

Recycling the Past in residency at Dansearena Nord, Hammerfest

Thank you Lisa Ullman Travelling Scholarship Fund for covering the costs of my travel to Oslo and enabling me to attend this residency. It has been a very valuable experience and you will find my report below.

Recycling the Past is a dance project for children that was developed during a three-week residency at Dansearena Nord, Hammerfest, Norway, 9-29th May 2016.



Photo by Zbigniew "Ziggi" Wantuch

Recycling the Past is a collaboration between dance artists Emelie Wångstedt, Martina Francone, Tea Harrysson, Hrafnhildur Einarsdóttir and composer Ragnhild Tronsmo Haugland. All artists live in different countries and had met a couple of times before to research this project. We arrived in Hammerfest with a skeleton of the piece and the characters we wanted to create but without having made any of the material. By the end of the residency we had finished a first version of the piece, had several sharings and premiered it at a children's festival at Hammerfest cultural centre. We showed the piece to a total of 180 children during the festival weekend, which greatly helped in determining which age group is most suitable for the piece.

We did not expect to have the piece as finished as we made it but the support from Dansearena Nord, as well as the luxury of having three weeks in a remote place surrounded by amazing nature, made the working environment very focused and efficient.

We aim to continue this project with a tour in Norway and are currently using the documentation gathered in Hammerfest to apply to various touring opportunities around Norway.

<http://recyclingthepast.weebly.com/>

Lisa Ullman Travelling Scholarship Fund Report

Residency with the group Recycling the Past at Dansearena Nord, Hammerfest, Norway, 9th May- 29th May 2016.

In May 2016 I travelled to the most northern part of Norway with dance artists Martina Francone (IT), Tea Harrysson (SE) and composer Ragnhild Tronsmo Haugland (NO) to take part in a three-week long residency to finish creating and rehearsing our piece that we have now titled Fargeland (Colourland). The residency included rehearsal time, mentoring, sharings and ended with a premier at a children's festival at the cultural centre in Hammerfest.

After three flights we arrived in Hammerfest, just three hours drive from the most northern point in Europe. We were housed in a big house overlooking the sea and mountains and had 24-hour access to a studio a short walk from the house. Being in a small town far from all of our everyday lives turned out to be an excellent working environment. The midnight sun, up all day and night, gave us an extra boost of energy! All of us live in big cities so to be surrounded by this amazing nature had a huge impact on our work.





The four of us live in different countries and have been working on this piece for about a year, mostly online and through videos as well as meeting once last summer in Norway and once in Iceland last autumn. This residency was very important to us as it brought us together for a longer period and allowed us enough time to complete the piece. We are interested in the dance scene in Norway and would like to tour the piece there later on so this time in Hammerfest gave us valuable insight into the cultural system in Norway. The producers at Dansearena Nord gave us invaluable advice on how to continue our work there.

We came with a skeleton of the piece, a rough idea of the storyline but without most of the actual material. The first two weeks were spent researching and developing material and by the end of the second week we had sharings with different age groups. In the third week we modified the piece, created our temporary set and costume and made the piece ready for the premier at Barnas Verdensdag festival on the 28th May.



Photo by Zbigniew "Ziggi" Wantuch



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Fargeland

Fargeland is an interactive piece for 6-10 year olds. It is an unspoken story of three fantasy characters that got lost in a black dark world. They meet, become friends and go together on a journey to find their colourful worlds again. They will need to fight the “big storm” that is responsible for the transformation of Colourland. The aim of the characters is to reveal the worlds and bring back the colour to each of them. To do that, they will need the help of the audience to solve challenges and overcome the storm. Once the worlds are revealed, the three decide to mix the worlds around and create a whole, unique and colourful world, much more exciting and fun! At the end of the performance the kids are invited to enter Colourland and take their own journey through it.



Photo by Zbigniew "Ziggi" Wantuch

Outcomes

This time in Hammerfest was really important to the group and the project, bringing all of us together after having worked from different countries for over a year, and giving us a long enough period of work to have a meaningful and creative rehearsal time. Having Ragnhild, the composer, there the whole time was also very influential and a great exchange between choreographic and compositional ideas. Dansearena Nord were extremely helpful and organized and arranged everything we needed in terms of props, sharings with school groups and continuous feedback. The sharings and performances we had during the second and third weeks were very important. We showed the piece to various age groups between 1-15 year-olds, which made us realize that the piece was more suitable for the age group 6-10 than what we had previously thought (3-8). As the interactive elements of the piece are very important and drive the

story forward the many sharings were very helpful so that we could try different ways of completing the tasks with the audience's help. We were also given advice on how to continue working and touring in Norway and are currently busy applying to various opportunities to perform the work. Our time in Hammerfest also developed the group dynamic. We spent every second together just the four of us, doing yoga in the morning, rehearsing, cooking and eating together and going for walks in the evenings and having endless conversations and discussions. This made the group really tight and connected, which was even more important since we mostly work from different countries and communicating online.

I would like to thank Lisa Ullman Travelling Scholarship Fund for giving me the opportunity to continue with this project and facilitating such a rich and valuable experience.

Emelie Wångstedt