

Contact Corfu Festival-Erasmus Report- Guba Dorka

After graduating from the contemporary dance department in 2025 June, in August-September I participated in a Contact Improvisation festival in Arillas, Corfu, Greece.

It's called Corfu Contact Festival/ Dance on Land & Water, which already shows that it's not only a usual CI festival. The festival's aim was to experience, practice contact improvisation on both land, and water. Including intensives with world-known teachers from around the world, and several other classes, like Axis Syllabus & Authentic Movement practices. And practices in water such as a heated pool, with professionals specialized in movement in water, and classes, jams in the shallow sea, and sand next to it. The main festival lasted for 7 days, and there was also a pre- and a post festival workshop, 3 days before and 2 days after the main days. I participated in the full program.

The pre-festival workshop was about the 'Textures in Contact' with a teacher called Aham (ES), which brought research on practicing contact with closed eyes. There were several warm-up exercises to build trust among each other, with the 12 participants, and then more and more discovery in dancing, mostly in pairs. It gave me a lot during these 3 days, that I could meet really different people, with different bodies and experiences, and to share this exploration with them. I really enjoyed that there was no focus on performance/efficiency, but a slower process of getting more confident with ourselves and others without our sight, and letting the sensation of our body, and the touch with our partner lead us. Also the venue, being outside, gave a lot to my experience, fresh air, sounds, and the view, when we had eyes open. :) One specific task will stay with me, to start with our partner from a hug, and while letting go of the initial form, stay with the quality of the hug in our dance.

The main venue- SoundGarden: One open air dance space, and one inside.





During the main festival, starting from the 29th August, we had a warm-up class with Sergio Palomares (ES), discovering the basic elements of contact such as rolling, sliding, and growing (pushing). It was a great time to meet with the other participants. After we continued the next 3 days with an intensive, I joined the class of Alessandro Rivellino (BR), who gave really enriching insights, and tasks to discover and deepen our dances. Usually we started really slowly, first getting in connection with our own selves and later on meetings, touch could appear. Firstly we didn't feed these meetings but later we started to go more for contact with each other. I found it a really safe space to discover, and I appreciated the fluid transitions between tasks, or the whole process of the classes during the 3 hours class. He had a soft approach with both

body-awareness, information about our bodies, anatomy, and how it works, and also with beautiful images, usage of our imagination.

We worked with how we can let go of control but soften our awareness. Also the idea of the different layers in our body appeared, and how we can use these in contact, and change them during our dance. We were researching the unknown. It was a more soft and playful research class, then a technical approach. I really enjoyed the three days and gained a lot from it. The thoughts, informations appearing in the class both had a positive effect on my dancing approach and my personal life as well.

In the afternoons there were more classes to choose from, either on land or in the water. I participated twice in the class of Ido Maron (IL), that was about how we can all grow and expand, and offer a surface for the other and really sensitively feel the other. Also breathing took a big part of this discovery and being released but having a tone in our body while constantly expanding and also having our awareness not only on the inside but also the outside.

I also had the chance to take part in two classes in water, in the pool. It was an incredible experience. It was held by Sophie Costes (FR) who offered a 'Waterness journey', working with the awareness of our breath in water, and a practice that involves a slow process of moving in water, and also being moved by others, discovering forces that work differently in water than on land. It was a really relaxing and interesting experience. It gave a lot to me to have different sensations with my body related to Contact Improvisation, with a floating environment. To be surrounded with water, and feel less weight, with different needs to hold against gravity, opened different possibilities that enriched my way of moving also on land.

Other parts of this exciting journey happened on the beach, both in the sand and the sea. There were classes there and also one jam.

Dancing in water, doing lifts and so on gave a new way of exploration, as the fall happened in water. There was a sense of freedom of the body, and contact, and less consequences in the well-known way. The beginning of the jam had a score, and from that we opened up the dance.

At the beginning of the score.



The score in the sea.



The class had more structure and exploration alone in the sand and then with trios have a time in water, more to little bit move one person, and give a container to this person.

Other than this almost every evening there was a jam. With different facilitators, and approaches. Once we did the Underscore Jam with the help/ explanation of Gál Eszter. During the days, and especially the jams, as time was passing, I felt enormously the development I went through in these two weeks. And also it was really much about trust that was growing in me, towards my own body, knowledge, and trusting in others and the dance. As in the first days I was more searching, what to do and how, by the end of the festival I gained more experience and availability of using my body and connecting with others. Really giving my weight, and letting go of any expectation. I also had sometimes hard times with this, as I saw more experienced people doing “crazy stuff” and had the feeling that I also would need to do those. But fortunately the facilitators also made it clear to not go for a concrete plan, lifts and so on, but let the dance happen. Sometimes there was silence, sometimes music, live or not. I experienced a lot of times to be lifted, be on someone. It was great that I could develop this. On the other hand, being a base for someone flying on me was more challenging, although that also happened often, but I felt less confident. I had the wish to develop in those situations.

As for this wish, the post-festival workshop offered a great opportunity. It was about a taste of acrobatics connected with CI. How can we get more comfortable and safe with up-side down positions, and we were meeting with acrobatics basics the first day, with exercises alone, and also in pairs. The second day had a more somatic approach at the beginning followed by some lifts, that we could practice both roles. I got the chance here to explore more the role of a base.

I really enjoyed the whole festival. I learnt a lot and also made good connections with people. I appreciated them a lot, the diversity and the openness that was around. It's beautiful to meet people from all around the world and share our dancing with each other.

Thank you for the opportunity, it will stay with me and enrich my dancing career in the future. I hope to return next year!