

FEISTY

Report for POETIC BODIES 2022.

I am Valeria Oviedo an interdisciplinary artist from Tijuana, Mexico, based in Berlin since 2020. My project "FEISTY" was selected to take part in the ICC program line POETIC BODIES during the 10th - 16th of May 2022 in Sofia, Bulgaria. ICC, Garage Collective and Nomad Dance Academy Slovenia within the frame of NOMAD Network are realizing this exchange through the program DanceHUB with Uferstudios. This exchange is in the frame of the European Network Project Life Long Burning.

The research proposal of "FEISTY" is an invitation to explore the notion of conflict: its origin and mission, this research bets on embracing contend. Discovering the extraordinary place of possibilities that opens up when we accept that we are part of the fight, whether we like it or not; it is imperative that we learn to disagree well, fight well, argue well. The investigation aimed to tap on humor, aggression, foolishness and resistance.

The first steps towards the residency was creating an open call to invite 3 local artists to act as co-researchers during this week. The application was in the form of a "battle card" where you needed to develop a fighter/player character, which for the selected artists, continued to develop during our process. For the transparency in the selection process a statement was released later on with the announcement of the selected artists: Irina Stoyanova, Zlatina Toleva and Ivaylo Dimitrov.

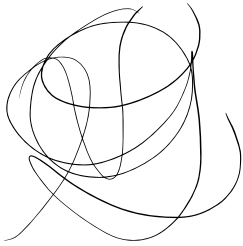
The laboratory featured the experimentation of movement that manifest in combative and theatrical expressions. Inspired by *lucha libre* (free wrestling) and cockfight, the two most traditional battle practices in Mexican culture. The character development was key for our research process, we engaged in a personal creation of these "alter-egos" and how would they navigate our reality.

The used of poetic and narrative writing was introduced as a first step, to then bringing them alive through the body. Assigned them with authentic personalities and attributes that we got to explore in different performative and audiovisual creations. We discovered how the details and specifications made the characters more tangible and true. Guiding and witnessing this exploration along side the co-researchers was deeply inspiring and enlightening.

The last day we had a final sharing of our research process, where we transformed the studio into an immersive and interactive museum that featured the 3 characters and additional material that was developed during the 7 days of exploration. The guests from the event gave us amazing feedback and insight on their experience inside this hall and the whole creative

team had a very pleasurable moment of opening up our processes. A small Q&A was held at the end, where we raised some reflections about the subject of conflict and how this project chooses to approach it.

In addition to our research process, every morning we held my motion laboratory called "Darle Cuerpo" where we invited all kind of movers in the community to join us. It consisted in a 1 hour movement meditation that explored giving body to the images, through enabling the link between imagination and motion to flow freely and organically, from mind to body. Open to all movers that wished to dive into a shared experience of joyful effort, where we rediscover the our connection to pleasure, playfulness and curiosity.



Valeria Oviedo G.

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