

Work Package 4. Organisation and Running of the Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival and Off Festival (first edition) – Lead beneficiary: Institute of Archaeology

## D4.1.2. - Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival – Artistic co-creation

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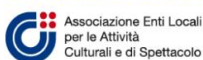
# DANCING HISTORIES

*Binding communities and heritage through dance*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. DEFINITION OF CO-CREATION AND SITE/COMMUNITY SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE

The very first mention of the co-creation and site/community specific performance developed by APs in collaboration with the IPs and local communities was already mentioned in the project proposal.

“Dancing Histor(y)ies APs will address the work in the heritage sites, running productions and site-specific labs (WP4/5); they will join an exchange program at international level, developing local activities with stakeholders, citizens, and cultural operators (WP3/5); they will benefit from a peer-to peer learning program (WP6). The project will foster the work of AP, providing them with the opportunity to travel, work in astonishing heritage sites in Europe, meet relevant and experienced dance companies, encounter local communities and participate in high qualifying training with peers and professionals.”

Then it was discussed during the first stages of the project and some definition to which all partners agreed was established during the partners meeting in Volos November 2023.

“The DH co-creation is a process in which Institutional partners, local communities and dance companies commit to collaborate together, opening to diversity and participation, to exchange and share objects, historical facts, interpretation, personal experiences, memories, stories and perspectives, creating a shared storytelling, a narrative of one site and the communities around it that will serve as an inspiration for high quality site-specific and community-specific artistic interpretation and intervention, in full respect of the differences of the participants, through a transparent, clear, flexible, trustworthy and facilitated process, and with the final aim of giving a new meaning to heritage sites as places of encounter, dialogue, social inclusion.”

In the DH model (D2.1) and Implementation Strategies (D3.1) it was planned and agreed that study visits (WP3), workshops and residences will serve as time for APs to learn about the sites and communities in order to gain relevant inspiration for their co-creation work.

During the WP4 implementation it was planned that each site and IP in charge will provide through the facilitator’s role good connection with local communities which APs will meet during 3 workshops and a residency in order to create the final artistic work that will be site and community specific. In the end at four sites out of five the planned activities together with the 1<sup>st</sup> edition festival were completely implemented. Also, by the plan of visits made in Volos 2023, each AP should have visited three sites and produced three completely new productions, which was not achieved due to the Ekpol withdrawal as partner from the project (for details see EKPOL’s report - D4.1. - Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival and Off Festival report).

### 1.2. DH ARTISTS IN CHARGE FOR CO-CREATION ACHIEVEMENT

Four contemporary dance companies,<sup>1</sup> DH APs were engaged in the co-creation process during the WP4 implementation and their choreographers in charge, sometimes with the support of dancers and producers, as well as IPs staff, worked on the new artistic productions dedicated to each site and community they met and were inspired by.

1. 420PEOPLE (Czech Republic) is the contemporary dance company founded by Václav Kuneš and Nataša Novotná at the turn of the years 2007/2008. The company presents a unique contemporary dance vocabulary in

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<sup>1</sup> Together with national dance companies: ASMED BALLETO DI SARDEGNA - ASMED has been operating in Sardinia since 1979. In 1982, the Balletto di Sardegna Company was established, becoming the first dance company in Sardinia officially recognized by the institutions and the MIC - Ministry of Culture. The productions create an original repertoire, always focusing on quality and diversity of offerings, utilizing renowned choreographers and dancers from the Italian and international scenes. The company has received numerous accolades and achieved success over the years, having been a guest at national and international theaters and festivals. COMPAGNIA DANZA ESTEMPORADA - The company was founded in August 1998. It is supported and recognized by the MIC - Ministry of Culture, the Region of Sardinia, and the Fondazione di Sardegna. From the very beginning, it has produced and staged successful performances, collaborating with numerous nationally and internationally renowned artists and participating in projects aimed at promoting and spreading dance. The company has been a guest at national and international theaters and festivals. GRUPPO E-MOTION - “The exploration of gesture and personal experience are the foundation of the performances of GRUPPO e-MOTION, whose shows are poetic and introspective journeys into the human experience and contemporary society.” A contemporary dance company, it has been supported by the MIC - Ministry of Culture since 2008. GRUPPO e-MOTION has participated in the most important national and international festivals and theatrical seasons in Italy, France, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary, Croatia, the USA, Mexico, Brazil, Egypt, Argentina, and more. The MSPD dance company is a prominent national-level troupe, led by the étoile Emanuela Bianchini and the principal dancer Damiano Grifoni. Since it is based in Rome, the company's festival preparation unfolds continuously since February.

performances and original choreographies by contemporary artists (Václav Kuneš, Sylva Šafková) with a modern interpretive and professional level. 420PEOPLE is a collective of artists who insist on the values of exceptional quality of performance and professionalism. Their pieces are playful and courageous, bringing on stage a wide vocabulary of contemporary dance. Improvisation is a natural part of their creation and so is informal dialogue with the spectator in the form of after-show discussions.

In the 1st edition of the DH Festivals the main choreographers were Václav Kuneš (Merida), Sylva Šafková (Viminacium).

2. Derida Dance Center (DDC) (Bulgaria), represented by Art Link Foundation, is the first contemporary dance centre in Bulgaria, founded in 2010 by Atanas Maev (Executive Director) and Jivko Jeliakov (Art Director). The main mission of the organisation is the development of the contemporary dance scene and the positioning of Bulgarian independent art in a European and global context. For its successful implementation, DDC develops activities in the following areas: production activity (Derida Company), Bulgarian and international residency program, curatorial activity, educational and training program, development of new audiences.

In the 1st edition of the DH Festivals the main choreographer was Jivko Jeliakov.

3. ilDance (Sweden) is a production body dedicated to contemporary dance, established by Israel Aloni and Lee Brummer in 2012. It is a dynamic organisation with a multidimensional operation which involves: creating, producing, performing and touring contemporary dance across Sweden and internationally; support and mentor emerging artists; takes a fresh perspective of what an “independent dance company” is. It operates as a whole body.

In the 1st edition of the DH Festivals the main choreographer was Israel Aloni.

4. Polish Dance Theatre / Polski Teatr Tańca (Poland) is the oldest dance theatre in Poland, operating continuously since 1973. It is a professional, autonomous company, and since its founding in 1973 it has evolved from a ballet theatre form to a contemporary dance theatre genre. Seeking new means of expression, it crosses stylistic and genre boundaries, exploring theatrical spaces that are new to theatre and basing the creative process on improvisation.

In the 1st edition of the DH Festivals the main choreographers were Paulina Jaksim (Ostia Antica) and Aleksandra Brzezowska (Tharros).

### **1.3. TARGETED LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS FOR CO-CREATION**

As was suggested by the DH draft model and Implementation Strategies, besides community engagement activities (CEA), the artistic co-creation process facilitated via workshops and festival residency was aimed to provide visibility to local heritage and values that communities protect, meaning the very close collaboration between heritage site, local community and artists/performers in planning, designing and enriching performances and artistic production.

Each site identified local stakeholders and targeted local communities during WP3. Local artists were encouraged to participate in order to obtain skill sharing and networking, while performances among typically local heritage would have included some transversal topics such as gender equality, environmental sustainability and accessibility or social inclusion.

Thus the participation of local stakeholders in the co-creation process during the implementation of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the DH festival considered Contemporary and traditional dance groups, talented children and youth, drama artists, visual artists (painters, sculptors), composers, singers, musicians, writers, storytellers, elderly people...

## **2. CO-CREATION DURING WORKSHOPS, RESIDENCY AND FESTIVAL IMPLEMENTATION (WP4)**

### **2.1 Implementation guidelines, Templates and Internal communication with APs**

For providing all partners an understanding of the achieved co-creation process in the relation AP-IP (heritage site) – Local stakeholders, IAB provided the APs with an Implementation guidelines with the template for workshops (1, 2, 3), period between the workshops, residency and festival.

These Guidelines, together with the report templates provided the APs with practical instructions and tips on how to most successfully elaborate and explain artistic processes within the DH WP4 – implementation of artistic co-creation the Workshops and Residencies in 2024.

Mentioned report is complementary to the video diaries, thus it was advised to keep the narrative simple and to focus on the AP's artistic perception: describing artistic approach towards co-creation process, what the APs saw, heard, experienced and learnt; how it inspired them and how they used it for the choreographies.

Internal communications on relation AP-IP (facilitator) - Local stakeholders were encouraged and facilitated by IAB in order to provide productive exchange in periods between the workshops and until the residency/festival.

## 2.2. WORKSHOPS 1 AND 2 REPORTS

### 2.2.1. SITE VIMINACIUM, APs: iIDANCE, 420PEOPLE, DERIDA DANCE CENTER

#### iIDANCE

**WS1:** The goal was to decide on the site for the performance, learn more about the current realities of the local community, their relationship to the site of Viminacium and about local music, dance and textiles. It was clear that it was not possible to include all local stakeholders into the final performance so the selection was made in regard to the expressed interests by APs and with the respect to their historical and sociopolitical contexts.

#### Selecting the site at the core:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16BYm44hf96f4tWzNOBxV2mANqyVoZkh3/view?usp=sharing>

A very important result of this visit and the workshops was the decision on the site of the performance. The Amphitheatre was selected mainly for the reason of various options in which the site can be used for the performance (audience in the centre with performance on different parts close to and around the audience - up on the wooden stands of the amphitheatre, in the arena).

#### Dance and music traditions:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AiuCbsJucDI7x\\_0O1esvid0kvQewviL\\_/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AiuCbsJucDI7x_0O1esvid0kvQewviL_/view?usp=sharing)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nsiiqsYiB5VsrcIulnXYjc3Ffaxb0uUW/view?usp=sharing>

Dance traditions of the Roma community provided valuable information about the complexity and richness in terms of their large variety of rhythms and expressions. Some small details caught the AP's attention and were considered to be implemented into the performance - for example the dance in which the dancers placed one hand on each other's belt, a small but impactful and intimate gesture.

Music and sounds from the areas around the heritage sites will be one of the key elements through which the performance will aim to connect not only the local community with the site, but also the three heritage sites the AP was working on.

#### Social inclusion of Roma community:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1quqTrODi7TAheWbvZ3sp-3M6KAUDBHvI/view?usp=sharing>

Visit to a Roma family's home showed the warmth and openness that this community keeps alive. History and culture of Romani people, is the most inspiring connection to the topic of "breaking borders", questioning the ties between (cultural) identity and national borders, showing ways of connection across these borders through language, dance and music and making us all aware of the complexity of our own, multilayered identities.

BETWEEN WS1 and WS2:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Fr9BVMFppFSpMeXqWv67dUKAs1ACrXII/view?usp=sharing>

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/19hJIMT64ofbXoRL2YswQ\\_GS1svEC\\_2Ug/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/19hJIMT64ofbXoRL2YswQ_GS1svEC_2Ug/view?usp=sharing)

AP shared the pictures of different types of clothing they discovered during WS1 to the their costume designer, which was further considered in terms on how the fabric would interact with the movement of the dancers, what is the symbolism of the different items and their colours and patterns, and how the costumes would look in the site (contrasts, how would audience see it from far away).

**WS2:** Work was focused on the co-creation process of music and costumes for the performance. The composer Didi Erez recorded traditional songs and music with the students of the local music school in Požarevac and costume designer Amanda Wisselgren started working on costume design with the students of the School of Design in Belgrade.

#### Co-creating process of costumes:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PXd1rWc9v2HBE-BGmr9DfIEvBdE0J\\_2s/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PXd1rWc9v2HBE-BGmr9DfIEvBdE0J_2s/view?usp=sharing)

Initial design was inspired with the study visits and the workshops, the final design and details were decided together with the local communities from all three locations where the AP will perform: Tharros, Mérida and Viminacium. The details that the students added to the basic costume design, like the braided fabric as well as inspiration from the students' sketches, inspired costume's details and the shoes design which would give the dancers the possibility to connect with the ground of the site.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/17dbMIvLCdQ-7ShIKxCwUXKEzKSruY7fH/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bYAIK-A5A3eLLbBYKToi0yCToKq5exyD/view?usp=sharing>

From the meeting with Roma dancers, the designer got inspired by the way the culottes react to movement of the dancers, as they are a blend of the aesthetics of trousers and skirts, combining female and male connotations and the binding of the corset.

#### Co-creation of musical score:

The composer Didi Erez created music for the piece from various inspirations: from Belgrade street musicians, to the amazingly talented singer who gracefully shared her voice with us at the School of Design, the inspiring students at the music school in Požarevac, as well as soulful Roma band listened in Belgrade.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10pGj9oa7Yuh7E7QDhzaAQzu5zktS8hpA/view?usp=sharing>  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YVvrhGVrpXzY4vP\\_JgctT688dCkH-PqB/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YVvrhGVrpXzY4vP_JgctT688dCkH-PqB/view?usp=sharing)

Three singers from the music school in Požarevac recorded two traditional songs with the AP's composer, combining characteristic harmonies and rhythms, while symbolising the timeless nature of music and its important societal function of connecting people.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OGiHePENFL68YKkItCRBynnTt0uqSPe0/view?usp=sharing>

The accordion is one of the most significant instruments in Balkan music, which is why it was important to represent it in the musical score.

Co-creation considered connecting three sites of the performance (Viminacium, Tharros and Mérida) and to combine the inspiration from all sites into the music and the costumes. The idea behind this is to bring the cultures of all three sites closer, to show the very specific characteristics, but also the connecting elements in the culture and history.

## **420PEOPLE**

### **Selecting the site at the core:**

**WS1:** The aim was to visit potential locations for the performance and the Amphitheatre was considered as the location that most captivated and motivated AP for creation. The AP defined the Amphitheater as quite magical, nestled amidst fields. Sightseeing was an opportunity to brainstorm on technical aspects.

### **Meeting local dancers, artists and community heritage:**

Small painting exhibition and artists' storytelling revealed how their work reflects the environment they live in – the strong Roman history but also the influence of nearby power plants and mines. Some artists expressed alongside the strong history of Viminacium also topics such as fighting for ecology, freedom and fresh air. The element of smoke and noise was present in their lives and in their artwork. This caught AP's attention and these elements were reflected in the AP's creations. It was discussed how history and heritage can be reflected through movement and dance. This interaction underscored the potential of visual art as a source of inspiration for choreography, particularly in how narratives and emotions can be expressed through both mediums. The visit to the gallery of Milena Pavlovic Barilli, a modern artist who intriguingly intertwined her art with fashion, not only provided AP's with a deeper understanding of the artist's life and inspirations but also sparked ideas on how to incorporate cultural narratives into contemporary dance.

Meeting the local dance group Bolero provided an opportunity to amateur dancers (adults and kids) to explore the body awareness, bodywork and movement principles, reinforced the idea that dance can serve as a powerful medium for personal expression. Hands-on experience not only facilitated a creative exchange but also emphasised the value of teaching artistic concepts at an early age. The local BOLERO group's demonstration of local folk dances and the AP's active participation highlighted the importance of preserving and celebrating traditional arts. This experience provided valuable insights into how these elements can create a bridge between past and present.

This workshop in Viminacium not only provided AP's with a unique setting for artistic inspiration but also deeply connected it with the local history and the environment. Engaging with the local community through storytelling, painting and dance workshops allowed them to exchange cultural values and incorporate these elements into the creative process. The visit has undoubtedly enriched the approach for the upcoming performance.

### **Concept for the choreography of 420PEOPLE**

In Viminacium, the choreographer felt so strongly about impermanence.<sup>2</sup> What the AP considered to be extremely important was the temporal perspective - even mighty empires are but one episode in human evolution, and the entire history of humanity is but a crumb in the history of the Earth and Universe. In some ways AP found this a very liberating thought - nothing is as important as it looks up close, and the end of something is always the beginning of something new.

### **Performance planning, information widening**

**WS2:** Firstly, the technical possibilities and the ideas regarding the planned dance performance (stage size, floor, sound, lights, etc.) at the amphitheatre were discussed, while the IA expert on the topic of spectacles in antiquity provided historical information specifically in regard to the selected site. The Bolero dance group presented their advancement on the "homework" assigned to them during the previous workshop with Sylva Šafková. Further dance workshops included coordination exercises, rhythmic play, technical exercises and practice of new dance steps, which will be implemented in the final choreography.

### **Improvising inspiration**

Activity with local painters in the amphitheatre provided ground to test heritage interpretation and storytelling through dance: the dance should reflect the dancer's impressions of the place, as well as the acquired information. AP explained

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<sup>2</sup> In Viminacium, you will find lignite mines, a rock formed millions of years ago from the remains of living organisms. It only found its use a few hundred years ago and now the era of its use is slowly coming to an end. Here we can see the skeleton of a mammoth, an animal that died out tens of thousands of years ago. The remains of buildings from the Roman Empire, an empire that has long since disappeared. Even the Roman settlement itself was destroyed several times by tribes that no longer exist. Thousands of graves have been found of people about whom we know very little, who had families, descendants, but all forgotten. The curse tablets made of gold and silver found in Viminacium must have been important to someone, otherwise they would not have made them from such expensive materials, yet their exact meaning has been forgotten. The very gold that humans claim ownership of was created a billion years ago in a supernova explosion, and even if it were inherited over generations, it is really only on loan to us for a fraction of the time.

this moment as one of the most magical moments of the trip: about 10 min. improvisation was reflected with enthusiasm by visual artists and archaeologists who saw the AP dancers dancing for the first time. Dancers praised this activity as a remarkable experience, due to the atmosphere and possibility of no limits to the classically ordered "fourth wall". Improvisation provoked vital discussion and reflection. Another WS with Bolero considered basic atonement of the body and mind with warmed-up, practised then ideosomatic tasks, spatial games, and especially learned a dance sequence, in which AP paid attention to delicacy, fluidity and the desired quality of movement. Bolero children dancers practised demonstrated tasks given in the previous activities, after which they devoted themselves to the exercises from the previous days in a more complex form. Finally, they learned new steps from a dance phrase in the end. Collaboration with local painters and exploration on dance improvisation in the activity with the artist Dušan Tomašević provided new insights of collaboration and interaction, especially in regard to connecting action painting and contemporary dance.

## **DERIDA DANCE CENTER**

### **Site and community at the centre**

**WS1:** The meetings the AP had with different local communities and people were so many and varied that they helped AP very quickly to get oriented in the local environment - in its cultural, social, economic aspects and the local people's needs and important topics. For the choreographer as an artist the location was very interesting and inspiring with its many differences - a lot of minority groups living together that are still in a process of integration which makes the place lively, vibrant and different. This characteristic of the place defined to the biggest extent of the choreographer's decision to explore the theme about borders - not only physical but social, cultural and geographical. Derida Dance Center's team was also inspired by both the local stories and the historical facts connected to the chosen location for the future performance - the Mausoleum. Meeting with experts of the local museum, inspired another topic to be explored - the Danube river, not only as a physical border but also via the local mythology. The moment after the choreographer shared that he would like to go deeper into the mythology the IP immediately suggested another stakeholder for the next WS. The idea to focus also on the water and the strange creatures that people believe are living in the Danube River pop up during these meetings. The meeting between the local musicians and Derida's composer and choreographer was also very productive, while local Roma dancers from KUD Amare Roma were soon selected to be incorporated into the performance. Site specific performance started to be built at the Mausoleum with Derida's dancer. At the same time the very first video mapping of the Mausoleum as the site of performance took place.

#### **Link to photo video in folder:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oT\\_hbp3Tp9UnWC4MiHXVfGv5Xy5nU4mV?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oT_hbp3Tp9UnWC4MiHXVfGv5Xy5nU4mV?usp=sharing)

**Between WS1 and WS 2:** The artistic concept connected to borders (inner/outer, life/death, known/unknown, light/darkness, own/foreign and strange, white/black, land/water, top/bottom, etc.) was started to be explored and developed through different choreographic movements. Some music composed by Yavor was tested as well.

#### **Dance as method of social inclusion**

**WS2:** Dancers from Amare Roma presented to the choreographer the dance homework, which helped in selection of the three Roma girls that will be part of the performance. They practised some specific movements and tried to follow a specific rhythm that will be used in the performance. For the choreographer it was very difficult to find an approach to include the girls from the Roma community in the performance, not only because they don't have the body movements of professional dancers but also because of the complex traditional principles of the community. The biggest challenge was to find a suitable approach to predispose and to integrate them into the performance. This was one of the most important things that remained for the choreographer after the second WS as a task for the next stages of the artistic process. Choreographer also met the local musician and listened to some music composed by him based on the instruction of Derida's composer and he liked the sound a lot. They talk again about the idea of the performance and the direction into which to develop the sounds (to remind of water and birds - peacocks, connected to Viminacium). For the final creation of the concept of the performance, inspired by the local mythology, extremely helpful was the meeting the AP had with the local painter and artist that was suggested during the first workshop by the IP. Some of the developed movements of the choreography were tested with the dancer at the Mausoleum.

#### **Link to photo video in folder:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1niZgH3u\\_6qhR3bL0HubyWjxjs4fibG8K?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1niZgH3u_6qhR3bL0HubyWjxjs4fibG8K?usp=sharing)

**Between WS2 and WS3:** One of the main tasks in this period for the choreographer was to prepare the Derida's dancers about the future connection with the local Roma participants in the performance. That was a process taking place in different directions and through different stages. The creation of a concept to defend such a collaboration, introducing the dancers to the cultural identity of the Roma people and involving the dancers in the process of inclusion. Another challenge during this period was the impossibility to recreate, at Derida Stage, the tomb chosen for the dance at the Mausoleum. Some pillows, chairs, tabourets and even cartons were used but without a lot of success. The choreography was developed but AP weren't really sure which of the movements would be able to be performed at that very specific location of the Mausoleum. AP was totally aware that it won't be possible to transfer something created at the stage directly to the Mausoleum and that almost everything needs to be ready to be readopted or changed, when AP arrives at

the location. That was the main reason why AP decided to focus on the collection of movement content that could be used there. But the biggest challenge that remained was the future creation of the structure on the place in very short terms while preserving the total authenticity and identity of the place. The music of the performance was finalised and the costumes were ready.

### 2.2.2. SITE MERIDA, APS: iDANCE, 420PEOPLE

#### iDANCE

**WS1:** The aim was to decide on the site for the performance, learn more about the current realities of the local community, their relationship to the heritage in Mérida and about local music, dance and textiles. It was clear that it was not able to include all local stakeholders into the final performance so the selection was made in regard to the expressed interests by the AP. The AP was impressed by the level of artistry that is present in this community, so they put the respect for the local community at the core of the considerations and were careful to take inspiration from or recreate elements of their traditions, and want to be as conscious of their historical and sociopolitical contexts as they can. Meetings with the local communities were an opportunity for exchange, where the AP learned and shared practices for artistic creation.

#### Selecting the site

Alcazaba:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NLvtxykXI0CxJsrGtf0BdKx5vOazWN0h/view?usp=sharing>

Hippodrome:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19p9arI-HhbdqirBxnIxu05ZlnJ-KvhZs/view?usp=sharing>

Foto:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ObBgw4B15YSuTOvQ7aF3oazgWLGj\\_xpm/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ObBgw4B15YSuTOvQ7aF3oazgWLGj_xpm/view?usp=sharing)

Two sites, the Hippodrome and Alcazaba were considered, as well as the site “Portico del Foro”. Finally it was decided that performance has to be within the site according to what the Consorcio de Mérida will allow in order to ensure that the site will not be harmed.

#### Working with Flamenco dancers

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Db04QLemMvhbtzOCs3gAfUq5OmjlHipZ/view?usp=sharing>

Meeting with Fuensanta Blanco and her students, allowed the AP to participate in one of the flamenco classes and start to explore how elements of flamenco can be merged with contemporary dance.

#### Folk music and dance

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WpLpcByqYjD1NVHeZqGgNf\\_mr1BWUycB/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WpLpcByqYjD1NVHeZqGgNf_mr1BWUycB/view?usp=sharing)

Many elements of local folk music, dance and clothing were presented. Many rhythmical instruments that are used were distinguished, from castanets to simple glass bottles, and the strong sense of community in this group.

#### Recreation of Roman clothing and gladiator fights

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jYjgFvWumuAMFthrnffBnAenwQIZsqC-/view?usp=sharing>

Recreation of ancient textiles, clothing and lifestyles is a present practice in Mérida, and was presented to the AP, as one form of relating to the history of the site. Through these practices, AP came to think about questions of authenticity and what is the motivation behind these practices for the people of Mérida? How do they connect contemporary life to the past? Why are we holding on to traditions or returning to an ancient past? Why are we trying to recreate something that is impossible to recreate?

**WS2:** Costume designer and composer meet local communities for the co-creation process of the costumes and the soundtrack of the performance.

#### Link to photo/video in folder:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IuhtNVssTTOQzdcB8KCqy8T6de8UiET/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/14mxYjo1JapvveXnWeDxkHkfaWldZ6n-f/view?usp=sharing>

**Short description:** for the costumes, one particular element of Flamenco culture was at the core of the creation process: the mantón de manila, a kind of shawl with tassels. Costume designer was mainly interested in how the movement of the mantón alters the dancer’s silhouette.

#### Link to photo/video in folder:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W8gsLQ-gp7IFbvE9ajXwa2ckfKYZVCyT/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oNSgcuMUcnpM-V7MbOyP5gSXRWBKYqva/view?usp=sharing>

**Short description:** Flamenco was also at the core of the composition process. The material recorded in Mérida included Flamenco rhythms (claps, steps, fingers snapping) and percussion sounds recorded at instrument maker Pepe’s workshop. However, the composer also made sure to capture vocals and everyday sounds of the streets in Mérida.

### 420PEOPLE

#### Meeting the local community

**WS1:** Several meetings provided consideration of technical support to the performance and discussions regarding the different experiences in relation to tourism and culture and performing arts as the main attraction of any location. The main point of interest for collaborating was to meet and see the TAPTC group and visit their class/rehearsal, dealing with



different Youth Theatre groups. Workshop with a group of professional and semi-professional dancers and actors was set in order to start preparing for the final performance in July which enabled an insight into the potential of the group. This nice experience proved to be crucial in establishing the next course of the collaboration with the local artists and performers. Work with amateur dancers aimed, among others, to attract more local communities as potential participants and audience.

Stories and examples of Greek tragedies and how they are still relevant in our times, mainly how the structure of these Greek plays is influencing many art forms and people, from Shakespeare to Star Wars, was the setup for the inspiration. The focus was on a theatrical presentation, since all of the participants have a vast knowledge and experience in that field having written, directed and performed themselves in many.

**WS2:** The AP had a chance to learn more about the Spanish region Extremadura that is full of historical monuments coming from Antique times and is strongly influenced by Roman and Arabic culture. Therefore, the topics of the performances that are chosen to become a part of the festival are connected to well-known myths about old Greek and Roman gods. For this reason, 420PEOPLE company decided to create a piece based on the myth of Icarus. The visit to Diana's temple provided insight and exploration into the site of performance and its proper use, in order to not cause any damage. The topic of the site-specific performance in the case of Merida, that is full of cultural events and performances, proved to be site-specific, since as they say in Merida - people in Merida live outside. Meeting local amateur actors and actresses in the workshop aimed at exploring some tasks for improvisation inspired by breathing and flying. The AP was searching for special movement qualities that will carry the piece. Students also learned one longer dance phrase that will be used in the performance. In the last part of the workshop a specific image was jointly created, one scene based on moving as one organism. As a direct result of many artistic meetings and exchanges between the AP and Merida Festival's artistic team, AP came to realise that the story of Icarus is only a suggestion for the creative process and that the 'how' and 'what' is finally chosen for the final performance is up to the AP and their own interpretation. That is why additional texts by different writers were added: Miguel de Cervantes, Czech poet Jan Skacel and text by a dramaturg, dissident, president of the Czech Republic Vaclav Havel. Altogether, the history is strongly present everywhere in Merida. Artists are trying to find a way to bring it closer to people and explain the stories from the past in a way that young people can relate to and understand. All these helped to move forward with the scenes that AP had started to create. Using various methods of working with voice and spoken words in combination with movement, helped the actors and actresses to explore the potential of this connection. On the other hand, the AP saw how contemporary dance is strongly present in theatre and how elements of both can be combined in a drama performance inspired by the story of Electra.

### **2.2.3. SITE THARROS, APS: iDANCE, POLISH DANCE THEATRE, NATIONAL DANCE COMPANIES**

#### **iDANCE**

##### **Defining site-specific performance with local community inspirations**

**WS1:** Like in Mérida and Viminacium, the main goal was to get to know the local community in Cabràs better and to dive into the folk traditions through dance, stories, costumes and music. For the presence of the choreographer, it was important to see the site again.

Many different groups and parts of local culture were met, which left the co-creation process in Tharros - just as at the other two sites - with plenty of inspiration and focusing on capturing elements that are specific for each location, but also what connects them.

Some of the highlights for us are listed below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1snULbkDEEAokDq96U9tucT3qlP0vPoY-/view?usp=sharing>

Meeting with a local folk dance group contributed to learning of some steps for a traditional group circle dance, while the rhythm, music and movements showed some distinguishing characteristics compared to those encountered in other locations, although the basic form of dancing in the circle while holding each other's hands is a common practice in many other traditions as well.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1x9efuiQXJSPcbSIQv\\_QVCmlIQ7DN\\_uiB/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1x9efuiQXJSPcbSIQv_QVCmlIQ7DN_uiB/view?usp=sharing)

While sharing their traditional folk costumes with AP, one of the women showed how the skirt, which has several layers, can be used to protect the person wearing it from rain, wind or sun, by folding the upper layer over their head. Costume designer was interested in working with silhouette shifting of costumes - not only does the skirt fulfil a function, it also changes the shape of the person's outlines and how we perceive them.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mJQwO80R5327BpKDz6BswGaQatJjZyTV/view?usp=sharing>

The site visit with the local dance company helped in performance location selection, as well as organisational and technical planning. This contributed to defining site-specific performance (not only "inspired by the story of the site" approach), meaning work with the physical structures of the site (walls, rocks, pillars) at selected Tophet at Tharros archaeological site.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OGzOpzPsW0UOaqScquFXyCYMoGStHYn/view?usp=sharing>

Musical highlight was a video of a woman improvising songs while sieving flour, using the rhythmical movement of the sieving process as a beat for her song.

**WS2:** Costume designer and composer came to Tharros to meet local communities for the co-creation process of the costumes and the soundtrack of the performance.

Besides seeing the site for the performance and visiting the village of San Salvatore and participating in workshops with the local dance companies, the main focus was on recording material for the soundtrack of the performance with local communities and collecting inspiration from traditional clothing for the costumes.

**Link to photo/video in folder:**

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**Short description:** for the costumes, the main inspiration came from the white garment worn by the Is Curridoris (barefoot runners) as well as traditional embroidery elements.

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PL-WV50gWsFrR3W4RMTA5hLFwsSUj92/view?usp=sharing>

**Short description:** the musical elements recorded in Tharros are traditional rhythms and songs played by the local music legends, and with specific stories of these traditions.

## POLISH DANCE THEATRE

### Gathering information

**WS1:** The goal of the first workshops was to gather as much information as possible. The AP decided to be inspired by the entire local culture, that has been on this island for thousands of years:

- costumes (e.g. skirts of barefoot runners),
- use live music, perhaps mixing it with electronic sounds created by younger generation musicians.

The AP considered the story of the Giants of Mont'e Prama as one of the inspirations for the show and decided to delve into it together with the local community and turn it into a performance concept. There were initial inspirations that would determine in the upcoming creative process whether they would be incorporated into the co-created production or not. However, the AP left Tharros with the feeling that a specific Sardinian community had shared with us the story of the Giants of Mont'e Prama, which probably should have been a meeting place for a common creative process.

**Link to photo/video in folder:**

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**Between WS1-WS2:** Full of impressions from the WS1, the AP started shaping it into the idea of the dance performance. However, the AP noted that working from a distance, in different circumstances is difficult, instead of spending more time in Tharros and being surrounded by a holistic image of culture - people, sights, smells, sounds, signs of human artistic activity.

**WS2:** During the WS, the location was chosen, in one of the places pointed out by the organisers. The performance will happen during the sunset to limit the use of the technical equipment (no artificial light) and to use the surroundings as the natural and beautiful scenography, with the idea that the audience gets to enjoy the beauty of the movement of the professional dancers and be interested in the performance of their stories.

Throughout the WS2, the AP was able to „feel” the atmosphere of the site specific, search for the feeling of community specific. They were “dancing the Sardinian dance together, listening to the origins of local musical tradition and as artists in a co-creation process we wanted spontaneity, lightness, fun, and the curiosity to discover new things like children”. In their own words, they took with them this experience of searching for common experiences that will enrich the co-creation. The focus of the WS was on rhythm and melody, highlighting relationships and comparisons, then on traditional singing and dancing in its various forms. Additionally, the AP worked on the changes that characterised the transformation over time, while maintaining the original essence, reaching today's audience. The discoveries made during the WS2, significantly influenced the content of the prepared performance “The Echoes of the Dust” which will be a poetic exploration of the history of the Giants, the rock warriors discovered on the island.

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[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/14wKyI\\_TXaYPLWiX6shSvaFgevDu\\_pSBQ?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/14wKyI_TXaYPLWiX6shSvaFgevDu_pSBQ?usp=sharing)

**Between WS2-WS3:** In this period, there was a change in the artistic team of the Polish Dance Theatre. The AP wanted to continue work on "The Echoes of the Dust" by using the previous activities and remain faithful to the idea of the performance, thus ensuring continuity of the creative process, so the original idea contained in the script and concept prepared by Paulina Jaksim was interpreted through co-choreography performed by Aleksandra Brzezowska, Dominika Babiarz, Agnieszka Wolna-Bartosik.

## ITALIAN DANCE COMPANIES - ASMED BALLETO DI SARDEGNA, COMPAGNIA DANZA ESTEMPORADA AND GRUPPO E-MOTION

### Site selection and meeting the local community

The aim was to decide on the site, the locations for the performance, learn more about the current realities of the local community, their relationship to the heritage in Tharros and about local music, dance and textiles.

**WS1:** The aim of the workshop was to conduct a site inspection and define the spaces where the performances would take place. It was very important to get to know the local communities and immerse the company in their knowledge, traditions, and culture. The "rosette" workshop held at the Diocesan Museum of Oristano allowed the artists to experience an ancient tradition firsthand and showcased the colours and fabrics. They also visited the Giovanni Marongiu Museum and were able to admire the Giants, the greatest symbol of Sardinian history and culture. Their poses served as inspiration for the choreography that was presented. Meetings with the local communities like Is Curridoris were an opportunity for exchange, where the company learned and shared practices for artistic creation. Despite belonging to Sardinian culture and being deeply familiar with its traditions, this workshop was very important because it allowed the artists to develop a co-creation process by fully immersing in the traditional dance, music, and culture of the region.

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**WS2:** During the second workshop, the companies continued the process of artistic co-creation, meeting with local communities and working alongside artistic partners. They fully immersed themselves in the dance, developing synergies and collaborations. The goal was to bring together different cultures during a unique historical moment, while maintaining the tradition and culture of the Cabras region as the common thread.

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## 2.2.4. SITE OSTIA ANTICA, APS: DERIDA DANCE CENTER, POLISH DANCE THEATRE, MSPD

### DERIDA DANCE CENTER

Site selection and meeting the local community

**WS1:** The artistic team of Derida Dance Center aimed to carry out specific activities to define the thematic scope in the conceptual development of the performance, technical specifications, stages of creation, and ways to collaborate with local artists, musicians, and communities. One of the main goals of the team was for the dramaturgical content to be entirely connected to the archaeological site of Ostia Antica, exploring the reasons for its creation, functionality over the years, architectural features, and influence on local communities over the centuries. Developing the visual identity of the performance, using the architecture of the archaeological site, requires a specific approach to work during the dark hours of the day. Due to the impossibility of conducting activities at nighttime at the Capitolium Staircase (chosen as a location by the team during the site visit in September 2023), a new site had to be chosen. After exploring again, the artistic team of Derida Dance Center chose to develop dramaturgical content in the so-called Mithraeum, associated with Mithraism. The Mithraeum represents a naturally or artificially constructed cave. The only opening, even in cases where the Mithraeum is artificially constructed, is the entrance. The rooms are dark and windowless, which perfectly correspond to AP's need of darkness and will enable performance there during daylight within the working hours of the Archeological Site as that was one of the requirements.

During meetings with local communities topics related to the local context were discussed - traditions, way of life, personal experiences related to the archaeological site, and interests of the communities living in Ostia, which enabled developing conceptual content that not only attracts the local community but also reflects contemporary identity.

Activities were conducted with both professional dancers and beginners, during which the artistic director introduced the participants to the aesthetic directions of Derida's work. During the working meetings, potential artists for involvement in the upcoming stages of the production period were identified. For example, during the study visit in 2023, Derida team met the costume designer Marta de Luca.

Local partners organised a working meeting with Maestro Vicari with whom possibilities for collaboration and work stages in creating the sound environment between a Bulgarian composer and local artists were discussed.

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### AP creative work progress and site change

**Between WS1 and WS2:** the AP started to develop choreography and specific movements to fit the space inside the Mithraeum. The composer started to explore and suggest music and sounds that could connote to the mystic of the space, while the visual artist started to explore and develop suitable images. Detailed information about technical needs for the performance in the Mithraeum were shared with the IP, while in March, a few days before WS2, the AP was informed by the IP that they are not sure if they will be able to secure access to the Mithraeum during the WS2 which questioned its conduction, since the original idea was to develop a very site-specific performance especially designed and created for

the Mithraeum, making it impossible to be transferred anywhere else due to the specific proportions and particularities of the location. The problem for the AP was that they couldn't continue to work on a performance if the location is not confirmed as all its choreography and visual design is supposed to correspond to that location. Thus, the AP needed to stop the whole creative process until the official confirmation of the location.

Finally, in April, the AP was informed that access to the Mithraeum is denied and that they need to choose another location. During an urgent online meeting and via photos from the Internet the walls of a nearby private castle were suggested to the AP's team as an alternative option. This required thinking of a totally new concept in order to start work on developing a new choreography for the space in front of the castle's walls, even though the AP didn't see the location live. This effected new identification of technical needs and requirements connected to the proposed new location.

In May, a week before WS2, the IP informed AP that it is not possible for them to perform in front of the Castle's walls but suggested performance to be inside the Castle - in Salone del Riario and sent some photos via email, which caused the AP to started to thinking of a totally new concept and new choreography for the new space. Altogether, frequent changes in location meant that the concept and its development often had to start over, leading to significantly more work for the AP than initially planned and increased occupancy of the rehearsal studio.

#### **Meeting new site and defining work with local stakeholders**

**WS2:** During WS2, the AP visited the Castle and the last suggested place to perform - Salone del Riario, tried to learn as much as possible about the new place - both its histories and stories from the past but also nowadays. On this occasion, the AP met people from local communities and found out that many of them are interested and want very much to have a bicycle alley from Ostia to Rome. As this information kept being mentioned by the community in almost every conversation, AP became absolutely sure that they needed to find a way to incorporate this idea somehow in the future performance. The AP decided to collaborate artistically with the costume designer Marta De Luca with whom they had long, very inspiring and productive conversations during the WS, as well as with Maestro Valerio Vicari.

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#### **Co-creation process challenges and solutions**

**Between WS2 and WS3:** Almost immediately after returning from WS2, the AP started to develop the final concept about the performance. The challenge was to find a way to incorporate the biggest dream of the local people about the bicycle alley into it. Again, it was communicated with the IP for the technical needs concerning the new place, as well as that AP had decided to collaborate on artistic co-creation with the costume designer Marta De Luca and with Maestro Valerio Vicari. At the online meeting with a local costume designer, discussing the performance costumes ideas, the IP's team was not present. Following this, the AP received an email from the IP, informing them that future collaboration with selected local stakeholders is possible only through the IP, as long as they are external to the iBorghi team. This proposal was not accepted by the AP, since both local stakeholders in question were part of the programs of all the workshops conducted thus far and the costume designer even participated in the first site study-visit in September 2023. Local stakeholders were not found and selected by the AP, but were selected by the IP, as local artists that could collaborate in the AP's co-creation process. Regarding the situation that affected AP's co-creation process, Derida requested official written feedback from the Project Manager and the Work Package Manager regarding the received email, in regards to the collaboration work that should be contracted and paid directly between AP and the local people of Ostia Antica. Additionally, at this meeting, the AP asked for clarification on the budget allocated for local community collaboration activities, since they were familiar and had insight with budget allocations specifically for APs and IPs roles within the project and the WP4.

In order to overcome the situation, provide co-creation results and achieve the 1<sup>st</sup> edition festival performance the project coordinator and the WP4 leader suggested to the AP to continue the work on the performance in Tharros, to which AP agreed and decision was taken to relocate Derida's 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop, residency and performance to the Tharros site.

## **POLISH DANCE THEATRE**

### **Openness to meet partners for co-creation**

**WS1:** The AP arrived with open minds on how to co-create with the local community with the use of local cultural, tangible and intangible heritage. Here the AP's were provided with a chance to experience the energy of young and local contemporary dancers. Over 20 enthusiastic dancers in a studio made the AP aware of the potential that should be involved in a co-creation process. They showed their movement and way of thinking about dance, both individually and in a group. The AP needed to get a better feeling for the dance partners, so the improvisation was a right tool to show the creative potential of every single dancer. The AP had a chance to meet local people with artistic flair from different artistic areas and aesthetics. The choir of elderly women gave an input on local stories and their memories, their artistic expression and perception. At the beginning there was a certain lack of trust and the AP's task was to listen and get closer to each other. In the end, the AP managed to start a dialogue. Another key moment was experiencing the location of the planned artistic activities. The AP could touch ancient ruins in their natural environment, thus, listening not only to the people they met, but also to the places that were visited. Thus, the AP collected material to make specific artistic decisions.

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**Between WS1 and WS2:** Even during WS1, it was clear that the AP would involve local partners in the co-creation process. Before the WS2, the AP had to think over how to combine artists both amateurs and professionals in one coherent production. It was time for elderly ladies to decide whether they would join the project. There were also key decisions about spacing the final performance in Ostia Antica. Quite a few factors which the AP wanted to combine in one production was a challenge. So, it was important preparation time before the next meeting.

### **Creative community established**

**WS2:** During WS2, the AP worked with already declared young dancers, who gave their artistic input for the final performance. As the leaders of the co-creation process, the AP had to rely on their skills, what was desired to be added were emotions emerging from the common performance. Inspired by the stories of three elderly ladies, the AP and local stakeholders needed to decide together to tell their stories with movement and dance or give moving impressions of their stories. Local society represented by elderly ladies inspired the AP with a "Barcarolo Romano", a song which was planned to be incorporated into the performance. It was a new artistic idea to be developed before the next meeting on WS3. The musical layer of the performance was still to be considered in the creative process. In this field, the AP was getting new impulses and inspirations, e.g.: two musicians from Roma Tre Orchestra. They were planned to be a part of the performance. Together, it was needed to be seen how their guitar and vocals would meet with the movement and the whole flow of the performance. Another surprising, creative impulse came from the amateur painter who will create a painting that, through imagery, expresses her emotional perception of ancient Ostia meeting dance. From an artistic point of view, the AP could say that at this stage a creative community that listens to and inspires each other is established.

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**Between WS2 and WS3:** the AP was preparing the concept of the work in a site-specific space. As already known by the local artists, it was easier to see different stages and artistic solutions. However, the AP was aware that until all meet together for rehearsals in the place of presentation, they won't be able to make many creative decisions. The ladies' choir sent the AP a preliminary recording of the chosen song, prepared by them. The amateur painter created a painting which expressed her emotional perception of ancient Ostia meeting dance.

## **MVULA SUNGANI PHYSICAL DANCE**

The local dance company's performance drew inspiration from the history of the Archaeological site of Ostia Antica and the Castle of Giulio II, blending the historical part with nature. The performance arouses and evokes figures inspired by nature, ruins and what can be currently see in the archaeological site. Being a resident company, the historical/cultural facts of the territory was already acknowledged, but thanks to the various inspections of the archaeological site and the meetings with local community the dance company was able to deepen its knowledge of the place even further.

This involves active participation in the workshops of APs and the preparation of MSPD own performances for the Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival in the period from February to July 2024.

The overarching objectives of the festival preparation via WSs work were: to work on an artistic production that narrates the local territory, spanning from the past to the present, encompassing its history as well as the human and cultural aspects that characterize it; to involve the local community in constructing this narrative and ideally, also in the performance itself; enhance the territories involved and strengthen the sites where the performances took place, in a connection between history, artistic heritage and cultural, popular and traditional heritage; to work closely with the institutional partner (I Borghi srl), with the other involved companies and the institutional and communities bodies of the territory to ensure that the festival is artistically coherent.

## 2.2.5. SITE VOLOS, APs: 420PEOPLE, POLISH DANCE THEATRE<sup>3</sup>

### 420PEOPLE

#### Meeting the site identity through people and nature

**WS1:** The AP learned about the ancient heritage of the city by visiting Athanasakio Archaeological Museum, with a rich collection of artefacts from the Neolithic to the Roman times. This was an opportunity to discuss the museum's history, cultural events with the director, as well as technical aspects with the light and sound manager which will be further developed by AP's light designer in terms of the choreographer's artistic ideas. Meeting the site and local community considered cultural and natural explorations, including a visit to Mount Pelion which offered profound insights into local history and the significant impact of nature in the choreographic vision, particularly the self-reflection and power of nature. Meeting with the Municipality dance school of Volos enabled discussion with the director, on what contemporary dance means for the young generation of dancers in Volos, about the strong tradition of folk dance in Greece and what contemporary workshops with different teachers can give to these local dancers. Volos has a strong community of dancers, but they don't have any professional education or dance conservatories, for which reason the AP considered it important to introduce to a local group of students what contemporary dance is and how a professional dance company works. That is why dancing activities with children and students were of great importance enabling deeper understanding of contemporary dance technique and included choreography from 420PEOPLE's repertoire. The session sparked discussions about teaching methodologies and the principles of contemporary movement, and to students was presented the way in which the AP's want to work during the DH project in Volos. The idea was to introduce to dancers' different styles of contemporary dance through different dancers of 420PEOPLE. Dancing activities for adults were focused on body awareness and movement, offering valuable insights to both amateur and professional participants. Visit to the Municipal music Conservatory of Volos led to stimulating discussions on improvisation in music and dance and potential collaboration opportunities.

The visit to Volos was filled with productive meetings, cultural explorations, and enriching workshops that fostered mutual learning and inspiration. The interaction with the local dance and music communities not only deepened the understanding of the local cultural landscape but also opened avenues for future collaborations and exchanges.

#### Link to photo/video in folder:

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MCov3CLaRb2ISxh5cOpa6Ute9IQDoQGN/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16OI0PTlt7Fjj0Dwby6r0NVMpBOCH8AC-/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T64cCg00APWaDlxmE0NpFs4Oyw2t2crE/view?usp=sharing>

#### Concept for the choreography of 420PEOPLE dance company:

The theme of the choreography created especially for the festival in Volos is the search for identity. The three main performers are going through a period in their lives when they are struggling with an identity crisis. The inner self-reflection is always triggered by contact with each other. The theme of the performance is implicit and abstract rather than directly descriptive.

For movement material, the AP's choreographer will draw inspiration from Mount Pelion and its landscape. The choreography will reflect the elements of nature, such as the flow of the wind or the power of the mountains and the sea.

**WS2:** the IP presented to the local art scene the plans and expectations for the festival, as well as history of the city, the industrial, cultural and social involvement by visiting the Museum of city Volos. Workshops in the studio of Local Dance School were dedicated to younger students and older-advanced students and were focused on finding natural ways of moving through several different improvisation tasks, to teach the young students a short dance variation and on partnering, dance and movement with a partner. This went from simple partnering work to more advanced tasks and gave several tools on how to move, dance with a partner or in the group and how to take advantage of using the body of a dance partner. Dance activities with a big group of adults (40+) were dedicated to learning the basics of partnering and dance by improvisation tasks.

Visiting music conservatory provided learning about traditional Greek music, famous Greek composers and local musicians and most common instruments that are used in Greek music. It was very inspiring for the AP, as it discussed what can be used for the performance and which musicians and composers could be included in future collaboration. Meeting the local visual artist provided an insight into the local artist collaboration in WS, which provided additional inspiration for the artistic co-creation. WS2 in Volos provided valuable information about the city and the community, and opened many possible ways into which direction the AP can go with the work.

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<sup>3</sup> According to the initial schedule elaborated together with the IP in November 2023 during the site-visit in Volos Derida Dance Center was supposed to conduct WS1 in the beginning of July 2024, WS2 in the beginning of August and WS3+Residency in the end of August/beginning of September. Derida Dance Center wasn't able to conduct the workshops due to the fact that the IP left the project.

**Link to photo/video in folder:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11xcFw5C7jxYJsGbd\\_iG8jAIdI\\_HpZpD/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11xcFw5C7jxYJsGbd_iG8jAIdI_HpZpD/view?usp=sharing)

**POLISH DANCE THEATRE****Meeting (and choosing) the local community**

**WS1:** During the first visit to Volos, the AP's received many stimuli from which to choose the one's that will guide them through their further creative work. The AP had meetings with many representatives of the local community, including the local music school, the academy, folk dance group, local DJ as well as representatives of the ancient theatre of Demetrias. As a result of the creative meetings, they had to choose both the inspirations that would further guide us in the process of co-creation, but also face the decision of selecting local groups with whom they would co-create the performance.

The AP showed interest in cooperation with the local community in the cross-section of the age structure. For this reason, they conducted separate creative and dance meetings for three age groups: 12-17 years, 18-45 years, 45+. The result showed that the process of fruitful co-creation and creative cooperation is not determined by the age of our participants, but that the decisive factors are: openness to new experiences, creative curiosity, the desire for personal realisation in the field of dance and dance theatre. Throughout the process, the AP started developing common creative ideas, supported by the community, regardless of the age group.

**Link to photo/video in folder:**

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**Between WS1-WS2:** In this period, the AP was in touch with a facilitator from Volos, to think over further steps of artistic work. At the same time, making plans on how to combine their own dancing team with communities from Volos that took part in the WS1.

**Discovering the environment**

**WS2:** During the workshop, the AP continued to evolve the relationship with the local community met in the previous workshop. This time, the focus was not only on the diverse age structure of the local community, but also on exploring the diverse creative environments. In this way, they learned about the opportunities available to dancers and people potentially interested in dance. Additionally, the focus was on music, as the world of music remains a close creative environment for a dancer. Thus, through contact with the music school, the AP tried to learn about the local realities of the environment that deals with musical creativity. Finally, the workshop continued exploring traditional dance, costumes, and customs. The importance of local traditions was identified by the AP as important, as they desired to understand the meaning and position of dance in the region also from this historical perspective. The workshop and the deepening of the relationship with the local community, allowed the AP to start making creative decisions that would have been the result of the conducted research. As they put it: "We are inspired to refer to the language of local traditions, including musical ones, because it gives a chance for a creative process of co-creation with the participation of the involved community of Volos."

**Link to photo/video in folder:**

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[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_EKQcFxr6fhCC3oYotOILLv-KntBl2Gm/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_EKQcFxr6fhCC3oYotOILLv-KntBl2Gm/view?usp=sharing)

**2.3. WORKSHOP 3, RESIDENCY AND FESTIVAL****2.3.1. SITE VIMINACIUM, APS: iDANCE, 420PEOPLE, DERIDA DANCE CENTER****iDANCE****Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/18tyHI5kKfBt1\\_cuGhSbCIhubh5K5h7hn/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/18tyHI5kKfBt1_cuGhSbCIhubh5K5h7hn/view?usp=sharing)

Testing the choreographic material that was created in the studio in the Amphitheatre, making use of the characteristics of the site. In this case it is the different levels, creating a special opportunity for the performers and their movement to interact with each other while being separated by the difference in height. It also shows the difference of the choreography being performed in front of the remains and on ground level vs elevated on top of a wall with the sky as the background.

**Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Uvih97JBzGFA82W-1\\_EoXmYPuUAg8NE3/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Uvih97JBzGFA82W-1_EoXmYPuUAg8NE3/view?usp=sharing)

Costume rehearsal and video shooting in the Roman baths with videographer Uros Stepić. The baths were chosen as an alternative performance location in case of rain (which later became a reality). Besides adapting the choreography to the specific conditions of this site, the aim was to produce promotional material that could be used for the performance in 2024 as well as for project presentations and other dissemination activities. It was also an opportunity to try the choreography with the costumes to see how they interacted with the site (and how long it would take to clean them afterwards).

**Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1755aZgehWCX0opnqffHIwBh8eE3g-Pwn/view?usp=sharing>

After trying the choreographic material in the site, it was important for the performers and the choreographer to spend time indoors in the studio to be able to go through necessary adaptations and new ideas in a space equipped with a dance floor (and AC), as the workable amount of hours at the site were limited due to heat, dust and hard/uneven ground. Working in these conditions puts a strain on the body, which is why it is also important to have a calm, clean space where the dancers can warm up and cool down before and after the rehearsals.

**Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ezvw\\_ZGM-Wb2i2rrshF\\_c-S44ilxVm\\_W/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ezvw_ZGM-Wb2i2rrshF_c-S44ilxVm_W/view?usp=sharing)

Workshop led by Israel Aloni, focusing on individual and collective agency, body awareness in the physical space and in relation to other people sharing that space. Participants were adults working for culture organisations who came to Viminacium to attend the conference co-hosted by the Creative Europe desk in Serbia and the Institute of Archaeology.

**Choreographers notes by Israel Aloni**

“When we learned about the life and activities that took place at the Baths in Viminacium, I became interested in the mundane life of the community and society who lived there so many years ago. Whilst the archaic stories and the grand gestures of the Romans are indeed impressive, I found great interest in the individual people and what kind of relationships they were able to develop within their community given the reality of having to bathe in public, in communion. When we made the piece for Viminacium I took on the strong connection between the human physical body in the materials with which they interacted on a daily basis. The piece in Viminacium had the dancers really embodying the archeological remains and at the same time letting their own physical body be embodied by the archeological remains. I was interested in how the organic body of the dancers and that of the archeological remains can to some extent meet again, as they probably did 2000 years ago.

The encounter with the music school was really enchanting to me, particularly the work of the young singers. I was taken by their ability to channel the many years of history through their voices and utter the voices of the many people who have experienced torments over the last centuries. In the choreography we incorporated this aspect in the way we treated the space. We intentionally chose to be attentive to past beings and lives who have gone through arrays of experiences not only in the archeological areas but generally on Serbian soil. Meeting the young singers from the music school gave us a glimpse of how history travels through body, sound and voice and in our choreography we approached movement with respect to the passage of history through the physical body.”

**Inspiration for costumes (notes from Amanda Wisselgren)**

From historical attire: The Jelek, an embroidered vest from the Serbian women's folk costume, particularly influenced by the silhouette of the male waist.

From the overall visit: The innovative approaches of the students at the design school greatly inspired me, encouraging boldness in my design. Their drapery techniques underscored the desire for soft yet detailed vests, incorporating symbolic elements like flowers and braids representing hairstyles across generations. The manton pattern, featuring flowers and birds, draws from Serbian symbolism.

From the archaeological site: Patterns on the top garments are reminiscent of those found on pottery, while the subtle gold metal weaving and bone coloration provide additional inspiration.

**The soundtrack**

The soundtrack composed by Didi Erez featured the traditional song "Marijo, ćero, Marijo", sung by Ljubica Ilić, Pavla Stanković & Anastasija Kostić. Other elements included in the soundtrack are folk music sequences played on accordion by Dimitrije Ivković & Jovan Petrović. All of these elements were recorded during the second workshop at the music school “Stevan Mokranjac” in Pozarevac.

The elements recorded in Pozarevac were combined with other sound material collected in Mérida and Tharros/Cabràs.

**Track with traditional folk song:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FIKIXxa-sQaHTUPqH7pG5MHbZ8MjPliw/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FIKIXxa-sQaHTUPqH7pG5MHbZ8MjPliw/view?usp=drive_link)

**Track with accordion sequence:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/15q5\\_C5ZesBWwT8QF0RMP0pqTM0UGbF2I/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/15q5_C5ZesBWwT8QF0RMP0pqTM0UGbF2I/view?usp=drive_link)

**420PEOPLE**

**WS3:** The main goal of the third workshop at Viminacium was to work on the choreography IMPERMANENCE. 420PEOPLE dance company sent video recordings of the choreography's work-in-progress prior the workshop and video consultations were conducted between choreographer Sylva Šafková and the Plesni klub Bolero group. The workshops conducted:

1. Workshop for Adults: Focused solely on adult participants, working on the choreography.
2. Workshop for Children: Dedicated to child participants, working on the choreography.
3. Workshop with Painter Dušan Tomašević: Focusing on action painting, Tomašević explained the principles of his craft. Dancers and the painter delved into innovative ways to merge his action painting with contemporary dance. Together, they prepared a concept for an improvised presentation, which was showcased on June 20, 2024, as part of the Community engagement activities presented in the town of Požarevac. The performance fused dance, music, and visual art,



culminating in the creation of a painting. During these workshops, the 420PEOPLE dancers concentrated on preparing movement material as per the choreographer's wishes, paying close attention to the details and meanings of their movements. For the dancers of 420PEOPLE, it was an intriguing experience to share their movement research findings with other dancers. The local dancers were enthusiastic and eager to share the stage with professionals. They consistently arrived at rehearsals well-prepared and with a positive attitude, which allowed AP to concentrate on refining the details, synchronising with the music, and deepening the connection between the dancers.

**Link to photo/video:**

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[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1x3e1KFvWtr6W\\_ah0-vd6fHM8pseuSGc/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1x3e1KFvWtr6W_ah0-vd6fHM8pseuSGc/view?usp=sharing)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11YzKucnoBp57dCGKdATbhSWOfCfIJmAM/view?usp=sharing>

**Residency:** The entire group of 420PEOPLE visited the CEA (Community Engagement Activities) in Požarevac to watch a performance by Plesni klub Bolero, gaining a better understanding of their work. It was very important for the AP to engage in the local activities. The next day, the AP embarked on the joint work on the choreography. All dancers were actively involved in the creative process, with the main aim of integrating these two distinct groups participating in the project. The aim of the choreographer was to connect these groups from different countries, with different backgrounds and different ages on one stage. The choreographer believed that the residency was vital because it allowed him and the dancers to create directly on-site and draw inspiration from the location itself. In the last two days, the AP primarily addressed technical conditions. Due to the smaller stage size (approximately 6 metres smaller) than approved, from the choreographer's point of view, it posed a major setback, especially with plans to have 40 people on stage. Knowing the actual stage size, the choreographer would have chosen to include fewer dancers from both 420PEOPLE and Plesni klub Bolero, which was considered as unacceptable by AP due to accustomed professional standards they are requesting. Another issue arose when the IP mentioned that due to rain, they wouldn't be able to set up the lights at the open stage on the Amphitheatre which could cause extensive damages to which the technical company warned them it would be needed to be paid by IP. AP was thus forced to explore alternative options. While weather conditions are beyond anyone's control, AP decided to move the performance to another location – Limes Park. An outdoor covered option was prepared, with discussions about an indoor alternative in case of heavy rain (which is something usual for Viminacium by experience IP had). This solution wasn't ideal as it disrupts the connection with the historical setting. The choreography was designed specifically for the Amphitheatre space and based on an overhead view that blends the choreography with the heritage site. The new arrangement provided a completely different perspective. Overall, it was a very pleasant collaboration, since in the end both AP and IP found joint compromises not to harm performance execution. In this process the facilitator role proved to be of high importance in order to overcome changing schedules and keep the AP well-informed, working together with AP on finding solutions. Opening night of the festival was conducted very professionally. AP was delighted to see that the show came together as a cohesive whole and that the locals blended seamlessly with the 420PEOPLE dancers on stage.

**Link to photo/video:**

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**Dance, Movement, and History in Perfect Harmony**

**FESTIVAL:** Viminacium, a breathtaking site steeped in history, served as the perfect canvas for a festival that seamlessly intertwined dance, movement, and the ancient setting of this former Roman city. The ruins, with their timeless beauty, honoured an unparalleled stage where art and history merged, creating a living dialogue between the past and present.

**Link to photo/video:**

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ai3ukIWIB2Jjkri5FKUP5k8apv0pMU1t/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1karn22-7ecIcUXzGh1FM3uAGv4zUIHtU/view?usp=sharing>

**Artistic Journey Through Time!**

The festival was more than just a series of performances; it was an immersive journey through time. The dancers, inspired by the grandeur of the amphitheatre and other ancient structures, brought the history of Viminacium to life through their movements. Each performance was carefully crafted to resonate with the environment, turning the ruins into a vibrant expression of artistic vision. The decision to host the festival in such a historically rich location amplified the impact of the performances, making the experience truly unforgettable.

Even though AP didn't have the opportunity to see the full performances of the other dance groups, they were fortunate to witness their rehearsals directly at the historical locations. These moments honoured a rare glimpse into their creative processes and allowed AP to observe how each group drew inspiration from the unique setting of Viminacium. Additionally, the APs had the chance to discuss their works and share the sources of inspiration during informal meetings, particularly over meals. These discussions enriched the experience, fostering a sense of community and of mutual respect among the artists. The exchange of ideas in such a relaxed environment allowed for a deeper connection with our fellow performers, enhancing the collaborative spirit of the festival.

**Engaging the Local Community**

One of the festival's greatest achievements was its deep engagement with the local community. The organisers not only facilitated seamless cooperation between the artists and the local residents but also created a space where everyone could

contribute to the artistic process. The participation of the community added authenticity and depth to the festival, making it a true celebration of the region's cultural heritage.

**Link to photo/video:**

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fcwKg-1CknjVJxY1MuPjG4htluGJ0IHx/view?usp=sharing>

### **Overcoming Challenges with Creativity**

While the proximity of heavy industry and the lack of a nearby large city posed challenges, the festival overcame these obstacles through creative solutions and a focus on the strengths of the location. The logistical issues, such as the last-minute change of venue due to weather concerns, were handled with flexibility. Although there were some delays, these did not detract from the overall experience.

### **Inspiration for the Future**

The festival left an indelible mark on all who attended, honouring not just a glimpse into the past, but a vision of how art can connect artists with history and each other. As the AP looks into the future, they see immense potential for the festival to grow, both in scope and impact. The AP envisions even greater opportunities for interaction among artists and between the performers and the audience. By continuing to innovate and embrace the rich history of Viminacium, the festival can continue to inspire artists and audiences alike, creating lasting memories and connections. The AP believes that this festival has great potential to thrive in the future. The combination of dance, movement, and the rich historical setting creates a unique and compelling experience that resonates with both artists and audiences alike.

## **DERIDA DANCE CENTER**

**Link to photo/video:**

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Arriving at Viminacium AP was happy to find out that the working space at the Mausoleum was 100% secured according to the initial technical specification. The residency period was highly intensive. The first day in the Mausoleum, the AP realised that many of the created movements are impossible to be performed due to the too narrow space on the top of the tomb because of the specific location of the stones inside. During the residency, the AP had to adjust or redevelop these movements, but also to create some totally new ones. Especially for the middle part of the performance when the dancers were hanging and sliding on the walls in the middle part of the tomb. It can be said that the tomb with its specific forms, stones and walls was co-choreographing the performance. In the very beginning of the work for the choreographer the respect towards the archaeological site was of highest importance. That was defining for the way the choreography was created and the way the dancers are getting in contact with the archeological site - stones, walls, etc.

### **The dance**

Every day, the AP practised the dance movements with the three Roma dancers from KUD Amare Roma. They started with just a few movements and gradually, day by day, enlarged the number and complexity. AP included some movements typical for the Roma community - especially the ones with the hands but in a slow motion/speed and it takes some time to get used to doing it slowly. Choreography also included their specific torso movements as a way to express their anxiety. The choreographer was very happy that the distance between him and the local artists and participants was overcome and he was very proud that Derida dancers had also overcome it and had built a close connection and partnership with the Roma dancers. Choreographer finds extremely valuable in the performance the organy and the truthfulness of the presence, the authenticity of the movements and the expressiveness of the three Roma girls. Last but not least, the connection between the Roma girls and the dancers that was in the basement of the final scene of the performance - the connection between two different cultural and social units via the boundaries.

### **Video Mapping**

Most of the video mapping was also recreated during this period - changed and redeveloped further following the new choreographic movements of the dancers. The AP had one rehearsal with the local musicians playing live to finetune the sound.

**Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zjmTkMTgwCmh9CpvRAIC\\_WpY11o111An?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zjmTkMTgwCmh9CpvRAIC_WpY11o111An?usp=sharing)

### **ChronoRay**

**Link to photo video in folder:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LBEj93eR\\_w0OU0eOtz0OMJa0M4kaD0u7?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LBEj93eR_w0OU0eOtz0OMJa0M4kaD0u7?usp=sharing)

The final choreography of the performance ChronoRay together with the video mapping, the music and the costumes (white for the dancers and black for the Roma girls) reflect the idea of the passage via dualities - light/darkness, top/bottom, land/water, known/unknown, own/foreign, used-to-it/strange, white/black, inner/outer, real/unreal, life/death. It explores the interactions between these dichotomies via the idea of all those warriors and foreigners who passed via these lands in the past and their interactions with the local people and myths. With the fairytale mood AP wanted to create a feeling of uncertainty about what is real and unreal. Does the harmony in the last part of the performance that AP created via the mirror movements between the dancers and the Roma girls really happen, is it possible to be reached or was it just a dream and left it to the audience to decide.

### Engaging the Local Community

During the CEA AP's visual artist did a workshop for local children showing how visual video art is part of contemporary dance and its huge influence on the creative processes.

**Link to photo video in folder:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZvzV-z4EBX9LbttEeFArY0vR\\_BWHMzeT/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZvzV-z4EBX9LbttEeFArY0vR_BWHMzeT/view?usp=sharing)

### 2.3.2. SITE MERIDA, APS: iDANCE, 420PEOPLE, LOCAL COMPANY

#### iDANCE

**Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jw9viPs39ynPRAfPZ92Lk-8PGHII00D9/view?usp=sharing>

Workflow considered going through some of the choreographic material that was created during the residency in Sweden, featuring elements that were inspired by the encounters with local communities. In this case, those are different folk dances the AP has learned about in all of the three performance locations. This part features some characteristics from all three places, like holding each other's arms, the side/cross steps, and the movement of one arm above the head while the other moves in front of the abdominal region, as is seen in Spanish folk dance.

**Link to photo/video:**

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RABhGZaQ5b-NCVvc2HgpO4YWe4IxnkGk/view?usp=sharing>

**Getting to know the site**

The site in Mérida was challenging as the AP needed to identify the areas for the audience seating and the parts that could be used for the performance, that would be visible from several angles (audience was seated as well as placed elevated on the street on two sides around the site).

**Link to photo/video:**

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NL95pg04Y8h--UPIgcKU7yKNIE6Q8IPq/view?usp=sharing>

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QOD2EywUnHFv\\_V1wrU60N2pJ7vlaNWbl/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QOD2EywUnHFv_V1wrU60N2pJ7vlaNWbl/view?usp=sharing)

Session with Fuensanta Blanco to go through the part of the choreography using the Mantón, a tassel shawl traditionally used in Flamenco dance. This session's aim was to finetune the part with Fuensanta's help and to make sure the choreography does not any taboos that may exist in Flamenco when working with the Mantón,

**Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZcZGruOj9-mKbP3tRNvLJLAJiOlrjWKR/view?usp=sharing>

**Short description:** testing for the Mantón on site

Reenactments of Roman culture like gladiator fights are a big part of contemporary culture in Mérida. This part of the choreography takes inspiration from these fights and the specific choreography of battle or modern martial arts.

**Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/176GVTp9mD0RSSx9-uWdxcKbSqB6hJLAD/view?usp=sharing>

**Choreographer's notes by Israel Aloni**

"During our workshops in Merida, we learnt about the strong reminiscence on the history of gladiators. We learnt that nowadays there are reenactments and restating of gladiator fights and it is attended by large audiences. It was important for me in the development of choreography for One Day We Will Be Statues to look at the untold history of gladiators and visit their personal worlds. I was interested in who they were as people and not only as functions of entertainment. In the choreography we looked at the sensitivity with which gladiators had potentially treated each other given their shared destiny. In the choreography one can see tenderness, gentleness and kindness within the context of combat between two male presenting bodies.

In our visits in Merida we had numerous encounters with Fuensanta Blanco, each wonderfully powerful, insightful and inspiring. Particularly I found great interest in the specificity of each type or strand of flamenco that Fuensanta told us about and how different communities have their unique styles and lineage of flamenco.

When we created One Day We Will Be Statues we dove deep into the expressivity of the body and the Manton (the typical scarf which is used in Flamenco in unique ways) as its extension. We looked at the expressions of the body in relation to the cloth and how the work with the cloth requires a particular rhythmically from the body in order to respect the cloth's temporality - how it folds and unfolds in space over time.

Often in Flamenco—in more traditional forms of Flamenco—the Manton is utilised to enhance the movement and the expressions of the dancer. When we created the piece for Merida, I looked into what happens if the identity of the dancer as such is concealed, by their face being entirely covered with the Manton the whole time. I was interested in what utterances the Manton would have if it was in the space on its own. I wanted to experiment with how the history and the tradition of this incredibly rich culture is carried by the well known symbolism of the Manton."

**Inspiration for costumes (notes from Amanda Wisselgren)**

**From historical attire:** Inspired by the Mantón de Manila, I crafted both a faithful reproduction and a skirt embodying its movement, drawing from the worlds of bullfighting and flamenco.

**From the overall visit:** Witnessing Fuensanta's masterful manipulation of fabric to convey stories and the spirit of flamenco left an indelible mark on my design ethos. The mosaic and white city details influenced the top garments.

**From the archaeological site:** The statues, with their interchangeable heads and inherent respect, inspired me to infuse the garments with both embellishment and a sense of shared identity.

#### **The soundtrack**

The soundtrack composed by Didi Erez features Flamenco-style vocals sung by Flamenco artist Fuensanta Blanco and actor, director and facilitator Javier Llanos. Additionally, Didi Erez recorded sounds of everyday-life like church bells and was greatly inspired by the many different rhythms in Flamenco and Spanish traditional music.

#### **Track featuring Fuensanta's vocals**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Lp1vK17fr5ESBHaMJ6L4egNq2uFIQrjt/view?usp=sharing>

#### **Track featuring Javier Llano's vocals, clapping & rhythmical elements inspired by Flamenco & Spanish folk music**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WCF5zdWGEsgXRIFVdGbFdDFMnzRnIKEf/view?usp=sharing>

#### **Track featuring Javier Llano's vocal's & church bells recorded in Mérida**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WrnobadDBgucP-c ux L bEkHUuRH8au/view?usp=sharing>

## **420PEOPLE**

**WS3 and RESIDENCY:** Planned in advance, WS3 and the Residency were arranged to take advantage of the potential of the presence of the 420PEOPLE company, the time possibilities of the local group and the specifics of the Spanish weather.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vLJcqh5bViqQ22RO7knQblbDx2X9wj6e?usp=sharing>

Rehearsals at La Kabilia Studios took place first and then on the Diana Temple stage. All members of 420PEOPLE company worked at a high professional level. What was new and very surprising for the AP was the way how the local group approached cooperation.

Six women of different ages were extremely professional, took cooperation very seriously, were prepared, willing to try new things and concentrate on working together. As stated by the AP: "They were all amazing!" Engaged, professional, focused on work. At the end of the rehearsal period, AP asked them the question "How do you like this collaboration?" And here are the answers the AP collected:

1. Ines: *I'm enjoying working with you. I feel that I am part of Icarus, that I am inside and I am flying with you. Truly I mean it from my heart. I feel very lucky to do it.*
2. Paqui: *Very good. But it is a pity that I cannot dance like I wish and want. But I am enjoying it with you. I feel really well.*
3. Lucia: *I feel very comfortable. I am working quite well with all the team. And honestly I am glad that I got this opportunity. Therefore I am appreciating it very much.*
4. Patri: *I feel very good and happy. But I wish to have different physicality to be able to do more things (movements). But I like how you all move, dance and it is a great opportunity to be part of it.*
5. Sara: *I feel very good. I am really enjoying it... As I told you before I was dancing but then my knee got injured and I stopped. It was a challenge for me. And this is the first time that I am dancing again.*
6. Susana: *For us it is an honour. Amazing experience to see you dancing, working, learning from you and to be able to participate. It is truly an honour to participate in the creation of this piece with such professionals. It is like a dream. I will never forget it in my life.*

The answers do not reflect everything the AP talked about, what working with the AP and in the field of contemporary dance gave to local dancers, what ways it opened up for them again. They don't tell the whole personal stories of everyone involved, but it can be felt from answers that joy was mutual, claiming the desire to continue working together and to develop artistically.

Additionally, the AP praised the collaboration and work of the IPs facilitator.

What the AP found unique within the DH settings and its partners was the amount of young people involved in theatre productions as actors, performers, dancers and singers. The history of 'youth theatre' groups is very present in Merida and that served as the inspiration for the upcoming co-creation.

As the AP's should follow the overall dramaturgy of the Merida Festival, which are the Greek plays, 420PEOPLE have chosen the Icarus story. The AP's had various meetings in person and online, as well with the artistic team from Merida which proved to be very inspiring and directly influenced the process. Many aspects of the Icarus' story were discussed with regard to present time. It also became clear that any other input from any kind of literature is a welcomed addition to the already well known story. That is why the texts by Ovid, Cervantes, Skacel and Havel were added later - as a direct inspiration of those meetings.

Working on texts and speech and use of the onstage language was done in very close collaboration with Juan Carlos, who's expertise was very welcomed.

The collaboration with the local performers was done through various workshops during the first visits, where some elements of the future work had been already tried and explored.

#### **The soundtrack**

One of the main parts of the final performance was also original music composition, which included samples of live recordings made during the initial workshops in Mérida.

During the final residency all of these elements were put together day by day. As well as finding more intertwined and seamless connections between the professional dancers of 420PEOPLE and Mérida's performers. The AP believes that this is exactly one of the core points by which it makes the DH concept unique and long lasting.

#### **Engaging the Local Community**

The AP participated or visited other CEA (Community Engagement Activities) and Festival activities: 'Morfeo' performance, Training Course dealing with various techniques on group dynamization, creativity enhancement, theatrical direction, stage production and citizen intervention, produced by TAPTC Teatro, 'La apparition de Menandro' performance and seminar 'Use of heritage sites for performing arts utilisation'.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DWz0xvMKjNt\\_kRzTA-uDFKHb-WIMxx3g?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DWz0xvMKjNt_kRzTA-uDFKHb-WIMxx3g?usp=sharing)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S8SrLbnTSK26mHrBX\\_RyvMd8vpx-yVpq/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S8SrLbnTSK26mHrBX_RyvMd8vpx-yVpq/view?usp=sharing)

**FESTIVAL:** The Mérida Festival is a huge event for the entire region, meaning that groups, families, artists come to town. The whole city, the whole region lives with the festival. On weekends, the city is unrecognisable, full in every area and it could be seen that the tradition of the festival is really huge. For the region, it means the biggest event of the cultural (and touristic) season. As it was clear that bigger size space is needed for the final performance and with regard to some difficulties the Mérida Festival has when obtaining permissions for performing outside of the venues, e.g. streets, locations other than venues etc, the Diana's temple stage has been chosen. The location for the 420PEOPLE performance was in a busy square. The audience participation at the 420PEOPLE performance was excellent, but the AP expressed the concerns that the auditorium was unfortunately not the merit of the promotional activities of the DH / Mérida Festival. It's well known location within the city and its ease of access for the general audience is great. The AP found it also significant for the Icarus' story.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11MOod2v-26lggFCLInoBzgTukBZbakNN/view?usp=sharing>  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dKCF\\_vTQVSf7eA8rNRHJfN0IAwwXAYik/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dKCF_vTQVSf7eA8rNRHJfN0IAwwXAYik/view?usp=sharing)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B5cKR10k1\\_7hP01XT-WPWAcMwpr4R2dr/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B5cKR10k1_7hP01XT-WPWAcMwpr4R2dr/view?usp=sharing)

### **NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY: JUAN CARLOS TIRADO CARROZA/ALBA GOG**

**WS1, 2, 3 and Residency:** The theatre classroom at "Santa Eulalia" high school in Mérida, directed by Juan Carlos Tirado Carroza (theatre director/producer) and Alba Gog (choreographer), has provided the necessary ecosystem and framework from which the co-creation process of the local DH production has been generated. The overarching goals of the local co-creation process within DH festival have been to: Integrate dance into theatrical training activities at the IES Santa Eulalia secondary school in Mérida, involving young students from 12-16 years from secondary education (selected local community) into a co-creation process as an educational and personal growth tool, not only generating a stage performance but also fostering a continuous debate connecting the Greco Latin myths with contemporary challenges; Use the environment of a local archaeological site to carry out the final representation and thus contribute to the philosophy of the DH project: "binding communities and heritage through dance"; Contribute to the objectives of the Mérida Festival Consortium: lowering down the audience average age attending its festival performances, by promoting the participation of young people in the co-creation processes of local performing art productions.

The fact that the entire working group resided in Mérida, made a difference compared to the co-creation processes of the other two participating artistic companies (il Dance and 420PEOPLE) in the DH festival in Mérida. Instead of three visit studies and stays (three workshops) and an additional residency period prior to the final performance, the local co-creation process was continuous, through weekly training and work sessions, from about January 2024 until just the final performance date (July 7th, 2024).

Fostering theatre and dancing culture with youth groups from Mérida being developed within the archaeological spaces; Dissemination and promotion of the performing arts culture with priority target the local community of Mérida, helping the organization of the Mérida Theatre Festival to lower the average age of its spectators, currently estimated at 46 years; Promotion of dance within the cultural context of Mérida, fundamentally focused on theatre, thus contributing to the consolidation of a stable dance program in Mérida.

**FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE:** "Electra" (local production) by Juan Carlos Tirado and Alba Gog: Creative concept is the new version of Sophocles' Electra tells us through of the word and the dance, the story of the revenge of death of Agamemnon at the hands of his wife Clytemnestra. The story shows Electra with her brother Orestes who executes the revenge of her by killing her mother Clytemnestra, thus avenging the murder of her father. With the death of her mother and her lover Egypt resolves the conflict that sets in motion tragedy: crime must be paid with crime.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1S53wYmE6tRmtosIS2n5BA3V9N\\_IndXFT](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1S53wYmE6tRmtosIS2n5BA3V9N_IndXFT)

### 2.3.3. SITE THARROS: iDANCE, POLISH DANCE THEATRE, MSPD, NATIONAL DANCE COMPANIES

#### iDANCE

##### Link to photo/video:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j\\_6tMUIK8Z79nlJeuvcKAAyGdNpIdwjt/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j_6tMUIK8Z79nlJeuvcKAAyGdNpIdwjt/view?usp=sharing)

Workflow considered exploring the site to identify areas for audience placement and spatial set-up of the performance. In Tharros, the AP decided to use a large area for the performance and play with distances between the performers and the audience. As the audience entered, the dancers were placed on two sides of the path, as the audience were positioned on three sides of the fenced part of the sides, next to the visible remains of the Tofet, some parts of the performance happened in close proximity to the audience, some further away in the part the audience entered at the beginning.

##### Link to photo/video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IGtvomCHpNSNtce7-ckDbFONbOGr9Um8/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13AaYxK2lp9wZExqcKoeJ5A1Qx58OhR8C/view?usp=sharing>

Exploring a choreographic idea (first in the studio, then on site) that was inspired by the custom of the women in Cabras to wear one of their skirt layers over their heads to protect themselves from rain or sun. The challenging part with this was the unpredictable effect of the wind on the movement of the fabric.

##### Link to photo/video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1d06suadPg88IfzzRnk41-MDiUI-F7CeR/view?usp=sharing>

**Short description:** pose inspired by “the boxer”, one of the “Giants of Mont’e Prama”, Nuragic stone sculptures found close to Tharros.

##### Link to photo/video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TIqWF0efVP29--KF1bsvbdGtT1SxJQC/view?usp=sharing>

Rehearsal of the part inspired by the barefoot runners of Cabràs. The long white skirts are tied up to a knot around the waist, referencing how the runners would tie their traditional garments during the run. It shows the versatility of the costume design and its ability to combine two cultural references in one simple part of the costume.

#### Choreographer’s notes by Israel Aloni

“The meeting with the barefoot runners left a strong impression on us. The encounter with their powerful brotherhood and at the same time devotion to something bigger than themselves invited me to think about power and vulnerability as closely related. When we worked on the choreography we developed a running section, which derived from a bigger part in the work that was dedicated to the choreographic specificities of folk dance, in which the performers demonstrated a very powerful camaraderie as they endeavoured the same physical challenge and at the same time they experienced great vulnerability as they were working with the tricky spatial and rhythmical patterns of the running.

During our workshops in Cabras we met folk dancers. One of them was an older man who demonstrated and performed very complex foot-work from the local folk dances with impeccable ease. I was really taken by the deep embodiment of the tradition and the generational transfer of the folk culture to the extent that it sorts of flow in this person's body and he can perform incredibly complex moves and rhythms with a nonchalant mastery. When we created Living in Tophet we often referred to this particular combination of sophistication and ease in the movement quality that we were seeking.”

#### Inspiration for costumes (notes from Amanda Wisselgren)

From historical attire: The intricate lace technique of Sardinian undergarments served as a major inspiration for embellished garments. Additionally, the skirt design, reminiscent of those worn on the head in Sardinia, reflects my interpretation of barefoot runners. The red manton echoes the flag carried by these runners.

From the overall visit: Engaging with textile professors and friends was enlightening and inspiring. Learning local dances and experiencing live music provided a profound sense of place.

From the archaeological site: The site's vibrancy underscored the need for lightweight garments, influencing my design philosophy towards creating pieces that feel more liberating.

#### The soundtrack

For the soundtrack, the site of Tharros brought some lighter, airier elements to the otherwise more dramatic and darker sounds collected from the other places. Didi Erez was invited to folk musician Mauro Palmas’ studio to experiment with different string instruments, mostly mandolines, lutes and guitars. Sounds of the wind and other natural elements creating a spacious feeling add a calmness and breathiness to the musical score that created a beautiful dynamic combined with the sonic elements from the other sites.

The sound of a galloping horse is a reference to the tradition of the Sartiglia celebrated in Oristano. In this track you can also hear some voices recorded during the workshop with Mauro Palmas and Elena Ledda.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/19T7swUMw338chzttSnnue\\_fsvi0nwLv1/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/19T7swUMw338chzttSnnue_fsvi0nwLv1/view?usp=sharing)

## **DERIDA DANCE CENTER**

### **Exploring the location in detail**

#### **Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/13UnoLPZ2ExSzHpGaxz8Xsi\\_1-0HQ93LR](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/13UnoLPZ2ExSzHpGaxz8Xsi_1-0HQ93LR)

Exploring the site together with a representative of Tharros Archaeological Park to identify areas for the dancers and the audience, as well as restricted areas and “do not touch/step” places/objects.

Due to the very high temperatures during summer in Tharros and the mandatory requirement from the institutional partner to perform during the daytime (18:00 / 19:00 under 38-40 degrees), the AP’s team decided to use the area of Tharros Archaeological Park that is closest to the sea.

The initial idea was for some parts of the performance “ChronoWaves” to take place in the sea, very close to the shore, in order to incorporate to the maximum the sea as a natural source of water (typical of Sardinian culture). Unfortunately, the AP was not able to realise this idea, as it was discovered (upon arrival at the site), that approaching the Tharros Archaeological Park from the sea is forbidden.

### **Exploring and developing the choreographic idea of ChronoWaves – daily rehearsals inside and outside the Cultural Center in Cabras, Sardinia:**

#### **Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1hNTgsPIT2MIGqZ2sFnduXurr6Is70h\\_F](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1hNTgsPIT2MIGqZ2sFnduXurr6Is70h_F)

Since the original idea of performing some parts of the ChronoWaves in the sea was not feasible due to the Archaeological Parks rules, the AP had to change and redevelop them. For the first two days, the AP used the hall inside the Cultural Center in Cabras. However, since it was very hot and stuffy inside, without any air conditioning, the AP decided to conduct the rehearsals early in the morning right outside the Cultural Center.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1IXtEfiBTev6hsWPa\\_sH41nvdTQlznHgA](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1IXtEfiBTev6hsWPa_sH41nvdTQlznHgA)

### **Fine tuning ChronoWaves performance to its specific location in Tharros Archaeological Park:**

#### **Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yVYVVviTV6afImJiqdOoHCS6-nNoz3Td2/view?usp=sharing>

Every afternoon Derida team was finetuning the performance ChronoWaves to its specific location in Tharros Archaeological Park –

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1J4EnLes\\_3X\\_LvN-UIngVEfvKD0ol42gs](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1J4EnLes_3X_LvN-UIngVEfvKD0ol42gs)

On July 9, 2024, AP held a workshop with two local musicians - Maestro di Launeddas Stefano Pinna and Maestro Giuliano Armas (accordion) - during which it became clear that it would be very difficult for them to improvise live while following the musical environment developed by AP’s composer, Yavor Zografski, for the ChronoWaves performance. After the workshop, AP spoke with Maestro di Launeddas Stefano Pinna, and agreed to grant the rights to one of his famous songs, which can be listened to here:

[https://youtu.be/x2tLoNDi8ks?si=p\\_KXf6R\\_APuQTLJI](https://youtu.be/x2tLoNDi8ks?si=p_KXf6R_APuQTLJI)

The AP’s composer incorporated this song into the sound environment of the ChronoWaves performance.

They also agreed that both Maestro di Launeddas, Stefano Pinna and Maestro Giuliano Armas (accordion) will perform their music live immediately following each of the two performances of ChronoWaves on July 14.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SjYtgEULmzOEHWXxfaHnt2vpoiv8vdO7/view?usp=sharing>

### **Engaging the Local Community**

#### **Workshops with local communities and kids - Tharros, Cabras, Torre Grande**

#### **Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1V4pIVQ0E8WF\\_px3-sWzFwOqIRNse7E-c](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1V4pIVQ0E8WF_px3-sWzFwOqIRNse7E-c)

On 11 July 2024, Atanas Maev and Miroslava Georgieva from the Art Link Foundation / Derida Dance Center team took part in the CEA Workshop “Dance on your wave” in Torre Grande, Eolo Sailing School. The workshop was dedicated to children and their families from the local communities.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/16P3UYxZ-m9Ss5kO2vIcBp5G1wJaG2kHhZ>

#### **Short description:**

On 13 July 2024, Atanas Maev and Miroslava Georgieva from Art Link Foundation / Derida Dance Center team took part in the CEA Workshop “The story in reverse” at Tharros Archaeological Park and met local communities to discuss how stimuli, suggestions and stories have come to life in the artistic creation. AP shared details from the collaboration with the local musicians named above.

### **Concept idea of ChronoWaves performance by Derida Company**

The performance ChronoWaves of Derida Dance Center explored the concept of time and its cyclical nature. It was inspired by the very specific location of Tharros between the “live” and the “dead” sea. The choreography was a harmonious blend of classical techniques and contemporary, abstract movements, captivating the audience with its

emotional depth and physical prowess. The dancers moved with fluid grace, their bodies seemingly defying the constraints of gravity and the passage of time.

The performance was using natural lighting and was further enhanced by the specifically composed music environment mixed with the magic sounds of the traditional Sardinian music instrument – launeddas played by the local musician Maestro Stefano Pinna.

Throughout the performance, the dancers interacted with the architectural elements of the ancient site, using them as props, platforms, and sources of inspiration. As the dancers moved through the ruins, the audience was transported to a realm where the boundaries between past and present, movement and stillness, were blurred and reimagined.

#### **Technical issues and realisation:**

Derida Company declares they encountered challenges that made it difficult for them to show their work at its best. The electricity was not available, which meant the AP couldn't use video mapping to highlight the archaeological site. This forced them to perform during the day in very hot temperatures, over 38 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the audience had to wear big headphones to hear, which made them feel even hotter.

When the performance was scheduled, it was realised that it would coincide with the finals of the World Cup. Despite this, no changes were made. The AP performed twice in a row, but this didn't increase the number of people who came to see the performance. It was noted that other companies did not have the same issues. For example, the Mvula Sungani Physical Dance group performed on the main stage and could use electricity and lights, and were allowed to perform after 9 PM.

#### **Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1CDvhm5I22W83s-nG4tl2SUqg67CE7rkI>

### **POLISH DANCE THEATRE**

#### **Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ratemvpk\\_nkVaPKWLs6ssBVWEj30n4QV?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ratemvpk_nkVaPKWLs6ssBVWEj30n4QV?usp=sharing)

**WS3 and RESIDENCY:** At the final residency, the AP continued the concept of “The Echoes of the Dust” including impressions related to the Giants of Mont'e Prama. These archaeological marvels were the inspiration for the use of movements referring to the poses of these legendary figures. One of the Giants, and the only original among the others is the alleged "Musician". This ‘character’ inspired the AP significantly and was so important in the development of the performance, that the AP decided to give it the role in the performance.

During the WS3, in the creative process, the AP was accompanied by a wonderful musician Mr. Guliano Armas from the local community. They heard him perform several songs on the accordion, thanks to which they had the opportunity to select the most interesting ones not only in artistic terms but also important for the culture and heritage of this region. During the creative process, the experienced so-called creative collisions of experiences, i.e. new ideas. This taught the AP that cognitive diversity can knock us out of tunnel thinking, which greatly limits imagination and possibilities, but that unlimited imagination and building new opportunities is the key to communication in this project and all creative work. In the end, the music that sounded on the accordion during the performance fit perfectly into our story, and its sounds resonated beautifully between the past and the present.

The entire creative process for us is a story about thinking in open categories while maintaining a dose of humility, i.e. space, so that others can contribute something from themselves. Thanks to this, co-creation can occur. Co-creating a multidimensional understanding of complex heritage and art.

Finally, the original idea contained in the script and concept prepared by Paulina Jaksim was interpreted through co-choreography performed by Aleksandra Brzezowska, Dominika Babiarz, Agnieszka Wolna-Bartosik. During the residency, the focus was primarily on developing an appropriate choreography for the performance to the music of Italian composer Gigi Masini (‘Tharros’, ‘Swallow’, ‘Tears of Clown’, ‘The wind song’) and local musician Guliano Armas (‘Passu de sa Processioni’, ‘Ballo campidanese’).

#### **Echos of the Dust**

The performance “*Echos of the Dust*” included the fascinating music of the Italian composer Gigi Miasin, combined with Sardinian folk music played live on accordion by Guliano Armas, was the perfect narrative to the story of the cultural richness of the island. Sand, wind and water and the human body, with their movement penetrating through the senses, appeared as dance and performance “Echoes of the dust”. Our dance story is outlined in three parts. The first reflected the famous Barefoot Runners, arousing dust, who went down in history with these deeds, and the ubiquitous wind and water saturated our senses during the movement interpretation. The second referred to the rock warriors of the Giants, where the exploration of archaeological discoveries inspired the movements used referring to the poses of these legendary characters. One of the giants analysed by archaeologists, and at the same time the only and original of the others is the alleged “Musician”. The accordionist musician fits perfectly into this our story, and his sounds resonate beautifully between the past and the present. The third part is just such a compilation of echoes from the past with the present by including the audience in a dance performance embodying the steadfast spirit of the island. The song “Ballo campidanese” combined the dance history of the place and the people. In these incredible circumstances of space, we made a journey



full of struggle, finally celebrating with the audience the present stepping on the iconic earth with the steps of their traditional Sardinian folk dance.

**Link to photo/video:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ratemvpk\\_nkVaPKWLs6ssBVWEj30n4QV?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ratemvpk_nkVaPKWLs6ssBVWEj30n4QV?usp=sharing)

**Description:**

Dancers Aleksandra Brzezowska, Dominika Babiarz, Agnieszka Wolna-Bartosik in costumes and the music Giuliano Armas

### **ITALIAN DANCE COMPANIES - ASMED BALLETO DI SARDEGNA, COMPAGNIA DANZA ESTEMPORADA AND GRUPPO E-MOTION**

**WS3 and Residency:** During the residency, the focus was on developing an appropriate choreography for the performance.

**BT'LNM**

The performance BT'LNM (battè 'allōnīm) Bodies travels along channels of movement inspired by the impressions of a land that has fought to rise from the waters, giving identity and resilience to a people who embody values, traditions, modernity, and transversal languages. There exists an invisible space between human reason and superstition, a gap of light where the soul finds nourishment in ritual, the sacred, and the exploration of the divine. In that place, the Human Being elevates spiritually, connects with intangible spirits, and performs acts of faith to break free from the cage of the flesh and rediscover

Bodies travel along channels of movement inspired by the suggestions of a land that has struggled to rise from the waters and give identity and strength to a people that embodies values, traditions, contemporaneity, and cross-cutting languages. There exists an invisible space between human reason and superstition, an interstice of light where the soul finds nourishment in ritual, the sacred, and the exploration of the divine. In that place, the Human Being spiritually elevates, connects with intangible spirits, performs acts of faith to distance themselves from the cage of the flesh, and rediscovers ancestral memories. In this space, time bends, truth thins, and the only possible reality diverges into ecstasy.

A journey in Sardinia that "resonates."

A sound, physical, and environmental experience in which, by traversing traditions and listening to nature, artists and spectators can be immersed in a new condition: reaching a liminal space and the possibility of experiencing a transformative practice.

The performance involves the participation of the audience.

**Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DTTGsTIMNIoq17YJuGqfyws7GrWswE4S?usp=sharing>

### **MVULA SUNGANI PHYSICAL DANCE**

**WS3 and Residency:** In the context of collaboration between partners, particularly between Rome and Tharros, a performance by the resident Roman company MSPD was included in the programming of the Tharros Festival. This marks a further development of the project's central theme: collaboration between diverse artistic and cultural entities. The inclusion of the performance in the festival reinforced the concept of encounter and co-creation, which are among the project's primary objectives.

Through this synergy, the project expanded its scope, fostering artistic exchange between different geographical and cultural areas. The event not only provided an opportunity to strengthen existing ties between the partners, but also opened up new avenues for interaction between artists and audiences, thus enhancing the project's overall impact. In this sense, the participation in the Tharros Festival was a moment of collective growth and enrichment.

**FESTIVAL: PERFORMANCE** The Dance of Water

Water, a crossroads of stories, peoples, culture and dreams, inspires this new work by director and choreographer Mvula Sungani and étoile Emanuela Bianchini. The authors, both known to the public and critics for having always experimented and researched new expressive forms linked to ethno/popular culture, over the years have developed an original and innovative expressive language, which finds its maturation in this new piece. The Dance of the Water is an exciting piece that celebrates a primordial element with the company's repertoire: water. Through fluid and harmonious choreographies, the dancers accompany those they assist on a sensorial journey that explores the different nature of water and places, where dance represents the fluidity of the primordial element for a harmonious celebration of birth, and therefore of life. The Dance of the Water has in itself a strong anthropological matrix, in fact it is a path that is inspired by the Neapolitan culture which has always represented a model of integration as a crossroads for peoples, races and ethnic groups representing places, colors, customs and typical customs of the land... land caressed almost completely by the sea. The visual narrative of the work is based on the imaginary fusion between historical places, eras and styles, where artists of different backgrounds have come together with a harmonious and univocal voice, generating the culture of our country, where the past has always joined the future. The choreographic poetics inspired by the Italian popular tradition is stylized by the close-knit duo Bianchini - Sungani, through new contemporary trends and merged with Physical Dance. Movement and melody become dances, and dances become water. The Dance of Water is a reinterpretation of Etnika, a

show conceived by the Sardinian-African choreographer and director Mvula Sungani and the Cagliari musician Mauro Palmas, a contemporary homage to Sardinia inspired by the literature produced on the Island, by folk tales, by nature, and clearly by the splendid sea.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1DTTGsTIMNIoq17YJuGqfyws7GrWswE4S>

### 2.3.4. SITE OSTIA ANTICA, APS: POLISH DANCE THEATRE, MSPD

#### POLISH DANCE THEATRE

**Link to photo/video:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fKwqnZWGfSL481uZv8ucVo1mjXaM3IOH?usp=sharing>

**WS3 and Residency:** Final preparations AP experienced in a dance studio together PTT dancers and Italian dance partners. Polish performers were carefully watched by their local colleagues. As a result, it could be seen as a subtle transfer of the character of movement and stage expressions. The dancers influenced each other and their movements, sometimes unconsciously. The AP had to respond to the voices of the singers. Co-creation has turned into coexistence. The AP claimed: “Fantastic experience!”

Rehearsals at Tempio Rotondo of the Archaeological Park of Ostia Antica gave the performers a new energy blow. AP had to adapt to the natural environment. Small details started to work differently: the character of the movement, voice and sound of our soundtracks, and meaningful space for the final performance. Somehow, AP was all discovering this performance for the first time. The image of the wind dancing between AP’s dancers in total freedom, doing whatever it wanted with the costumes and scarves, was fascinating. It was a perfect moment of co-creation not limited by the expectations.

**Festival:** Participation in the 2024th Festival in Ostia Antica for PTT means presentation “Sculpted Echoes: Dance of the Ancient Estuary.” in co-creation with the stakeholders of this particular production: Mvula Sungani Physical Dance, Roma Tre Orchestra, Elderly choir. The creative processes involved in creation and presentation are crucial for AP. However, the Festival also includes organisational, technical and promotional aspects also experienced by AP during the implementation of the project.

#### Artistic dimension

The performance draws inspiration from the historical journey of Ostia Antica, an ancient port city known as the “Navel of Rome”. Dancers bring to life the vibrant atmosphere of the ancient Baths of Neptune, as described by Seneca. The scene transforms to reflect the memories of Italian’s residents, with choreographies inspired by the city's past and its sculptures, incorporating personal stories from the elderly. Finally, dancers create the illusion of the flowing Tiber River, embodying its spirit with fluid and graceful movements, highlighting the symbolic heart of Ostia.

#### Organisational dimension

These aspects of the festival are not directly related to the co-creation process, but they can support or hinder this process. During preparations for the Festival, we were provided with, above all, good conditions for meeting the local community, conditions for work, mutual inspiration and getting to know each other. However, regarding the organisation of the final in the form of an “Sculpted Echoes: Dance of the Ancient Estuary” performance as part of the Festival, we have comments regarding: insufficient or inappropriate promotion of the Festival, significant logistic changes that influenced the course of rehearsals, final preparations, lack of communication.

We list the above-mentioned organisational and communication difficulties arising during the Festival to emphasise that the final work is also important for the undertaken co-creation process. We would like to avoid overshadowing a very interesting process of co-creation by weaker organisational aspects. Especially since the project's goal is binding communities, instead of leaving this community after the completed part of the project.

The above difficulties do not overshadow our artistic satisfaction with two performances at Tempio Rotondo of the Archaeological Park of Ostia Antica and with the creative path we have travelled with the local community.

### MVULA SUNGANI PHYSICAL DANCE

**WS3 and Residency:** During the workshop and residency with the artistic partner Polish Dance Theatre, the resident company MSPD established a deep and fruitful collaboration. From the very beginning, the meetings and rehearsals with local communities—including dancers, musicians, and elderly women with an artistic background—proved to be crucial in the co-creation process. This type of involvement not only enriched the work of both companies but also strengthened the connection with the local communities, fostering direct and participatory interaction. A significant portion of the work had already been developed during previous meetings and through communications between the workshops. These initial exchanges laid the foundation for the advancement of the artistic activities. The PTT third workshop, along with the residency, marked a turning point of consolidation. During this period, the relationship between the two companies grew stronger, allowing them to work in a more harmonious and cohesive manner. This phase was characterized by the addition of essential details that emerged from the continuous exchange between the companies and all participants. This collaborative process proved to be extremely productive, not only in facilitating the emergence of a shared expressive direction but also in promoting an ongoing dialogue between artists with different backgrounds and experiences. Thanks

to these continuous exchanges and discussions, the MSPD company was able to enrich its artistic perspective. This dialogue generated new sources of inspiration, leading to the creation of two improvisation performances, which were a direct result of this creative process. These performances were presented at the end of the first and second Polish Dance Theater shows at the Tempio Rotondo, in the Ostia Antica Archaeological Park.

**FESTIVAL: PERFORMANCE**, “Sculpted Echoes: Dance of the Ancient Estuary Improvisations”

Drawing inspiration from choreographer Polina Jaksin, étoile Emanuela Bianchini has conceived a site-specific performance featuring 13 dancers from the local community. The performance is inspired by the marble sculptures that once adorned the city centuries ago, but are no longer visible today. This modular, site-specific project was intertwined with performances by the Polish Dance Theatre in Ostia Antica. Among the ancient ruins, the dancers’ bodies transformed into living statues and installations, creating an evocative dialogue between past and present. Tableaux vivants, improvisations, and choreographed sequences brought ephemeral sculptures to life, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in a unique sensory experience. The idea was born from the experiences of CRDL in various Mediterranean archaeological sites, where young dancers explored the expressive potential of outdoor spaces. In Ostia Antica, this experience turned the ancient rocks into a natural stage, crafting a magical and engaging atmosphere. The fluid movements and static poses of the dancers evoked images of ancient deities and rituals, prompting the audience to reflect on the historical layers of the site. The project offered an opportunity to experiment with new forms of artistic expression, merging dance, landscape, local youth communities, installations, and performances. The aim was to create an immersive experience that engaged all the senses, offering visitors a fresh way to experience the archaeological heritage. The audience's reactions were enthusiastic, demonstrating how contemporary art can engage in a meaningful dialogue with the past.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1dzKFYdSMqcP5CDdK0qUqWcJJ-uzvi\\_dJ](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1dzKFYdSMqcP5CDdK0qUqWcJJ-uzvi_dJ)

**WS3 and Residency:** Preparation activities for “Ballo!” show

The preparatory work of the resident company for the June performance was an experience of great artistic and cultural value, where collaboration with the Italian Folk Orchestra, the Folk Choir, and a Folk Dance Ensemble played a central role. This synergy gave rise to a shared journey of rediscovering musical and dance traditions, offering a unique opportunity to blend different artistic languages and reimagine them in a contemporary context. Dancing, creating, designing, learning, enjoying. Dancing through history and with history, reclaiming both ancient and new narratives rooted in the lives of communities that, in such memory-rich territories, have chosen to shape their present. The rediscovery of traditional folk music and dance was not merely a return to cultural roots but a genuine process of innovation. Ancient melodies, songs, and movements found new life through their encounter with modern artistic sensibilities, allowing cultural heritage to remain alive while being creatively and originally reinterpreted. This type of collaboration not only enriches the final performance but also strengthens the bond between generations, uniting past and present in a synthesis that celebrates the diversity of artistic expression. The fusion of traditional folk elements with new forms of expression creates a bridge between the local and the global, highlighting how cultural roots can be an endless source of inspiration for the future. The work of the resident company with the local community was significantly enriched and mediated by the participation of Maestro Ambrogio Sparagna, one of the foremost experts in folk music in Italy and Europe. His contribution brought exceptional artistic and cultural value to the project. Sparagna directed the orchestra and skillfully guided the creative process, which was deeply connected to tradition, popular culture, and folk art, facilitating a meaningful intersection of the arts and fostering co-creation. Sparagna not only coordinated the musical work but also created a collaborative environment where co-creation was central to the process. His deep knowledge of folk traditions and his innovative approach allowed the local community and the resident company to integrate naturally and harmoniously, resulting in a unique artistic experience that celebrated the richness of cultural heritage and generated new forms of expression.

Mvula Sungani Physical Dance with Orchestra Popolare Italiana - Coro Popolare Italiano - Compagnia di Ballo Popolare (Italian Popular Orchestra - Italian Popular Choir - Popular Dance Company) at Cavea of the Archaeological Museum and Roman Villa of Parco della Musica.

**FESTIVAL: PERFORMANCE** “Ballo! La danza del Vesuvio” (Dance! The dance of the Volcano)

Water, a crossroads of stories, peoples, culture and dreams, inspires this new work by director and choreographer Mvula Sungani and étoile Emanuela Bianchini. The authors, both known to the public and critics for having always experimented and researched new expressive forms linked to ethno/popular culture, over the years have developed an original and innovative expressive language, which finds its maturation in this new piece. The Dance of the Water is an exciting piece that celebrates a primordial element with the company's repertoire: water. Through fluid and harmonious choreographies, the dancers accompany those they assist on a sensorial journey that explores the different nature of water and places, where dance represents the fluidity of the primordial element for a harmonious celebration of birth, and therefore of life. The Dance of the Water has in itself a strong anthropological matrix, in fact it is a path that is inspired by the Neapolitan culture which has always represented a model of integration as a crossroads for peoples, races and ethnic groups representing places, colors, customs and typical customs of the land... land caressed almost completely by the sea. The visual narrative of the work is based on the imaginary fusion between historical places, eras and styles, where artists of different backgrounds have come together with a harmonious and univocal voice, generating the culture of our country, where the past has always joined the future. The choreographic poetics inspired by the Italian popular tradition

is stylized by the close-knit duo Bianchini - Sungani, through new contemporary trends and merged with Physical Dance. Movement and melody become dances, and dances become water.

The Dance of Water is a reinterpretation of Etnika, a show conceived by the Sardinian-African choreographer and director Mvula Sungani and the Cagliari musician Mauro Palmas, a contemporary homage to Sardinia inspired by the literature produced on the Island, by folk tales, by nature, and clearly by the splendid sea. For the choreographic part, Mvula Sungani was inspired by Italian folk dances and the Sardinian dance - tundu, which he learned as a child from his mother and Sardinian relatives when he was part of the Ala' dei Sardi folklore group, his grandmother's hometown where the choreographer himself spent a lot of time until adolescence.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1dzKFYdSMqcP5CDdK0qUqWcJJ-uzvi\\_dJ](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1dzKFYdSMqcP5CDdK0qUqWcJJ-uzvi_dJ)

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

#### 3.1. CO-CREATION RESULTS IN REGARD TO MODEL DEFINITION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Suggested preliminary DH model for valorisation of heritage sites through performing arts, community engagement and territorial development consisted of the 10 +1 components, and according to them, each IP together with the APs selected to perform at defined sites created an implementation strategy that defined steps of the DH 1<sup>st</sup> edition of festivals. Comments below considers conclusions from the APs reports, together with the conclusions from the meetings between IPs and APs organised by Mapa das Ideias on several occasions (18 August – Artistic Partners, 26 August – Institutional Partners, and both 5 September and 11 September) with the aim to identify results of collaboration during the WP4.

1. Discover (and respect) the Site – it can be said that in majority of AP's reports it was found that they respected the sites, praised them and used the potential of history and heritage as inspiration for the performances. The level of this achievement depended on several factors: a) engagement of the IPs to righteously represent the possibilities of their selected sites and clearly at the beginning of the co-creation process communicate all information on the permissions and limitations that were not always in the IP's charge; b) changes that occurred due to external factors (such as weather conditions) which affected site setting of the performance or the site-specific nature of the performance; c) some performances achieved site specific dance choreographies, while others implemented the option of site setting complementing choreography, which sometimes was the AP's decision or in some cases this was caused by technical or site permissions limitations.

2. Find the Facilitator – majority of APs' reports praised the role of facilitator as a good medium towards the righteous dialogue with the local stakeholders and communities, as well as between IP and AP (with necessary knowledge of local and English language)

3. Local Engagement – Besides the activities dedicated specifically to the local communities, local communities with their creative representatives (stakeholders) as predicted by the DH model and Implementations Strategies have been at the centre of the co-creation process helping the APs' performance achieving artistic interpretation of the local and community heritage. In most of the cases this kind of co-creation was achieved via several different aspects: actual participation of local stakeholders in the performance and choreography creation, co-creation in music or costumes, or inspirational and motivational co-creation, stories, paintings, intangible heritage etc. materialised by dance moves, video and light design or effects, etc.)

4. Artistic Production – this parameter depended by APs' reports mostly on the technical and organisational aspects provided by AP. Artistic production sometimes was praised as co-production in relation between AP and IP.

5. Territorial Development – APs reports reflect on the important meetings, encounters or conferences they had with many local stakeholders representing public and civil sector, authorities which contributed DH festival visibility in terms of better local understanding and support. For the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of DH festival, the most important was APs' engagement in capacity building of the local dance groups.

6. Communication Channels – APs all agreed that internal communication varied at each site/IP, in some cases they rated it very low or very high, considering sharing the artistic co-creation or aspects that might have affected it. In some cases, those challenges were better overcome, very often due to the role of facilitator or thanks to the big level of creativity. APs praised press conferences organised by IPs as well as promotional materials which were produced, but also stressed that in some cases promotion was insufficient in order to promote locally oriented created choreographies and completely new dance productions.

Transversal Activities were not all selected by both IPs and APs for the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the DH festival. Some of them were targeted for this year, while others remained for the next year's festival.

7. Gender Equality – this topic was clearly targeted as important by leaving open possibilities for all local participants in co-creation. Some of the choreographies clearly tackled by topic in thematic context the gender aspects, namely those delivered by il Dance.

8. Accessibility – besides CEA activities which were targeted to provide accessibility to the local community, several aspects of co-creation led to better accessibility of elderly people in case of Ostia Antica or Tharros, availability of dancers

moving via audience (ilDance performances), using the visual effects, audio headsets, daylight enabling some advantages of better accessing performances for people with disabilities.

9. Environmental Sustainability – artistic production in several occasions had positive impact in regard to environmental sustainability: daylight performances (Merida, Tharros and Ostia Antica), site specific – non scenic performances (Tharros and Ostia Antica), usage of digital visual effects for scenic performance (Viminacium)...

10. Social Inclusion – Co-creation process considered several vulnerable groups involvement or by topic inspired performances, LGBTQ community (il Dance performances), the elderly people (Tharros and Ostia Antica), ethnic groups/minorities of various classes (Roma community – Viminacium and Derida performance).

11. Continuity (Keep it alive) – in terms of co-creation many APs continued communication with local communities and stakeholders they collaborated with providing fertile ground to continue and improve the work and achieved results in the future.

### **3.2. CO-CREATION RESULTS AS GUIDANCE TO SUCCESS OF 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION FESTIVALS**

Being in the position to overview both insights of the IPs and APs IA as WP4 leader concluded that DH project is actually the tool which in the 1<sup>st</sup> DH festival edition served to find the model of the productive dialogue between the artistic freedom cherished by APs and sites' limitations that were supposed to be cherished and protected by the IPs role. In order to improve the mutual language which will serve better engagement of the local communities in the co-creation process and visibility of the sites' heritage and artistic creativity, hereby some remarks can be highlighted from the APs' reports in order to secure the success of the next 2025 festivals:

- IPs needs to secure and follow co-creation process and react in time if the one is not achieved or affect neglecting the site or local community
- APs need to share preferences on time, communicate interests towards local stakeholders and select among those represented by AP to whom will continue the co-creation process
- In order to secure site-specific performances IPs need to communicate all aspects and possibilities with APs on time (permissions, limitations, to warn on possible harms, damages or affects of external factors, adequate narratives and all relevant to the selected site) ...
- Extending the residency and shortening the preceding trips. A longer residency could intensify the connection between historical locations and dance.
- APs might already have inspiration for the next year, as they got to know the different places of the archaeological sites better
- APs recommended each choreographer to choose a different location at each site of the performance in order to avoid scheduling conflicts, which will also enable the audience a more diverse experience by visiting different sites.
- By building on this year's experiences, such as the strong community involvement and the artistic use of the historical setting, future editions can further elevate the festival's reputation as a unique and enriching cultural event.
- Social gatherings, workshops, and collaborative projects could further enhance the festival's role as a hub of creative exchange. APs could share more time at the sites exchanging experiences and brainstorming on mutual cooperation and mutual inspiration. This could bring an even more human and professional (inspirational) dimension to the project.
- Considering the aspect of co-choreographing with the site and archaeological remains while creating site-specific performances.
- Use of typical local dance movements in order to highlight the presence of the local community "on stage".
- An English-speaking facilitator would need to be assigned to each company separately in order to avoid sharing a common coordinator with other companies, especially before the premiere.
- Think of the local stakeholders' involvement in other performances of the festival, sometimes choices were not possible to be materialize if a group is already involved in some other Festival productions.
- Strengthen the promotion of co-creation process especially in days of residency and festival
- Try to extend the group's stay so that they can see all the performances of the DH Festival, including local groups (eventually off the program)
- IPs should keep in mind that not only selection of place/site but as well the time of the performance as well as technical aspects and possibilities may affect artistic production and results of co-creation

Results of the aforementioned meeting organised by Mapa das Ideias points on the following:

Communities: Partners manifested a desire to deepen the participation of local communities in the process. For this to happen, APs explained they require more time to work with communities, and noted the importance of keeping the same participants throughout the process. Another aspect to support this has to do with the need for the IPs to deliver info about communities to APs with enough time for them to properly develop workshops tailored to these participants. A final point regards the need for APs to keep a permanent and open dialogue with participants about the performances they are creating, and to add open rehearsals to residencies, to keep participants fully engaged.

Production: Given their experience APs advised about the need for both APs as well as IPs to have Production Managers in their staff. These can either be hired (reducing the risk by bringing experts) or trained (allowing DH partners to increase

their internal competences for the future). A salient point regarding production has to do with the information/communication flow on technical and logistic needs and requirements, which needs procedural clarification and should be improved, to mitigate the difficulty inherent to long-distance and cross-cultural production.

Co-creation: While co-creation is the artists domain, it was a shared interest of APs and IPs that communities should be central in the process, so that the resulting performance includes local culture elements and site storytelling, essential goals of the DH project. As such, co-creation needs to find ways to deepen the inclusion of local communities, while preserving the artistic integrity that characterises DH APs.

General: Most concepts approached in post-Festival discussions seem to need as much reflection as the consortium entailed with the Dramaturg/Facilitator during the first months of the project. Among these, concepts like Co-creation or Production and Production Manager were especially discussed. In many interactions, when considering improvements to the second year of DH Festivals, some solutions require a GA Amendment (e.g. changing KPIs or reallocating budgets), while others can be solved by changing internal practices, such as some questions for full transparency (e.g. budgets).

## 4. ANNEXES

### APS VIDEO DIARIES

APs video diaries were Created by each AP during the WP4 implementation, WS1, WS2, WS3, RESIDENCY AND FESTIVAL. Their main purpose was to communicate the APs impressions, artistic visions and provide the atmosphere in which new productions were created. APs had complete freedom to share their own feelings and emotions through self recorded highlights of their experience in the DH festival sites.

Merida	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WGFvh5PyEUyR4_6Pg1jXTV-zG4MEew3n?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WGFvh5PyEUyR4_6Pg1jXTV-zG4MEew3n?usp=sharing</a>
Ostia Antica	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GIWG7Ed595uZCYcaWtVao3YKD4N5nEy8?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GIWG7Ed595uZCYcaWtVao3YKD4N5nEy8?usp=sharing</a>
Tharros	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xk6S-F7VBnP3EKUOEh8-ZLS57XAZZbyS?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xk6S-F7VBnP3EKUOEh8-ZLS57XAZZbyS?usp=sharing</a>
Viminacium	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17lbVTq4c1Gjz8JZs3iWSnNUkUM-j5n6h?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17lbVTq4c1Gjz8JZs3iWSnNUkUM-j5n6h?usp=sharing</a>
Volos	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EC6tCoYHqRV_XmcshMfVdh9_As1q0adp?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EC6tCoYHqRV_XmcshMfVdh9_As1q0adp?usp=sharing</a>