

NOTES FOR THE FUTURE

FRANCE LE GYMNASE CDCN IRELAND COISCÉIM DANCE THEATRE ITALY COMUNE DI BASSANO



CHOREOGRAPHY
CONNECTS

FRANCE LE GYMNASSE CDCN

IRELAND COISCÉIM DANCE THEATRE

ITALY COMUNE DI BASSANO

CONTENTS

PREFACE	05
METHODS OF NOURISHMENT AN ESSAY BY MONICA GILLETTE	06
ABOUT THE PROJECT BY BRIDGET WEBSTER	35
TIMELINE	36
PROJECT PORTRAITS BY SARA LANDO	38
BIOGRAPHIES	40
PARTNERS	45
FUNDERS	47
OUR STAMP	49
CREDITS	50

All images by Anna Kushnirenko unless otherwise stated.





PREFACE

CHOREOGRAPHY CONNECTS

An innovative two-year residency exchange project engaging with the thematics of choreography, nature and care as a springboard to discover new pathways for artistry, sustainability and community.

In this publication you will discover the ingredients and characteristics of the project as a transformative offering for the future.

Underpinned by an essay by the project's dramaturg, Monica Gillette, it is based on numerous conversations, movement interviews, practices and reflections with the project's choreographers, dance organisations and accompanying guest artists.

METHODS OF NOURISHMENT

AN ESSAY





WHAT DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THE WORD INNOVATION? WHO AND WHAT DO YOU THINK OF?

Even though I am rooted in the arts, very often my first associations with the word tend to be product or technology related, revealing how much capitalism and marketing have taken over parts of my subconscious. When I turn my attention to innovation in the performing arts, I often associate the word ‘innovative’ to a performance, conjuring images of a bold, new artistic voice or the use of digital technology or virtual reality.

Luckily there are alternative spaces within the dance field where we can exercise innovation in other forms; forms that are responding to the need to work and be together differently. In these spaces, innovation lies in the intimacy and growth that occurs when human relations are centred with the belief that through togetherness and care, we will find new pathways in artistry, production and sustainability. **Choreography Connects** provided such a space.



PROJECT DESIGN

Envisioned by the collaboration of three dance organisations – CoisCéim Dance Theatre (Ireland), Opera Estate/CSC, (Comune di Bassano, Italy) and Le Gymnase CDCN (France) – and with the financial support of The Arts Council of Ireland, a new approach to collaboration through artist residencies was developed.

An initial look at the structure of the project may appear familiar – six artists from different localities engaging in residencies in each other’s countries. But it did not follow such a known path. To begin, the three partner organisations formulated key themes as a framework to initiate the process: **choreography, nature and care**. These themes were not necessarily the focus of artistic research or driving the creation of a work, but rather motifs that ebbed and flowed, continuously showing up in new forms.

The project partners also selected **six female dance artists**, chosen for their distinctive artistry and various approaches to socially engaged work. They were given full freedom and were not required to produce an outcome during their solo residencies, allowing for unbridled discoveries to reveal themselves. The residencies were offered twice for each artist, lasting two weeks in one of the partner locations. Although the choreographers were primarily alone in the studio during their residency periods, they stayed connected through **a series of online meetings**, both with myself as the project dramaturg as well as with each other. When desired, they also had the opportunity to meet local citizens, artists and experts in areas related to their artistic inquiries.

In addition to the **solo residencies** there were **three weekend gatherings** in Bassano del Grappa at the beginning, middle and end of the two-year project where the choreographers, dramaturg and members of the partner organisations came together. Also present were locally based photographers who documented the gatherings with an artistic response, which includes visual imagery throughout this publication.





Image: Dioramas from the 2023 Gathering.
Photographs: Sara Lando

MOVEMENT INTERVIEWS — A WAY TO BEGIN...

A fundamental element of the first gathering in Bassano del Grappa in 2022 was utilising a movement interview practice that I developed with Clint Lutes in 2015 as a way to introduce oneself. The practice, initially created with young scientists to embody their research, provides an intimate space for discovery through a carefully structured format that engages both physical and verbal expression. At its core lies a simple setup: one person with eyes closed moves freely while being interviewed. This central figure is supported by two others who provide physical impulses, verbal questions and care, creating a safe container for exploration.

Before the interview begins, the person being interviewed is given two initial questions to consider: an open invitation to introduce themselves from any starting point they choose, and a second question shaped according to the thematics of the relevant project. These questions serve as anchors for the conversation that unfolds through movement, touch and dialog.

The wider group plays a vital role, seated in a circle around the moving interview. Their task is twofold: first, to document the interviewee's words, capturing moments that might otherwise be lost in the flow of movement and speech. This act of witnessing becomes an offering to the person being interviewed, giving them a reflection of their own thoughts and discoveries. Second, they note moments of resonance – words or ideas that connect to their own practice, questions, or personal journey. Through this process, invisible threads of connection begin to weave through the group.

Each interview unfolds over approximately 20-25 minutes, followed by an equally important period of reflection and discussion. The process begins with free writing, allowing all participants – particularly the interviewee and their two supporters – to process their experience. The conversation then opens, starting with the interviewee sharing their discoveries, followed by reflections from their supporters, and finally widening to include observations from the whole group.

This careful structure creates a space where physical movement combines with verbal reflection, allowing for discoveries that might not emerge through traditional conversation alone. **The process honours both individual experience and collective witnessing, creating a rich tapestry of shared understanding and connection. This way of being together was continuously practiced throughout the two years of the project, strengthening and empowering the artists individually while also developing a community of mutual recognition and support.**

The role of the Movement Interviews in the first gathering of the **Choreography Connects** project supported the artists in how they introduced themselves through their dancing bodies and not having to begin with more familiar and possibly formal introductions, setting the tone for breaking away from habits. They also had to immediately step into the role of caring for and supporting one another, even though most had never met each other before.

The physical nature of the interviews also created a space where conventional barriers between professional and personal narratives dissolved, bringing important topics to the surface, such as shifts in identity and desires, aging, pleasure, recovery, relations to nature, rituals, mythology and motherhood. The practice revealed itself as more than just an interview technique – it became a method for deep listening and sharing that acknowledged physical, emotional, ancestral and sensorial aspects of their lived experiences.

The movement interviews were returned to in 2023, mid-way through the project, revisiting the memory of the initial experience as well as providing a collective moment to witness what had transpired in their lives the year before. At the conclusion of the project in the summer of 2024, a collective version was invented to seamlessly pass in and out of their individual narratives with the entire group holding and guiding the physical process as a whole. Leading up to the collective interviews moment each choreographer also guided the group through aspects of their own practices that had nurtured, supported or revealed important information to them during their solo residencies, providing a repertoire of intuitive practices.



EMERGENT LANGUAGE — A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Over the course of the two-year project, language began to collectively formulate to capture what was happening in real-time. Following is a brief collection in hopes it makes visible the character and qualities of the project.

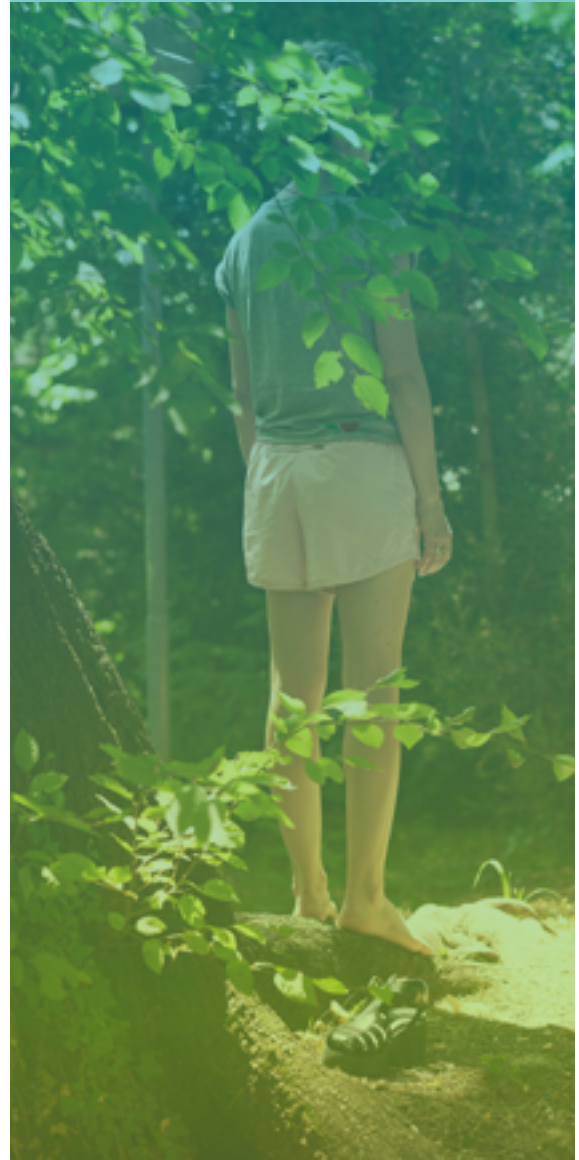
The Void: Going into the studio alone without a focused creation agenda sometimes provoked discomfort and uncertainty among the artists. Over time, this unstructured studio time came to represent a space of profound freedom, albeit one that at times demanded a challenging confrontation with oneself, encouraging artists to refocus their interests and redefine their pathways forward. What sometimes began as an uncomfortable emptiness evolved into an invaluable resource. *The Void* became recognised as a necessary component of what made the residencies meaningful.

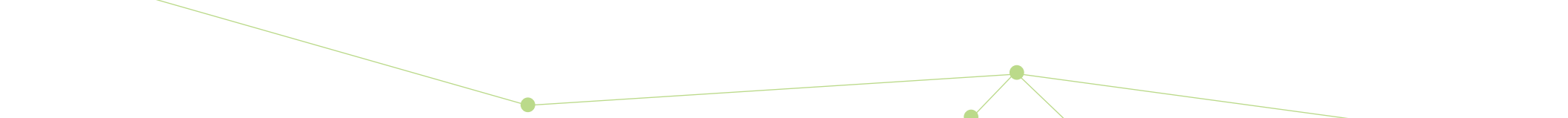
(Self) Sustainability: While sustainability typically evokes environmental repair and planetary health, this project approached the concept differently. Rather than pursuing environmental solutions, even though Nature was one of the project themes, the focus shifted to both addressing and revealing new pathways for the sustainability of the artists themselves.

Reflect: This term within the context of the solo residency periods encompasses the vital process of encountering one's own practice and creating space to contemplate both completed work and future directions. It represented a quiet space where artists could listen deeply for what was needed, rather than simply responding to what needed to be done.

Non-production: The solo residencies deliberately stepped away from production-oriented goals, instead embracing exploration with complete freedom and no obligation to produce tangible







outcomes. This approach allowed artists to delve into a wide variety of interests, often revealing what was most crucial for their artistic development.

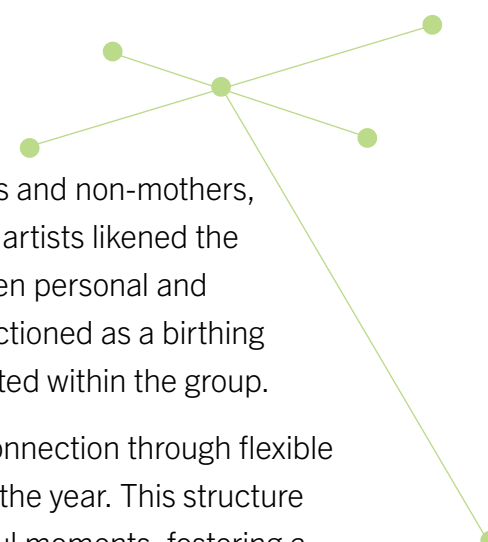
Artist Driven: While the project began with a basic residency structure and key themes, it evolved collectively through the interaction between artists and dramaturg. This flexibility allowed for maximum adaptivity, creativity, and responsiveness to actual needs and desires as they emerged throughout the year.

Horizontal: The project cultivated a distinctly non-hierarchical approach where all collaborators worked at eye level with one another. This horizontal structure fostered trust, acknowledgment, and deep respect for each person's needs and artistic process.

Care: Care manifested in multiple ways throughout the two-year period. It was often evident in the absence of typical pressures - no need to persuade, convince, apply, ask for, or demand. The conditions, both financial and human, were established to support complete freedom and acknowledgment of what the artist needed to explore in the moment.

Generosity: The presence and vulnerability shared between colleagues proved deeply generous, empowering each artist's journey toward brave paths of inquiry and exploration. This generosity created a foundation for artistic courage and discovery.

Seasonal cycles: The two-year project's structure, including two solo residencies and three summer group meetings in Bassano del Grappa, enabled a seasonal revisiting of each artist's journey throughout the years. This cyclical approach revealed parallel experiences among the female artists, contributing to a sense of collective experiences and building resilience through sometimes challenging periods. It also allowed for new layers of awareness to be revealed when seasonal cycles were crossed through again.



Doula-ing and Birth-ing: The distinctly female group, including both mothers and non-mothers, acknowledged and celebrated feminine approaches to mutual support. The artists likened the dramaturgical and peer support to doula work, making no distinction between personal and professional inquiries. The supportive and collective nature of the group functioned as a birthing process for ideas that thrived under the distinctive way that care was cultivated within the group.

(not) Alone: Despite the solo nature of the residencies, artists maintained connection through flexible online conversations with the dramaturg and regular group calls throughout the year. This structure enabled artists to share their inquiries, doubts, desires, challenges, and joyful moments, fostering a sense of collectivity within individual exploration.





METHODS OF NOURISHMENT — LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

It is hard to capture or convey how meaningful **Choreography Connects** was for me personally and professionally. I was not one of the artists entering into the solo residencies, but I had the privilege to be in dialogue with the six choreographers, individually and collectively over two years. To receive their trust as well as to be co-responsible in building an environment where everyone can flourish throughout a multi-year process was deeply meaningful.

On the surface the structure of the project could appear quite simple, but sometimes the simplest of intentions, especially when embedded in values of care and wellbeing, can yield results with the most depth. If you are interested in cultivating such an environment, the following are provisions to consider:

- Provide time, space and communion to breathe and to explore without pressure.
- Provide a dialog partner or dramaturg for the artists to individually and collectively reflect with and who can also offer language and recognition to what might feel blurry or be freshly emerging. Even when an artist is not striving for a product or outcome, having a companion to reflect with, someone who is comfortable with personal and professional inquiries mingling and informing each other, is invaluable.
- Provide a continuous mix of solo time and collective time, in presence and digital, indoors and outdoors, so that threads of discovery and excitement can be carried together over a longer period while a community of peers is slowly forming in a variety of locations.
- Provide moments of exchange with members of the dance organisations and artists so that both the effervescent nature of what grows can be felt by the people who initiated the project as well as for new pathways of communication to be built, clarified and trusted.
- Invite guest artists (such as the photographers whose imagery is spread through this publication) to be witnesses to what unfolds. Their artistic responses can both reinforce and inspire the nuances of what is growing and emerging.



CLOSING TO OPEN

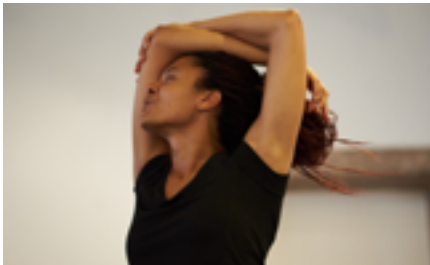
Bringing such a transformative project to a close is never easy, but with closures also comes new potentials from what was uncovered and learned. The value of the trust built over time through sharing embodied practices, vulnerabilities, challenges, desires and celebrations, contributed to a collective and individual strength for all involved. That trust, combined with time and space to deeply reflect and listen to personal shifts needing to be made, allowed for a pause in daily production habits so that small resets could be made for large and lasting impressions and transformations.

As water was a constant theme and meaningful presence for us, I close with an offering of a word bath from the memory of our experiences:





INTUITIONS, PAGAN RITUALS, THE FREQUENCY OF TREES, MATRYOSHKA DOLLS, BODIES OF WATER, UNTYING BRAIDS, LOSS, A CAPTAIN, GIVING BIRTH, MYSTICISM, SADNESS, HERITAGE, THE DOULA MOTHERSHIP, DIVINATION, SOLITUDE, EMOTIONS, SPELLS, PRAYERS, LIFE TRANSITIONS, PROXIMITY TO THE SEA, GROUNDING, FATIGUE, THE END OF PLEASING, A FUNERAL, DISORIENTATION, ACTS OF FAITH, KEENING, ACCEPTANCE, NATURE, PATIENCE, EROTICISM, RHYTHM, A NEW ALBUM OF SONGS, LANDING, PASTORAL CARE, SEASONS, A WEED GARDEN, HYPNOSIS, NEW ANCHORS, A PILGRIMAGE.



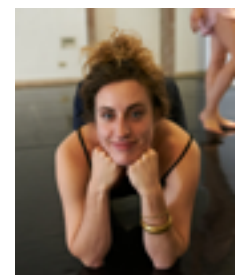
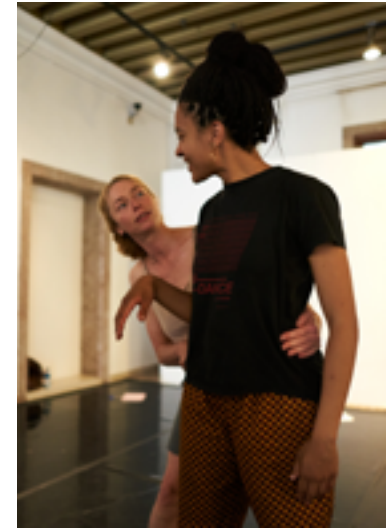


INTUITIONS, RITUELS PAÏENS, LA FRÉQUENCE DES ARBRES, POUPÉES MATRIOCHKA, PLANS D'EAU, DÉNOUER LES TRESSES, PERTE, UN CAPITAINE, DONNER NAISSANCE, MYSTICISME, TRISTESSE, HÉRITAGE, LA DOULA, DIVINATION, SOLITUDE, ÉMOTIONS, SORTS, PRIÈRES, TRANSITIONS DE VIE, PROXIMITÉ DE LA MER, ANCRAGE, FATIGUE, LA FIN DU PLAISIR, UN ENTERREMENT, DÉSORIENTATION, ACTES DE FOI, GÉMISSEMENTS, ACCEPTATION, NATURE, PATIENCE, ÉROTISME, RYTHME, UN NOUVEL ALBUM DE CHANSONS, ATERRISSAGE, SOINS PASTORAUX, SAISONS, UN JARDIN DE MAUVAISES HERBES, HYPNOSE, NOUVEAUX REPÈRES, UN PÈLERINAGE.





INTUZIONI, RITUALI PAGANI, LE FREQUENZE DEGLI ALBERI, LE MATRIOSKA, GLI SPECCHI D'ACQUA, SCIOGLIERE LE TRECCE, PERDITA, CAPITANI, IL PARTO, IL MISTICISMO, LA TRISTEZZA, L'EREDITÀ, LA GUIDA MATERNA DI UNA DOULA, DIVINAZIONE, SOLITUDINE, EMOZIONI, INCANTESIMI, PREGHIERE, TRANSIZIONI DELLA VITA, LA VICINANZA AL MARE, IL RADICAMENTO, LA STANCHEZZA, LA FINE DEL PIACERE, UN FUNERALE, IL DISORIENTAMENTO, ATTI DI FEDE, LAMENTO, ACCETTAZIONE, NATURA, PAZIENZA, EROTISMO, RITMO, UN NUOVO ALBUM DI CANZONI, L'ATERRAGGIO, CURA SPIRITUALE, LE STAGIONI, UN GIARDINO DI ERBACCE, IPNOSI, NUOVE ANCORE, UN PELLEGRINAGGIO.





MAGNIFYING SUCCESS

There is no doubt that this project has been a great success, measured by the profound impact it has had on all participants. Through multiple residency cycles and continued digital dialogue, artists could revisit and deepen their investigations over time. This allowed for a gradual building of trust and understanding, both with themselves and within the group. The solo residencies became sacred spaces of inquiry, offering rare opportunities for deep personal and artistic examination that might otherwise be impossible in more structured or production-oriented contexts. The two year duration of the project and rhythm of the residencies and encounters also provided an environment where discoveries and transformational shifts could flow naturally into the artists' ongoing artistic practices and parallel projects beyond Choreography Connects, magnifying the impact exponentially.

This innovative and exemplary framework that balanced solitude with connection and physical presence with digital continuity, loosely but mindfully held by the themes of choreography, nature and care, has been a game changer in the realm of artistic residencies and one that should be extended and built upon for years to come.



PROJECT INFORMATION



51

CORSO DI
MARIANO DE' CRAPPA
passo
carrabile
M. DE' CRAPPA

53

55

alloom bar

mis
antteq

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Across cultures and throughout history, dance builds connection – to oneself, to others, and to one’s environment.

This was the foundation stone for **Choreography Connects** – an ambitious experiment designed to give time, space and imagination to engineer pioneering new pathways for sustainable environments – ecologically, socially and professionally – to rethink the very notion of “care” – and rewrite the source code of how we work.

Devised by Roberto Casarotto, Laurent Meheust and Bridget Webster, the venture brought together CoisCéim Dance Theatre (Ireland), Le Gymnase CDCN (France) and Operaestate/CSC (Italy) with six socially engaged dance artists and their local communities. Taking place over two years, and anchored by a highly experienced dramaturg, the project began with a series of tasks to address the strategic alliance between three key themes: **choreography, nature and care. It was then deliberately set free to evolve organically – driven by the desires and needs of the artists involved, under the expert accompaniment of dramaturg Monica Gillette – to facilitate candid horizontal dialogues, and to imagine, interrogate and share tools for artistic practice to flourish.**

Critical to the success of this project was its innovative design that enabled 36 different physical points of connection between project artists, bound together by a safe online space that focussed purely on creative conversation. This was achieved through 12 in-person residencies (four in each location), 30+ connected digital conversations, and three annual summer gatherings in Bassano, Italy, that brought together primary project principals. Each residency connected visiting artists with their local counterparts and was deeply rooted in place through encounters with artistic peers, cultural organisations and their networks, and with the public as participants, witnesses and visitors.

TIMELINE

2022

Inaugural Gathering with all artists

[also present: Bridget, Roberto, Greta, Anna with Betty and Laurent online]



Monica Gillette joins project as dramaturg

Vittoria Caneva Residency, Ireland. [included studio sharing]

22—23 JUL

01 NOV

21 NOV—3 DEC

20—31 MAR

15—25 MAY

3—13 JUL

14—16 JUL

17—29 JUL

BASSANO, ITALY

DRAMATURG

DUBLIN, IRELAND

ROUBAIX, FRANCE

DUBLIN, IRELAND

BASSANO, ITALY

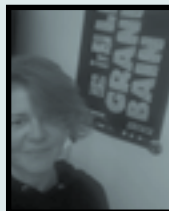
BASSANO, ITALY

BASSANO, ITALY

Monica Gillette's *Moving Interviews* technique used to kick off the project for artists to get to know each other.

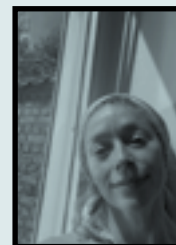


Chiara Frigo Residency, France. [in parallel with Le Grand Bain]



Marion Carriau Residency, Ireland. Took place primarily on a beach. [in parallel with Dublin Dance Festival]

Justine Cooper Residency, Italy.



Gathering with all artists and Monica. [Anna, Bridget, Roberto, Greta present]

Sara Lando Portraits made.



Betty Tchomanga Residency, Italy. [in parallel with Opera Estate]



2024



Aoife McAtamney
Residency, Italy.

16—28
OCT

BASSANO, ITALY



Vittoria Caneva
Residency, France.
[in parallel with
Forever Young
Festival]

2—16
DEC

ROUBAIX, FRANCE



28 MAR—
8 APR

ROUBAIX, FRANCE

Aoife McAtamney
Residency,
France. [in parallel
with Le Grand
Bain]

Marion Carriau
Residency, Italy.
[in parallel with
Operaestate]

8—18
JUL

BASSANO, ITALY



19—21
JUL

BASSANO, ITALY

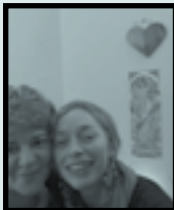
**Gathering with
all artists** and
Monica. [Anna,
Bridget, Roberto,
Greta present]

Collective *Moving
Interview* to
complete.

24 OCT—
3 NOV

DUBLIN, IRELAND

Chiara Frigo
Residency, Ireland.
[multiple cultural
connections]



8—19
JAN

DUBLIN, IRELAND

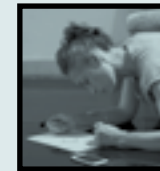
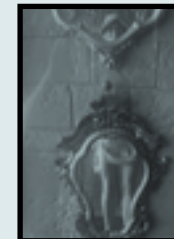
Betty Tchomanga
Residency,
Ireland. [in parallel
with First Fortnight
Festival]



2—12
JUN

ROUBAIX, FRANCE

Justine Cooper
Residency, France.



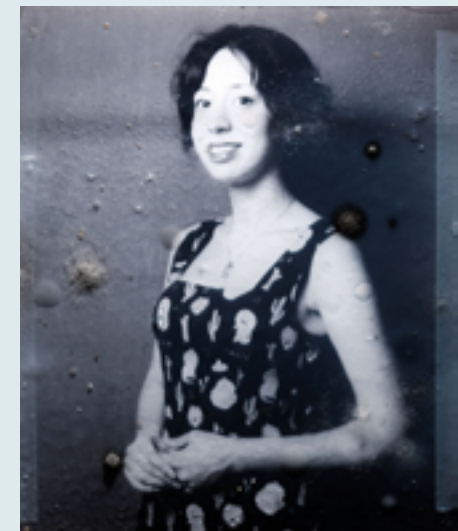
PROJECT PORTRAITS

BY SARA LANDO

“During the residency in Bassano the microbiome of the room and the people in it was recorded on an agar plate for the duration of the interviews. Portraits of the participants were then printed, covered in nutritional agar and contaminated with the same colonies.

Over the course of several weeks the changes were documented, allowing the microorganisms to evolve and tell their version of what happened.” – Sara Lando

View portrait videos [here](#)





BIOGRAPHIES

VITTORIA CANEVA PROJECT ARTIST

Vittoria Caneva is an Italian dance artist. After graduating from Balletto di Roma, she has worked as a performer for Yasmeen Godder, Nora Chipaumire, Melanie Démers, Masako Matsushita, Kinkaleri, Pietro Marullo, Chiara Frigo, Anagoor, Giorgia Lolli. Since 2019 she is a Dance Well teacher – Movement Research for Parkinson. As a freelance artist working in Italian and European festivals and centres of residence, she is interested in physical and choreographic practices that challenge the themes of sustainability, inclusiveness and empathy.

She is a founding member of Base9, an artistic community that creates choreographic projects and workshops.

With *Lucciole-L'arte del dubbio* she was a finalist for DNAppunticoreografici 2022, as part of the Romaeuropa Festival.

MARION CARRIAU PROJECT ARTIST

Formée au CNDC d'Angers, je collabore depuis en tant qu'interprète avec différents artistes: Mohammed Shafik, Les Gens d'uterpan, Mylène Benoit, Julien Prévieux, Laurent Goldring et Arthur Perole. En 2011, je rencontre Joanne Leighton avec je collabore étroitement jusqu'en 2023. Je crée *Je suis tous les dieux*, mon premier solo en 2018. La pièce est recrée dans une version jeune public en 2021. *Chêne Centenaire*, duo écrit et interprété par Magda Kachouche et moi-même voit le jour dans sa version intérieure en décembre 2021 puis en version extérieure en 2022, ainsi que *Paysan.ne.s.*, pièce participative que nous envisageons comme la troisième arborescence de *Chêne Centenaire*. En 2023, je crée *Des Forêts des Lunes*, une pièce avec et pour un groupe d'enfants. En 2024, je crée un trio *l'Amiral Sénès*. La même année, j'assiste Magda Kachouche pour la création de *la Rose de Jericho*. En 2025, je crée *Les Légendaires*, une installation radiophonique sur l'héroïsme, composée à partir de récit réels ou fictionnés de personnes très âgées.

J' envisage la création chorégraphique comme un lieu d'ouverture sur la fiction favorisant la réinvention des corps. Le tissage de la danse à la pratique vocale et aux arts plastiques est au coeur de ma démarche artistique. Je conçois des oeuvres modulables pensées pour entrer en dialogue avec l'environnement dans lequel elles s'inscrivent.

Par mon travail, je souhaite défendre l'entrelacement des liens, l'attachement au monde, aux écosystèmes et aux espèces. C'est pourquoi, chacune de mes créations questionne les mythes qui construisent notre rapport au monde. Le mythe comme une construction imaginaire qui exprime par le sensible et le symbole les valeurs fondamentales d'une communauté à la recherche de sa cohésion.

ROBERTO CASAROTTO CREATIVE PRODUCER

Currently Co-Director of Aerowaves Europe, the European Platform for dance, Roberto develops initiatives aimed at supporting the artistic research, mobility and artists' development in the field of dance, the engagement of communities and participation of citizens in cultural activities. He is the Italian initiator of *Dance Well* – Movement research for Parkinson's, an initiative aimed at researching the impact that the practice of dance has on people living with Parkinson's and at including them in the social and cultural life of the context they live in.

He has coordinated, among others, the projects *Migrant Bodies* using artistic tools to share a civil reflection on migrations and the cultural impact and differences they bring and *Dancing Museums* exploring how dance could expand the possibilities of dialogue and access between art works, heritage and visitors.

Before working in dance organisations, Roberto was a professional contemporary dancer. He has developed experience in the editorial field and is the author of the book *Nigel Charnock*, published in 2009 by L'Epos in the Dance forward/Dance for Word series. Roberto was Artistic Director of Balletto di Roma from 2015-2018 and developed the dance programmes at Operaestate Festival/CSC from 2006-2022, in Bassano del Grappa.

JUSTINE COOPER PROJECT ARTIST

Originally from New Zealand, Justine has been based in Ireland as a freelance dance artist, teacher and choreographer since 2008. A guest lecturer at The University of Limerick, Dance Ireland and Dance Theatre of Ireland and recently graduated as an advanced teacher in Quan Yin Qi Gong.

As a dance artist Justine has had the pleasure of working most recently with CoisCéim Dance Theatre, Croí Glan, Justine Doswell, Junk Ensemble, Jools Gilson, Liz Roche Company, Laura Murphy, Mary Wycherly, Oona Doherty, United Fall, Maria Nilsson Waller, ANU Productions and Dead Center among many others.

As a Movement Director Justine has worked with Ann Cleare on *MIDHE* (large scale orchestra and choir work at the National Concert Hall), Una Kavanagh, Corn Exchange *MISFITS*, nominated for Best Movement Direction 2018 Irish Times Theatre Awards, and Noelle Brown Theatre Company.

Justine was a member of Meryl Tankard Australian Dance Theatre from 1998-2000. Her own work *Folds of the Crane* was presented as part of Tiger Dublin Fringe Festival 2015 (nominated for Spirit of the Fringe and Best Lighting and Design) also presented at Dublin Dance Festival 2016 and What Next Festival 2018.

CHIARA FRIGO PROJECT ARTIST

Choreographer and performer, co-founder of Zebra Cultural Zoo, Chiara Frigo has developed her artistic interest in the field of dance and performing arts. Having graduated in molecular biology, she has taken part in international research projects collaborating with Amsterdam's SNDO, Vancouver's Dance Center, London's The Place, Rotterdam's Dansateliers, Copenhagen's Dansescenen, and Madrid's Paso a 2-Certamen Coreográfico de Madrid.

Her choreographic research has focused increasingly on the connection between movement and dramaturgy. In 2010 she started to collaborate with Montreal's Circuit Est choreographic centre, where she has been a guest for production residencies since. Her poetics delved deeper and deeper into the political and social environment: her piece *West End* reflects on the decline of the Western world and resorts to a number of different languages. The wish to reach new audiences and involve the local communities led her to create *Ballroom*, an intergenerational project that was presented in Iceland, in the Netherlands, as well as in numerous Italian festivals. Her piece *Himalaya* marked the beginning of a research around the topics related to spirituality in arts.

She recently created *Blackbird*, a community project inspired by art as a form of activism and collective creation and *Miss lala al Circo Fernando*, conceived for Marigia Maggipinto, a formal performer of Pina Bausch's, is a reenactment experience of an artistic and personal archive. She is currently involved in the creation of *A Human Song*, a large-scale project recently showcased at NID Platform 2024, that brings together citizens of all ages, cultures, and backgrounds.

Chiara also curates video art projects, design projects, and is engaged in theatre collaborations.

BIOGRAPHIES

MONICA GILLETTE DRAMATURG

Monica Gillette is a dance dramaturg, facilitator and Co-Artistic Director of the first edition of the Tanztriennale taking place in Hamburg in 2026. After dancing professionally she now guides multiple projects with dance as a pathway for social engagement and multigenerational cultural exchange. As a dramaturg she has accompanied several European funded projects: *Migrant Bodies – Moving Borders* (2017-2019), *Empowering Dance* (2018-2023), *Dancing Museums – The Democracy of Beings* (2020-2021), *Dance Well* (2022-2025) and *Aerowaves' Moving Borders* (2023-2025). Monica is also a dramaturg and transformation coach at Tanzhaus Zürich and researcher for EDN – European Dance Development Network, resulting in the 2024 publication, *Practices of Care and Wellbeing in Contemporary Dance: Evidence from the Field*.

ANNA KUSHNIRENKO PHOTOGRAPHER

Anna Kushnirenko is a dance and photography artist from Kherson, Ukraine. As a dancer she started her way in private contemporary dance school and then developed skills accessing through workshops, dance festivals and camps, co-creating and being part of dance performances with an emphasis on contemporary dance and improvisation. Her movement practice is built around dance improvisation and performative practices, with the aim to create connection to space and people. She works a lot with non-professionals and communities, people with Parkinson's, sharing her practices as a teacher. As a photographer, she has mainly worked with people, making documentation for events and capturing portraits. She gives attention to the details that are part of big complex things. Her artistic choices are inspired by life's unique moments, nostalgia and ironic vision of things.

SARA LANDO ARTIST

Sara Lando lives and works in Bassano del Grappa. Her work explores identity, the boundaries between what is real and what is imagined, and how memory deteriorates and remodels with the passage of time. She uses mixed techniques including photography, illustration, collage and three-dimensional and textural elements. She is interested in collaboration with non-human artistic partners and the concept of diffuse authorship. The techniques she uses stem from a playful curiosity and direct interaction with the object and explore the degradation of the image and the concept of creation as a consequence of the physical destruction of an object.

saralando.com

AOIFE MCATAMNEY PROJECT ARTIST

Aoife McAtamney is a multidisciplinary artist based in Dublin, layering the craft of contemporary dance, choreography, filmmaking, music and education. She is the artistic director of *Daughter Of A Drum*, a creative alias and home to all of Aoife's creative offerings. Aoife began a career as a dancer producing work locally and internationally. She has created and toured works by Oona Doherty, Emma Martin, Ioannis Mandafounis, Fabrice Mazliah and has guested for Theatre Basel. As an actor, Aoife can be seen in Paula Kehoe's TV documentary *The Devils In her* alongside Olwen Fouéré for BBC NI and TG4 and *Woman In The Wall* for BBC NI and Showtime.

As a choreographer, she has been the recipient of prizes and bursaries from the Arts Council of Ireland and Culture Ireland and was Ireland's first female LGBTQ+ Aerowaves artist as part of the cohort of 2014 with her first solo *Softer Swells* – that subsequently toured internationally including to La Briqueterie in Vitry-sur-Seine and the Instances festival in Chalon-sur-Saône. Her movement practice evolved to music, songwriting and soundscapes for performances and in early 2020 Aoife graduated with an MA (1st) in songwriting at the University of Limerick. She released the album *Pink Breath* in 2024 to critical acclaim, praised as a record with 'epic quality' from The Irish Times and features on RTÉ Radio One, RTÉ Recommends List and BBC Sounds, selected for Ireland Music Week 2024 showcase.

Aoife coaches dancers in vocal movement and cultivates a community arts practice. She teaches individuals and group coaching including contemporary dance casts including Oona Doherty's *Lady Magma* and with Emma Martin/United Fall. From 2020-2022 Aoife was the lead movement artist for Dublin City Council Culture Company and participation practice credits with ageing bodies of culture include CoisCéim Dance Theatre's *Broadreach* and now with Macushla Dance Group.

LAURENT MEHEUST CREATIVE PRODUCER

A philosopher by training, Laurent Meheust got involved very early in the world of culture and specialised in supporting artists for the theatre and contemporary music at first, before devoting himself fully to dance. In 2008, he joined the choreographer Michel Kelemenis and took part in the construction of KLAP Maison pour la danse (Marseille/France), working to establish its status in local, national and international professional networks. He develops the artistic residencies and the programmes of the annual festivals.

He has been guest lecturer between 2006-2019 at the Université de Provence for the License and Masters in Cultural Mediation and in the Art and Cultural Heritage programmes. He joined the Board of Directors of EDN/ European Dancehouse Network in 2018, was the President in charge between 2019-2022, and became Co-President in 2022. The same year he was appointed Director of Le Gymnase CDCN (Roubaix/France), and developed an international project connecting to the residencies program and the 2 annual festivals – *Forever Young* and *Le Grand Bain* – in different cities and theaters in les Hauts-de-France.

BIOGRAPHIES

BETTY TCHOMANGA PROJECT ARTIST

Born in 1989 from a Cameroonian father and a French mother, Betty Tchomanga began her artistic training in 2004 at the Conservatoire de Bordeaux and with Alain Gonotey of Cie Lullaby. She then trained at the Centre National de Danse Contemporaine d'Angers (CNDC) in 2007 under Emmanuelle Huynh. She began her career as a performer in 2009, working with artists such as Emmanuelle Huynh, Alain Buffard, Fanny de Chaillé, Gaël Sesboüé, Herman Diephuis, Marlene Monteiro Freitas and Nina Santes.

Alongside her artistic career, Betty pursued literary studies at the Université Paris, Sorbonne Nouvelle, graduating with a Master's in modern literature in 2014.

Since 2019, Betty Tchomanga has focussed on her writing and research as a choreographer. Her pieces explore the notion of transgression in the sense of going beyond, crossing a limit, whether physical or aesthetic.

Betty Tchomanga likes to produce hybrid forms in which bodies transform and metamorphose. She works with practices that involve overcoming the limits of body and mind through intense engagement of breath, body and voice. Since the creation of her solo *Mascarades* in 2019, she has been researching the voodoo cult and the representations associated with it. She is interested in the narratives that link the West and Africa, particularly through colonial history.

Betty Tchomanga choreographed and directed *Madame* (2016), *Mascarades* (2019) and *Lessons of Darkness* (2022) and the four-part choreographic series *Decolonial (Hi)stories* (2023-2024). She is an associated artist at Quartz, scène nationale de Brest and Théâtre de la Bastille in Paris.

BRIDGET WEBSTER CREATIVE PRODUCER

Bridget is a co-founder of CoisCéim Dance Theatre. She has produced numerous new works for the company, including international presentations at the Place, London, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and Peak Performances in USA, Ten Days on the Island (Tasmania), Arts Centre Melbourne and Sydney Opera House, Australia. Recent credits include the ART:2023 project *Palimpsest/Sparking Debate; The Wolf and Peter; Body Language/In the Magic Hour* and lead producer on the major international multi-partner collaboration, *These Rooms* presented as part of ART2016 in Dublin and 14-18NOW at the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT2018) and at Tate Liverpool. In 2020/21, she oversaw CoisCéim's move to, and refurbishment of, the landmark building at 42 Fairview Strand that resulted in a distinctive new space for dance in Dublin's north city.

She is an independent creative producer/mentor and sits on the advisory panel of the Emma O'Kane Bursary. Bridget is also closely associated with Aerowaves – where she was Ireland's first partner co-programming the first 3 platforms for the Dublin Fringe Festival. More recently, as a board director, she was integral to the relocation of the company to Ireland to secure the network's future following Brexit. Other notable board memberships have included Project Arts Centre, Irish Theatre Institute and The Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annamakerrig. An alumni of Common Purpose, Bridget holds engineering degrees from Glasgow University and Imperial College, London.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

COISCÉIM DANCE THEATRE LEAD PROJECT PARTNER

CoisCéim, pronounced “Kush Came,” derives its name from the Irish word for “footstep.” Led by David Bolger, a member of Aosdána, it produces exceptional, inclusive, and sustainable dance theatre in line with values of integrity, vibrancy, connection and joy. World-renowned, their original and distinctive dance works for stage, film, and public spaces blend diverse dance styles to inspire and spark genuine curiosity in dance and its relevance to our everyday. Winner of multiple Edinburgh Fringe Firsts and Irish Times Theatre Awards, and home to the innovative outreach program, Broadreach, CoisCéim thrives in its Dublin studio at 42 Fairview Strand. A registered charity, the company is strategically funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, and supported by Dublin City Council and Culture Ireland.

CoisCéim was the lead producer on *Choreography Connects*, and is deeply grateful to the Arts Council of Ireland for its support through two IRIS (International Residency Initiatives Scheme) awards, that made the project possible.

coisceim.com

CSC/OPERAESTATE PROJECT PARTNER

Part of the Municipality of Bassano del Grappa, the CSC Centro per la Scena Contemporanea is a dynamic dance house dedicated to the development of the culture of contemporary dance in the Veneto Region, while the Operaestate Festival involves 35 cities and presents over 100 multidisciplinary performances and events each season in theatres, castles, parks, villas, site specific locations and museums of the territory. The CSC is supported by MiC (the Italian Ministry of Culture), and many of its international projects and cooperations are supported by the Creative Europe, Europe for Citizens and Erasmus+ programmes of the European Union. It is member of the European Dance Development Network (EDN) and of Aerowaves, in constant dialogue with dance organisations in Europe; and it is also part of the Anticorpi XL network: the very first Italian network for emerging contemporary dance artists, involving 37 programmers from 15 different regions, and including projects supporting the artists mobility and creative researches. In recent years, it has started dialogues with many European and extra-European partners.

The CSC is devoted to the artistic development, community projects, productions, promotion of artistic mobility. It offers more than 35 residencies to Italian and international artists every year. It is committed to developing new and enhanced ways of engaging participants and audiences whilst continuing to focus strongly on building a sustainable future for dance as the Italian leading supporter of dance artists. It is committed to transforming and enriching lives through dance, to shaping where dance is going next.

operaestate.it

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

LE GYMNASÉ CDCN PROJECT PARTNER

For forty years, Le Gymnase CDCN has been supporting and creating a network within the dance sector in and around Lille, as well as regionally, nationally and internationally. At the heart of its activity is its support for artists and audiences. Le Gymnase is one of twelve National Centers of Choreographic Development (CDCN) in metropolitan France. As a CDCN, Le Gymnase's guiding principles are based on: supporting artists, working to raise awareness and mediation, professional training, research, dissemination of dance and regional outreach.

Every year, around 120 events are staged for the public, interspersed with regular outputs from residencies and shows with our programming partners. Le Gymnase also has two major events in its programme: festival Le Grand Bain – plural, diverse and innovative program, with creations, in-situ shows, multidisciplinary proposals, and the festival Forever Young, the first dance festival for children and young people created in France in 2006.

Le Gymnase also joins forces with an artist for a period of 3 years – and currently Silvia Gribaudo from January 2024 – working on co-productions, dissemination, masterclasses and participatory projects with the associate artist and boosting their artistic presence in its area.

One particular historical and organic focus for Le Gymnase is its involvement in mediation working with the sectors of education, social work and health, using different tools and educational packs.

Another example of this is the LOOP network that Le Gymnase runs, a professional dance network designed for children and young people that currently comprises 24 organisations. This network is involved in sharing resources

and developing educational tools, and is also a space of artistic exchanges, and commissions artists for shows for young audiences.

An international outlook is translated into each of our activities, such as: expanding the LOOP network to festivals and initiatives intended for children and young people on a European scale; being more involved in producing and disseminating the work of international artists; establishing a career path for artists with our European partners; becoming more international also crosses over into our mediation projects through our involvement in international cooperation projects such as Dance Well, which unites eight European partners to work on long-term activities from August 2022 to July 2025.

gymnase-cdcn.com

FUNDERS

ARTS COUNCIL IRELAND PRIMARY FUNDER THROUGH IRIS

The Arts Council of Ireland is the Irish government agency for developing the arts. It works in partnership with artists, arts organisations, public policy makers and others to build a central place for the arts in Irish life. At the heart of its strategy is a vision for the arts in Ireland grounded in a sense of people and place, where the arts are truly valued as a vital feature of our daily lives and where ambitious and innovative artists are supported to make work of excellence.

International Residency Initiatives Scheme (IRIS)

This scheme seeks to create opportunities for transnational exchange and cooperation across all art forms through the facilitation of diverse residencies programmes that involve partnerships with organisations based abroad thus creating a supportive framework for the international mobility and professional development of artists and art practitioners.

artscouncil.ie

BOARDING PASS PLUS DANCE KEY FUNDER, ITALY

Boarding Pass Plus Dance, supported by the Ministry of Culture, is a project that provides numerous actions and activities for the internationalization of the careers of artists and dance operators, as well as the exploitation of relations and collaborations between Italian and foreign partners, and the dissemination on the territory of the skills acquired and projects developed during the project. The project leader is Operaestate/CSC di Bassano del Grappa, in partnership with Associazione Culturale AREA06/Short Theatre, Fondazione Piemonte dal Vivo/Lavanderia a Vapore, Oxa srl/Base Milano, Santarcangelo dei Teatri, and many international partners.



Project Artists from left to right: Aoife McAtamney, Justine Cooper, Chiara Frigo, Betty Tchomanga, Marion Carriau, Vittoria Caneva and Monica Gillette.
Photograph: Anna Kushnirenko



CHOREOGRAPHY CONNECTS STAMP

PROJECT ARTIST 2022—2024

At the end of the project – each artist received a special stamp as a parting gift to use as they see fit – the intention being to mark the impact of Choreography Connects on their future work and artistic practice.

ARTIST REFLECTIONS

Over the course of Choreography Connects, the artists shared visual notes and written reflections of their varied experiences. These are archived on the project webpage [here](#).



CREDITS

DEvised BY ROBERTO CASAROTTO, LAURENT MEHEUST, BRIDGET WEBSTER

WITH VITTORIA CANEVA, MARION CARRIAU, JUSTINE COOPER, CHIARA FRIGO, AOIFE MCATAMNEY, BETTY TCHOMANGA

DRAMATURG MONICA GILLETTE

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANNA KUSHNIRENKO AND SARA LANDO

GRAPHIC DESIGN: ALPHABET SOUP

PRODUCERS: SARAH LATTY (FOR COISCÉIM DANCE THEATRE), NADIA MISINI (FOR LE GYMNASE CDCN), GRETA PIEROPAN (FOR CSC/OPERAESTATE)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: BRIDGET WEBSTER

SPECIAL THANKS TO: DAVID BOLGER, CAOIMHE COBURN GRAY, INNA MAZURENKO, OLWYN LYONS, MIA DI CHIARO, DUBLIN DANCE FESTIVAL, SOFIA GIRARDI, ADELAIDE DE BORTOLI, ROBERTO CINCONZE AND HERBALISTS MARCO AND ROBERTA OF INEDITOLAB IN BASSANO, AND ROMAIN PAQUET, CÉLIA BERNARD IN ROUBAIX.

