

ANNA BICZOK

LLB Creative Crossroads Artist Cycle 2

YEAR ONE: NEXT STEP IS A STOP

01.07.2020 - 31.08.2021

As for all of us, 2020 was nothing like what I expected. Before my CRCR Year 1 had started, the pandemic had already changed all our previous practices and routines. All plans for residencies and performances had been postponed several times for me as well, and most of the time until June 2021 my artistic practice of this period was about reading and working in the studio alone - practicing a consistent working routine, whatever happens. These times definitely shaped my approach to practice and to art in general, but more practically speaking it was also a great opportunity to dive deeper into the topics I was interested in, and that are connected to both productions I was working on. I read articles and participated in online lectures on feminism, Eastern European woman identity, the change of systems and how it affected gender roles, and the reasons for lack of feministic approaches in the area. It was a real challenge to connect these academic approaches to my personal experiences, to find traces of social constructs in my everyday life, to see the well known patterns from a distance, from a different perspective. Working with movement and listening to my also Eastern European female body in the studio gave a counterpoint to this examination of the collective, and always led back my focus to the personal. Super confusing to bring these perspectives and these languages together. I had a plan for applying to study Gender Studies on an academic level but did not manage to get in the second round, meanwhile also gave up on this trajectory, as spending almost a year with this focus felt like a trap to me, a wrong direction. My residency with Ula Zerek at Bazaar Festival has been postponed from April 2020 to October 2020 and then still did not happen for real - we did online zoom rehearsals and a zoom presentation at the online edition of Bazaar 2020¹. (we tried to meet with Ula in person for two additional times for a Budapest residency in Sept 2020 and March 2021, we had to cancel both). We still wanted to have a live residency though, so we managed to spend 2 weeks in Prague finally in August 2021 and presented our work in progress at Saturday Bazaar² event.

¹ <https://bazaarfestival.cz/2020/en/event/i-saturday-bazaar/>
<https://vimeo.com/474366577>

² <https://bazaarfestival.cz/en/event/saturday-bazaar-excerpts-from-works-in-development/>

Another online project found me - a new territory I definitely wasn't looking for - where I created a short solo for an online audience. This format - with two online events and 8 performers with their own short solos - had an attempt to merge the genres of stand up comedy and contemporary dance³.

In July 2021 my first LLB CRCR residency happened - I spent two weeks in Impulstanz Vienna. I have been teaching at the Impulstanz Festival. It was a unique experience. It was also a great challenge, to find my place in such a huge institution that is mostly about big audiences, while my work and my proposal was more about intimate inner somatic experiences. I was happy to meet people in my group that could truly relate to my proposals and were very grateful for the time and space they could spend with a deeper connection to themselves. In my residency, the studio, I had the possibility to search the first steps to my next production "TRILATERAL" with the help of wonderful Karin Pauer.

I find myself really lucky with this CRCR opportunity, it gives very important support both financially - these times can be really tough.. - both in communication. I have the privilege to be able to consult everything with Workshop Foundation, ask for advice or administrative help any time, and this communication, this support is very important to me to keep my work on track. I am also very happy to get to know fellow artist Karin Pauer, who I plan to work with in my next year production 'TRILATERAL' and I also dance in her work 'WE WERE NEVER ONE'. This is a very precious new connection to me.

I am very excited and I am looking forward to next year's activities: my production 'TRILATERAL', creating Karin's 'WE WERE NEVER ONE' and meeting new communities at next year's LLB residencies.

<https://vimeo.com/594481006> password: ALTA21

³ <https://www.facebook.com/SlipperyProject/>
https://tripart.hu/hu/eloadas/slippy_avagy_kicsuszik_a_szankon

Anna Biczók
Creative Crossroads Cycle 2
Annual Report
01.09.2021-31.08.2022

At the beginning of September 2021, Austrian dancer choreographer Karin Pauer arrived to Budapest. I worked as a dancer in her production *WE WERE NEVER ONE* this season. This residency was Karin's first opportunity to prepare for the rehearsals of the production, and I was able to spend a few days with her at the very beginning. We presented our movement materials arranged with texts and music to a couple of employees of Workshop Foundation.

September and October were filled with my own production's preparation work, planning and organization, applications, paperwork and many hours alone in the rehearsal room. I was preparing for the May presentation of my trio dance production with the working title *TRILATERAL*, which was finally presented under the title *DELICATE*. I organized details and prepared for our first rehearsal period. The first two weeks of rehearsals took place in November, we spent a week at Workshop Foundation studios with dancers Karin Pauer and Sasha Portyannikova, and Rozi Mákó also came to play music with us on some days. I spent the second week alone with Sasha. At that time, I was still planning to be the third dancer on stage. During the rehearsals, I worked with them with improvisations based on imagination, their own past, own ancestors, characteristics of female figures, and completely physical focuses - the logic and connection of the latter forms was intuitive, but at the same time, they usually turned into closely related materials translated into the language of movement.

In December, we spent two weeks in Stockholm at MDT as the first group residency of Karin's *WE WERE NEVER ONE*. The team and the choreographer's concept met for the first time - first acquaintance with movement materials, text and materials. We continued this work in Vienna at brut studio in January 2022. The materials and the movements deepened, the first scenes were born, the structure took shape.

In February, *DELICATE*'s residency followed. I had already decided that I would not be in the play as a performer, and I asked Hungarian dancer Adél Juhász to be the third dancer. We spent the residency in Brussels at the chapel of Les Brigittines, our accommodation was in STUK apartments in Leuven, as the host was STUK Leuven. We continued on the path we started in November, now with three dancers and musician Rozi Mákó. We worked with our own family stories and other texts related to female figures in addition to the movement materials, and presented the collage of the text and dance

material as a work in progress presentation, after which we held a discussion with the audience. It was a very difficult period, because unfortunately the war started during that time, and two of us are very closely involved in what has been happening. It was a great challenge to work as if nothing had happened, and at the end we didn't even try to, the events were strongly present in our thoughts, conversations, and bodies. This topic was also strongly present in the audience discussion.

The last rehearsal period of Karin's production took place from mid-March until the premiere in mid-April. It was very intense physical and mental activity, with the constant threat of Covid... On April 8, we presented the play in brut Wien, and played it 4 more times with great success.

This was followed by the last three weeks of our journey together with Karin (since we danced in each other's pieces, we eventually spent this year together almost continuously), the last rehearsal of *DELICATE* and its premiere at Trafó. After the residency in February, I had a strong decision to leave out the text parts of the material and create a purely movement-based dance piece. The structure of the movement materials found its place last week, a rather minimalist but at the same time very detailed material was born, which we were able to present to the Trafó audience for two nights.

In the weeks after the two presentations, I tried to catch up with mountains of administrative work.

My next project was in the frame of the Choreographic Convention program organized by Workshop Foundation and danceWEB. In the Budapest part of the program I led a working group on the topic Sustainability of the human body. Coming up with the idea of working on the topic of the body and the questions of sustainable living with it, I wanted to have people from different backgrounds in the group, to relate and discuss the issue from different points of views and to have conversations between different knowledges. I looked for people with education and experience in the field of economy, psychology, rehabilitation of the body and art. This was the guideline in the selection process, and this is how Andres Castiblanco (Colombia/Austria), Janka Kormos (Hungary/The Netherlands), Luiza Moraes (Brazil/Hungary), Reka Oberfrank (Hungary), Bartosz Ostrowski (Poland/Portugal) joined the group. These people from very different cultural backgrounds offered their knowledge from all these fields. On the last day of the Budapest program we offered and experience for public audience. Two days later I participated in the Vienna part of the program as a panelist at the *What's Done/Undone* panel discussions in the topic *Places of Desire*.

My last professional activity this year was meeting fellow Creative Crossroads artists at the Performance Situation Room program in Leopold Museum Vienna. From 30 July-6 August we shared our practices and presented a result of our interactions as part of the Impulstanz Festival on the last day. This was a lovely and fruitful meeting with very nice people.

For my 2 years CrCr cycle I had a plan to create a duet with Polish dancer Ula Zerek. Since our August 2021 residency at Bazaar Festival Prague we had plans to continue and exchanges and consultations were made between me and Ula and Gyula Cserepes, whom we asked to be our artistic consultant for further developing our material. Unfortunately, because of all the earlier delays due to Covid and because of a more delightful personal reason recently this project hasn't found its final form yet in the Creative Crossroads timeframes and at the moment the future of it is uncertain.

I have been continuously in dialogue with Workshop Foundation in these processes, I was able to solve the distribution of the funds and the preparation for the residencies and any activities with their constant help, organizing and support.

I think Creative Crossroads is a great opportunity for an artist, I never before had this immense support both with organising and financially to be able to realise my artistic plans. I hope many more artists can experience this further on.

Choreographic Convention - In Other Words: The Future
Anna Biczok
Sustainability of the Human Body
Final Report

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I was trying to create a space that initiates conversations, therefore I consciously did not want to lead discussions on what this topic means for me, but offered time and space for everyone to add their own contribution such as reading texts, proposing dance exercises or listening to podcasts... We were writing notes on a long paper that showed some traces of our path.

Andres gave us a short summary on sustainability and sustainable development - how the terms are used, where they come from, and he proposed to read a short chapter from Harari's Sapiens on how consumerism developed to become the most successful religion. With a movement offering we engaged our attention with the space and all details in it, woke up our senses and our bodies before entering the next reading.

We read a text by Byung-Chul Han from Burnout society, that I proposed as I found it interesting how he finds reasons for neural illnesses in society by comparing it to an immune system that doesn't fight negativity anymore but tries to understand and accept all differences.

Bartosz offered us movement engagement leas by space, time, colour, shape and appetite, and then we read excerpts from Catherine Malabou's Ontology of the Accident. These texts were sharing thoughts on how the Self develops a completely new entity by accidents, sudden injuries, traumatic losses.

Janka, who is a movement therapist, shared with us practices to incorporate different qualities of water and referred to Astrida Neimanis' Bodies of Water.

Luiza brought us to a meadow on Margaret Island where we read excerpts of David Abram's The Spell of the Sensuous and then we moved by practicing engaging with the 'other than human'. Later we read 'The Uses of the Erotic' by Audrey Lorde.

Every day we had a 12 minute nap practice proposed by Luiza.

For the public sharing event we started with a nap practice together with all of the people. We also created a sound sample where we were discussing the topics we were thinking and moving through the week. The audience could listen to our discussion while reading through our paper pathway notes and our copies of texts. We tried to offer a space where people can get engaged through different senses and can choose how they want to get involved.

This was a beautiful trip we co-created with the group members, and I hope our intention to relax, rest, slow down and listen from that relaxed but very engaged presence could offer a different and sustainable approach on how to move through life.