

Covering letter

Date: 22 November 2010.

Dear LUTSF

Please find enclosed my project completion forms and accompanying report. Apologies once again for the delay in its return.

I hope all is completed satisfactorily, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

I left my last address before my trip to Brazil so I am currently and potentially temporarily residing at the address at the top of this letter.

Many thanks for the support from your organisation, it is greatly appreciated.

Best wishes

Colin Daimond

### **Colin Daimond Brazil trip 2010**

On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010 I set off for Brazil for a 6 week period to study Capoeira with my own Master- Mestre Sombra, to be immersed in Afro-Brazilian culture and in order to participate and observe Capoeira practice within its traditional community. My trip and study was funded by the Lisa Ullmann travel Scholarship fund and professional development grants from the Arts Council of Wales and Community Dance Wales.

For the first two and a half weeks I trained Capoeira technique 5 nights a week with Mestre Sombra – founder of “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”- at the Senzala at their academy in Santos, São Paulo State, Brazil. I greatly value Mestre Sombra for his huge emphasis on improvisation and his methodology of teaching based on setting a score or rules for exploring improvisation. The Capoeira technique classes were everything that I'd hoped. The Majority of them were very similar to classes I had attended whilst training in Brazil for 6 months in 2005. I felt a beauty, strength and lightness return to basic movements - removed from my peers and constantly teaching, it can become very easy for my basic movement vocabulary to become automated/less expressive. I felt that the very character of my movement had been given a polish and shine. In 2005 I absorbed a lot of new concepts and techniques, returning to these techniques and concepts 5 years later I realise how much I have applied them to, and absorbed them into my practice of Capoeira. I also had a huge realisation that these same ideas of which I use regularly can also be applied in a myriad of ways by the Capoeira artist that I had not even begun to consider.

I was able to organize training with Trel Xara from “Centro Cultural de Capoeira Angola Quilombola” 3 afternoons a week. As a sweeping generalisation, the regular Senzala classes were a polishing and extending of my existing knowledge and practice, the sessions with Quilombola were a whole new body of learning. Not only was I taught directly by Trel Xara, I learnt a huge amount through observing his way of practice and teaching. I have a body of material which as well as practicing for my own development has become included in my own teaching. I have sequences and phrases that are practical, adaptable and informative for the teaching of my own students regardless of experience or ability. Trel Xara also got me to teach one of his beginners classes and gave me feedback on my own teaching.

The weekly Roda (Capoeira “Jam” if you will) at Senzala is an open yet formal event, this is the setting for Capoeira as a complete artform. The weekly Roda in Senzala attracts around 30-40 Capoeira practitioners each of whom have distinct skills and characteristics. As Capoeira is an

improvised form, the opportunity to “Play” (“Jam”) with many different Capoeiristas is vital to learn more about the art and improve improvisational skills. As “Senzala” is recognised as a centre of excellence, Capoeira Artists of a very high standard are attracted to the weekly event.

At the time of my application I was aware of the possibility of there being an “Encontro” (international encounter of Capoeira Masters, teachers and practitioners) at Senzala during the summer of 2010, however no details had been finalised. The event ran from 30<sup>th</sup> July to 8<sup>th</sup> of August. The Encontro incorporated Capoeira technique classes of both traditional and contemporary styles, workshops of other Afro-Brazilian dance forms and Capoeira Rodas. However most informative for me was the participation of Mestre Virigilio and Mestre Felipe, who had been invited to teach and talk at the event by Mestre Sombra. Mestre Virigilio’s teaching style was totally different, really interesting approach. When Mestre Felipe started Capoeira it was with people who have subsequently become a famous part of folklore and are sung about in Capoeira Roda’s today. At the end of the Encontro Mestre Sombra presented me with the title of “Monitor”, he said he had hoped to do this in Wales but there hadn’t been time. “Monitor” is a second level teacher, I had hoped to discuss my future progression/qualification during the trip, but Mestre Sombra has put me on the next rung of the ladder.

The 5<sup>th</sup> week was a return to the regular “Senzala” classes, and there was an added opportunity to participate in a “Batizado” by a completely different group. It was still very interesting and an important experience. I stayed in a family home during my time in Santos and various colleagues brought round historical and academic documents, CD’s, DVD’s, footage of Capoeira events, old photos and newspaper articles to the house and all manner of discussion ensued.

During the Senzala Encontro Mestre Virigilio had informed me of an imminent five day event in the north of Brazil called “Dancebatukeira” hosted by a teacher called Cabello. The event was notable as it was to be under the Artistic direction of Mestre João Grande. Mestre João Grande is a revered figure in Capoeira- he is one of the original surviving students of the late Mestre Pastinha. Mestre Pastinha being THE most legendary figure in traditional Capoeira since its decriminalisation in 1935. I had visited Mestre João Grande’s academy in New York in 2002 as a relatively naïve Capoeirista, so when the opportunity to train with him in Brazil, alongside other great Capoeiristas presented itself I leapt on the very rare opportunity. I travelled for 18 hours straight using buses, a plane and a ferry to get from Santos to Ilheus.

The body of learning and experience I gained through attending Dancebatukeira was absolutely huge. There were Capoeira technique classes and workshops for traditional various Afro-Brazilian Dance forms, some of which I hadn’t even heard mention of before. Mestre João Grande’s approach is very different from that of Mestre Sombra, he is very specific about body position and alignment. Again stylistically very different from what I do, I felt very taken with the basic principals of the style and felt very at home with the concepts and principals in the classes.

I learnt a huge amount of new movement material because through my other training experiences I already understood the “why’s” within Mestre João Grande’s teaching. It is not my intention to remodel what I do as a Capoeirista, but rather I absorbed some very new techniques and concepts that I am looking forward to including within my everyday movement vocabulary. I have had my eyes opened to a whole new approach to Capoeira movement and found it fascinating making my own observations on how these traditional techniques may have become adapted/included/stylized into what is usually termed “Capoeira Contemporanea” (literally contemporary Capoeira).

A huge unexpected bonus of the whole trip was that this event was also attended by the Academic, Ethno-musicologist and Choreographer Professor Emilia Biancardi. Emilia Biancardi was the first choreographer ever to put Capoeira (and many other Afro-Brazilian dance forms on stage), she founded her performing folk culture group “Vivabahia” (the first of its kind) in 1962. Its through Emilia Biancardi that the world became familiar with Capoeira and that Capoeira practitioners began to spread out across the world. A lot of the choreographies of Afro-Brazilian dances that are taught throughout the world today are based on choreographies from “Vivabahia”. Mestre João Grande had been one of her original performers in Vivabahia. I found her lecture’s fascinating, whether it be about folkloric traditions, historical aspects of Vivabahia or on the modern diaspora of Afro-Brazilian Arts. She gave a whole Masterclass on various instruments that

were commonly used between the end of slavery and the advent of access to “modern instruments”. The workshop group also made a public performance of the material that we learned with Professora Emilia Biancardi at a local music venue.

Everyone expected me to return from Brazil with a suntan- they hadn’t believed that Brazil has a winter. It was a particularly wet winter, it probably drizzled 6 days a week whilst I was in Santos and during DanceBatuKeira there was severe rainfall. During the event, the effect of flood water getting into the well water supply was probably the cause of nearly half the participants suffering stomach cramps and acute diarrhoea. Unfortunately, tests on my return to Britain show that I picked up a waterborne stomach parasite called Giardia. Despite the illness, the value of the technique classes is not diminished. I am re-inspired, more aware and have a huge body of new elements to work on. In terms of experience I was able to participate in a wide variety of Rodas with Capoeiristas from very different styles. I have learnt or seen things that I will continue to digest and develop for a couple of years and that I have already begun to apply in my own teaching. My basic understanding of various traditional Afro-Brazilian Art forms, their historical aspects and their cultural relevance has improved massively. A by-product of the event is that I also gained a new qualification – that of “Monitor”. I have made new contacts amongst my peers within the Capoeira world.

The project in itself has not necessarily guaranteed me more work or financial stability in the future, it has however renewed my passion and vigour as an artist. Through having direct physical contact with some of the famous artists that have created Capoeira what it is today, I have returned with a whole host of new artistic tools. Access to various historical and artistic resources has greatly deepened my overall understanding. With focussed effort and applied hard work from this point on I hope to strengthen the practice of Capoeira within North Wales and my own diversity as an Artist. I believe the benefits of the project will be seen to be widespread. I have also established new contacts and strengthened working links with many international artists.

### Diary Breakdown

11-12/07/10 travel wales- santos	
12/07/10 : 1-to-1 movement Lesson with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
12/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	3 hours
13/07/10 :General Discussion with Mestre Sombra (and rio book)	1 hour
13/07/10 : 1-to-1 Lesson with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
13/07/10 : beginners class with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	1 hours
13/07/10 : Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2.5 hours
14/07/10 : 1-to-1 Lesson with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	2 hours
14/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
15/07/10 : Discussion with Trelnel Xara	3 hours
(re documents regarding :quilombos in minas de gerais, mestre Leminhas songs and footage of M. Joao Grande etc)	
16/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
17/07/10 : Roda at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	3 hours
18/07/10 : Discussion of songs with trelnel xara	2 hours
	{1 <sup>st</sup> week ,Training sessions = 22.5 Hours, 1 event= 3 hours }
19/07/10 : 1-to-1 Lesson with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	2 hours
19/07/10 : Discussion with Mestre Sombra	1 hour
19/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
20/07/10 : 1-to-1 Lesson with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	2 hours
20/07/10 : Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2 hours
21/07/10 : 1-to-1 Lesson with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
21/07/10 : beginners class with Trelnel Xara in the Cadeia*	1 hour
21/07/10 : Discussion with Mestre Sombra in the shop and coffee	1 hour

21/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
22/07/10 (improv class) Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2.5 hours
23/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2 hours
24/07/10 : Roda at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos” (showcase at mt)	1.5 hours
25/07/10: Making berimbaus etc with trenel xara and trenel leandro	4 hours
{2 <sup>nd</sup> week, Training sessions = 24 Hours, 1 event = 1.5 hours }	
26/07/10 (3 people) Lesson with Trenel Xara in the Cadeia	2 hours
26/07/10 : Discussion with Mestre Sombra	1 hour
26/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos” (C.Mestre No)	3.5 hours
27/07/10 : (3 people) lesson with Trenel Xara in the Cadeia	2.5 hours
27/07/10 : Discussion with Mestre Sombra	1 hour
27/07/10 : Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2. hours
28/07/10 : (2 people) Lesson with Trenel Xara in the Cadeia	2 hours
28/07/10 : Discussion with Mestre Sombra	1 hour
28/07/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	3 hours
29/07/10 : Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2. hours
Encontro	
30/07/10 start of the encontro international – technique class, Training roda	2 hours
31/07/10 Improvisation percussion workshop with percutinho mundo	2 hours
31/07/10 Aula com M beija Flor (technique class)	1 Hour
31/07/10 Aula com M Bahia (technique class)	1 Hour
31/07/10 Training Roda	2 Hours
1/08/10 Aula de Puxada de Rede com M. Cruz	2 Hours
1/08/10 Aula M Ediandro (technique class)	2 Hours
1/08/10 Training Roda	3 Hours
{3 <sup>rd</sup> week , Training sessions 35 hours}	
2/08/10 Morning class with Mestre Sombra at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
2/08/10 samba/pagode percussion masterclass with “De Olho No Futuro”	2 hours
2/08/10 Mestre Sombra technique class	3 hours
3/08/10 Morning class with Mestre Sombra at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
3/08/10 Mestre Virigilo technique class	3 hours
4/08/10 Morning class with Mestre Sombra at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
4/08/10 Music and Roda M felipe (plus M. Braulinho)	3 hours
5/08/10 Morning class with Mestre Sombra at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
5/08/10 Maculele warm up Cm Maria Pandeiro	0.5 hour
5/08/10 Aula M Ediandro (technique class)	1.5 hours
5/08/10 Training Roda	1 hour
6/08/10 Morning class with Mestre Sombra at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	2.5 hours
6/08/10 Training Roda	3 hours
7/08/10 Lecture for teachers with M.virigilo, M Felipe	3.5 hours
7/08/10 Training Roda	3 hours
8/8/10 Aula Mestre Sombra (technique class)	2 hours
8/8/10 Roda	2 hours
8/8/10 Batizado Roda	2 hours
{4 <sup>th</sup> week, Training sessions = 38 Hours , 2 events = 4 hours}	
9/08/10 : Lesson with Trenel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
9/08/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos” - CM noan	3.5 hours
10/08/10 : Lesson with Trenel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
10/08/10 : Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2 hours
11/08/10 : Lesson with Trenel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
11/08/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	3 hours

12/08/10 : Music with Ternel Xara re songs	2 hours
12/08/10 : Training with Mestre Sombra in the Cadeia	2 hours
13/08/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	1 hours
13/08/10 : Roda at Encontro of Mestre Valtinho	3 hours
14/08/10 : Roda at “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	3 hours
15/08/10 : Music with Ternel Xara re songs	2 hours
{5 <sup>th</sup> week, Training sessions = 20 hours, 2 events = 6 hours}	
16/08/10 : Lesson with Ternel Xara in the Cadeia	1.5 hours
16/08/10 : Training with “Associação de Capoeira Senzala Santos”	3 hours
<i>(17/08/10 18 hours travelling! -Dancebatukeira 14)</i>	
18/08/10 M. João Grande technique and training roda	3 hours
18/08/10 percussion with Emilia Biancardi	2 hours
18/08/10 Training Roda	2 hours
18/08/10 traditional percussion – “beriba lada”	1.5 hours
19/08/10 Lecture on maculele with Emilia Biancardi	2 hours
19/08/10 Maculele technique C. Mestre Tisca	1.5 hours
19/08/10 M. João Grande technique and training roda	4 hours
19/08/10 percussion – barravento-samba with berimbau	2 hours
20/08/10 Dança Afro/Cavalo Marinho	3 hours
20/08/10 M. João Grande technique class	2 hours
20/08/10 Roda/public exhibition	2 hours
21/08/10 lesson and lecture with M. João Grande	3 hours
21/08/10 percussion – caxixi and beriba lada	1 hour
21/08/10 Training Roda	3 hours
21/08/10 Beriba lada performance etc	0.5 hours
22/08/10 Closing Roda	3 hours
{6 <sup>th</sup> week Training sessions = 34.5 hours, 3 events = 5.5 hours}	
23/08/10 salvador	
24/08/10 travel back to santos	
25-26/08/10 travel home	

Total number of hours training =174 Hours  
Hours participation in events/performances= 20 Hours

Plus countless hours of activities/research/discussion specific to the furthering of my capoeira skills and the opportunity to converse informally with many Capoeira Masters, Teachers, Musicians, Dancers and Choreographers.

Colin Daimond



dancebatukeira



Mestres Felipe & Virgilio



Mestre Sombra