to working in public spaces, creating networks and partnerships for reflection, dialogue and exchange. www.ashkalalwan.org

In all these visits, the participants were accompanied by the person in charge of the place and had the opportunity to ask questions. This activity was very useful to stimulate the dialogue and the exchange of experiences and made it possible to take a deeper look at the cultural scene in Beirut.

Activity 4:

Autumn Dance | Arab Dance Platform | 9 – 11 November

13 performances by 12 artists were presented:

Concerto 13 / 2nd movement | Omar Rajeh | Lebanon | 45 min.

How they thought a table is a table | Caroline Hatem | Lebanon | 15 min.

More Less | Brahim Sourny | Morocco | 30min.

Until the Dust Settles | Art & Movement Company | Lebanon | 10 min.

Shadow...where to? | Georgette Gebara | Lebanon | 6 min.

Upside down | Malek Andari | Lebanon | 15 min.

Bereavement | Georgette Gebara | Lebanon | 6 min.

Ephemera | Mazen Kiwan | Lebanon | 25 min.

Un an après | Nacera Belazza | Algeria | 55 min.

Imra'a | Maguy To' | Lebanon | 5 min.

From Majnoun Leila | Nadra Assaf | Lebanon | 6 min.

Mhayern Msika | Nejib Ben Khalfallah | Tunisia | 40 min.

Big my secret | Zei Khauli | Lebanon | 45 min.

Activity 5:

Working groups – discussion | 10 November

Potential and problems for the development of contemporary dance in the Middle East | moderator: Nadra Assaf | Lebanon | Artistic director Al-Sarab Alternative Dance School

“(The seminar) focused more on the problems. The two main issues discussed were: the availability of support (both moral and financial) for dance/movement functions/workshops; the ethical/moral dilemma facing the use of the body in countries where the body is a matter of ‘haram’.

As for the potential: we felt that there was one main factor, which was colleague acceptance and support. We believe that the fact that dance does not get a lot of

government support in the Middle East leads to there being a larger amount of interaction and support within the dance/art community. " Nadra Assaf

The artist and his role in society | moderator: Walid Sadek | Lebanon | Artist, writer and AUB professor

"...we began by asking if any of those present in the meeting have ever experienced through their work a social and/or political relevance. The answers were varied. Some argued for what I would consider as a naive belief in the therapeutic and therefore transformative impact of the arts. Others urged that artists consider their work as an occupation, a day job, which stands side by side with other occupations in a given society.

Still, a few were more critical recognizing that the arts and the artists are, as is often the case, in crisis and therefore any attempt to engage with the society must understand that art does not stand outside but is rather already structured if not determined by the society. Towards the end of the meeting, an attempt was made to introduce the concept of the gift (Mauss, Clastres, Baudrillard) as a pathway towards a sociality in which competition requires the presence of the other. A sociality where receiving a gift is in fact more challenging than the act of offering. The meeting ended without closure and without any resolutions." Walid Sadek

Mobility and international collaboration in dance – is the Mediterranean a relevant platform? | moderator: Medie Megas | Greece | dancer and dance editor

"The group that discussed this topic fought a bit with some language difficulties, but managed in the end to produce some interesting thoughts and questions.

The importance of mobility and international collaboration was taken more or less for granted as the discussion moved straight to the painful issue of funding and money. Questions arose regarding the criteria used by programmers and funding organisations in their selection of dance companies or individual artists for festivals or other funded programmes. These questions led us to address the issue of international cultural policy: who it is run by and what role can dance play in this exercise of export. The fact that cultural policy is usually carried out by organisations linked to a countries' ministry of foreign affairs (like the Goethe or the French institute) rather than its ministry of culture seemed to be revealing to everyone. When the real intentions behind a certain policy are not relevant to the

development of dance as an art form, then one can understand why many decision-makers prefer to play-safe rather than experiment.

Nonetheless, everyone seemed to agree that someone from the south of Europe and even more so from an African or Middle Eastern country has a lot to gain from searching for funding outside his country, from a place where funding for dance comes in greater numbers and more forms. At the same time, it was fervently supported that it is the responsibility of the dance world of each country to convince their governments of the importance and potential of dance as a cultural product.

It was also discussed that in order for mobility and collaboration programmes to be more effective, artists themselves need to be more involved in organisational and decision-making processes, allowing their personal experience to guide funding programmes and other initiatives in more effective directions. The increasing specialisation in the art field may lift many weights of the backs of the artists, but at the same time calls for a greater exchange of ideas and experience.

Regarding the second part of the topic in question: 'Is the Mediterranean a relevant platform?' a positive answer was not taken for granted. New questions arose regarding the existence of such a thing as a Mediterranean identity, the use of creating such regional affiliations and networks, the difficulty in overcoming enormous cultural and economical barriers and the need to open up towards other greater regions worldwide, as for example South America, which offered the inspiring example of REDSD (Red Sudamericana de Danza).

In the midst of bustling Beirut the only certainty that we reached was that '*créer un potentiel de rencontre et d'échange, et créer des moments...*' is a good first step in an effort for better dance and more artistic opportunities for dance artists." Medie Megas

Activity 6:

Conference about the Mediterranean Dance Map project by DBM in the presence of 5 collaborating researchers and dance critics from 3 Mediterranean countries | 11 November

Algeria | Nacera Belaza and Boubakeur Sekini

Cyprus | Elena Christodoulidou and Emiliani Christou

Palestine | Khaled Elayyan

After the first public presentation of the project on the DBM Mediterranean Dance Meeting in Istanbul, in June 2007, our work continued in order to find people to collaborate with us from some of the countries that were not available in June. These three countries had started working some months before this meeting and they presented some important data and reflected upon the dance scene in their countries with the audience.

Despite the fact that we live in a globalized world, there still exist unknown realities. In this conference, we were given a good picture of the actual contemporary dance scene in these three countries: the little or non- existence of a contemporary dance scene in Algeria; the beginning of a new age in Cyprus fighting for legal status and recognition from the State; the use of art and particularly of dance as a “weapon” for a reflection about the social and political situation in Palestine.

Activity 7:

Open session for project presentations | 11 November

Move Out Loud | by Filipe Viegas

<http://moveoutl.blogspot.com>

A project that aims to promote global communication through dance and movement; a “one world” choreography that crosses borders, languages, cultures, frontiers, religions and economical differences. It works using the Internet as a tool that facilitates the sharing of information in a global and fast way.

A choreographer or a dancer will upload to the site of the "MOVE OUT LOUD" project a 3 minute video of a dance solo. Then another choreographer or a dancer already registered in the site will receive the link of the video of the previous artist and will have to record on video a choreography that starts with the last movement of the previous artists. Then this video is uploaded and sent to the next artist and the method is repeated.

This is an ongoing project that can live and grow over time and since its viewing is available to anyone that has access to a computer, it will promote contemporary dance, and it is a project by artists for artists, with no intentions of making a profit, other than to share experiences, universes, imagination, stories, feelings, desires or despairs and to shout it to the world... to all... like one big family.

EX:CHANGING *Memories of Movements* | by Sara Gebran

A social arena for artists to meet, to collaborate, and to develop ideas toward a performance which focuses on the creation of an experience shared with an audience. The quality of the social space or public arena is one of the main aims of the project. They intend to make artistic and social process the product of the work, more than the performance seen as a result.

The project calls for collaboration and communication between artists from multi-disciplinary fields, varied levels of experience and age, and different nationalities or ethnic groups; with an aim for further exchange with the audience.

Cultural Management and Network for Contemporary Performing Arts | by Zeynep Gunsur

A culture and arts management project in Istanbul that brings together a number of cultural actors on a common platform through a series of meetings, seminars and a final conference in order to openly discuss the problems of the contemporary performing arts field and develop responsive ideas and projects. Through these events, the goal is to make an impact on cultural and artistic policies on a public scale, initiate a transformation process, and develop civil organization strategies.

The Place and the Word (From the series “The exile and the kingdom”) | by Fernando Renjifo

The place and the word is an open and creative project, which might eventually result in an audiovisual installation, or a performance, or a video-graphic creation. In the first stage, Fernando Renjifo will visit Beirut to gather visual and audio material and subject it to a first development. The project is based on material coming from personal interviews, writings and diverse video and audio recordings. There is also a possibility for using pre-existing archive records from Umam Documentation and Research and the Arab Image Foundation, two associations with an extensive audio and visual archive who are supporting this project. Fernando expects to access historical testimonies as well as testimonies from the city’s inhabitants, among them poets, artists and intellectuals.

“Io Lusso” | by Andrea Fagarazzi

www.andreafagarazzi.com

After their visual arts work, Andrea Fagarazzi and I-Chen Zuffellato are starting to work on their new production “Io Lusso”. In this phase, they will analyse and deepen some aspects of the contemporary social and cultural condition, beginning with the theme of “Luxury”.

Within a sociological analysis, they intend to reconsider the effects produced by luxury on the corporeal.

The main questions that stimulate their artistic investigation are:

What are the strategies and the forms of Luxury? What are the effects produced on our bodies? How does it influence the senses and how are they modified? How does the concept of “beauty”, always capricious and disputable, change and slide? Does desire, not foreseen by need, exist? Or is luxury a human need to desire beyond, outside of oneself?

DBM MEDITERRANEAN DANCE MEETING | PARALLEL ACTIVITIES

Activity 1:

Andrea Fagarazzi’s Choreographic Residency with Alia Hamdan and Pierre Geagea | from 3 till 11 November

ANDREA FAGARAZZI’S REPORT

“I had the pleasure of receiving an invitation from theatre director Omar Rajeh, to lead a choreographic residency and to join, for my first time, the DBM Meeting in November '07 at the Maqamat Theatre in Beirut. Rich experiences and new encounters with artists and operators characterized my stay of ten days.

Two people were introduced to me when I arrived in Beirut. First I met Pierre, a ballet dancer that had never experienced contemporary dance and had a particular condition, he was deaf. The second day I met Alia, a contemporary dancer.

The choreographic residency was programmed for the duration of nine days, working for five to six hours per day. I had to deal with various obstacles that arose during the period, as, for example: the participants could not join the process every day and not for all the hours, due to their personal motivations; there were difficulties in accepting the different activities proposed; for some there was no motivation even to sit and talk about cultural and artistic issues.

Although, the participants were enthusiastic to join the project, we spent most of the first two days getting to know each other, talking and experimenting with some topics through exercises that I proposed, through writing and movement.

My **first proposition** had specific points of research:

A) *Identity, what defines or does not define our self?*

B) *We can't define who we are in one single thing. Then, we rather try to first understand some of our different characteristics.*

C) *Final step - A multiple identity. How to increase and later amplify or minimize one "common" identity of the three collaborators? Is this possible? Or do we instead reach an Un-identifiable identity?*

In relation to that, Alia was immediately considering *"I have problems with the concept of identity. If somebody asks me who I am, I don't know, because I'm constantly changing!"*

This was the right direction for me but unfortunately, and not only for her statement, after a long discussion, I came to understand that my proposition was not welcome and accepted from both participants.

As a **second proposition**, I proposed to go around the city of Beirut, visiting characteristic places like the sea-side, cemetery, streets and to reflect, analyzing and reconsidering themes in what they mean, why they exist, why the people need to go there, from an anthropological and personal point of view; if and what are the cultural differences. But for Pierre and Alia, this was a kind of waste of time; they were not interested and didn't really want to explore it.

Perhaps for some people it sounds boring, but why not reconsider one's own city from different perspectives?

Third proposition. Since the purpose of a residency is to confront, to share information and to develop a project together, I didn't want to force anyone to do something that only I wanted, because it was supposed to be a collaborative effort. I opened the possibilities to the rest of the group, by asking if there were

any suggestions or themes that they would like to explore. The main interest for themes was to continue to explore some exercises of movement research lead by me and to learn some of my choreographic pieces. We did it, and I must admit that despite all the difficulties it was clear that Alia and Pierre were willing, each one with his/her personal way, to discover new strategies of communication between inner feelings and movements. Of course, there is always a certain loss, especially in new things, when you have to fight against and go over your limits, in order to increase the inner distance of your own possibilities, especially for a trained ballet dancer. It was surprising to see the challenges in the use of the body and new tools in relation to the space.

Alia and Pierre were enthusiastic, but I was not convinced, because it was becoming a workshop, and I was not there for that reason.

Fourth proposition. As I said at the beginning, Pierre has a particular condition, he is deaf. I thought that this was a very interesting situation to explore for the entire group. We all concentrated to understand on how Pierre is able to hear more than just nothing, focusing our attention on the natural body tools that he exploits, and to go beyond the special little machines that he uses in his ears. We tried an exercise of breathing and vocal sound that he did for a long time in his childhood, just setting a little mirror under our nose.

“Surprisingly”, we discovered that it wasn't so easy, even for us. At the beginning, Pierre doubted going through all of this, because it was reminding him of a heavy time of his life, it was understandable. But we went on opening and improvising also with movements, experimenting how it could affect the body's relation to the space and the relationship between us.

A second phase was to go on with that, to further understand what kind of other senses Pierre had developed in his life, in order to go beyond the deafness. To know how in general he relates himself with the rest of the people, the world, considering a condition that is invisible. These were considerations that again we would have to approach and relate to the entire group.

Through Pierre's experience, I noticed a main consideration to recognize which was the incredible effect that the exercise had had on his body over the years. The specific mutation operated on his body. Of course, one who is able to hear from birth cannot experience the true challenge of it, but there is a clear and undisputed issue in it. We must consider that, following just a natural process and forcing the body under a deep research, the human capacity can go far and evolves beyond the challenges.

This would have been a very interesting path to continue for our research. But I decided to discontinue the choreographic residency due to the following reasons: the numerous rejections of my propositions from the beginning; the experience level and the lack of propositions from the participants; their inconstant participation from time constraints; and, finally, for other reasons that are not to mention in this present context.

It became a workshop lead by me and I think that I couldn't have taken the responsibility of this change.

We all know that time is the main source for knowing each other and it gave us the capacity to understand what we can and want to do.

Activity 2:

Solo Creation Workshop by Kitt Johnson | Denmark | from 5 till 8 November | 19h30_22h30 | MT Dance Space

Participants: Ayman Nahleh, Clara Sfeir, Cynthia Traboulsi, Dana Khalil , Elsa Zgheip, Hanane El-Dirani, Ivana Villada, Nada El-Eid, Shirine Nasrallahova and Talin Buyukkurkciyan.

KITT JOHNSON'S REPORT

"Omar Rajeh (Maqamat Theatre Dance's Artistic Director) proposed to me to perform a solo piece of mine, Rankefod, in the Autumn Dance, and also give a solo creation workshop for Lebanese choreographers and dancers, which I accepted. It turned out that he could not finance the performance, so finally I just did the workshop.

The workshop turned out to be connected to the DBM meeting, which took part simultaneously. That gave me a chance to attend part of the talks and also see the Arab Dance Platform, which were both very interesting for me. Since it was my first encounter with both DBM and Arab dance I got a lot of new information about what is going on, what the problems are and the attempts to improve. And I also met a whole lot of new people that stimulated a fruitful exchange both on an artistic, organisational and human level. I am thankful for that!

As for the workshop I had originally proposed 5 days, 5-6 hours per day. It turned out to be 4 days, and only 3 hours a day. This was mainly due to the fact that all

participants, professionals and amateurs, were working in normal jobs during the day. So it was a bit short, especially since Omar Rajeh wished to have a public presentation by the end of the workshop.

The participants turned out to be mainly amateurs; some of them had zero performance experience. But nevertheless, they worked very well, and showed a lot of courage and enthusiasm. There was a core group of eight people who followed the whole workshop, and I think another 5 people, who were there on and off, due to work. Of course this is not the best scenario for either the group or the work, but those were the conditions and the engagement present made it worthwhile, indeed!

By the end of the workshop we did a half an hour presentation of a mix of set and improvised material. I was very impressed by the result considering that half the group had never performed before. For me it was not important to present some piece of art, but to give to the participants a good experience and the desire and courage to continue exploring their bodily expressivity. In my opinion, we succeeded!"

www.kittjohnson.dk

Kitt Johnson was supported by the Danish Ministry of Culture

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

"Kitt is a very experienced teacher other than being a great performer I'm sure. She had the capability to put the beginners and advanced dancers and actors and actresses in one group by helping everybody to not lose interest in the work and encourage them to benefit from it. Her build up to the class was very well organized. She was motivating the class with imagery exercises, creative words and thoughts. As a human being, she is beautiful and full of passion and passes her knowledge to her students. It was a great experience working with her and I had a chance to recall my knowledge with an interesting approach."

Talin Buyukkurkciyan | Turkey

Choreographer and dancer

Activity 3:

Video-Documentary by Alessandro Guidotti | Italy | from 7 till 19 November

DBM and Maqamat Theatre Dance invited the filmmaker, Alessandro Guidotti, to accompany the DBM Mediterranean Dance Meeting. The video-documentary will premiere in 2008.

Activity 4:

Dance Criticism Seminar by Jaime Conde Salazar & Tiago Bartolomeu Costa | Spain & Portugal | from 7 till 12 November | MT Dance Space

5 participants: Asmaa Wehbeh, Nadine Khalile, Nicole Younes, Sidsel Nelund and Taghrid Al-Samary.

This seminar had the main purpose of exploring peripheral points of view in relation to dance and, especially, in relation to live arts in Beirut. The leading role of this seminar was shared between Tiago Bartolomeu (*Revista Obscena*, Lisboa) and Jaime Conde Salazar (Dance critic for *Obscena*, *Ballet/Tanz* and *SuzyQ*). This in fact made it possible to propose different approaches to a dance event. After attending performances within the dance festival *Autumn Dance*, all participants wrote texts to later discuss in a group setting, but unfortunately such a setting was not possible.

JAIME CONDE SALAZAR & TIAGO BARTOLOMEU COSTA'S REPORT

Goals

- Expanding the analysis resources when approaching any live art event;
- Developing and writing routines related to dance criticism;
- Exploring contexts of continuous debate and critical reflections in reference to the performances seen during the Dance Festival;
- Analyzing cultural references and dance traditions in Lebanon.

Challenges

- Creating a space where a fruitful exchange of ideas could happen and an exploration of each person's point of view;
- Raising questions about authority, the construction of the "oriental" fantasy, the point of view of the spectator inside the theatre (for ballet), hegemonic European trends, etc;
- Questioning positions within the dance world and especially the position of the critic.

Difficulties

- Participants were not fully committed with the workshop and the routines proposed. Because of their jobs and diverse interests they tried to combine different activities. The result was an irregular number of participants in each session and a real impossibility of developing a constant work together.
- It was impossible to get involved in writing discussions because of the irregular presence and work of the participants. Discussions happened to be more focused on theory than on practice. That created an interesting environment where people with different backgrounds shared their personal positions on dance.
- It was impossible to reach the editing point and, as a result, to publish any text. The few texts submitted required a deep discussion before being handed to the audience. But participants never assisted regularly to the sessions and edition issues were never carried out.
- Performances offered during the festival didn't raise enough interesting questions. Somehow, the Lebanese cultural context was left out of the program. The result was that participants were more interested in talking about other cultural phenomena happening in the city than working on the dance festival.

Activity 4:

Filipe Viegas's Choreographic Residency with Zei Khauli | Portugal | from 12 till 19 November

FILIFE VIEGAS'S REPORT

"I had the chance to be in an artistic residency with local choreographer Zei Khauli. Despite our artistic differences, we managed to create work and develop thinking about the gay community in Beirut, and global feelings like love and friendship.

Since Zei and I had never worked together before we decided that the best way to work was to share ideas that we previously had. So, one could bring images that came to his mind, share music that he would be interested in using for something, and also evolve movement improvisations. This sharing would then be the basis for simple discussions about the starting points, and then the other could interject in the ideas of the other, or not.

It was interesting that some subjects, especially the naked body, could have such different impacts on the performances, since in an Arab country it is still forbidden to expose the body.

At the last day all the material (around 12 different scenes) was presented to people who were interested in what we were working on, which was also important to confront with the audience, and then get their feedback."

PUBLICATIONS

500 brochures of the DBM – Mediterranean Dance Meeting Programme were printed. They were mainly distributed together with the Autumn Dance's Programme in cultural places, theatres, universities, restaurants, cafés and pubs.

The programme was also sent as pdf format by email to over 1500 addresses in the DBM database with an advance one month and half.

The announcement of the workshops was made by mailing directly to the dance community in Lebanon. The announcement started one month before the workshop began.

FEEDBACK ABOUT THE MEETING

“The structure and organisation of the meeting was very good and I think it served the cause it aimed at. Everyone met someone new, I personally was very intrigued by the situation in Lebanon and other countries and it just gave me a boost to discover more. Also the networking possibilities were great as now I am in contact with a few of the attendees.

One thing which I feel needed a bit more attention or care is the choreographic residencies. It would be interesting to find out more how these worked out, what the challenges were and what the outcome was. It would be a good way to investigate and open up a dialogue for finding ways to make residencies to their maximum potential.”

Emiliani Christou | Cyprus
Arts manager and performer

“DBM Meeting in Beirut was an enriching experience to meet the cultural operators and choreographers of Mediterranean and Arab Region countries. To have knowledge about how they work and how the situations are in their countries.

Also because Beirut is beautiful, historical and politically important and the most chaotic city in the region. These facts made the meeting more interesting. It was worth to get to know the culture and the history of the city.

The discussion groups (at least mine) opened new ways of looking into art and raised questions which were great exercise to do with all the other participants of the meeting.

Only The Festival and the pieces involved could have been chosen by giving more importance to the quality instead of the quantity of the pieces.”

Talin Buyukkurkciyan | Turkey
Choreographer

“The meeting was very good, not so much because of the discussions programmed by the organizers but mostly for the opportunity to meet and talk to other artists, producers or organizers. I think this is what makes the meeting valuable. You don't know with whom you're dealing with until you meet them, talk, spending time after a meal, a drink or discussion of a performance... This was excellent.

I also loved to hear the very short presentation of some of the artist's projects, which was

the last hour you offer us to say few things about our next work. Maybe a bit more time for that could be excellent, because one can have a clearer overview of how art is being directed towards...

What is missing? Maybe more contact, for example, can we start going and visiting each other, teaching, performing, or just meeting outside these meetings? I guess one needs a few more meetings to then start trusting one another before beginning an exchange.

This was my first meeting at DBM. I hope to come back in February 08."

Sara Gebran | Denmark

Choreographer

"The last DBM meeting in Beirut was interesting and positive for me. Beside the fact that the meeting was a space to encounter, exchange with the other participants and to discover the Beirut contemporary dance scene, it was also an opportunity for me to show and share my artistic performance in the frame work of the Arab dance platform.

The organisation was very good, I got all the practical information and details, that makes me able to have some autonomy, I also like the idea of how the stay was organised, the hotel, the contact point, all the places in one area.

About the program, I like the idea of dividing the participants in different working groups, I feel that we were more implicated and the exchange between us was more constructive and easier."

Brahim Sourny | Morocco

Choreographer

"It was a great opportunity for me to participate to DBM, I was glad to be given the chance of showing my work and to watch other Lebanese and non-Lebanese works - it's most interesting for instance to get to discover North-African artists with whom we usually have no relationship (no artistic bridges connect us)."

Caroline Hatem | Lebanon

Choreographer

"DBM meeting was of great importance to us as it was the first time we met people from countries of Middle East and people from the Mediterranean region at the same time.

Cyprus is so close to these countries but we always felt so far away. Now the situation is differentiated and we believe we can exchange ideas, start collaborations initiate projects

with European countries but also these Middle East countries.

Personally I found myself inspired and moved by the situation in Lebanon, Palestine, Portugal, Morocco, Algeria, Turkey, Tunisia, etc. It was an inspiring moment meeting all these important and creative people and made us think about new perspectives of collaborations and initiatives.”

Elena Christodoulidou | Cyprus

Choreographer

“For me as a Palestinian the meeting was great because I met many people and I started to build a cooperation with many of them, also it was a good chance to see dance performance and invite dancers to Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival 2008. The meeting was excellent to have more idea about dance scene in the Mediterranean countries. And finally it was important to meet the Lebanese dancers, theaters, and cultural organizations.

Thank you for your cooperation and your hard work.”

Khaled Elayyan | Palestine

Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival Director

“It was my first time that I joined the DBM Meeting. I can point out with pleasure the good political direction that has characterized all the encounters, if we especially consider the decision to do the meetings in Beirut, and because they have been bravely contextualized in the current problematic situation that Lebanon lives. I do have to consider it also from a general view that is present even in Europe, under the condition that we live nowadays, under some psychological strategies and actions that want to move away the good exchange of human resources and it creates a phobia of the foreigner. The DBM meeting had made, with success, a strong effort for an open dialogue and confrontations of the differences between the cultures, which for me is an extremely important evaluation to do.”

Andrea Fagarazzi | Italy

Choreographer

ORGANIZATION TEAM

Hugo Quinta | DBM Coordinator

Omar Rajeh | Maqamat Theatre Dance Artistic Director

Tarek Hassan | Production Manager

Zei Khauli | Executive Producer

Marwan Hamdan | Production

Lisette Shehade | Administrative Assistant

Lina Jou Khaddar | Technical Director

Rasha Jou Khaddar | Assistant Technician

Majed Zgheib | Assistant Technician

Ali Younes | Assistant Technician

Zeid Olleik | Assistant Technician

Bassam Bou Diab | Assistant Technician

Mohammad Farhat | Assistant Technician

Bassel Kassem | Sound Technician

Karam Ghossein | Sound Technician

Lina Ashkar | Stage Technician

Ali Farhat | Office boy

DBM BOARD MEMBERS

Mark Deputter | Portugal | President of the board

Malek Sebai | Tunisia | Vice-president of the board

Cristiano Carpanini | France | Treasurer of the board

Mona Knio | Lebanon | Vice-treasurer of the board

Zeynep Gunsur | Turkey | Secretary of the board

Ornella D'Agostino | Italy | Member of the board

Irena Staudohar | Slovenia | Member of the board

DBM IS SUPPORTED BY



Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures
Fondation Euro-Méditerranéenne Anna Lindh pour le Dialogue entre les Cultures
مؤسسة أناليند الأورو-متوسطية للحوار بين الثقافات



European Cultural Foundation



FUNDAÇÃO
CALOUSTE
GULBENKIAN 50
1956
2006
anos

alkantara