
A Dance Journey

Butō Tokyo Barcelona

Marlene Jöbstl with her students

March 19th - April 11th 2026



Introduction

The year 2026 is very symbolic for me. Twenty years ago today, I first went to Japan to work with Daisuke Yoshimoto, Yoshito Ohno-sensei, and Gekidan Kaitaisha. This year, on March 11th, I'm returning to Japan. But this time I'm not going alone; I'm taking my students with me on a Study Trip: we're going together to study butoh for three weeks in springtime Tokyo.

I'm proud to introduce them to my teachers in Tokyo, to my underground artist friends, and to the mysterious and contradictory culture that is Japan. Upon our return, we'll share the fruits of our journey. I hope to bring a breath of fresh air to the butoh movement in Europe.



Twenty years ago

In 2006 I came to Japan for the first time.

I met Daisuke Yoshimoto in NY butoh festival 2005, as I was assisting Yumiko Yoshioka. It was a big impact to get to know Daisuke san, he directly invited me to dance the introduction of his solo « Eros and Thanatos » because I was « tall » and he wanted to try this dance with a tall woman. That was a big honor for me and I enjoyed a lot this small duet. The next day I could attend his workshop and I just loved the way he taught butoh. I felt deep attraction in studying further with him.

So I said: I want to come to Japan to work with you.

Do you have time and space ?

Daisuke san said: yes!

That was in October 2005. In the beginning of January 2006 my feet touch Japan for the very first time. There was big heavy snow falling from the sky!

During this first 3 months in Tokyo, I could also perform with Daisuke san's group « Space Cradle », and could attend Yoshito Ohno sensei's class. I came back the following January to work on 2 productions of Gekidan Kaitaisha and stayed 4 months.

I could see performances of Uesugi Mitsuyo san, Min Tanaka, could create with my friend music composer Gaku, organize and perform a new solo piece « Be » in Plan B. During my stays I had butoh adventures, projects, and made very good friends.

Since then, I left Paris for Ocata, a small town near Barcelona.

During this years, I could deepen my approach to butoh, develop pedagogy of creative investigation, started Butoh Birthday KINJIKI Ceremony festival. I could grow as a butoh performer, and do what is the best thing for me : be on stage and share my dance with the audience!

When Yoshito Ohno died, I felt deep loss, and also a deep call, I need to go back, at least to say goodbye to Tokyo, to Daisuke san.

Pilgrimage

But this time I don't want to go alone, I want to bring my dear butoh students with me to get to know Japanese butoh in Japan.

I also want to share with them my precious memories, to meet my beloved teachers and artists and friends that I got the chance to built a deep relationship with.

This Dance Journey is a pilgrimage, it is about learning, growing, sharing. It is totally independent, no funding, no sponsor.

My mission is to act as a bridge, between European and Japanese butoh world, to avoid the best I can this « lost in translation ». My role is the threshold, the passage in both directions, open up realities, human qualities and artistic skills !

With your permission, I now present my students who are super excited of starting this life changing voyage.

With much LOVE

Marlène Jöbstl

My Dear Butō Students

This is not a student « group », this are single persons which I met during my butoh teacher life, people from when I started to be a professional butoh teacher in Paris, in 2009, and all through different places, manly Europe, until 2025.

I have chosen every single one to be part of this very special dance study journey. I did not choose on behalf of their dance level or physical abilities. It is about trust. We trust each other fully as persons and as dancers. We share our great interest in butoh, we want to grow and learn and we love kindness.

I hope you can get to see each single one as an individual. We are not a group, even though maybe trough this journey we will become one, but is not the aim of this project.

Some are very beginner, some haven't dance in a long time, some recover from injury, some are mothers who asked permission to husband and children to go away for this 3 weeks, some are teachers who took special vacations.

Our youngest is 27, our oldest 61.

Some came to Tokyo before, most of them first time , some don't even speak english.

This is my butoh student flower bunch, a wild bouquet.

Isabelle Cossin

Isabelle Clément

Juan Gutierrez

Lola Roig

Temenuga Manolova

Sandra De Miguel de Sanz

Clara Más

Marie-Louise Edelholt

MaySun Fung

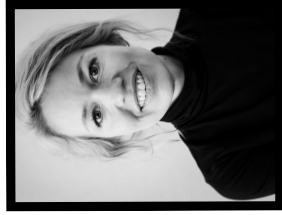
Temenuga Manolova
from Sofia, Bulgaria



Isabelle Cossin
from Paris, France



Marie-Louise Edelholt
from Copenhagen,
Denmark



Sandra de Miguel de Sanz
from Madrid, Spain



Isabelle Clément
from Strasbourg, France



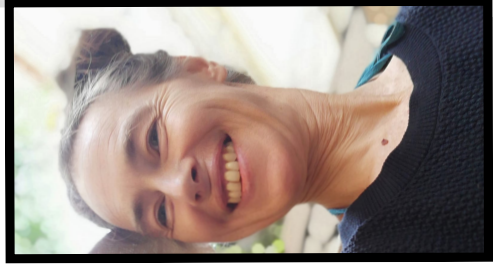
Clara Mas
from Valencia, Spain



Juan Gutierrez from
Barcelona, Spain



Marlene Jöbstl
from Vienna,
Austria and
Paris, France



Maysun Fung
from Hong Kong



Lola Roig from
Barcelona, Spain





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