

“Taking matters into your own hands”

keđja workshop for Baltic countries has taken place in Tallinn, Estonia on the November 26-28, 2010. The meeting had a sub title “From an Idea to the Project” and was dedicated to the problems which meet self-organizing dance people in doing their everyday job. The arrangement brought together 26 participants from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. As a workshop leader from the keđja side there was Ása Richardsdóttir, leading workshops, discussions and lectures. The Union of Estonian Dance Artists made the main work concerning local coordination of the project. The main coordinator was Kamma Siegumfeldt from Denmark. The project was funded by EU Cultural Programme and Estonian Cultural Endowment.

This seminar appeared to be the first meeting of the Baltic dance community during last 5 years, if not the first in the history. The first common issue which came out during the meeting is that those three countries, which are situated so close to each other, had no idea of what is happening in the field of contemporary dance of the neighbor: the lack of information, no common information channel, few performances and companies which we know from each other and which have and opportunity to travel between Tallinn-Riga-Vilnius. To say in one sentence – no communication going on.

So for the first day all the participants had chance to present their organizations as well as main projects they are working on at the moment.

While mapping the situation in all the countries, one example project was taken into the work of so called “groups by countries”: the idea of a Dance House, its necessity to the local community of dance professionals and amateurs, possible structure, development etc was viewed and discussed by each group separately. And in the reports of each group appeared, that if Latvian and Lithuanian representatives had a chance to imagine and fantasize on the issue, the Estonian group had already to go into the practices and to work on the real details, as soon as the Estonian Dance house is planned to be establishes since 2012.

Later on, next two days, we mainly worked on the real projects and ideas each participant took with him/her to the meeting. Having a strong practical and theoretical supervisement by Ása Richardsdóttir, getting feedback of the colleagues and possible future partners, we were working in smaller groups developing our own projects and ideas, trying to find real opportunities to make those projects happen.

One of the biggest ideas, which was born during this work was the project of the Baltic Dance Platform, discussed by Jarmo Karing (Estonia), Goda Dapsyte (Lithuania) and Elina Cire (Latvia). Next step on the development of Baltic Dance Platform are going to be taken in the nearest future, the project group is meeting in Haapsalu in April 2011 for the Estonian new dance Festival Uus Tans 10.

Some steps for the establishing a stronger Baltic Dance network were taken by Triinu Aron (Estonia), Maija Pavlova (Latvia) and Martina Jankauskaite (Lithuania), who are going to have regular meetings with dance producers, choreographers and dancers form each country during the year 2011 (April in Estonia, June in Riga and May or September in Lithuania). They want to create an opportunity for Baltic dance people to meet.

Giving and getting the feedback of the arrangement, we got to know, that most of participants learned something new concerning the issue of being a self-organizing dance people, for examples: how and where to find money for different kind of projects, what should be said to the sponsor, how

to reach media and how to build the working group needed for the success of the project. And of course, the main issue of meeting people face to face, getting to know them and their work was the most precious present we got out of this meeting. We are looking forward to the future collaborations.

The Baltic Dance Community was created in a Facebook as well as some pictures from the meeting are in the process of publishing under the Estonian Dance Artists Union in Facebook.

Maria Goltsman
The Union of Estonian Dance Artists

www.tantsuliit.ee