

## **Trip to Morelia, Mexico; Heike Salzer**

**Dates: 19<sup>th</sup> June – 2nd July 2019**

The trip to Morelia, Mexico in June-July 2019 has been an extraordinary experience on artistic, professional and personal level.

I would like to thank the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund for the support, enabling me to embark on a trip that has left a deep impact: Professionally by the possibility to realise several projects that will continue beyond this journey, and personally through the experience of the whole journey, leaving me with a profound impression that has enriched my practice and reassured my perspective towards my role as a dance artist in a wider context.

All planned activities and events have been achieved successfully and additionally new opportunities have arisen. The following report provides brief descriptions of the events alongside images, press and video links to offer visual references, illustrating the rich experience of my journey.

### ***Espacios Latentes Replanteados - Latent Spaces Reframed***

The exhibition *Espacios Latentes Replanteados* was opened with a live performance at the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Alfredo Zalce, Morelia, on 23rd June 2019.

The exhibition was open during the following week 23.06.19 - 30.06.2019 and had a flow of visitors.

Presenting a range of site-specific landscape screendances in a venue such as the museum Alfredo Zalce presented an opportunity to present work from contrasting environments alongside each other, engaging in a visual dialogue.





A video of the opening performance can be accessed here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=423996591521993>

A video of the exhibition can be seen here:  
<https://vimeo.com/351186214>

A review has been published and be accessed here:  
[http://elcaleidoscopio.com.mx/?p=796&fbclid=IwAR0OKfLh9j4g\\_RekvvaXlXyhG9yzMMB19yTbxGMJDAP\\_ABL16SJLyqD90V0](http://elcaleidoscopio.com.mx/?p=796&fbclid=IwAR0OKfLh9j4g_RekvvaXlXyhG9yzMMB19yTbxGMJDAP_ABL16SJLyqD90V0)

### **International Congress of Performing Arts: Alternatives for teaching and creation in the University environment, Michoacán University of Saint Nicholas of Hidalgo, Morelia.**

The week after the opening performance, I had the pleasure to teach several masterclasses to the students of the dance department at the University and choreograph a new piece with a group of undergraduate dance students. The experience of collaborating with the dancers left a great impression on me. Their energy, rigour, curiosity and positivity was affectionous. These dancers completely gave themselves into the process, and engaged with openness and generosity on a shared creative journey. I felt enriched by this experience where the moment of dancing together allowed us to communicate across language borders.



The students will perform the work in September 2019 during a public performance alongside other works created during the Congress.



Furthermore, Ana Baer, co-director of our screendance company WECreat Productions, and I gave a talk about our collaborative screendance practice to students and general public.

### **Filming of *WECreat Spaces – Morelia*, in collaboration with Ana Baer**

Two days of the trip were dedicated to the filming of a new screendance in collaboration with my co-director Ana Baer. On the second filming day, we invited dance artist Rocio Luna Urdaibay resident of Morelia, to join the journey, creating a duet.



We explored the city by wandering and engaging through site-specific exploration with place. We wandered through the old town, the markets and the secluded pavements, encountered staircases in the early morning sun rise and explored the city through the visceral inquiry with space. The screendance illustrates an embodied account of place and aims to capture the atmosphere of our journey.

Dancing and filming together with Rocio and Ana offered us the chance to explore place as a shared journey. Experiencing a moment with someone else is different than alone. I very much enjoyed connecting to place by dancing with a new dance partner and by getting to know Mexico with two artists who originate from this country.

The video will be submitted to screendance festivals and be presented in future Latent Spaces editions which are planned to take place in the next year.

## Screendance work directed by Ana Baer and Rocio Luna Urdaibay

The last activity was the development of a screendance piece directed by Ana Baer and Roico Luna Urdaibay, based on narrative research of dance artists Rocio Luna Urdaibay and Natalia Reza (Mexico).

There were two stages of this work, starting with two days of filming in a Black Box theatre.

On the first two evenings, I met a group of Mexican dance artists purely through dance. We spent three hours dancing following structured improvisation. Very little

was spoken, perhaps because the time in the theatre with lights and the technician was precious, or because of the language barriers. I would like to think that none of that was the reason, but that we enjoyed that no other communication was needed. This non-verbal communication was profound, demonstrating how a network of dancers can engage in a dialogue through artistic means, reassuring me that dance is a vital tool to create dialogue and communication.



For the second part of the project we travelled into the mountains above Morelia, exploring the forest. Five women from different corners of the world connecting with the environment through a shared exploration of place.

This companionship established via dance, grew strong and our conversations and reflections the day after were enriching. Apart from reflecting on the filming days our discussions developed into fruitful exchange of other areas, on themes of art and its social impact, decolonisation of the curriculum in our retrospective institutions, as well as personal stories and goals.

Based on the felt companionship and the experience of an inspiring dialogue that is informed by the different contexts of our working contexts in various countries, we are establishing a regular intercontinental online *artist dialogue meeting*.

These meetings will provide space to exchange thoughts about our arts practice and roles as researchers and educators in Higher Education.

## Evaluation of the organisation of the trip

All projects and the journey itself went very well, which was due to the organisational strengths of the team at the University of Morelia and Texas State University, Ana Baer and Roico Luna Urdaibay, who organised the Congress. The organisers made sure that all steps during my stay were perfectly arranged and I am very grateful for their thoughtful and careful planning.

## Future dissemination of the projects:

The Exhibition *Latent Spaces* and the screendances will be developed in the coming years, and we are aiming to find a platform for the publication of our *artist dialogues meetings*. Information about all projects can be found on following online platforms:

Website: [www.salts.nl](http://www.salts.nl)

Fb: @saltsart

Instagram: @SaltsArt

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/salts>

Finally, I would like to thank all organisations and the affiliated individuals that have made this trip and the events possible:

Lisa Ullmann Travel Scholarship Fund

University of Saint Nicholas of Hidalgo, Morelia, Mexico

Texas State University, San Marcos, United States

Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Alfredo Zalce, Morelia, Mexico

University of Roehampton, London, United Kingdom

