

teaching the teachers-budapest
13.-20.april 2010
personal report by peter pleyer

threefold: before/during/after

1.before:

why i am invited to teach the teachers in budapest? my history with the dance-community in budapest dates back to 1993 when i was traveling with my fellow student at the "european dance development center" in arnhem/nl, eszter gal, to budapest to perform a duet that we choreographed. it was performed at "skene" a small, almost improvised theater-space at the university. the light-grid was on ropes, so the whole light-design was constantly moving. after this we came back frequently, every year to teach or perform in this city. performing at mu-theater, artus-theater and merlin-theater and improvising at hero-square and galleries with the growing number of musicians that got interested in our way of working. as a duet we won a choreography prize in lübek/germany, and traveled to perform in festivals in paris, new york, st petersburg, jaruslav/russia, lublin/poland and other places in europe. when we both left arnhem and the netherlands in 2000 to go back "home", me to berlin, eszter to budapest, we met yearly at the improvisation-performance-festival she was curating and organizing: "kontakt-budapest", bringing her international colleagues from that scene to budapest and to hungary, bringing new information about working with a different body/mind in training a dancer, making material for improvisation/performance and about composing/choreographing. our interest was to grow further together, building on our foundations but also to educate other dancers, artists and audiences in budapest and hungary. in the last 10 years this festival took place at l1-studio, artus-studio and theater, mu-theater and sin-art center. teaching the teachers 2010 in budapest brings different threads of this past together, weaving a new net for the city and for the participating teachers, students, programmers and organizers.

2. during:

so here we are in a dance studio in the budapest dance school. although the many dance studios we worked in during our ttt-meeting are all slightly different, they have a similar feel and i stated more often in the process, how much at home i do feel in a dance studio. the openness to move in any directions, filling the empty space with ideas and movements, clean enough floors to sit and roll and slide on. in the round is one of my major teachers, eva karczag, much of what i know about my body, about sensing and dancing with that body i know through her guidance. susanne martin, a friend and colleague from berlin with whom i shared dancing in jams around europe, and in a company in sweden. tamás bako, a gentle, versatile and clear mover and dancer that i met in classes and jams during "kontakt budapest". and two to me unknown participants, viktoría varga and dorothea rust, both i met with growing curiosity. slightly disappointed, at first, that gill clarke is only with us from a distance via mail and skype, i did appreciate her input and considerations very much during the process.

the disappointment lay more in my expected meeting with her after missing her in previous meetings that dealt with the development of dance/education and during her research period at the "hzt" in berlin. most helpful was her commenting on some scientific readings on education and art as well as some political doorways, that we in dance-education are no longer "producing" dancers for a specific market, but in the best case artists with diverse and individual knowledge, that are flexible and strong in developing jobs and opportunities for further professional work.

already from the first circle the method of articulating thoughts, ideas and proposals followed a nonhierarchical, horizontal pattern which continued to inspire us to change fluidly between talking, moving and writing, even performing together.

as i was the first one to propose my "class" to the group and the invited students i chose to design it that way that i could not only share my way of teaching but also my latest interest and research into the history and practice of dance in the last 30-40 years. especially with the help of bringing printed matters, magazines and books, but also new media and dvds into the dance-studio to be warmed up with and being incorporated into moving.

i was very happy that the article of mary overlie on her viewpoint theory in the book "training the american actor" became a source for more inspiration and clarifying quotes during the process.

the idea that the most effective teaching is through passion for the subject the love for the people in the lineage, the history , and through a personal involvement in the individual, most recent artistic research was articulated after most of the classes.

the maps we generated towards the conclusion of the ttt-meeting, the harvest of the process, were important manifestations of the net, the fabric we manufactured during our days in budapest.

for an understanding of the structures, infrastructures and the persons involved in the budapest contemporary dance scene susanne's and dorothea's map of all the places we visited and all the people we met stays with the workshop foundation as a visible reminder of richness and diversity in the city. the personalized history map of eva and me will stay as an important skeleton of our knowledge and experience of the development of contemporary dance in the last century, that needs and asks for commentary, additional routes, people and places, but is a valuable visualization of yet another important threadwork, network and tissue.

the individual maps of the classes we taught were a helpful tool in sharing with each other in a nonjudgmental way our thoughts, and played a key-role in the representation of the research during the conference, helping to guide audience through the process of the ttt-meeting.

3.after:

as the ttt-budapest meeting fits perfectly into a string of teaching opportunities i had and will have in 2010, like pearls on a necklace. the impact of these days of intensive articulation and sharing of personal ways of navigating through the developments in the education of dance-artists in europe, will show itself in the near future. for "kontakt-budapest" 2010 i will return to budapest to coteach with eszter gal at sin-art center in july.

developing a class, a course , a curriculum that deals with the recent history of practices in dance-making is a goal that i want to continue to follow, and all participants of the ttt-meeting in budapest gave me personally the strength, permission and trust to do so. to be able to get honest feedback of colleagues that i respect much and from different students and organizers is of great importance. it gave me a sense of belonging, so necessary to keep investing in that track.

a future continuation in any possible way with the same or similar group would be important and greatly appreciated. especially in the direction of inhabiting the divers venues that we visited in a performative setting.