



Research for THE SOFT ANIMAL OF OUR BODY

The Research for THE SOFT ANIMAL OF OUR BODY is a continuation of Wunderland's work with radical physical and sensory audience participation into new fields. With our solid background of working with the audience one by one, meeting one performer at the time, we now want to explore new fields: the audience and the performers moving together as one group. Dissolving who is who, exploring the physicality and inner dynamics in a group.

We want to explore how physical and sensory input can connect us/the audience-participants in another state of mind than our everyday state. Our main question is: How this can make us come closer to the real love/passion of "the soft animal of our body". How can we allow ourselves to show this side in a group? What kind of group will it be? We want to investigate how the audience at some points throughout the performance can become independent, how much structure is needed, and when? How to guide them into the opportunity to take charge, to be free of our structure, to - in moments - become equals. Is this possible? What does it take?

THE PERFORMANCE

The performance is taking place in the local sports hall. When the audience-participants arrive they are guided into the changing rooms. Here they will find a white full body suit and a white helmet/mask. Everybody changes into the suit and mask to prepare for the game of the Soft Animal of our Body. The participants are then led into the dark sports hall by performers who are wearing the same type of suit.

The sports hall has changed into a kind of landscape. It makes you crawl on soft steep surfaces, have an overview, get together in cosy corners, slide soft on your back like in a lake or floating in the universe, hide inside warm caves with a deep spicy fragrance. In here you lie down and are guided into moving together in a group, a melting pot of organisms; projections of small moving lights above your heads - like the life inside the body, or the movements of the universe... For the next 1,5 hours the group plays, fights, explores and laugh together. As a flock, a herd, a community, family.

COSTUMES - facilitating sensory and kinaesthetic experiences. Facilitating group building.

How can the audience-participants costumes have an impact on the body awareness? - Restricting some parts of the body, allowing freedom somewhere else, padding one part or giving sensory and kinaesthetic input. How can the "becoming one kind" through wearing similar (outfits) influence the group behaviour? And how does it influence the feeling of the individual. What kind of feelings evokes wearing a mask/helmet? And what kind of feelings evokes when we take it of?

LIVE SOUND GUIDE

We want to work with a live guiding voice to allow time and group dynamic to have a natural flow. We imagine a "game-master" who from a hidden place can follow what is going on and allowing something more time or give new impulses through sound and light shifting in the space. We will be developing a sound system (in cooperation with Daniel Plewe) that can direct sound into headphones integrated in the audience-participant's suits/helmets. It will have more than one channel so that the participants can have different messages or sound input. Later in the experience the sound will be coming from the landscape in the room; from caves, corners, the floor etc.



How does the intimate sound influence our perception of ourselves and the group and how does the "common sound" that is shared in the room effect us? What happens when different groups get different instructions in the headphones? We will explore how sound and words effects the physical body and the feeling of being part of the group. How it can support and how it influences the group dynamics, actions and movements in the group.

OPEN TESTS: NETWORK BUILDING, AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE

We will invite audience-participants into our research every 2nd day. After each test we will have a feedback and sharing session led by T. Rosendal Nielsen PHD interactive dramaturgy, who will question the work and put it into perspective. Haukur Ingi Jónasson from Reykjavik University will join us here as well. The invited test audience will be people from very different segments, as this is part of our main interest in the group dynamic and group building research: workers from local companies, youngsters, immigrants, artists from different fields of art, elderly people who are still fit for some physical challenges.

The participants – both audience and actors – will RESEARCH the following QUESTIONS

How can a group, through physical interactive and sensory experiences, be guided into their personal longings?

How can we play with group dynamics, building relations and "communities" in a staged space, but with real and honest interaction?

Can a group, who just met become a clan, a family?

How can the way we act in a group show us ourselves in a new way? Show us relation to others in a new way?

How can people from different social groups, different ages, different habits of using the body, challenge and complement each other?

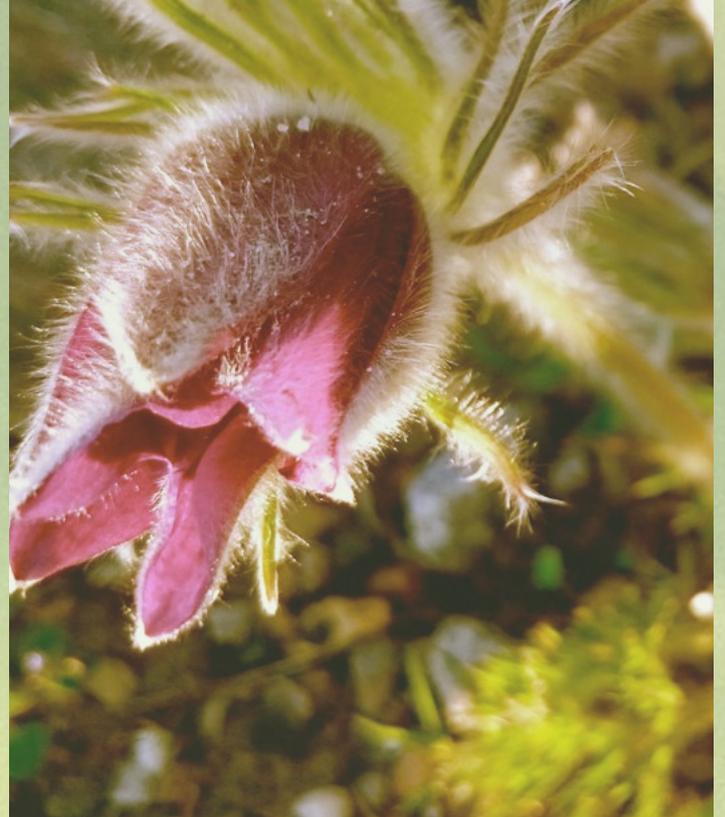
How does it influence our behaviour in a group being "disguised" in the costume and gradually being unmasked?

How does the group dynamic change according to the number of individuals in the group?

How many performers are necessary to guide physical changes and changes in the state of mind of the group?

FUTURE PLANS

Production in Aarhus in September/October 2018. Touring in sports halls in villages and cities in Denmark, Norway, Estonia and Iceland in 2019/20. Working with different communities and framing the possibility of different segments of people to meet.



COOPERATION PARTNERS

Bora Bora – Dance and visual theatre
Performing Arts Platform
Sceneagenturet
1:1 Productions

TECHNIQUE

Daniel Plewe (D)

RESEARCHERS

Thomas Rosendal Nielsen, PHD in interaktive dramaturgy.
Haukur Ingi Jónasson (IS) - PHD in Psychiatry and Religion, professor of leadership, management and organisational behavior, psychoanalyst.

ARTISTS

Mette Aakjær (DK) – Artistic leader and performer
Mari Mägi (Estonia) – co-creating performer
Helga Rosenfeldt-Olsen (DK) – co-creating performer
Nina Matthis (S) – co-creating performer
Sigrid Astrup (NO/DK) – Visual artist, costumes and set design
Sonja Winkelmann Thomsen (DK) – Text- and interaction design
Thoranna Bjornsdottir (IS) – composer
Sara John (Australia) – dramaturgical consultant

TARGET AUDIENCE

14 years old and up

