

Khaita on the Hill of the Muses, Athens, Greece

Date : August 26, 2017



Congress organiser Alkis Rafts (centre) with the Khaita dancers and other Congress participants

Since 2011 Khaita has gradually become an intrinsic part of our community life, and more and more practitioners have come to appreciate and enjoy the precious gift of Harmony in the Space. Khaita is also manifesting as a powerful vehicle for spreading a message to the wider public – not only by supporting Tibetan culture, but also as a bridge to the Teaching.

Following Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Rosa Namkhai's wish to present Khaita to a wider public and thanks to their precious advice, this July our international Khaita group travelled to Athens, Greece to present Khaita Joyful Dances at the 50th World Congress on Dance Research organized by the International Dance Council.

The Congress featured five days of classes, lectures, performances and exhibitions, and gathered more than 350 participants from 50 countries. The heart of the event were performances taking place at the beautiful national Dora Stratou Greek Dances Theatre, on a pine covered hill opposite

the Acropolis – Philopappou Hill or The Hill of Muses, since the myth says it used to be the home of the nine muses.

The Dora Stratou Theatre is the only one of its kind in the world. Since 1953 it has been a living museum of Greek dance. Dances, songs and music are presented in their original forms that were or are still performed in their respective villages or islands. The theater has an astounding collection of 2,000 traditional costumes, the largest of its kind in the world. The theatre has a large permanent stage designed by the famous Greek painter Spyros Vassiliou and has a seating capacity of 800 people. The theatre was founded by Mrs. Dora Stratou thanks to her desire to keep alive traditional forms of dance, music and song. She believed in the preservation of dances as a proof of the continuity of Greek culture since antiquity. We truly felt that presenting Khaita in such a place was extremely auspicious.





We performed at the Dora Stratou Theatre on the 7th of July. Our international Khaita group included 12 dancers from Italy, Russia, France, Poland, Argentina and China. We performed a compilation of circle dances that included some of our most loved tunes. [You can see the photos from our theatre performance [here](#)].

After our performance and the following days we had a chance to receive feedback from other participants, and we must confess we did not expect it to be so positive! “This was the most joyful performance”...“We could feel that you really enjoy dancing together”...“One could clearly feel that as a group you work not only on the level of the dance” – these are some of the comments we received from the Congress participants. Curiously enough, many conversations would end up with questions about and sincere interest in the Master and the Teaching, so we could witness in a concrete way Khaita acting as a bridge to the Teaching!



Moreover, on the following days in Athens we did two street events that included both performance and dancing with the public. [You can see the photos from our street performances here]

We would like to thank the Athens Dzogchen Community for their help and for being such gracious hosts, Merigar West for their continuous support, all the Khaita team that participated in person and remotely, and, ultimately, our precious Master and Rosa Namkhai.

May this event contribute to laying the foundation of spreading Harmony in the Space around the world!

Elena Dumcheva

See the [Facebook photo album](#) of the event