

Erasmus report

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I have spent my last three month in The Netherlands, teaching Kizomba at Salsaventura Dance Company. I was assisting Dudley Angela dance teacher at the classes. He was the main teacher, due to his larger experience and dance profession in Kizomba, but we were both really active and cooperative with each other in the classes.

We had 10 weeks course where met with different people also very international people, not only from The Netherlands, with also different background. They were beginners in dance, they didn't really have any professional dance education behind them.

Kizomba dance is couple dance which is basically based on stepping on the floor, but it has several combinations, and without full connection with the partner it is not possible to do it. As I mentioned we had really different people coming to the classes and we needed to measure a level and keep a balance between people. Mainly the students had the biggest problem with the rhythm and/or with the connection. Stepping on the beat and isolating their body was challenging for many of the students. Age differences were also big, approximately between ages of 22-45 years old student could be in the same group.

The classes started with warming up, what usually I was leading it. It was based on stepping on the beat, and let them practice isolation in their upper body and their lower body, mainly in their hips and pelvis movement was really important to teach them.

Dudley was also willing to give me space for me to say something or show something to the student, he was always supporting my approaches. Afterward, we were discussing it and if something was not perfect, he was coaching me and corrected me. I was really appreciate it, because I could always learn from it.

I made a video about our classes, so you can get more idea about Kizomba. I must say they were really beginners, so we spent a lot of time, just to let them step on the beat on the right way. We couldn't go into difficult moves.

We had some group photos made during classes. The dance school organized some special „theme” for the last classes where the student could take a mascara. One of them was Gala theme and the other was Rock and Roll.





Video: <https://vimeo.com/212391593>

The other big part of my Erasmus experience is my preparation for The Netherlands Choreography Dance Competition, where I have decided to make a solo for myself.

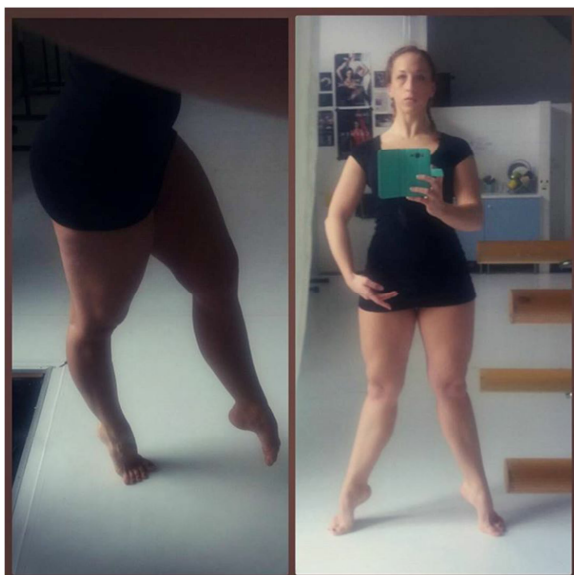
It has been a while that I have been creating a piece, so I was enthusiastic to get into a deeper creative work after a long time. I had some ideas before, also ideas for music, which come together after a few rehearsals. Nice experience that I kept a good relationship with my previous Erasmus place, where I spent a few months. Dance in Art is a dance studio based in The Netherlands, Haarlem, director Martine Van Santen, who is offering a one-year different dance programs for international dancers. The main goal is to train them in Modern and contemporary dance, and provide them a bigger chance to get a career in the dance field. They get daily training, teachers and choreographers, portfolio, photoshoot, workshops and also place to create their own work. This is the place where I have been started my Holland journey too. I think it is a nice place to be.

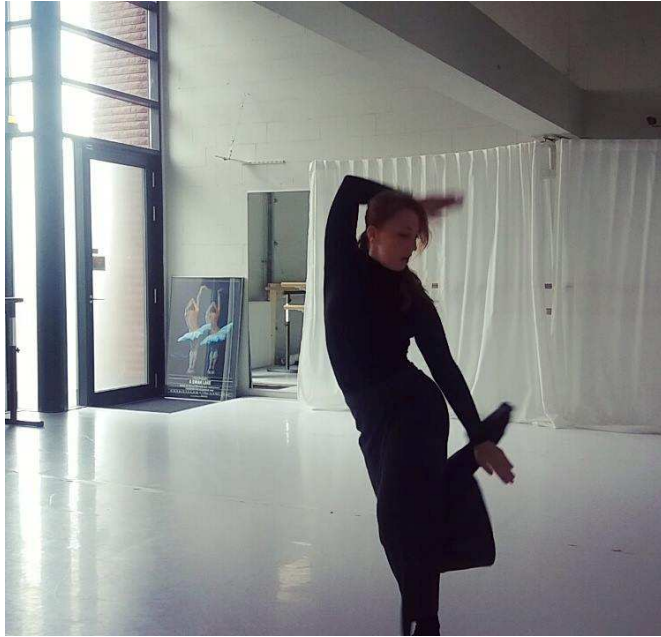
So Dance in Art provided me a dance studio where I could rehearse and create my solo. I successfully made it, which I have been recorded and sent to the Competition. There was a pre-selection for the competition, where my solo went through, so I will be able to perform it on the 6th May in Haarlem, in front of an audience and the jury.

Also got an opportunity to perform it on the International Dance Day in Leiden city on the 29th April. Details are still under organizations, but I am happy that more people can see my work.

The video is available to see in this link. Title: BlackBIRD

<https://vimeo.com/206737640>





The period of the Erasmus time I was able to take some classes in Amsterdam Dance Centrum and also some Bikram Joga, but in the last month, unfortunately I got a back injury, I must say a really serious one. One day I realized some pain in my back, what one of my friend check and she said it seems like one of my vertebrae is not in the line. So I decided coming week I am going to the doctor. But on the weekend from out of nothing, I found myself not able to move from a huge back pain. Was really scary because I couldn't sit, sleep or take my shoes on. So as soon as I could I went to the doctor and ask for help. They sent me to the manual therapist who told me that one of my vertebrae turned inside, which bothered the other vertebra and of course all my muscles. Eventually, he cracked it back. Since than I am visiting also manual and fysio therapist as well. They provide me care and special exercises which with I can get better day by day.

Today I am better but my movements are still limited sometimes, by the sharp pain in my back. Hopefully, I will be able to perform my solo without any problem and pain.

I have learned and experienced a lot due to teaching Kizomba, creating my solo and being injured. It is a journey which is never ending.