

Beatrix Simkó: The Whole is More Than the Sum of its Parts

Dance Research NRW 2022 - Folkwang University of Arts

Brief content of the research

I focused on the socio-political tension between the individual and the group and explore how this duality manifests itself in the body and is negotiated in physical interactions.

Research phases

Before the arrival to the NRW specifically to the Folkwang University of Arts where the research and sharing took place, I had been doing preparations with a drama pedagogue Fanny Hajdú and some invited dance colleagues (Florian Entenfellner, Charlotte Virgile) in Budapest. My research was connected to the stage dance work (It Contains Hard Parts) so we integrated the main theme and some movement exercises of the work and transformed it into a workshop. We were analyzing communities, dynamics inside different communities, our decision making processes among different sized groups and talked about personal experiences. This wide range of material we compressed into a two moduled workshop model, which we unfolded during the residency period in Germany.

On location

At Folkwang we were focusing on building a structure out of the so far created material and finding the elements that can help the understanding and the experience of our target age group. We divided the workshop into two main blocks. The first part was more like a drama pedagogical approach and the second module was more like a dance and composition based dance workshop. Into each session we designed reflection talks and feedback circles. In *Studio A* we set up our installation where we not only worked with spoken instruction, but a lot with signs and written text on the floor, wall and on other objects.

The sharing

Our invited class came from the Werdener Tanz Gymnasium, the age mostly between 15 and 16 years.

The first day we offered a 90 minutes long dramaturgically precisely built movement based and self reflecting workshop, where the invited students had the chance to

gradually meet us, get to know us, build trust with us, and introduce the exercises and stick to the whole structure we created. The second day we offered a 120 minutes dance warm up, creative improvisation tasks, composition exercises and sharing inside the sharing, where they presented to each other what they worked on during the dance workshop. Feedback session closed the second day, too.

Evaluation

Our goal was to bring our topic close to these students, creating a safe and open space for them, where they can express themselves freely and even leaving their comfort zones, which was an actual feedback from more than one person. We aimed to create an eye-levelled, democratic environment, where they are free to choose and freely express these choices.

I had the chance to facilitate both workshops in German language, which was a nice challenge and also a direct connection to the students. My aim is to continue sharing this format with different age groups, random or formed communities and offer it through the skills of my research colleagues in different languages.

