



Dancing on the Edge

ABSTRACT ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Dancing on the Edge is home to everything that crosses borders: a platform for bold art and adventurous visitors

Preface

The year 2020 was a special year for everyone. It was a year of lockdowns full of working and programming online. DOTE has always worked a lot digitally (sometimes entire performances produced and presented via Skype, due to travel restrictions of some makers that DOTE works with), but now almost all programs could not continue and the entire cultural sector had to find new ways to cope with a changing world.

During this time DOTE has renewed its **Online Magazine** and has taken steps for a new website and online environment; the annual Scholarship Program has become the **DOTE Online Masterclass Program**, and **Meet the Artists**, which was to take place in collaboration with Het Huis Utrecht, could not take place due to the measures surrounding COVID-19. Instead, DOTE developed a new series, **Rituals of Change**, where we played with the concepts of offline and online and wanted to create really new content for online instead of working with live streams. This is a concept that we want to continue in 2021 and in the run-up to the DOTE Festival in 2022.



1 Activities Dancing on the Edge 2020

DOTE's activities are grouped under three pillars:

Professional – this pillar covers all activities related to the development and exchange of professional expertise, such as co-productions, international projects, residencies, scholarships and training.

Programming – this pillar covers the bi-annual festival in several cities in the Netherlands. Also including all programming throughout the year, such as guest performances, installations, lectures and participation projects.

Knowledge Exchange – since its inception, DOTE has built up a broad network and a lot of knowledge in and about the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa). DOTE connects partners internationally and aims to promote knowledge and exchange.

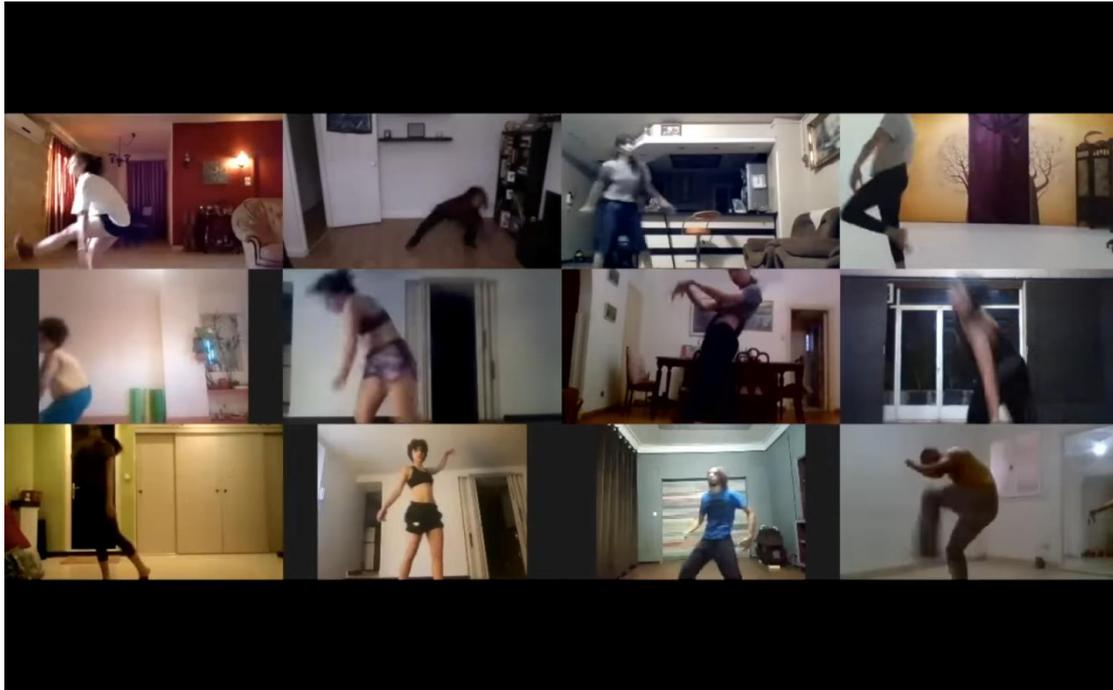
Professional: DOTE Online Masterclass Program

For the ninth time in a row Dancing on the Edge (DOTE) has offered scholarships to talented and motivated dancers from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region). For the last 8 years, each year two dancers were invited to take part in the *Summer Intensive*, organized by partner organization Henny Jurriëns Studio, as well as to attend performances at Julidans Festival in Amsterdam.

Due to COVID-19 measures, intercontinental travel was limited. Therefore, for the first time in our scholarship history, we created the **DOTE Online Masterclass Program**. Instead of two selected dancers, we invited a total of 15 dancers from the MENA region and diaspora to take part in the program. During three weeks, from the 11th till the 31st of July, the dancers worked intensively on their dance skills, by participating in technique classes and workshops given by teachers representing the most important companies and styles in today's contemporary dance world.

The Listening Body by **Michael Schumacher** - In this three-part improvisation workshop, the competencies to listen well were examined. Through a better awareness of our impulses, both internal and external, we are better able to understand ourselves with our environment and with other makers / dancers.

Using both practice and theory, this workshop addressed individual and social aspects of the creative process and worked with 'instant choreography' in our everyday environment.



Super / Workshop by **Christina Mertzani** - This series of workshops used contemporary dance techniques mixed with acrobatics, hip hop, break dance, yoga, pilates and martial arts. Special attention was paid to warm-up, body awareness through breathing techniques as well as exercises aimed at developing strength and flexibility. In this series of workshops, a dance sequence was learned, which the dancers also used as inspiration to make their own dance video under the guidance of Christina. These videos have also been shared on social media.



Dynamics, Rhythm & Texture by **Alleyne Dance** - A series of physical contemporary dance lessons with complex and technical sequences adapted to the home situation, focused on performance and endurance. Each session started with different aspects of movement study, focusing on articulation of the hands, isolation, spirals, breath and flying. In addition, we worked with improvisation originating from physical intention.

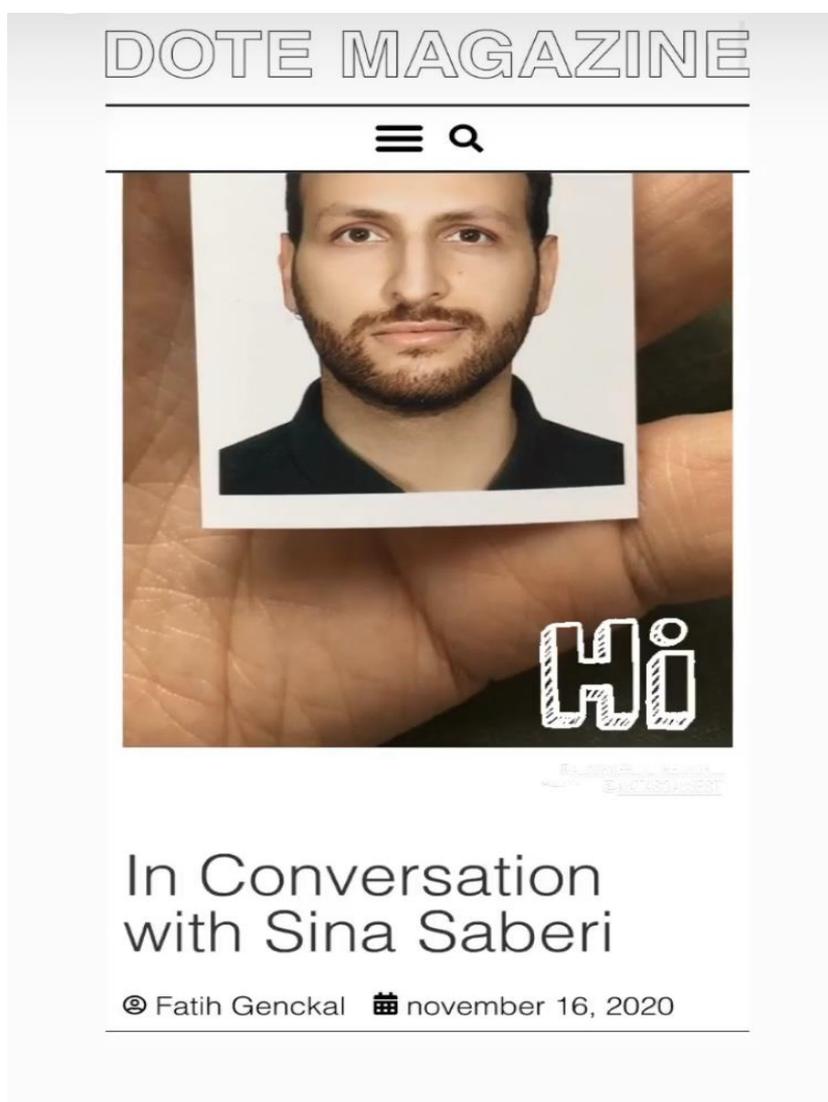
Gaga Workshop by **Ian Robinson** - A series of three workshops based on the work of Ohad Naharin. Gaga is about deep listening and increasing the awareness of physical sensations. The Gaga classes were a workout focused on flexibility, endurance, agility, coordination and efficiency of movement. An investigation of form, speed and effort combined with the playful investigation of different movement qualities, such as soft and thick textures, delicate and explosive power as well as underestimation and exaggeration. A multi-sensory and physically challenging experience aimed at connecting with the passion to move!

"In Persian, we have a proverb that roughly translates to "when evil creates divine" which, for me, describes what happened with us and Dancing on the Edge this year, best! The unlikely opportunity of meeting 15 potential future allies, emotionally and professionally, is all you can ask from a good life experience, to begin with.

Dance wise, I feel absolutely inspired by this experience. Each class unlocked for me new potentials, I didn't believe were there to explore. With some of the more technically demanding bits of them, I risked pushing beyond my so-called limits to enter a more playful zone where I stopped applying expectations on myself. I now find that new unlocked area a better space for learning.

Thanks to you and whoever that is making Dancing on the Edge possible, I find myself more confident than ever before, to take steps. Steps on a broader range. Steps that don't deserve to be hanging" - participant DOTE Online Masterclass Program

Professional: Partner Meetings & Research



In 2020, no foreign travel took place as a result of the restrictions surrounding COVID-19. All meetings took place online.

Research has been conducted, especially in the field of online working. We have renewed our separate website, the Online Magazine, and provided it with new content (including an interview series in collaboration with Corner in the World from Istanbul). The Online Magazine will be an important additional channel for Dancing on the Edge in the coming years. We not only use it for our own content, but it is also a platform for creators and partner organizations to share work, provide context and deepen the artistic dialogue.

Programming: Ongoing Program

“It was a really nice experience to be able to connect with people around the world, even online. I felt connected to these people :)” – participant Rituals of Change

In February Dancing on the Edge took part in the activity *Sounds of the East* in Tugela85, the artist hub in Amsterdam East where Dancing on the Edge currently has its headquarters.

Dancing on the Edge has developed a performative online workshop series called *Rituals of Change*. We wanted to experiment with artistic programs that are specifically made for the online environment.

This grew into the series **Rituals of Change**, for which we collaborated with 3 makers and a designer. A three-week program consisting of three workshops, each with various activities. Each workshop was led by a different artist, who relates in one way or another to ritual in his / her artistic practice. Ritual to look back at our past; ritual to mark where we are now and what we have acquired; and ritual to bring the future to us and use this difficult time as an inspiration to imagine how we want to proceed. It touched on various themes, such as decolonization, dealing with land and the environment, food, identity and belonging.

The workshops consisted of online sessions and in the week before, people were sent *incentives* with inspiration, instructions, and daily tasks. Everything was beautifully designed and done with attention. A designated “log” could be used for the daily tasks, which were returned and of which we as DOTE made short films.

It all led to a different “presence” and experience during the online session. Moreover, DOTE has a very large international network, which meant that the diversity of participants was enormous, which added a lot of extra value. We were surprised how well the series worked and want to continue this line in 2021 and towards the festival in 2022.

Rituals of Change Workshop I - Decolonizing Rituals

Fazle Shairmahomed

Writing - Moving - Ancestors

What does spirituality mean in the process of decolonization?

Participants were asked to do a writing ritual addressed to specific ancestors each day and to prepare an act of the ritual to be performed during the online session. The online session itself consisted of jointly performing a ritual, each in his / her own way, bodywork and dance, meditation and a group discussion about our shared colonial histories. By using dance we also made contact with our body and the knowledge that lies hidden within. Shairmahomed is inspired by rituals from Gnawa, Zar, House, Butoh, and Body Weather.



Rituals of Change Workshop II - The Good Stuff Doesn't Sit Still

Maureen de Jong | 't kleinkookbedrijf

Hand Taste - Sensing - Fermenting

A meditation on food. Food contains the lost knowledge of tradition, it is a bridge between our inner world and the physical environment around us, it connects us with the land on which we live. It brings us together in celebration of the moment, even when we are physically apart. Eating well supports our health and our immune system (necessary at this time). Traditions of fermented food go back centuries and cut across cultures. Fermentation uses time as a means of transformation.

We used time, movement and attention as means to achieve something good. We focused on our hands and the knowledge hidden in them. In this workshop full of movement and personal stories, we made kimchi together step by step.

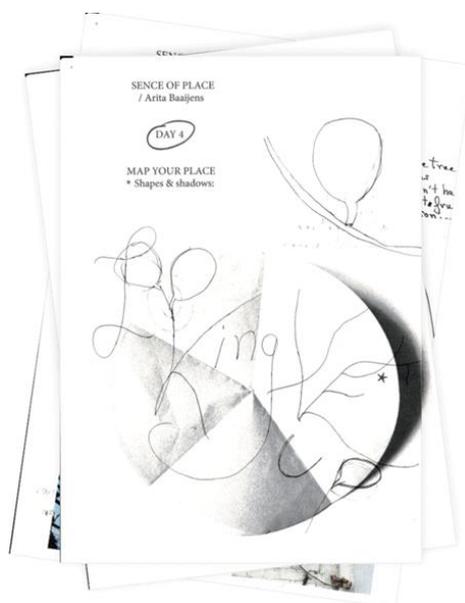


Rituals of Change Workshop III – Sense of Place

Arita Baaijens

Sacred landscapes – Listening - Deep Mapping

Landscapes and places are expressive, they are alive, contain wisdom and influence us in many ways. How can we do a better job of listening to what landscapes have to tell us? In this workshop we explored a new language and unearthed the key landscapes which have shaped you. We gradually tuned our awareness to the subtle, intricate ways that nature and places communicate with us. We worked with a sensory code-language enabling to read odors, sounds, tastes, colors and many other signs and signals. We took time to listen. Listening to the stories a place could reveal.



“I wanted to thank you for this opportunity, it really changed the way I move in the world, taking the time to deeply appreciate my surroundings. I felt it was a really insightful series of workshops, taking different angles in regards to movement, either through time or in space. I would love to attend more of these events in the future!” – participant Rituals of Change

Programming: Tour

Corona has also prevented many tours of our co-productions from taking place. Nevertheless, the performance *Today Is a Beautiful Day* by Youness Aboulakoul, which had its world premiere at the Dancing on the Edge Festival 2019, was performed 3 more times in 2020, before all restrictive measures took effect.

2 Audiences

2020 was a non-festival year, which typically means there were fewer activities to communicate about. To keep our audience engaged, 5 newsletters (10,000+ recipients) were sent and a lot of communication was done via social media, with own content or third-party content. In addition, further steps have been taken with both the Dancing on the Edge Community Facebook group (which grew from 422 to 881 members and came to life through weekly posts from the members) and the DOTE Magazine. In 2020 by far the most reach came through digital activities and online communication.

Digital activities

Online masterclass aftermovie + solo's

The online classes of the DOTE Online Masterclass Program were recorded, and the participants were asked to make a solo for video. All recordings have been edited into the DOTE Online Masterclass after movie, which helped not only to present our activities to our public but also present the participants through their solo's.

Conversations / Featured Artists in DOTE Magazine

In collaboration with A Corner in the World we published the series Conversations, 15 interviews with artists from the Middle East and North Africa, under the label *Featured Artists* in the DOTE online magazine.

Logs of Rituals of Change

The workshop series *Rituals of Change* took place online, with tasks for the participants to accomplish in the days running up to each online session. The artist Corine Datema made GIFS out of the 'traces' from the participants (their daily tasks documented in the logs) in combination with the results and the recordings of the workshops. In an artistic and special way these shorts gave an impression of the project. This is to be found in the DOTE online magazine.

Public outreach

The total number of visitors in 2020 can be divided into visitors / participants in activities (physical or online events), viewers of digital activities (see above) and reach / interactions via online communication (social media, newsletters, and magazine readers).

1. **The number of visitors / participants in the activities of DOTE was 979** (estimated 656).
2. **The number of viewers of digital activities was 955.** No digital activities were included in the original plans.
3. **The number of people reached with online communication was 123,909**, of which 111,529 via social media, 10,245 people opened DOTE newsletters, and 2,135 unique visitors visited the online magazine. The number of interactions on social media (likes, shares, comments) was 9936.

DOTE Magazine renewed

The online magazine DOTE was established in 2017. At the time, this was an experiment to test whether a separate, user-friendly place for online content could be managed within the organization and whether it could contribute to our online presence, reach, and contextual depth.

Positive feedback was received in all areas. Therefore, after the festival in 2019, it was decided to invest more in DOTE Magazine in 2020. In content, in the website, its promotion and management.

3 Finances

Dancing on the Edge has income from multi-year and incidental subsidies as well as its own income. The year 2020 was a special year in many ways. Several activities could not take place, which also meant that DOTE had less income through partner contributions or other subsidies.

DOTE did have their annual support of AFK as well as some support through the municipality of Amsterdam, which made that an extra investment in an online environment could be made. We also used some reservations, and still had some (late) revenues from 2019 as well as a debt release. It all made that we could close the year with a positive result of €88, which was transferred to the general reserve.

The results can be summed up as follows:

(amounts x 1.000)

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Income	47	439
Project costs	-40	-438
Residue from projects	7	1
Management costs	-14	-1*
Residue from income and non-program cost	-7	0
<u>Financial benefits</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Results	0	0

*management costs in 2019 were mostly filed under project costs.

4 Organization & Board

The board of Dancing on the Edge consists of the following persons: Nan van Houte (chair), Laurens Runderkamp (treasurer) and Mauritius Wijffels (secretary). Natasja van 't Westende has been appointed as director. In addition, we worked with various freelancers for the various projects. There are no people employed.

The board has 3 to 5 members. The term of appointment is for 4 years and can be extended once. The board checks the direction and meets 4 times a year. The board is committed to the principles of the Cultural Governance Code.

Our policy pays a lot of attention to the Code Cultural Diversity. In terms of program, audience and partners, DOTE scores high in terms of diversity. The team is also very diverse. Dancing on the Edge deals sensitively with personal data in the field of cyber security in accordance with privacy laws and regulations.

