culture360 interviews Dimo Milev, a dance choreographer for the M1 Contact Contemporary Dance Festival organised by The Human Expression (T.H.E) Dance Company in Singapore. Based in the Netherlands, Dimo is currently choreographing a work in collaboration with T.H.E full-time dance artists entirely over Zoom. This work will be performed for a live and virtual audience, in real time.

What was your inspiration behind the choreography and creation of Desidium? What is the message you wish to convey through the dance?

The inspiration for the piece is desire and all the pleasures and sufferings it brings. It is about how “it is never enough”; how we want to hold on to moments and to people forever, and how this idea of possession and holding on is sometimes seen as more important than the simple experience of living and experiencing.
How did your experience in this collaborative work in the “new normal” differ from that of your previous works with T.H.E Dance Company in the M1 Contact Contemporary Dance Festival?

In the end, this experience was much better than I expected. The dancers definitely helped a lot. They have a strong work ethic, and are very humble and dedicated!

Is there anything unique to this style of collaboration that you particularly enjoyed, or anything you would do differently in a similar work in the future?

I guess everyone experiences it differently. Personally, I feel that I have to be mindful of the words that I choose, and to know when to say them. The timing is very different, and this is what I struggle with the most. Whichever way I choose to express myself, it always feels incomplete! But this “incompleteness” has its own charm. You have to trust and let the dancers be the main part of the process, and to be open to the situation guiding you in a different and unusual way. I’m sure little by little we will grow to be more comfortable and get used to working in this way, and that will bring something new to our art.

What are your thoughts on the prospects of cross-border collaborations in the industry, considering the present limitations on cultural mobility and face to face exchanges?

It is great that we find new ways of working with one another despite these limitations, and even turn these limitations into a new way of expressing and questioning our work and life in general.

How has the emotion and atmosphere of the ongoing pandemic impacted the creativity, expression, and style of dance, both in the Netherlands and overseas?

You definitely question yourself a lot, as well as your way of living. It seems like sometimes, we humans need suffering and pain, as well as to be subjected to extreme situations, in order to make real and important changes in our lives and to respond. It is well known that crises are necessary for us to rethink and readjust, to find new ways of living...it shifts your point of view as you start to see things from a different perspective, and that brings about new solutions, as well as hope to do everything better. Crises and new situations are perfect catalysts for inspiration.
Tickets to the real-time livestreams of InterBeing - A Double Bill by T.H.E Dance Company featuring choreographers Jos Baker & Dimo Kirilov Milev at 8pm SGT on 25 & 26 June are available at https://www.sistic.com.sg/events/m1contact2021a.

Dimo will also be having an open Zoom rehearsal for his work in InterBeing on 17 June, from 8pm to 8.45pm SGT. Sign up for the open rehearsal at http://bit.ly/oridesidiumdimo.

Dimo will also be conducting an online class on 19 June, from 4pm to 5.30pm SGT. For more information, do visit https://the-contact.org/classes-workshops.