

# keðjaUmeå

---

**May 2-6, 2010**

## **Notes and photos by Elinn Bolonassos**

• Lab with Sarah Gebran: Conceptual Dance. ....	2
• Lab with Anna Koch and Ingrid Cogne: Possibilities of the Urban Space. ....	6
• Choreographers' Meeting. ....	7
• Opening Ceremony. ....	7
• Lab with Gunn Hernes and Lene Bang: Arts Management, level 1 . ....	9
• Lab with Benoît Lachambre: Extending the comfort zone . ....	9
• Lab with Bill Shannon: Possibilities and Limitations of the Body . ....	10
• Lab with MAP Consortium: Inspiration and The Creative Process . ....	11
• Discussion: Meet the Home Comers . ....	12
• Lab with Kristine Slettevold: The Dancer's Creative Process . ....	13
• Lab with Helena Jónsdóttir: Get out of the hole and into the whole! . ....	14
• Summary session . ....	15
• Closing lecture by Dragan Klaić: For an Open Dance World . ....	16

## **Notes by Anna Karlander**

• Producers' Meeting. ....	18
• Lecture by Cecilia Roos: The Dancer's Perspective . ....	20
• Lecture by Helena Jónsdóttir: To understand the menu. Experience the meal! . ....	21
• Digital Dance Archives. ....	22

## **Annexes**

- Lecture by Cecilia Roos: The Dancer's Perspective: The external and the internal gaze (pdf)
- Pirjetta Mulari and Asa Richardsdóttir: Arts Management lab, level 2 (power point)
- Closing lecture by Dragan Klaić: For an Open Dance World (power point)

## Notes by Elinn Bolonassos

May 2 – 6

### Lab with Sara Gebran: Conceptual Dance

Sunday May 2 – Tuesday May 4

Sara Gebran is a Venezuelan/Danish/Lebanese choreographer and performer, known for her fearless artistic investigations of various social and political issues. She is also the artistic director of the company Public Eye.

*The Conceptual Dance* Lab introduces tools and helpful notions to approach a new piece of work or compositional creation based on a concept. The focus is on how to create a short piece responding to a specific subject, and how this subject defines or influences the creation of movements, as opposed to forcing a concept to justify the established or desired movements. The lab is designed to help the participants open up their inner creative sources, for example, by doing as many tryouts as possible in a short period of time, leaving very little time to pass judgement on the choices made. Participants work alone or in groups. The lab continues on Monday and finishes with a presentation on Tuesday.

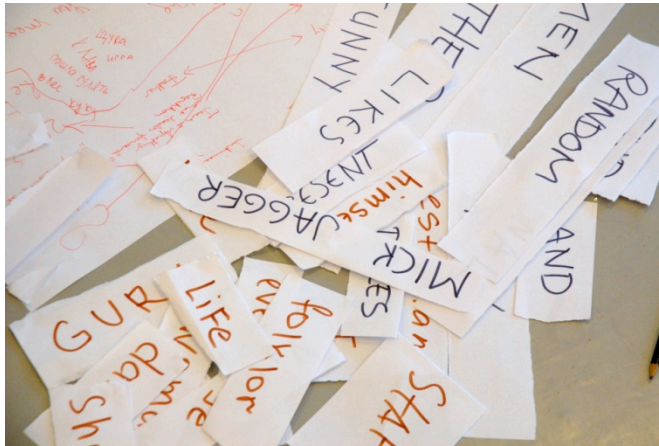
Sara Gebran tells the participants of the workshop to not judge the work, as an approach to creating. Everyone carries with them both history and taste and you have to allow yourself to experiment with the unexpected. Gebran talks about achieving knowledge instead of repeating it. She tells the partakers to not say or think "I like this" or "I do not like this", but instead to begin all suggestions with "What if..." Sara recommends propositions instead of judgments. Free yourself by stop judging, and stop imagining what others might think. This will allow things to happen and you will obtain new knowledge. She talks about "a place of investigation", and that the investigation is a process that should continue on stage. She requests that the dancers should relate to the audience not as consumers of a product but as consumers of knowledge. Sara tells the participants that the idea of movement is the idea of transformation and that one concept can carry several sub concepts. Within playing you can find concepts and without play, life is not fun.

The dancers have to ask themselves how to use the space in a way they do not already know, to try movements they do not know, investigating new movements that feel uncomfortable at first. They should not think about who will buy or sell this.

*What, why, how* and *who* are the four important things to have in mind when defining a concept. What – subject of work, why – intention, how – tools, who – the receiver. What is it I really want to say? Why am I interested in this? How do I want to say it, and for whom am I doing it? The participants write down three ideas each of subjects they are interested in at the moment. The ideas are:

- Asphalt & gravel
- How to be everything at once
- Sickness
- Not touching the floor
- Daddy
- Intimacy
- Apathy/tears
- 2012
- Continuity
- Killyourmother.se
- Possible everything
- Reflex
- Democracy and dance
- A creative approach to dance
- The relation to myself
- Being old
- Dead grass and unknown people
- Uncomfortable and non-economic movements
- Plastic bags from different stores
- Communication
- Lost
- Identity
- Whispering
- Better
- Smiley
- Forgiveness
- Moist & moss
- Unexpected communication in the public space
- How to stay true to a written text

After the idea generation the dancers are divided into groups of three or two and start to discuss the idea they want to work with and conceptualize. During the groups' discussions Sara Gebran goes from group to group asking about the concepts. Common for all groups is that they do not want to answer, or cannot answer the question *why* they want to investigate their chosen idea/concept.

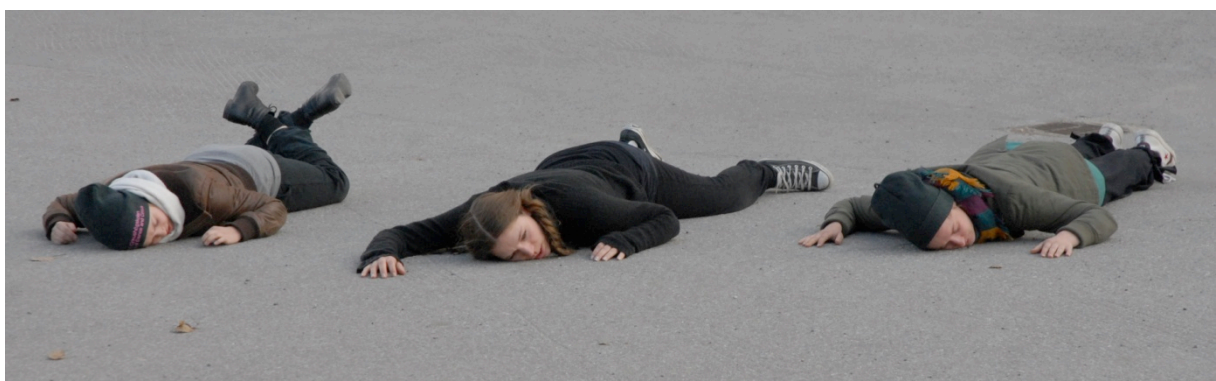


When the groups have worked with their concepts they show each other their pieces. The first group to show their work talk about their fathers, about drug addiction and identity, and afterwards the whole workshop group discuss the work. The group did not choose one idea but several.

Next group's concept is *whispering* and they need to be very close to each other to hear one another. They also make the audience participate in their performance. They whisper to the others to come and listen. In the discussion afterwards it is said that it challenged someone's issues with intimacy and the group says they wanted to explore the different aspects of whispering – the intimacy and the lack of communication for instance. They wanted to move people both physically and internally.

The third group explored shakes and they included things you usually exclude, like saying what is on your mind. When everyone talked after they said when the participants were far from each other it was about the movements and when they were close it was about the relation, a story.

One of the groups explored asphalt an gravel and did their work outside on both asphalt and gravel.



The day two of Sara Gebran's lab starts with an exercise where the participants have to relate to 0, 1 and 2, where 0 is just walking, 1 is keeping the same distance to one person, and 2 is keeping the same distance to two persons. After



this the group has to interpret the sentence *Touching the devil* and they are not allowed to talk, only to use consonants and vowels.



Following this exercise is continuing to work with the solos that the dancers chose in the end of the first day's lab. They then present their work:

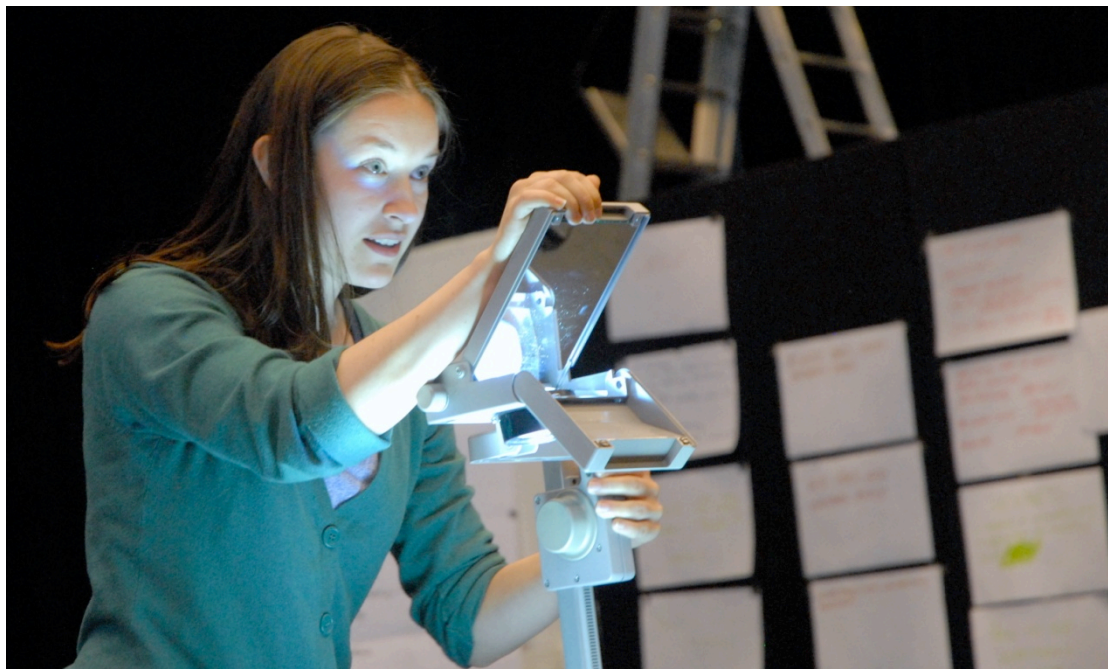
- A Skype or MSN conference with computers, the theme being communication or miscommunication/half-communication. Communication taking places at the same time as you are doing something else. The soloist's intention was a group where everyone could see each other, but it didn't work, so instead she had contact with the others, but they could only see her. The comments afterwards were for instance that with no group she could make people interact with each other without them knowing about the others.
- One idea was a social situation where you get anxiety because you have a feeling of how you are supposed to be or behave.
- In another solo, the soloist asks the others to help her in her solo and two from the workshop come to help her. She asks them to take off her clothes, one article of clothing at a time. How far will they go? How does she want the audience to feel? Discomfort? The piece is about intimacy.
- In the next solo piece, the soloist asks the audience about their partners, feelings of satisfaction and fulfilment, and such and while she asks the questions she writes on a computer and puts the cable from an overhead projector around her neck. It is a piece about relationships.
- Another piece is about (superfluous) hair, which the soloist thought was tough when she was younger but not anymore, she says, but at the same time you are aware that she feels the same now.
- One piece is about how you are so close to people on the subway, the bus, in a queue and similar in public, but you never speak to each other. The soloist imagines how much you could tell each other if you started to talk.

- The last solo is about a drug addicted father, a daughter's attempt to understand her father, and in the process forgetting the importance of trying to understand herself. The piece is extremely personal and intimate and she uses her body perfectly when she talks. In the discussion afterwards Sara Gebran states how difficult it is not going into character but actually being the character.

### **Presentation of Sara Gebran's lab**

**Tuesday May 4**

Sara Gebran's workshop participants presented their individual work and the difference from the day before is significant. The participants are much more confident and the pieces they present have a depth they lacked before.



### **Lab with Anna Koch and Ingrid Cogne: Possibilities of the Urban Space**

**Sunday May 2 - Tuesday May 4**

*Possibilities of the Urban Space* with Anna Koch and Ingrid Cogne, part one (part two is on Monday, the third and final part is on Tuesday).

Anna Koch is a Swedish dancer, choreographer and Artistic Director of Weld, a platform for dance and related art forms. Her work is often site-specific and makes the artistic process visible to its audience. Ingrid Cogne is a French choreographer based in Stockholm. In her work she raises questions about the artist's relationship with his or her audience. *Possibilities of the Urban Space* is a lab on

the artistic process, creative feedback and the possibilities that lie in urban spaces. The lab provides a possibility for artists and architects to work in a process aware way. By using video and movement, the participants will create mini-presentations responding to the urban environment, each other and the situation as such. The lab continues on Monday and Tuesday.

In the lab, the participants were given different protocols to follow. One group would not talk for 50 minutes while working on several tasks. Another group had to gather 50 pieces of art in 50 minutes. In the discussion afterwards they talked about how interesting it was not to be able to express yourself with words and that they did not even write words, but instead draw things to try to explain what they wanted.

## **Choreographers' meeting**

### **Monday May 3**

The choreographers' meeting, organized by choreographer Marika Hedemyr (Sweden), is aimed to be a discussion about a Nordic-Baltic network for choreographers, to find ways to collaborate and to exchange resources. The approximately 30 partakers present themselves and tell what they do, why they are at the meeting and what they want. Some of their ideas are the following:

- the collective movement
- the chance of developing dance
- punk dance – dancing without any funding
- create a platform for emerging artists touring
- to have someone else's eyes and hands on their work and have their own eyes and hands on someone else's work
- to counteract the tendency to share only the product, not the process.

## **Opening Ceremony**

### **Monday May 3**

The opening ceremony is grand and has both performances and interesting speeches. The speakers have been given the task to talk about the theme of the encounter, *artistic processes*. The host of the ceremony is Annelie Gardell, head of the dance department at NorrlandsOperan and part of the team that planned the encounter in Umeå. Gardell welcomes everyone and says there are 200 keđja-participants from 21 countries and 4 continents.



Annelie Gardell presents the director of education at Midgårdsskolan Gunnar Olofsson, who also welcomes everyone and expresses that the school is happy and proud to have keđja. He also talks about the school and about Umeå, European capital of culture in 2014.

Then the keđjaUmeå management is presented by Gardell and among the ones who made the encounter possible is Moderna Dansteatern, The Swedish Dance Committee, NorrlandsOperan and Dansens Hus, all present at the opening ceremony. Artistic and general manager at Moderna dansteatern, Christina Molander tells the audience about the theme and how it was chosen. In 2006 the working group in Sweden sent out a question to dancers about what theme they would like, and 95% answered "the artistic process". Even though it was a long time ago the theme will always be current.

Then it is time for Björn Säfsten to give his view on the artistic process, a dancer's and choreographer's point of view. He says there are as many questions as there are answers and that the artistic process is so hard to talk about and that is why we all think it is so important. He talks about the artistic process as origami – when you fold something, something else is coming out and you have to fold that, and so on. He concludes that the process is about communication – how to communicate to each other and to the audience.

Åsa Edgren, general manager of Loco Motion, a production office for performing arts, gives an arts manager's point of view and she says the artist and the arts



manager are equally important. The role of an arts manager is to create an artistic product out of an artistic idea. Managing art is planning for the unknown. Art and management must be hand in hand.

PhD Lena Hammergren, professor at the University of Dance and Circus declares that not much research has been done on the artistic process. She talks about the difference between reflecting on your own process and someone else's. Also there is a difference between reflecting *on* your own process and *in* your own process and there are differences between reflecting on a practice and investigating a process.

Annelie Gardell informs us about NorrlandsOperan and its dance department. It is one of the biggest venues in Sweden presenting approximately 30 guest performances per year and in addition co-productions and residencies. Gardell talks about the MADE festival at NorrlandsOperan, and shows a couple of trailers from some of the performances that will take place on MADE - Colin Dunne, the movie *40 m under* with Cullberg ballet and the world premiere of *Now she knows with Zero Visibility Corp*. She reminds the keöja-attendees to visit the festival.

Malin Lundstedt, coordinator for keöjaUmeå tells the audience some practicalities and encourages the audience to have fun.

### **Lab with Gunn Hernes and Lene Bang: Arts Management, level 1**

#### **Monday May 3**

Arts Management level one is held by producers Gunn Hernes (Norway) and Lene Bang (UK/Norway). Among other things they talk about all the planning and thinking you need to do in arts management. Also how you sometimes are artist, producer and choreographer in one person. They also say that everything said in the room will stay in the room.

### **Lab with Benoît Lachambre: Extending the comfort zone**

#### **Monday May 3 and Wednesday May 5 (two different groups)**

Benoît Lachambre is a choreographer, dancer, improviser and teacher. The goal of Lachambre's workshop is to pursue some results of the artistic research on the creative process seen from the dancer's perspective.



The participants' movements are somnambulistic but still very individual – some have very irregular, spasmodic motions, some have minimalistic movements, and some move very big and dramatic. In one moment the room is seething with activity and in the next moment it is completely still.

### **Lab with Bill Shannon: Possibilities and Limitations of the Body** **Wednesday May 5**

Bill Shannon A.K.A "CRUTCH" is an American interdisciplinary dance and media artist, who is internationally known for developing a unique technique of dancing on crutches. His workshop was called *Possibilities and limitations of the body* and it was a lab designed for urban dancers and choreographers looking for fresh ideas outside the world of routines, skits and eight-counts. It focused on creative problem solving and developing tools for building theatrical dance presentations and pushing the limits of the genre.



In the workshop Shannon talks about the sensation of almost falling backwards, so you need to catch yourself. He shows the participants glides – the participants



have to interpret Shannon's glides. All movements have to be translated into no-crutch-style. The participants think the moves, such as the sweeping, look much more beautiful with the crutches than without. The participants try the crutches.

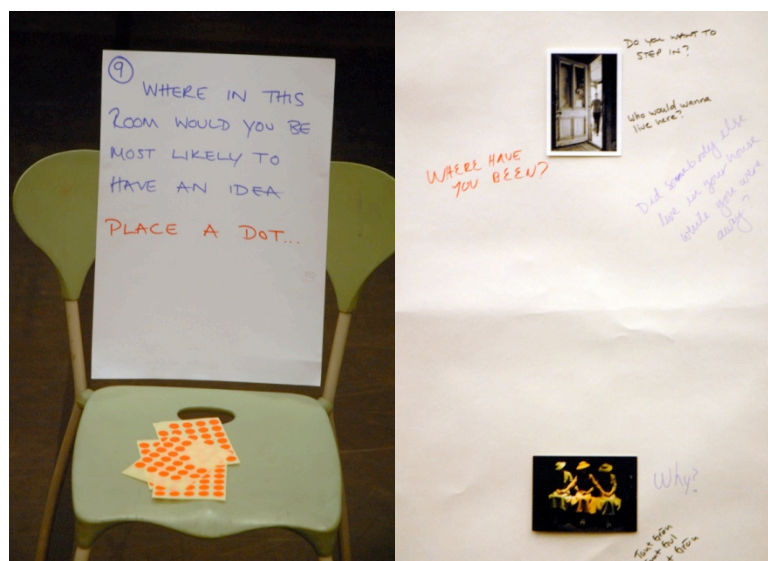
Bill says he never knows what he is going to do in beforehand in his workshops; he does not want to plan too much. He talks about how he tries to have organic lines with the crutches, arms and legs and he tries to minimize the utilitarian moves and instead do elegant and artistic movements.

Shannon's workshop makes you see possibilities instead of obstacles and you really feel like dancing even if you are not a dancer.

When Bill shows the group dog legs he blows his leg out and has to sit the rest of the workshop out. Then the group get to put all the moves learnt into a piece of choreography. The two groups seem to enjoy the challenge and the room seethes with activity. Bill thinks it is interesting to see the dance with crutches without crutches. It is an experience seeing the groups' translation of the movements.

## Lab presentation with MAP Consortium: Inspiration and The Creative Process Wednesday May 5

The MAP Consortium artists Fiona Lesley, Chris Higgins and Karen Da Silva (UK) present their lab *Inspiration and the creative process*. They read the manifestos created in the lab, for instance *Process is the true boss*, and *Play is the basis for all creative activity*. In the lab they worked with abstract creative processes, not a specific art form such as dance.



The lab had a playful atmosphere that made everyone want to participate even if they did not feel creative at first. The flow and the impulses are the same in every creative process. The participants worked in groups and created ideas and then they gave their ideas to another group and got another group's ideas to interpret and continue working with. The participants were surprised that they could do so much with so little. The results were impressive. They worked with simple questions in a structured process and it was like a big playground with endless possibilities. Time limits made the participants come to decisions quickly. The participants felt there was something powerful about working with something outside your own art form. Keđja makes people come together in the creative process even if their roles are not exactly creative – that is great!

### **Discussion: Meet the Home Comers**

**Wednesday May 5**

With Björn Säfsten and Kajsa Sandström (Sweden), Kathrin Bigler (Switzerland) and Victor Hernandez (Spain). Moderator: Karene Lyngholm, Artistic Director (Norway.)

The Swedish dancers/choreographers Björn Säfsten and Kajsa Sandström (originally from Umeå) shared their experiences and thoughts on working abroad. Moderator was Karene Lyngholm, Artistic Director of Dansens Hus in Oslo.

The two dancers Björn and Kajsa also brought two friends; Victor Hernandez, a composer from Madrid, and Kathrin Bigler, a writer and director from Bern.



Björn talks a bit about the expectations in the word "home comer" – you feel like you should bring or achieve something.

Kajsa talks about "the home comer festival" at NorrlandsOperan. They talk about the Umeå audience and Kajsa says that she feels as if she cannot fool them; if the Umeå audience get it then it is really communicating.

Victor declares that your sense of home is related to how outside yourself you live and on your relation to reality. He feels more at home in Stockholm than in Madrid because of the people he hangs out with, the context.

Catherine thinks that home is where the people you click with are and it doesn't matter if it is a big city or a small town.

Björn says the artistic process is not related to any geographical belonging even if you are influenced by the places you visit. Kajsa says the national identity is not included in the artistic work.

Then they talk about ash clouds and pollution and the possibilities of not being able to be a home comer because you cannot go away. Björn then states that here in Norrland we are used to driving very far and that he believes in slow-travelling where you feel that you are travelling, the sensation of travelling. He also says that conferences and meetings can happen without us meeting, that some things are not so crucial but that we would of course lose some things in not meeting face to face.

Victor likes the awareness of travelling and that you can feel it in your body. He wants to meet in person – that is more life. He considers himself a victim of this Internet thing and technology.

## **Lab with Kristine Slettevold: The Dancer's Creative Process**

**Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, May 4 - 6**

Kristine Slettevold is a Norwegian freelance dancer, choreographer and teacher in the field of contemporary dance, living in Sweden since 2004.

Kristine Slettevold's workshop *The Dancer's creative process* offers dancers a chance to discuss and deepen their understanding of their own methods. The starting point is a movement material which the participants get to work with in both a theoretical and a practical manner. The aim is to find a more dynamic way for a dancer to approach new movements. Wednesday morning the workshop is presented in the auditorium.



The participants started with a material given by Kristine and they then continuously wrote down their thoughts while working with the material. After the first day's workshop, each partaker had a text with their thoughts on the process. They had a process of focusing on the process. What is happening when I do this, and that, or this?

The participants have written texts about their processes and the various texts are about what the difference is between dance and movement, what dance is contributing to the humanity or the society, about being aware of every thought and feeling. When the participants present their work they continuously reflect on their phrases, movements, feelings and thoughts. Is it possible to have a process without creativity? You need creativity to solve problems. There could be less or more creativity. Keep the process on while presenting the work to see what happens with the work with an audience.

The dancers think there is a difference between working in the studio and working in front of an audience. It is more difficult to hear the rhythm inside with the audience. It is hard to avoid the performativity when you have an audience expecting something.

### **Lab with Helena Jónsdóttir: Get out of the hole and into the whole** **Wednesday May 5**

Helena Jónsdóttir is an Icelandic dancer, choreographer and a price winning film and video artist. She describes the camera as her favourite dance partner.

*Get out of the hole and into the whole* is the name of Helena Jónsdóttir's workshop and the lab allows the participants to explore and play with ideas



without having an idea on how it will end. Helena gives the participants tools to use when they are stuck or when they need or want to expand their work. They use magazines, scissors, glue sticks, pens, newspapers and several other tools to exercise storytelling and to learn the potential of every story.



## Summary Session

### Thursday May 6

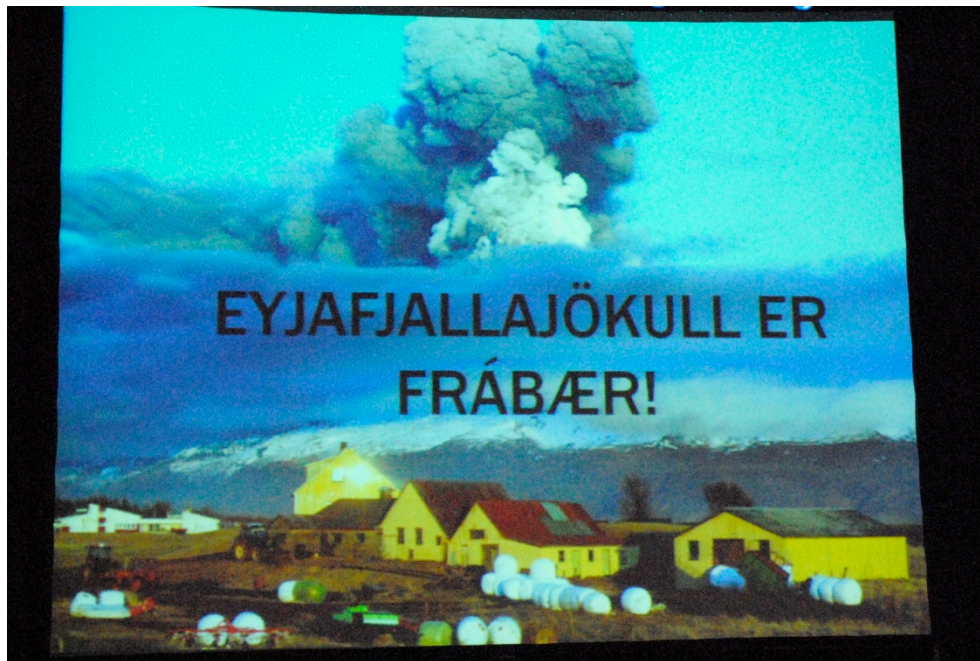
Christina Molander thanks everyone, all participants, co-partners, crew, volunteers, Midgårdsskolan, artists, technicians and workshop leaders.

Then there are reflections and evaluation of keðjaUmeå by several participants. Here are some of the reflections:

“keðjaUmeå opened up my mind, gave me new ideas, it is not scary to meet like this, have a chance to learn new things, to expand, cooperate, enthusiasm – a word to sum it up, the joy and the pain of the creative process, not only look at dance but through dance, it takes courage, persistence, patience and practice, action and theory is not so far apart as one might believe, to express in words the movements and the thoughts and feelings, the whole keðja encounter is a creative process, I started to believe in the Nordic connection, stimulating seminar, the potential in working with something else than your specific art form, the first keðja meeting where the artist is on the same level as every other

professional, need constructive honesty with mutual respect and trust, warm small talk and the little things, the labs – when they ended the real magic started, huge energy, new term – instant friends”.

After this there was a presentation of keðjaReykjavik by Ása Richardsdóttir. The theme for the Reykjavik encounter is Melting pot. The event takes place in October and the keðjaReykjavik special volcanic task force was created in April. They are making sure the participants can come to Reykjavik in October – they will get them there and they will take care of them.



### **Closing lecture by Dragan Klaic: For an Open Dance World**

Dr. Dragan Klaic is a theatre scholar and cultural analyst (NL). His fields of engagement, among others, are European cultural policies and international cultural cooperation.

Klaic describes the performing arts as public goods in a very consumer based society. He talks about commercial spectacular shows with huge budgets and how they affect the circumstances for everyone outside the commercial context. It is creating a habit, a notion of a good night out. If public theatre/dance imitates the commercial it loses its credibility.

The public theatre/dance is driven by the artistic vision and the commercial works on the hit/flop polarity. Public venues need to make themselves differ from



the commercial venue; be a resource of deliberative democracy. It is ultimately a question about the quality of public space.

Dragan Klaic claims that it is indeed a really big achievement to get someone to come to your performance, because the competition is strong – TV, gym, surfing the Internet, cinema, restaurant, read a book and so on. He also encourages the audience to not complain of the media image but to create their own media.

The commercial exploitation of the human body draws much more people than the work with and exploring of the body in contemporary dance. We are non commercial entities but we are in the market, we cannot ignore the market.

The lecture is very interesting and brilliant and Dr. Dragan Klaic is an outstanding speaker with a lot of charisma.



## **Notes by Anna Karlander**

### **May 3 – 5**

#### **Producers' meeting**

##### **Monday May 3**

This session was organized by Magnus Nordberg, production manager at Loco-Motion production office (Sweden).

Purpose of the meeting: to discuss the role/s of the producer or production manager in the artistic process. The process of decision making in creating a production is quite broad and it is not only the artist who makes these decisions.

Initially the meeting discussed the titles "producer" vs. "project manager" or "productionmanager". At Loco Motion they have decided to use production manager since it is more inclusive than only producer.

Magnus Nordberg: The artistic process is a process but without a clear beginning or end. An artistic work is an always ongoing work and development, and each project is just one part of the artistic whole. This is not always evident to people not involved in this type of work.

When working within the artistic process everything needs to be creative, not only the art in itself! In free lancing the methods and processes are actually completely free but still most people tend to structure their work rather traditionally, based on the (larger) cultural institutions. Do we need a change in the process? In that case how? Does a different process, different administration etc., change the artistic outcome or not?

Some key words defined by Magnus Nordberg:

Courage – have courage to go into the process even if the project is very undefined. Know the artist. Believe in the idea.

- Confidence – stick with the idea, even when difficulties arise, and they will(!). It is not easy though, and money is an issue but not the key issue in this type of work.
- Character – the production manager is the person to give the artistic idea a body, fill it with something concrete, tangible. This is often not fully acknowledged, but perhaps it should be more so.
- Control – the artist must be able to rely on the production manager to set the outlines for economy, time frames etc.

Participants of the meeting were asked to think for a moment about their own artistic processes in their respective work places and positions.

From discussions based on Magnus Nordberg's presentation a number of more "C-words" and other important aspects of the production manager – artist relationship arose:

- Communication • Companionship • Commitment • Continuity

"Spokesperson" – can be a good description for the production manager and the relationship with the artist, especially if it is a long lasting working relationship. Be sure to be clear with what you want in your role, how involved you want to be in the artistic process and in other processes of the production. If you do not agree and can not communicate in a good way it is better to go separate ways.

Analysis and strategy for the future – falls mainly on the production manager to realize. It is often difficult for the artist to have all this in mind while creating a new piece etc. The strategic work in view of the larger culture policy reality is/should be a very important part of the production work.

Magnus Nordberg concluded that the policies and grant's systems (in Sweden) unfortunately change often and quickly which of course makes it more difficult to have a continual cooperation with specific arrangers/venues. There is a real need to build such agreements to have continual support from for example a venue over a longer period of time. This is quite common in several European countries but not in Sweden and not so much in other Nordic countries either. Is a reason for this, besides the economic one, that the countries are rather small with not very many venues?

The situation of dance and subsidies in Estonia was also discussed since it seem to differ quite strongly from the Nordic countries, no doubt in part because of the youth of the democracy and state as is now. Funding is given directly to a few (national) agencies where the producers work to find artists and projects to give funding to. It is not so much the other way around that the artists apply for money themselves. Therefore the producers and administrators are in a position of power, they can lead and decide the direction of artistic projects. This is not common as a system in other Nordic countries regarding dance and contemporary performing arts. However in the film business it is much more common that a producer is awarded a grant to e. g. develop an idea or a manuscript, and for that gather the expertise and professionals needed.

#### **Ideas from the participants for a Producers' meeting at the next Keõja:**

- use of social media and the private vs public spaces, where do we draw the line?
- continuation of the discussion on artist – production manager collaboration
- wish to bring together the choreographers and producers/production managers in a joint meeting.

**Suggestions how to go on after Keðja Reykjavík this autumn:**

Founding a Nordic Producers' Network. Could be possible to hold a meeting about this already in August 2010 in connection to the Gothenburg Dance and Theatre Festival. Suggestion for and by producers in Västra Götalandsregionen to carry this idea further.

**Lecture by Cecilia Roos: The Dancer's Perspective**

**Tuesday May 4**

Cecilia Roos, (CR), began the lecture by pointing out that her research is not the truth, but her findings.

**Background**

CR has been a dancer for 30 years. The first professional production she was part of as a dancer was Margaretha Åsberg's *Pyramiderna*. Åsberg asked the dancers to write down their own reflections during the work process, to keep a sort of diary. CR found this difficult and did not know what to write at first. The insight that all eight dancers had so very different approaches to and experiences of the process was revelatory to CR: there are many different "truths".

CR is now professor in Dance Interpretation at the University of Dance and Circus (Sweden), and is carrying out research about the dancer's perspective presented in short here.

**Research questions**

How does a dancer develop her method/s in artistic work?<sup>1</sup> Can there be a method?

**Point of departure**

Movement development can be done in so many ways, from/with the choreographer or from someone else, in collaboration, improvisation etc. It can be imitating, copying, interpreting movements. But there will always be differences in interpretation with each individual. It is a complex web of input that the dancer must take in, process and explore possibilities of – explore with all senses. It is a long work of analysis, going over the material again and again. Often elements of surprise will arise during the process, e.g. when putting different sequences together.

**Thesis**

There is an internal and an external type of work or gaze: different approaches to why and how a movement can be initiated, and different needs of clarity for different dancers. (CR is searching for better vocabulary in the field as a part of

---

<sup>1</sup> Cecilia Roos noted that during her lecture she would refer to the dancer as a "she", simply because she is a woman herself and that this research and presentation is reflecting her as an individual.

her research.) The external gaze is more directly what you see, while the internal gaze is connected to the inherent knowledge of the movement. This duality, the two gazes, need to meet. Therefore consciousness and reflection are the most important parts of the dancer's artistic process.

### **An applied example**

Margaretha Åsberg once asked CR to imitate a statue at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm. The statue represented a young girl standing. CR found the task difficult, how would she find the sense of the statue's posture. It did not fall into place until she found a way of joining the external and internal gaze: both the visual image and the feeling from within.

Through this CR could find the core of the statue's expression and she could then imitate it standing still for hours without getting tired.

### **Aims of the research**

To strengthen the active process of the dancer in the artistic work and rehearsal period. To proclaim and promote the intelligent dancer. To reclaim the dancer's status as an important part of the artistic process: every dancer represents a unique interpretation of each movement.

Focus of CR's continued research will be further development of the meeting of the internal and external gaze. She is also collaborating, or planning to collaborate, with some researchers from other disciplines such as phenomenology and philosophy, and also filmmakers.

## **Lecture by Helena Jónsdóttir: To understand the menu, experience the meal! Tuesday May 4**

Helena Jónsdóttir, dancer and choreographer from Iceland, held a lecture on dance for camera and her own work in this field.

She described how she managed to develop from being a dancer, appearing in films, and gradually moving on to production and editing of films. From this experience she realized that she could combine the two expressions dance and film.

The art of dance for camera is quite young in itself and in Iceland it has only existed for about ten years. A few Icelanders have made film with dance/movement before but Jónsdóttir was still a pioneer in her country when she started out.

Her films do not have a lot of "pure" dance or trained dancers in them, but there is always movement. She is always looking for the simplicity of the movement.

Dance film should be of importance and value for everyone working with dance, and of course film. These films have the potential of reaching a much larger audience and letting them encounter dance, than live performances ever will. So - take the power, make a stand and claim the importance of dance films!

Handy tips from Jónsdóttir:

- Network – it is through your national and international contacts that opportunities will open up.
- Filming dance doesn't have to be so complicated. Make it simple and do good work in the editing phase.
- Look up all the festivals for dance films (60-70 in the world!) and try to get your film screened.

## **Digital Dance Archives**

### **Wednesday May 5**

This session was organized by Niklas Rydén, composer, film maker and writer (Sweden).

Presentations of

- Arkivet för svensk dans och koreografi, by Åsa Unander-Scharin, choreographer, PhD
- Scenarkivet, by Niklas Rydén.

Main aim of the session was to present the current situation of these web based archives and address issues for the future.

The dance field in general in Sweden is rather poorly updated in this type of digital documentation and organisation, probably because the possibilities of technological documentation have not existed for very long. The digital dance archives were constructed to change this and aim to be sources of extensive information easily accessible on the Internet. The inherent ephemerality of dance needs to be addressed and counteracted on.

### **Arkivet för svensk dans och koreografi The Archive for Swedish Dance and Choreography**

This national archive, spanning in time from the 1930's to the present, aims to be an archive and source for research for anyone interested in professional dance. Artistic work in a research context is one of the most important issues.



Today ca 25% of the dance productions that have been created in Sweden within the set time frame can be found in the archive. It takes a long time to collect the data and to process it into different search categories – Title/Work, Person/Group, Venue, Material – as well as making the connections between the different categories. The visitor can choose to search for something/someone within each of these categories and will also get new suggestions on information related to the search. The smallest unit in the archive is each individual performance date. The category Material holds information on press cuttings and reviews, programmes, photos and video material (short clips of 2-3 minutes because of issues of copyright).

Motion Capture is another function of the archive. It is most often used in creating motion in computer game figures and animated film, but here it is used as a tool for documentation of the danced movement. The motion capture gives the movement a very distinct and clear expression, detached from the dancer. Thus far the motion capture animations made of dance pieces are presented in 2D in the archive. To enable the visitor to choose point of view etc for him/herself will need extra software that has not yet been financed.

The archive is not fully open to the general public yet and not yet translated into English. The first version of the archive can be viewed at [www.dansdatabasen.se](http://www.dansdatabasen.se)

The temporary address for the new version is  
[www.liquid.se/ddb/dansdatabasen.html](http://www.liquid.se/ddb/dansdatabasen.html)

**Scenarkivet** [www.scenarkivet.se](http://www.scenarkivet.se)

The archive presents the history and artistic programme of the venues Atalante in Gothenburg and Moderna Dansteatern in Stockholm. The archive is also affiliated to Dansstationen in Malmö.

Search categories are Performances, Persons and Venues. An English version with the headlines translated is available. Certain statistics can be withdrawn from the database, such as number of participants in a production, number of male/female participants and so on. The video material made public is all shot at these venues and will in the future be put on the Vimeo site and be accessible either completely free or with a password.

Scenarkivet is recently allied with Dansens Hus in Denmark, sharing a platform/database with – [www.dansearkiv.dk](http://www.dansearkiv.dk) This has not yet been presented in Sweden.

The number of hits on the webpage is very good, each day between 100 and 1000 visitors ca.

## **Challenges now and in the future**

- Economic aspects – to receive sufficient funding to keep the databases updated and to continue the development.
- Technical aspects – to be able to partake in and even lead the development.

## **Funding**

The two archives have been funded in similar ways with project based grants from the Swedish state ("Access-projekt") and several other sources such as private or state foundations. The economic situation has been and is still difficult since several attempts to persuade the Swedish cultural department to agree to a continual funding have failed.

## **Discussion**

The presentations were followed by a discussion of the possibilities of these archives.

One of the issues particularly discussed was copyright. There was a general thought that the now existing regulations on what is allowed to make public on the Internet or not will probably change quite soon. The development of Internet itself will be interesting to follow during the next few years. One aspect that was ventilated was that whoever makes a work of art while being financially supported by the Swedish state grants system should have an obligation to document and make that documentation public within these types of archives.