

International Success Stories – Lara Barzon

Project Title	EUTOPIA Co-Tutelle
What were your main reasons for applying for the Co-Tutelle programme?	<p>The main reason for applying to the Co-Tutelle programme was the opportunity for comparison and broadening of perspectives that come with an international co-tutorship. Being based at two universities means having two supervisors from two different departments, each offering unique viewpoints. While this dual supervision presents challenges, it also fosters a greater critical consciousness through the necessity of navigating and integrating diverse academic perspectives.</p>
Brief description of project	<p>In one sentence I would say that my project is a theoretical and practical anthropophagic study in contemporary dance between Latin America and Europe. Anthropophagy is an epistemology rooted in Amerindian cannibal practices that turned into cultural cannibalism with the Anthropophagic movement in Brazil in the 1920s. It is a complex ritual of relating to ‘otherness,’ incorporating alterity without erasing differences. In my project I use the anthropophagic lens as an analytical tool to investigate decolonial practices and performances in contemporary dance. I focus on choreographers from different contexts between Latin America, where anthropophagy as epistemology was born, and Europe. In particular, by analysing performances by Salvo Lombardo (Italy), Tamara Cubas (Uruguay) and the transnational collective Istmo Nomade (Italy, Spain, Brazil, Uruguay) I aim to broaden the understanding of key concepts in dance, performance and cultural studies related to the transmission of memory: ‘re-enactment’ and ‘body as archive’. The aim is to understand how a politics of otherness that is based on the integration of the other into the Self instead of identity/alterity difference contributes to redefining the body in dance as a social body that welcomes diversity and performance as a ground for practising the collective body.</p>
What challenges/questions is your research trying to answer?	<p>The research developed around few main questions around contemporary dance practices:</p> <p>Are we limiting the understanding of the relationship with the existing as an act necessarily tied to a historicizing will?</p> <p>Is the extensive use of re-enactment and body-as-archive as tools for analysing performances that relate to the existing obscuring relational dynamics distinct from the will of the ‘living archive’?</p> <p>What meanings does the anthropophagic approach liberate and how does it transform the understanding of the body and the field of dance studies?</p>

	<p>How do 'anthropophagic' contemporary dance practices, performances, and techniques organically navigate between a globalized world and socio-ethnic-cultural specificities?</p>
<p>What have been your key findings and subsequent impact to date?</p>	<p>To date, my research has begun to uncover how cultural cannibalism proposes a contemporary posture inspired by anthropophagic practices, which embraces desire and a hunger for engaging with 'the other.' This approach disrupts traditional views of history as linear and progressive, challenging established notions of cultural lineage. Initial findings suggest that considering dance through an anthropophagic lens can offer fresh perspectives on issues of authorship, the stigma of copying, and the concept of artistic originality.</p> <p>These emerging ideas call into question how and what we perceive as historical, particularly highlighting the Eurocentric nature of cultural appropriation and re-enactment. The impact of this investigation may ultimately influence how we conceptualize dance not just as an art form, but as a terrain where to practice life that fosters a deeper, bodily knowledge. The potential for dance to rewrite history by consuming and transforming time and space is one of the exciting implications of this work. Through my analysis, I am demonstrating that the cannibal re-enactment of the performance act can do more than convey history. In fact, the relationship with a pre-existing performance can be used as an ally to change the conception of history itself and reposition the body and the effects on it given by the relationship with otherness at the centre of the investigation.</p>
<p>How have you found the co-tutelle programme so far?</p>	<p>I sometimes found it complex to navigate the different time schedules that the two universities require, as they are two very different models. As a result, I sometimes had to redo the same task with different formats, or take courses at both universities. Although this can complicate time management, I recognise that it is also a way of gaining broader knowledge of the workings and expectations of different universities, providing good experience to support future choices. Furthermore, I find it infinitely productive to have an exchange with my two supervisors, who are both present throughout the process and provide advice from a different starting point.</p>
<p>What have you found most rewarding about the co-tutelle programme?</p>	<p>Without a doubt, having the Eutopia co-tutelle is not only a scholarship but also means being part of a community that expands beyond the two universities that serve as my home. For example, I have been invited to take part in exclusive training to improve the impact of my research at TU Dresden; and present at events such as Eutopia Week. I therefore feel part of a network that not only offers me great opportunities during my PhD, but also gives me a sense of confidence in</p>

	thinking about international opportunities for my future career.
Intended next steps	<p>While my current focus remains on taking full advantage of the resources and opportunities presented by both Warwick and Ljubljana, I am simultaneously laying the groundwork for future steps in my academic journey. By engaging with international conferences and building a robust research portfolio with the support of Warwick's funds, I am not only contributing to the academic community but also broadening my own horizons, which I believe will be critical for my post-PhD aspirations. Additionally, with Ljubljana's access to Erasmus funds, my goal is to integrate a European dimension into my research, which could open doors for future collaborations within the EU. Ultimately, while my immediate priority is the successful completion of my current projects, these experiences are shaping my capacity for future research initiatives and professional opportunities.</p>