



PRESS RELEASE

The program "Dancing Histor(y)ies, Binding Communities and Heritage Through Dance" is now in full swing.

Dance companies are connecting with communities and intertwining with cultural heritage.

*The study visits for **Dancing Histor(y)ies, Binding Communities and Heritage Through Dance**, a European project aimed at linking communities and cultural heritage through dance, have begun. Financed under the "Creative Europe" program (Project id: 101099222), the project focuses on promoting archaeological sites through performing arts and aims to identify an innovative, effective, and replicable model for the enhancement of cultural sites actively involving local communities in artistic production and conscious heritage enjoyment, also promoting the international circulation of European artists. The project intends to create a common and adaptable general model to be disseminated and exploited at the European level, aiming to combine the material cultural heritage of the sites involved with the immaterial heritage of local communities and their stories, fused together through the creativity of dance.*

After the project launch held in Cyprus on April, 6 at the Cyprus University of Technology, the first out of the five study visits foreseen by the **Dancing Histor(y)ies** project was organized in the archaeological site of Viminacium (Serbia). Organized in collaboration with the Arheološki Institut – one of the institutional partners – the four artistic dance companies involved in the project visited the archaeological site of Viminacium and met citizens and stakeholders of the area for an in-depth exploration of the site itself and its *genius loci* – the sense and spirit of the place – with the aim of drawing inspiration and starting to collaboratively build the narrative underlying the artistic production and the original performance that will take place on-site.

"We are very happy to have hosted the dance companies" says **Jelena Anđelković Grašar**, project manager for the Arheoloski Institut "we believe that **Dancing Histor(y)ies**, with its participatory approach, along with its ability to involve local communities, can truly contribute to creating a European model in which both tangible and intangible heritage can grow and feed off each other within a system of coded relationships, thereby promoting the socio-economic growth of our territories."

Born from the collaboration of five cultural institutions from four European countries (Greece, Italy, Serbia, and Spain), **Dancing Histor(y)ies** is based on inclusive dialogue between the institutions managing the sites and the local communities. The strategic objective of the project is, therefore, the design, experimentation, and evaluation of a model for the enhancement of cultural heritage sites through performing arts, community engagement, and support for territorial development.

Dancing Histor(y)ies involves **thirteen institutions** from **eleven different European countries** with extensive experience in managing cultural sites, performing arts, dance production, research and training, as well as designing, managing, and evaluating EU-funded projects. From here derives its operational objective, namely that of creating a European dialogue that arises from the meeting of the southern Mediterranean area where the cultural sites are located (Spain, Italy, Greece, the Republic of Serbia) with the North, Center and Eastern Europe (Sweden, Czech Republic, Poland, Bulgaria) from where the artistic partners come. The diverse nature of the organizations involved allows the project to benefit from different perspectives that contribute to improving and promoting international dialogue and cooperation among cultural organizations. The encounter between cultures will also be accompanied by technical partners (coming from countries spanning the two identified macro-areas: Portugal, Spain, Hungary, and Cyprus), who will manage the cross-disciplinary processes aimed at co-creating value.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project includes activities such as workshops and residencies that will take place throughout 2023/2024 in preparation for the first edition of the Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival and will be replicated for the second edition in 2025.

Dancing Histor(y)ies project road map 2023/2024

April 2023 > Kick-off

Dancing Histor(y)ies was presented in Cyprus on April, 6 at the Cyprus University of Technology in the presence of representatives from the academic world and local institutions, gathered around a table to discuss sustainable local development strategies as part of the presentation of the publication “How could the Republic of Cyprus reduce the impact of seasonal tourism on long-term sustainable development?”.

It has been an opportunity to promote and support the project in its socio-economic dimension of local development.

April - September 2023 > Research activities

The University of Cyprus is carrying out research aimed at defining the model. Initially, all partners in their respective countries identified 5 good practices related to the enhancement of archaeological sites through performing arts and active community involvement.

Secondly, a questionnaire has been prepared to be administered during the summer to institutional partners and stakeholders (archaeological institutions, dance companies, citizens), aimed at understanding the difficulties that organizations encounter in collaborating and the solutions adopted to address these needs.

From the research findings, a model will be prototyped, indicating the targets to involve and the working methods. Starting from October, the model's will be implemented and each heritage site will work individually on adapting it to its own local needs, depending on its territory, theme and the involvement of people and communities.

April 2023 - summer 2025 > Peer to peer learning

To nurture the competences and skills of professionals in relations with the most effective models for the management, animation, fruition and valorisation of archaeological sites through community engagement and artistic production, the project envisages the creation of a peer to peer path that will be developed with the contribution of all the partners, tested during the first edition of the Festival within the consortium and then opened at EU level for further delivery within the 2025 edition of the Festival.

June - November 2023 > Study visits

Study Visits have started in June 2023: five stages to discover historical and cultural heritage sites where dance companies immerse themselves in the spirit of the places, meet the local communities and cultural stakeholders in order to collectively build the narrative that will guide the performance. At the end of the study visits, the partners will discuss and select the locations that best suit the performances of each artistic company.



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Dates and Locations:

- June 2023: Viminacium Archaeological Site (Serbia), in collaboration with the Institute of Archaeology from Belgrade (Serbia).
- July 2023: Merida Festival (Spain), in collaboration with Consortium Patronato del Festival de Merida.
- August 2023: Sardinia, in collaboration with Association of Local Entities for Cultural and Entertainment Activities; Ostia Antica Theater (Italy), in collaboration with I Borghi.
- November 2023: Greece, in collaboration with Etaireia Koinonikis Paremvasis kai politismou/EKPOL.

From October 2023 to summer 2024 > Artistic co-production

Workshops

Each archaeological site will host three artistic performances in 2024 and five in 2025 (during the two editions of the Festival mentioned in the following point) created by dance companies.

In order to create each performance, for each edition companies will participate in three workshops within the selected site, working with local communities. The workshops are aimed at parts of the local community, identified with support of the institutional partners, who rarely visit the heritage site (e.g. youth, families with young children, elderly).

Through the workshops communities, artists, cultural professionals and facilitators will be at the center of a shared process of discovery, co-creation, storytelling and artistic representation. Facilitated by the professionals, the dance companies will explore the sites assimilating their history and that of the communities, and will work co-creatively and collaboratively with citizens to gather experiences and useful inputs to co-design narratives that connect cultural sites to the present through a fil-rouge linked to the past and to historical and personal visions.

Residency

The third and final workshop will be followed by a week-long residency where dance companies will finalize the performance, rehearse, and work with local communities. After the residency, the premiere will take place during the Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival.

2024 > Dancing Histor(y)ies Festival. 1 festival, 4 nations, 5 cities.

The pillars of the Dancing Histor(y)ies project will be the two Festivals that will take place in 2024 and 2025, bringing together local communities, international dance companies and the archaeological sites that will host them. Each Festival will follow a unique calendar that involves the five institutional partners, each organizing three days in their respective archaeological sites, hosting three performances in 2024 and five in 2025.

2024 > Off Festival

Simultaneously with the Festivals, the Off Festival will be organized, aimed at engaging the public and promoting local development. The purpose of these activities is to strengthen knowledge and a sense of belonging to the site through participatory approaches. The archaeological sites will collaborate locally with technical partners and stakeholders to define a program of activities to be carried out during the Off Festival.



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Dancing Histor(y)ies partners

Institutional Partners:

- Associazione Enti Locali per le Attività Culturali e Di Spettacolo / Association of Local Authorities for Cultural and Entertainment Activities (IT)
- Consorcio Patronato del Festival de Merida (ES): Merida theatre
- I Borghi Srl (IT): Ostia Antica theatre
- Arheoloski Institut / Institute of Archeology (RS): Viminacium archaeological site
- Etaireia Koinonikis Paremvasis kai politismou / EKPOL (Prefecture of Magnesia social and cultural council I (GR)

Artistic Partners (*dance companies*):

- 420PEOPLE (CZ)
- Polski Teatr Tańca / Polish Dance Theatre (PL)
- Art Link Foundation / Derida Dance Center (BG)
- Aloni & Brummer Productions AB / IIDance (SE)

Technical partners (*with specific competences in research, training, dramaturgy and territorial development*):

- Technologiko panepistimio kyprou / Cyprus University of Technology (CY)
- Asociación AEI Cluster del Turismo de Extremadura / Cluster of Tourism of Extremadura (ES)
- Kulturális Örökség Menedzserek Egyesülete / Association of cultural heritage managers (HU)
- Mapa das Ideias (PT)

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