



fertile ground

an evaluation of keõja 2012-2015

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**FERTILE GROUND
- AN EVALUATION OF
keðja 2012-2015**

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Contents

| | |
|--|---------|
| Executive Summary | 9 |
| 1. Introduction | 14 |
| 2. keōja Evaluation Process and Values | 15 |
| 3. keōja 2012-2015 Overview | 18 |
| 4. keōja Encounters | 24 |
| 5. keōja Wilderness | 34 |
| 6. keōja Writing Movement | 46 |
| 7. keōja Think Tanks | 54 |
| 8. keōja Mentoring | 62 |
| 9. keōja Project Management | 70 |
| 10. Communicating keōja | 80 |
| 11. keōja's Wider Impacts | 86 |
| 12. keōja Values | 92 |
| 13. Concluding Questions | 100 |
| Acknowledgements | 102 |
| Postscript | 103 |
| Annex A - Evaluation Consultation | 106 |
| Annex B - Documentation and Online Resources | 110 |

2012-2015:
ENCOUNTERS
RESIDENCIES
THINK TANKS
MENTORING
WRITING MOVEMENT

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Fertile Ground is an evaluation report reviewing the activities, processes and achievements of keðja 2012-2015, an initiative that aimed to mobilise and develop contemporary dance and the dance community in the Nordic and Baltic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

keðja 2012-2015 had five activity strands encompassing networking, artistic creation, dance criticism, capacity building, touring and sustainability. The project was co-financed by the EU's Culture Programme 2007-2013 and involved twelve partner organisations in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden.

keðja was initiated in 2007 by six dance organisations in the region who developed keðja 2008-2010, a programme centred on regional dance conferences called Encounters. From this springboard, an enlarged Nordic-Baltic partner network identified the needs and creative impulses that became the keðja 2012-2015 activities. The programme aimed to create opportunities for professionals and others in the dance community to meet, analyse, develop, produce and share.

The evaluation was commissioned by keðja 2012-2015, who asked evaluation experts Judith Staines and Mary Ann DeVlieg to undertake an in-depth review of the activities and achievements. This took place towards the end of the project. *Fertile Ground* offers partners a reflection on the processes and outcomes of keðja, and can inform emerging follow-up initiatives.

OVERVIEW

The report covers keðja 2012-2015's five activity strands (Encounters, Wilderness, Writing Movement, Think Tanks and Mentoring), with cross-cutting areas of project management and communication. It examines the wider impacts and proposes a values-based grid to assess the process and outcomes. *Fertile Ground* concludes with key questions for any future keðja evolution.

Encounters: at the heart of keðja, Encounters were annual regional conferences that attracted around 200 stakeholders of every type from the Nordic-Baltic dance community. They were organised in Tallinn, Klaipeda and Mariehamn.

Wilderness: a residency programme for ten dance artist groups in remote and rural areas, allowing space to engage

with nature and inhabitants of peripheral local communities and to develop creative work. Twenty residencies took place in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Latvia and Norway.

Writing Movement: a mobilisation of writers, publishers and others committed to strengthening the critical discourse on dance, Writing Movement organised workshop labs in all Nordic-Baltic partner countries. It commissioned and translated new writing on dance and published a 'catalogue'.

Think Tanks: expert groups brought together diverse stakeholders to create concrete action plans for issues raised in the previous keðja years. The focus areas were Touring (developing a Nordic-Baltic touring circuit pilot) and Sustainability (strategies to improve resources and infrastructure).

Mentoring: a scheme was developed to address a lack of skills in communication and business management in the independent dance sector and matched 12 sets of mentors and mentees, coming from all the Nordic-Baltic countries. Mentoring sessions took place over two years.

The project had a tiered **Project Management** structure sharing responsibilities among the experienced partners and others. The partnership comprised Dansehallerne (DK) as Project Leader, with ten co-organisers: Artists' Group Fish Eye (LT), Bora Bora (DK), Dance Info Finland (FI), Dance Information Norway (NO), Dansearena nord (NO), MAD Production (FI), New Theatre Institute of Latvia (LV), SITE Sweden (SE), SL-Association of Independent Theatres Iceland, Union of Estonian Dance Artists (EE) and associated partner Kultur i Väst (SE). The Project Leader took on the major tranche of management and financial tasks. The activity strands were managed by the co-organisers, singly and in teams, through a devolved coordination process which allowed a degree of autonomy. Communications were organised both centrally and by the activity strand managers, using a range of tools and approaches, online and offline.

IMPACTS AND BENEFITS

The evaluators found a high degree of international connection and synergy within the keðja activity strands and amongst the many national and local partners. Encounters were the main 'glue' that brought together all activities and bridged the community of stakeholders. Wilderness mixed artists, rural communities and residency hosts in five countries. Writing Movement broke the professional isolation of

dance critics in eight countries and catalysed a remarkable number of local collaborations. Think Tanks were synergetic by nature, creating a forum for different types of dance professionals. Mentoring linked mentors and mentees across borders and raised professional levels.

Some of those consulted commented on a perceived lack of connection or interaction between the keōja activity strands. There were indications that external audiences varied in their understanding of keōja, many only knowing the part they engaged with. Interconnectedness was not a key priority in the EU project proposal, but the evaluators nevertheless found the overall project formed a singular critical mass. Perhaps some of the communications did not hit their targets and documentation of some activities was patchy. Finding enough time within the modest administration budget allocated by EU Culture Programme regulations was a constant problem, but overall the activity programme was coherent and complementary. It seemed that the activity strand management benefited from the freedom to develop its own pathways, and achieved results without enforced interaction with other thematic areas. As the keōja 2012-2015 project ends, the potential it generated is being unlocked through a range of spin-offs and planned legacy projects.

Substantial learning took place for project participants and co-organisers. Improved competence in managing large, complex international or EU projects was cited by the latter. Participants derived different benefits depending on their area of engagement: professional networks of mentees, new dance productions inspired by Wilderness now touring Europe, improved writing skills and published work, are among those quoted. Respondents unanimously agreed that keōja achieved its overarching aim to facilitate mutual learning about contemporary dance within and between the Nordics and Baltics and thus continued building the community it started in 2007.

ADDING GOOD VALUE

A grid of six value-based dimensions was developed by the evaluators to analyse keōja's methods and achievements. They looked at how **adaptive, developmental, diverse, synergetic, generative** and **visionary** keōja activities had been, the suite of values creating the acronym 'adds good value'.

There was evidence of all of these dimensions within keōja. An impressive range of stakeholders, countries and peripheries were involved. In its wide breadth, through the communi-

ty and synergies generated by touching a diversity of dance activists, as well as its capacity to evolve directly from previously identified problematics and yet adapt to different contexts, keōja can be considered a visionary initiative. It has done - and is doing - its part to ensure that the Nordic-Baltic ground continues to be fertile for sustaining a constant re-emergence and growth.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Undertaking their consultation and analysis when the future directions of keōja are under review by stakeholders and should, in any case, be led by the participants rather than external consultants, the evaluators decided against a prescriptive set of recommendations. Observations were included in the evaluation commentaries attached to each activity strand and cross-cutting area. Instead, the evaluators felt it would be more productive to conclude with key questions and reflection points to inspire current and future keōja organisers as they plan their next steps. The six pointers were:

- **Use it or lose it?** What is the price of drawing a line and concluding keōja?
- **One keōja or many?** Should keōja as a cluster of projects continue or should the activity strands become independent entities?
- **Us or them?** What are the advantages and disadvantages for the Nordic-Baltic keōja dance community to open and let others in?
- **The 'final' result: an oxymoron?** Chain reactions can be compromised if good initiatives stop before they have a chance to set down roots and grow further.
- **KIS - Keep it Simple:** In a future keōja, what must be done centrally and what can be done by others? What is most important and who can do it best?
- **NOISE:** This alternative analysis using Needs, Opportunities, Improvements, Strengths and Exceptions is recommended as an approach to maximise team effectiveness and positivity.

What can be concluded from the materials provided and collected, is that keōja 2012-2015 accomplished an enormous amount of work for, with, and by, an increasingly bonded contemporary dance community in the Nordic and Baltic countries, contributing towards addressing imbalances in the region, and touching probably every type of profile active in the sector, from student and artist to manager and policy-maker.

keđja is a complex, ambitious and impressive initiative. Its breadth and variety are a testimonial to the imagination, creativity, passion, endurance and vision of its artists, architects and executors who believe that the 'ephemeral' art of dance can be supported, developed, described, documented, and shared. Fertile ground indeed.







develop
& PRODUCE

1. Introduction

Fertile Ground reviews the activities and achievements of **keðja 2012-2015**, a contemporary dance development programme in the Nordic and Baltic countries which aimed to create opportunities for professionals and others in the dance community to meet, analyse, develop, produce and share.

This was delivered through a diverse activity palette of large-scale meetings, workshops and publishing activity supporting dance writing, artistic residencies in some of the furthest corners of the Nordic-Baltic region, a professional skills mentoring scheme and expert groups' reflections on the infrastructure and conditions necessary for dance in the region. The project was co-financed by the EU's Culture Programme 2007-2013 and involved twelve partners in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden.

This evaluation report was commissioned to provide an external analysis of the project, informed by a detailed consultation with partners, participants and existing documentation. The aim was to provide a balanced reflection on the three year project, reviewing the final results against those it set out to achieve, and taking into account the wider context.

keðja 2012-2015 developed out of an earlier project which started in 2008. The intensive process of networking and building professional capacity within the Nordic-Baltic dance community which was achieved through **keðja - dance encounters 2008-2010** and the **keðjaAarhus** Encounter meeting in 2011 laid the 'fertile ground' for **keðja 2012-2015**. This project marks a further step in the process of creating shared vision and actions within the Nordic-Baltic dance community.

Encounters

> 10 Encounters in 8 countries and self governing areas

Wilderness

> 10 residency places in smaller communities in 5 countries

Performances touring in Europe

Writing Movement

> Workshops, catalogues, articles. Writing Movement Network

Think Tanks

> Nordic-Baltic Dance Touring Network. Sustainability recommendations

Mentoring Scheme

> Mentors and mentees. Nordic Artistic Management Circle

2. keōja Evaluation Process and Values

2.1. Methodology

APPROACH

keōja has been an ambitious initiative, in terms of scope, size and vision. The evaluators' approach was to balance the quantitative and the qualitative evidence that we found. Quantitative data is important (and is normally well-covered in reports to the EU). This type of information was used, but the evaluation also wanted to:

- examine the evolution of the project over time
- identify its legacies and sustainability
- look at perceptions and attitudes of both participants and organisers
- understand the professional competences required for international cultural collaboration
- look at the processes undertaken by artists, cultural managers and funding bodies involved in keōja

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

The evaluators looked at a range of documentation, provided by keōja's overall project manager, co-organisers, the activity strand partners, Nordic funders and others freely available on the internet (such as videos, blogs and web sites). keōja overall project manager Kamma Siegumfeldt created a Dropbox and supplied nearly 100 separate documents and many web links. All requests made to her by the evaluators for documents were promptly fulfilled. A list is provided in Annex B and included:

- the EU application and documentation
- materials found on keōja and the partners' own websites
- written, face-to-face and skype interviews
- other documentation, evaluations, policy documents
- testimony from people who have witnessed, but were not partners to the project

The evaluators participated in various keōja co-organisers' meetings during the ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform in Oslo, Norway in December 2014 and used the occasion for numerous group and individual interviews.

Five separate themed evaluation questionnaires were sent out to 131 people involved in the management and different activity strands of the keōja project. This exercise aimed to reach all the key players and beneficiaries of the project, from co-organisers to artists, writers, mentors, mentees, residency hosts and others. Some had played a role in several different activity areas and were asked for separate responses on each. A total of 79 responses were received, a very creditable 60%

evaluation response overall, and with representation from all Nordic and Baltic countries. The list of respondents can be found in Annex A.

EVALUATION PARTNERSHIP

The evaluators, Judith Staines and Mary Ann DeVlieg, bring different strengths and interests to the evaluation. These include extensive knowledge of the European Commission's selection and evaluation processes, traditional and alternative methods of project assessment, long experience of evaluating cultural projects, first-hand knowledge and experience of: policy-making, project management, information platforms, social media and digital communication tools in the cultural field, international networking and collaboration.

Each evaluator had her own areas to investigate initially before sharing perceptions at a later stage. These included Wilderness, Mentoring, Communications, Writing Movement, Think Tanks and Project Management. Both looked at the Encounters, the project as a whole, its legacies and values.

While the evaluators both started with some knowledge of the keōja project, it soon became clear that the full extent of the project was far more complex and multi-layered than they first thought. At times the project seemed to take the form of an iceberg - there was so much more going on under the surface. This was a very useful aspect of the evaluation process, since they naturally assumed the role of culturally interested professionals, knowledgeable about the sector but on the edge of the keōja community. The evaluation was a form of journey in trying to understand the project better from the various perspectives, to balance those views and seek out the 'red thread' (or threads) that connected the keōja 2012-2015 chain of processes, activities, people and places.

2.2. Values

Inspired by UNESCO's work on culture and development which acknowledges that 'quantifying culture's role ... is a conceptual minefield', the evaluators decided to develop a set of values that are generally used as benchmarks in today's arts and culture sector, and that could be used as lenses to look at keōja's processes, projects and outcomes. These values are described in detail in Chapter 12.

The evaluators also valued self-evaluation and found that many of those consulted, particularly the co-organisers and those who took part in the group discussions in Oslo, were able to reflect critically and objectively on the project. This was instructive and constructive and is presented under the various chapters as 'self appraisal'.

2.3. Timetable and responsibilities

Kamma Siegumfeldt first invited the evaluators in June 2014 for a general conversation around the evaluation of keōja 2012-2015. Following clarification of the task and associated details, the evaluation proposal was discussed and agreed. Contracts were exchanged and signed in late September. A draft of the evaluation report would be delivered in mid-February 2015 with a final delivery date in mid-April.

Apart from a standard report with an executive summary, findings, methodology, annexes and so on, the evaluators agreed to comment on graphic design ideas. The responsibility of finding the designer and realising the graphic layout and design remained with keōja's overall project manager.

The report would assess keōja 2012-2015 within the general context of other contemporary dance initiatives in the Nordic-Baltic region including the previous keōja iterations, and include three levels:

- The extent to which keōja 2012-2015 attained the overall aims set out in the EU application
- How far the project management and activities met their objectives (learning outcomes, tangible and intangible legacies) for partners and participants
- Qualitative wider impact on the dance development and dance communities in the Nordic-Baltic region and countries, and beyond.

Following the evaluation timetable:

- October - December 2014: Planning, documentation review, devise & send questionnaires
- December 2014: Oslo meeting (preparation, interviews etc.)
- January 2015: documentation review, analysis of evaluation responses, Skype interviews
- January-February 2015: writing draft report
- March-April: revisions, graphic design, final report





DENMARK, **Sweden,**
Norway, Finland,
ICELAND, *Latvia,*
Estonia, LITHUANIA

3. keđja 2012-2015 Overview

3.1. Context and Programme Outline

keđja was originally initiated in 2007 by six dance organisations that wanted to develop the informal, sporadic 'Nordic Dance Meetings' that took place between 1999 and 2006. They identified the lack of Nordic networks, meeting places and structures for contemporary dance as factors limiting artistic exchange. Four dance information centres (Denmark, Finland, Lithuania and Norway), the Iceland Dance Company and Moderna Dansteatern in Sweden were involved. Dansens Hus (Denmark), a few years later to transform into Dansehallerne, was the Project Leader.

keđja - dance encounters 2008-2010 (subsequently described internally as keđjal) set out overall goals to 'create better possibilities for mutual exchange between dance makers and audiences throughout Europe' and to raise 'the awareness of dance, revealing potentials and facilitating development in all sectors of the art of dance'. keđja 2008-2010 centred on six Encounters (open dance conferences with around 200 participants) and a small series of workshops for dance managers in Baltic countries. The three-day Encounters were filled with workshops, performances, lectures, exhibitions, films and networking. They raised issues of common concern to the Nordic-Baltic contemporary dance professionals: education, touring and mobility, new media, the artistic process, audience development through work with children and youngsters and encounters between art forms. International guests were also invited as contributors to the regional reflections. EU support was granted from late 2007 to the end of 2010. Activities continued in 2011, funded mainly by the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme, Danish National Performing Arts Committee and Aarhus Kommune. An Encounter in Aarhus, Denmark (keđjaAarhus) was held and work was done to collectively write the EU application for the following keđja phase - one of the purposes of this evaluation.

The keđja overall project manager said that the keywords for the outcome of keđjal were identified as Empowerment and Mobilisation. These informed the development of the programme and objectives for keđja 2012-2015.

keđja 2012-2015 was a collaboration between 12 Nordic and Baltic contemporary dance organisations in eight countries - five Nordics: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the three Baltics: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. keđja 2012-2015

(keđja2) focused on the ideas and issues raised in the previous years and took them further, channelling them into concrete activities. Five 'activity strands' dealt with networking, artistic creation, dance writing, capacity building, touring & sustainability.

keđja 2012-2015 engaged a wide range of target groups in the dance community as a whole (including the general public) either through direct participation in keđja activities, communication activities including internet presence and collaborations with press and media, or indirectly by influencing policy-making and working conditions.

It is important to stress that keđja's geographic-professional focus was strictly the Nordic-Baltic region. The whole of keđja, since 2008, can be seen as a concerted effort over eight years to develop the contemporary dance sector in, by, with and from this region. Although others were welcome to participate in any of the open events (and indeed, 'foreign' facilitators were used on occasion), keđja definitely had a determined Nordic-Baltic focus.

3.2. Activity Strands

keđja 2012-2015 comprised five activity strands and the project's overall co-ordination function:

Encounters: These conferences (following the format and function of previous years) served as annual meeting points to bring together people involved in the Nordic-Baltic contemporary dance sector, to share concerns, facilitate mutual understanding, promote networking and develop the Nordic-Baltic dance community. They hosted discussions or events connected to the other keđja activities and allowed the project partners to meet, plan and share. Encounters were held in Estonia in 2012, in Lithuania in 2013 and on the Åland Islands in 2014. Co-organisers responsible were, respectively, the Union of Estonian Dance Artists (EE), the artists' group Fish Eye (LT) and Dance Info Finland (FI).

Wilderness: Dance artists' residencies in rural and remote locations, inspired by nature and interacting with local communities. Ten artists' proposals were selected, hosted in a variety of settings in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Latvia and Norway. Resulting work was presented at keđja and other Nordic-Baltic events. The co-organisers responsible were SL-Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland (IS) as Wilderness mana-

ger, Bora Bora (DK), MAD Production (FI), New Theatre Institute of Latvia (LV) and Dansearena nord (NO).

Writing Movement: A range of writing workshops, calls for articles that were translated and published and a final keõja publication all aimed to develop the discourse on contemporary dance in the region, identify and encourage new approaches, new writers and publishers and find new ways to communicate with publics. The co-organiser and Writing Movement manager was Dance Information Norway (NO), working with national organisers (sometimes called local hosts or local collaborators) in each of the eight keõja countries.

Mentoring: Coaching by experienced producers, artists and managers aimed to improve the professional competences of 12 young or emerging self-producing artists/companies. Twelve mentoring couples representing all eight countries were involved. The co-organiser SITE (SE) was the Mentoring scheme manager together with keõja associated partner Kultur i Väst (SE).

Think Tanks: Two expert working groups met throughout the keõja period – one looked at issues around sustainability in the contemporary dance sector in the region and the other explored the feasibility of a Nordic-Baltic contemporary dance performance circuit. Both aimed for concrete results via action plans. Although all eight countries participated, representation from Latvia was limited. Dance Info Finland (FI) was the Think Tank manager for both Think Tanks.

Project Co-ordination: Dansehallerne, formed in 2012 from merging the city's two main dance organisations, Dansens Hus and Dansescenen, was the Project Leader. Dansehallerne's role was to coordinate the work of all partners and activity strands to achieve the desired aims, manage overall finances and budget control and liaise with the European Commission. In collaboration with all partners, Dansehallerne was tasked to co-ordinate the partners' own fundraising and keõja communications. Dansehallerne also was a contributing co-organiser within three activity strands.

3.3. People/Partners

All of the co-organising structures, including the Project Leader and also the one associated partner, either gave the task to an existing staff member or employed someone new to manage the keõja activities for which they were responsible. These are called (activity strand) managers and their names are listed in the Annex.

PROJECT LEADER AND CO-ORGANISERS

A co-organiser is a term used by the EU culture programme to designate the partners in a funded project who share the legal and financial responsibilities. keõja 2012-2015 included one 'associated partner' who shared some tasks but no financial responsibility, as well as a large number of very local partners and collaborators who executed, hosted or programmed various activities and events.

DENMARK

Dansehallerne – keõja Project Leader – In its large former factory space, **Dansehallerne** presents national and international contemporary dance and supports the professional contemporary dance community with a library and video collection. A project centre offers administrative assistance and coaching to choreographers. There are professional dance classes as well as dance workshops with children and youth. It has performance, rehearsal and exhibition spaces, international conference hosting, a cafe and bookshop. Dansehallerne is an independent institution supported by the Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of Copenhagen. In addition to its tasks as Project Leader, Dansehallerne also organised the Danish **Writing Movement** and **Think Tanks** activities, and contributed to **Mentoring**. The **overall keõja project manager** was employed by Dansehallerne.

Bora Bora – a national and international production centre for contemporary dance/performing arts. It co-produces domestic and international performances, organises festivals, laboratory experiments, residencies, workshops and manages Aarhus's venue for dance and visual theatre. Bora Bora was the Wilderness partner for Denmark, responsible for four Wilderness residencies in two folk high schools in Denmark. In addition, Bora Bora organised a showing of **Wilderness** work and a meeting for keõja partners in Aarhus in March 2015.

ESTONIA

Union of Estonian Dance Artists – a non-profit artistic association that brings together choreographers, dancers and dance

teachers, protects the rights of freelance dance artists and encourages professional development, the Union organised the **keõja Tallinn Encounter 2012**. It is establishing a strong Estonian dance network; it collects, disseminates and makes Estonian dance information visible through media and publishing. The Union organises training, dance and other art events and exchanges information between similar international organisations. The Union also collaborated in keõja **Writing Movement**.

FINLAND

Dance Info Finland (DIF) promotes Finnish dance development, aiming to improve its status and conditions in society. A broad-based expert organisation, DIF includes service and advisory work; reporting, publication and promotional activities; research, education and development projects and political advocacy. DIF is concerned with both domestic and internationally oriented work. A co-organiser of keõja 2008-2011, DIF assisted keõja 2012-2015 in overall planning and implementation, shared some of the **communications** work, organised **keõja Mariehamn Encounter 2014** and took on the task as **Think Tank manager**.

MAD Production is an independent producer of dance and the LOIKKA dance film festival, promoting dance films in Finland and internationally and supporting artistic development in this field. MAD was the **Wilderness** partner for Finland and oversaw residencies in two locations.

ICELAND

SL - the Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland comprises around 60 artistic groups. SL aims to maintain a vibrant creative community and safeguard the interests of independent professional performance artists. Active internationally, SL also operates Tjarnarbió, a newly renovated venue in the centre of Reykjavik. SL was responsible for overall co-ordination of all Wilderness activity as well as co-organising the Icelandic residencies, and engaged the **Wilderness** manager. SL also contributed to the **Mentoring** selection process.

LATVIA

New Theatre Institute of Latvia (NTIL) - NTIL encourages multi-faceted forms of performing arts such as new theatre, dance, performance, and circus locally and internationally. NTIL's activities include organising festivals; presenting, production and co-production; educational programmes and professional development; information exchange and international networking. NTIL works with established artists,

young professionals, students and audiences. It is a partner in many international projects and networks. NTIL was the **Wilderness** partner for Latvia and organised four residencies in two locations in Latvia.

LITHUANIA

Fish Eye artists' group gathers artists based in Klaipeda from design, choreography, contemporary dance, sculpture and art criticism to encourage ideas and technologies. They organise events including the annual International Festival of Contemporary Arts PLArTFORMA and present and collaborate with artists from Lithuania and abroad. Fish Eye supports the creation of new interdisciplinary works, interactive approaches and non-traditional venues, drawing attention to professional training and education schemes. Fish Eye organised the **keõja Klaipeda Encounter 2013** and assisted with **Writing Movement**.

NORWAY

Dance Information Norway (DIN) is a national information and competency centre disseminating knowledge about dance and developing new skills in the sector. DIN newsletters, seminars, historical documentation, production and publishing cover all dance activities in Norway and Norwegian dance companies abroad. DIN was charged to organise and co-ordinate **Writing Movement**, manage the network and support local Labs with content, disseminate information, and manage administration of speakers (taking on the task of **Writing Movement manager**). DIN was also responsible for administering the funding for the writing and translation of new texts on dance.

Dansearena nord is a regional competence and network centre for dance in Hammerfest Kommune, in northernmost Norway, with an international orientation towards the Barents region. It promotes dance, prioritising companies working, living or touring in the region, offering residencies and production support. Dansearena nord was the **Wilderness** partner in Norway and organised four residencies in Hammerfest and Stamsund.

SWEDEN

SITE is a production house for contemporary performing arts in Stockholm, with offices, meeting rooms and studios for rehearsals, production and performances. SITE is also a learning centre providing professional advice on production, touring, funding and marketing. SITE was responsible for planning

and implementing the **Mentoring** scheme and also the Welcome Workshop for **Wilderness** residency hosts. This was done in collaboration with associated partner, **Kultur i Väst**, a large regional cultural management resource for western Sweden, charged to develop cultural life in its region across all artforms. SITE and Kultur i Väst staff shared the task as **Mentoring managers**.

PARTICIPANTS

Encounters were open events, all aiming to bring together the widest possible range of Nordic-Baltic contemporary dance professionals and people interested in the art form: academics, students, audiences, artists, producers, programmers, professional support agencies, policy makers.

The Wilderness residencies placed choreographers, dance artists and (depending on the artistic proposal) musicians, filmmakers and designers into a diverse range of artists' residencies in remote and rural locations, such as folk high schools, culture centres and dance production centres, where they worked on creative projects and with local community participants.

Writing Movement focused on writers and publishers. Writing workshops were attended by dancers, choreographers, theatre or general performance critics, teachers, students, people interested in dance or interested in writing. Editors and publishers of newspapers, magazines, books and online journals were encouraged to report on the Writing Movement activities and/or publish selected texts.

Mentoring paired experienced arts managers, consultants, dance advisors, lecturers and trainers, producers, choreographers and artists with less experienced self-producing choreographers, dancers/performers, a festival artistic director and a producer.

Think Tanks: the seven main Sustainability Think Tank members included the directors of the Performing Arts Hub Norway and the Finnish Institute in Estonia, policy makers on the municipal level (Lund, Sweden) and national level (Ministry of Culture, Estonia), directors of the dance information centres in Lithuania and Finland and a Finnish freelance choreographer/dancer. The 14 main Touring Think Tank members included directors of dance information centres; national and regional dance organisations and dance house directors; producers and tour managers; artistic directors of festivals.

3.4. Places

keõja built on the well-established historical project of creating and reinforcing a sense of 'Norden' - the Nordic countries - and in addition embraced the Baltic countries. Events took place in all partner countries, with Wilderness residencies including rural as well as urban locations.

ENCOUNTERS LOCATIONS

- September 2012: keõja Tallinn, Estonia, with the theme 'Dance Partnerships'
- June 2013: keõja Klaipeda, Lithuania, with the theme, 'National Artistic Identity in Dance'
- August 2014: keõja Mariehamn, self-governing (Finnish) Åland Islands, with the theme, 'Building New Bridges and Sustaining the Community'

The next Encounter (not co-financed by the EU) is planned in Hammerfest, Norway, November 2015.

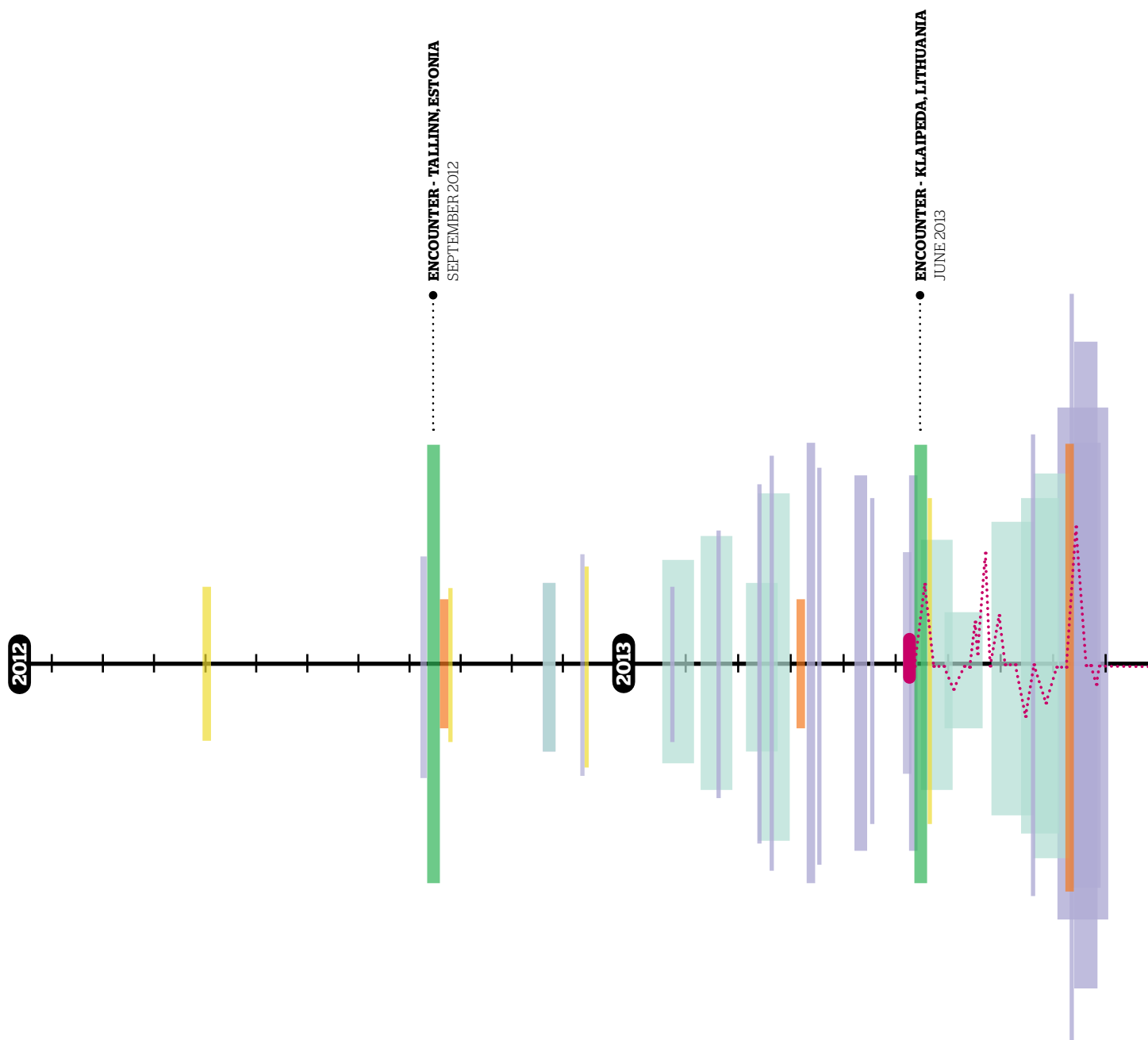
WILDERNESS LOCATIONS

- Two Danish folk high schools offering short training courses for young people in Denmark were involved - Toftlund and West Jutland.
- In Finland, artists were welcomed on Hailuoto island in the north, one of the biggest islands in the Gulf of Bothnia, and Kokko 1721, a traditional farm in rural mid-Finland used for artists' residencies.
- In Iceland, artists stayed in Egilsstaðir, east Iceland, working in a cultural centre based in a former abbatoir, as well as in Höfn í Hornafirði, a small community in the southeast.
- In Latvia, two communities welcomed the dance artists: Anaži, a small coastal town near the Estonian border and Brebene, a village in the southeast near a flood plain and nature centre.
- In Norway, the far northern town of Hammerfest hosted keõja artists; Nordland Visual Theatre in Stamsund, a small fishing village on the Lofoten archipelago, hosted the second residency.

WRITING MOVEMENT LOCATIONS

Writing Movement workshops or 'labs', varied according to the national organising partner, the situation of dance in their country and the organisations chosen to be the local venues. Twenty-one sponsored labs took place in diverse professional contexts in all eight Nordic-Baltic countries.

the activities TIMELINE



PARTNERS' MEETINGS/ CONTENT MANAGEMENT CIRCLES

Vilnius LT
Tallinn EE
Helsinki FI
Klaipeda LT
Copenhagen DK
Oslo NO
Aarhus DK

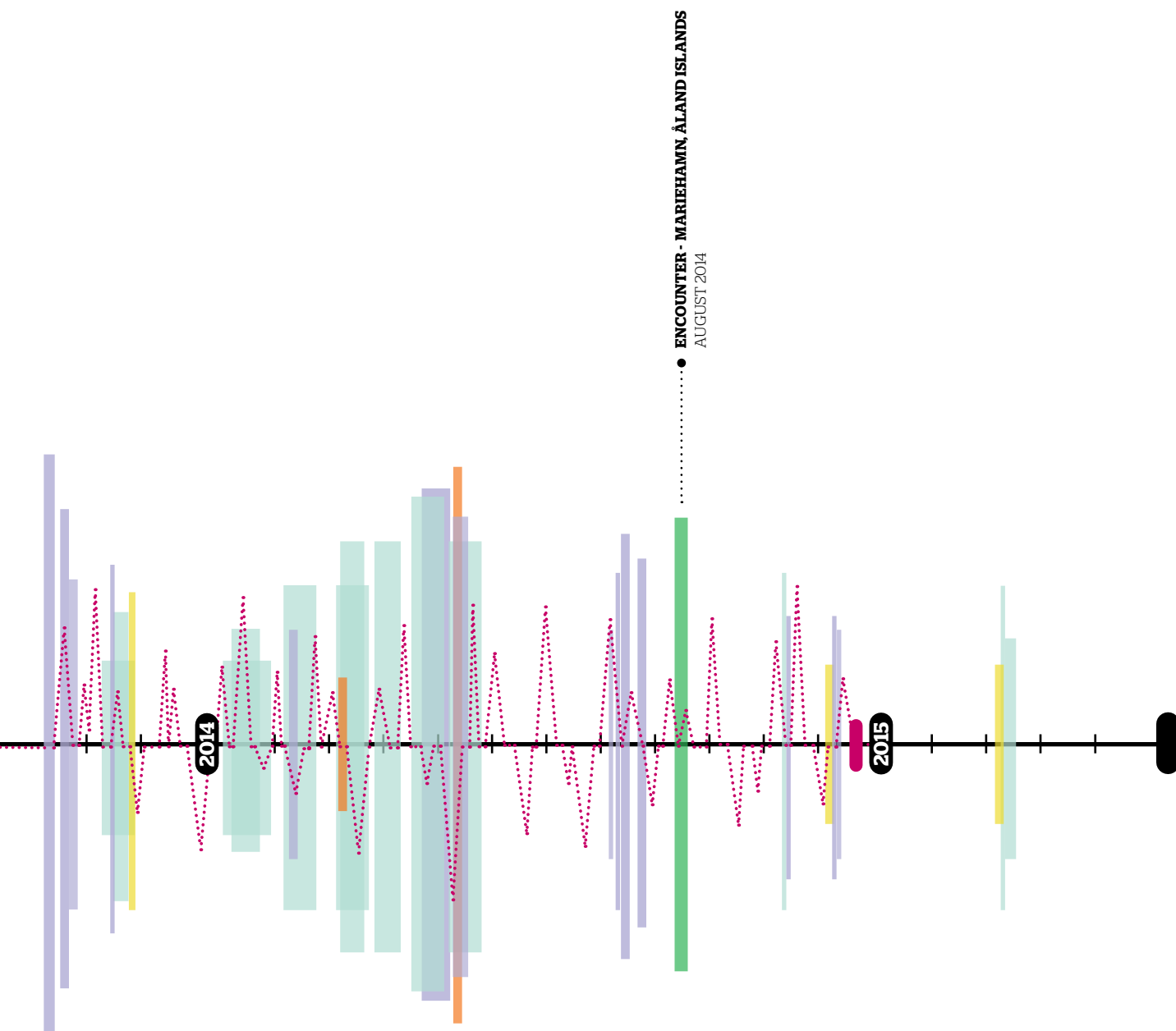
WRITING MOVEMENT

Tallinn EE
Helsinki FI
Klaipeda LT
Jurmala LV
Stockholm SE
Mariehamn ÅL
Oslo NO

Vilnius LT
Kaunas LT
Haapsalu EE
Gothenburg SE
Reykjavik ICE
Rzekne LV
Copenhagen DK

THINK TANK MEETINGS

Tallinn EE
Helsinki FI
Lund SE
Klaipeda LT
Stockholm SE
Copenhagen DK



The width of the bars represents the activity duration. Height is randomised.

ENCOUNTERS

Tallinn, EE
Klaipeda, LT
Mariehamn, ÅL

WILDERNESS

Göteborg SE
Hofn ICE
Egilsstaðir ICE
Hammerfest NO
Hailuoto FI
Dviete LV
Ainaži LV

Stamsund NO
Kangasniemi FI
Toftlund DK
Ringkøbing DK
Oslo NO
Brønnøysund NO
Mariehamn, ÅL

MENTORING SCHEME

Klaipeda LT
Various Nordic, Baltic and European settings
Mariehamn, ÅL

4. keõja Encounters

4.1. Introduction

They worked as a glue that held the overall project together and, without them, the keõja project would not have been the same.

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland

The strength of keõja to me has been the regular and open Encounters.

keõjaTallinn participant comment

The concept of the keõja Encounter was developed as the heart of the first keõja project, 2008-2010. Encounters were established as regional meeting points, 'human-sized' conferences attracting around 200 participants representing the whole range of stakeholders interested in contemporary dance in the Nordic and Baltic countries: artists, organisers, managers, producers, presenters, educators, students, dance writers, policy makers. They comprised panel discussions, lectures, both physical and discussion-type workshops, performances, dance film showings and pre-meetings for specialist groups such as producers or freelance choreographers. Meeting in a different city and country each time, Encounters were organised in tandem with key events such as dance festivals, and encouraged the local dance population to meet Nordic-Baltic colleagues and vice-versa. In keõja 2008-2010 six Encounters took place: Vilnius, Copenhagen, Kuopio, Oslo, Umeå and Reykjavik. A further Encounter was organised in Aarhus in 2011, outside the previous EU-funded programme. These multifaceted gatherings set the model for the Encounters in keõja 2012-2015.

Encounters emphasize networking and are a place for sharing results of the other keõja 2012-2015 activities as well as being the place for several of them to take place. In this way a fertile atmosphere is created, connecting people from many areas of the contemporary dance world to each other.

EU application text

This chapter looks in detail at the three keõja Encounters within the evaluation period and funded by the current EU grant: keõjaTallinn in 2012, keõjaKlaipeda in 2013 and keõja-Mariehamn in 2014. Outside the evaluators' remit is the keõja Encounter, currently being organised by Dansearena nord in Hammerfest, November 2015.

4.2. keõjaTallinn, Estonia 18-20 September 2012

For us as the organisers, to host such a great range of Nordic-Baltic dance activists was an important event not just for the Estonian dance scene but the country in general. It helped to say publicly that dance is important and a lot is going on.

Doris Feldmann, Union of Estonian Dance Artists

keõjaTallinn, the first Encounter of the new 'keõja2' was a tremendous challenge for the Estonian contemporary dance community, successfully met. Few EU countries could boast a foreword in the programme booklet of a contemporary dance event by their nation's President!

PROGRAMME

With an overall theme of 'leadership', several working sessions looked at how leadership functioned in the dance and the creative sector, as well as analysing the dance field's multi-form worker: dancer, choreographer, manager, producer, freelancer, employee etc. A session asking what the sector would look like in 2032 was accompanied by a call for texts, some printed in the programme (Finland, Iceland and Latvia). The keõja activity strands of Writing Movement and Think Tanks were active in both open and closed work sessions and there was a running focus on text and critique. Several movement and performance workshops were offered as well as artistic walks through the city. A new dance platform for Baltic contemporary dance, Baltic Bubble, hosted a residency and showing for three Baltic dance artists and provided five performances (three from Estonia, one from Latvia and one from Lithuania). The Fresh Tracks Europe network joined the Encounter with five performances and an introduction to their network. In total, there were 17 discussion/workshop sessions, 3 city tours and 11 performance-based events.

ORGANISERS/KEY PARTNERS

keõja has been really influential in Estonia. It is hard to convey just how big the influence has been. There is a definite causality. keõja was the outside force that brought in other dance organisations and pulled everyone together. It really has been quite remarkable. We in Estonia took the most out of keõja!

Raido Bergman and Doris Feldman,
Union of Estonian Dance Artists

keõjaTallinn was organised by the Union of Estonian Dance Artists. This was the first major event that the Union had organised, although it has been organising Uus Tants (contemporary dance platform) since 2011. The Union's new Board had just taken over, following a long period of internal discontent and threats of a schism, a few weeks before the EU approved the grant. 'keõja really was a force for the Union to continue and refresh itself so as not to miss the opportunity.'

The Union had not been part of the preliminary keõja planning process and, although they did choose the theme (artistic leadership), they were happy to inherit the structure and budget already developed. 'In a way it was easier - we probably could not have done it otherwise. We had to just jump in and run with it.'

As a result of this experience, the Union of Estonian Dance Artists and the Dance Education Union have now decided to merge, making a group of around 160 members. In addition, the Union now has regularly scheduled meetings with the Culture Ministry and also receives funding from them. 'The Ministry saw that the dance community started talking to one another and that no one was pulling only for their own side. There is a joint reflection - as partners - with the ministry how to finance dance.' The keõjaTallinn organiser's only regret is that not more individual Estonian dancers connected with keõja.

More than eight local partners were involved including the Tallinn Dance Academy, Telliskivi Creative District and a variety of venues: Kanuti Guild Hall, KUMU Art Museum's auditorium, Russian Theatre, F-Building, Sleeping Beauty Castle, Kiek in de K  k.

PARTICIPANTS

keõjaTallinn attracted 190 participants, mainly from the eight Nordic-Baltic countries: Estonia (43%), Sweden (12%), Finland (10%) and Denmark (9%). Three or four people came from outside (UK, NL).

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

Just over 30% of participants responded to the online evaluation. Consistent high scores (83% - 95%) attest to a 'good to excellent' experience in most aspects. For 56% it was their first keõja meeting. As is common for these conferences, there were some negative comments, for example regarding some

speakers, or sessions being aimed too low or too high with regard to participants' experience. 32% of participants said that keõjaTallinn led to new collaborations and another 48% believe that it will do so.

Although I only got to take part in one out of the three workshops I signed up for, it was compensated by the fact that it lasted over three days and had the advantage of getting my full focus ... some of the lectures or common sessions could have been more successful with some moderation and pre-editing.

Great variety of activities. Rich and deep on subjects. A general atmosphere which fostered interaction between participants (human scale, 'cosy').

Good idea to mix artists (dancers, choreographers etc) with people from 'the business around', like producers, writers and so on.

I think a lot of young dance artists and some more established got a lot of good workshops to choose from. The next step, which has been a challenge in all the Encounters is opening up to 'outsiders', which is particularly useful maybe in criticism activities.

4.3. keõjaKlaipeda, Lithuania 13-15 June 2013

As an organisation, we achieved great results while organising the keõja Encounter in Klaipeda. First of all for inviting the network's members (around 200 people) to discuss, work and create together. And, secondly for our city and country, where we could show and speak about contemporary dance activities with more strength and possible ways of acting.

Our organisation is quite small, but we were given a chance to organise one of the major events of the network. Thus, we felt trust in us from other partners to fulfil this task and got all the help from the partners we needed. It was very big work, but we managed to do it.

Goda Giedraityte, Artists' group Fish Eye

The first keõja opened in Vilnius in 2008 and it is a mark of the development of contemporary dance in the country that,

five years later, a keðja Encounter could take place outside the capital.

The fact that Lithuania now for the second time is hosting a keðja Encounter is a proof of success. It displays that, although there are different circumstances in the different countries, there is a genuine and mutual interest in working together for the purpose of developing art together and creating cultural exchanges across borders.

Kamma Siegumfeldt, overall keðja project manager
(keðjaKlaipeda programme brochure)

PROGRAMME

The overall theme chosen was 'national artistic identity in dance' aiming to discuss the concept, its relation to artistic expression and how it manifests itself or not in the dance that is produced in a place. Sessions related to the theme looked at programming for national or international audiences and identity within artistic collaboration.

keðjaKlaipeda was a meeting point for the keðja activity strands as well as groups who benefitted from the Encounter to organise their own side meetings. The group of Nordic-Baltic Dance Producers held a pre-meeting. An introduction workshop for mentors and mentees in keðja's Mentoring programme took place, organised by SITE and associated partner Kultur i Väst. Internal working meetings were also held by Writing Movement and Wilderness. The Touring Think Tank held its second round table working meeting. There was a Writing Movement workshop and lecture. The Sustainability Think Tank held a session, 'How do I make my art more sustainable?' led by freelance choreographer/dancer Sari Palmgren, MAD Production.

Again, as in Tallinn, the Baltic Bubble took place alongside the Encounter, offering site-specific performances for keðja participants and the general public. A week before keðjaKlaipeda opened, Heine Avdal and Yukiko Shinozaki's performance 'Borrowed Landscapes' was performed with Lithuanian dancers in a local supermarket to draw public attention to the forthcoming event.

Altogether there were 14 sessions or workshops, 3 city tours and 18 performances or showings including site-specific performances in the city. The first Wilderness documentary was

premiered. Performances came from Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, as well as multinational collaborations and, of course, a range of Lithuanian dance.

ORGANISERS/ KEY PARTNERS

For our organisation, there were three results: expanding our social network within the international dance community, dealing as mediators for Lithuanian dance community and fulfilling a major Encounter of the network.

However, it has been a bit sad that the Lithuanian dance community has not used all of the opportunities provided by the network. Participation [showed] our own problematic – of not being very active in international collaboration.

Goda Giedraityte, Artists' group Fish Eye

The main organiser of keðjaKlaipeda was the Artists' group Fish Eye. They collaborated with local partners Klaipeda University, Lithuanian Dance Information Centre, Svyturys Art Dock, Klaipeda Concert Hall and many other local people and professionals, private sponsors and businesses.

PARTICIPANTS

188 people participated from all eight keðja countries, notably Lithuania (34%), Finland (16%), Estonia (11%) and Sweden (10%). Seven participants hailed from outside the Nordic-Baltic countries.

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

Only 14% of participants completed the online evaluation. In general scores were slightly lower than for Tallinn: 76% – 92% stated 'good to excellent' for major aspects, with a weighting towards 'good'.

Negative comments referred to late or hard to find information or changes to the locations of events. 69% of respondents had participated in a keðja meeting at least once before; 31% had not.

It seemed like there were many individual and closed meetings going on. It was a tight schedule, so it was hard to have time to interact and get into discussions in plenum.

I discovered that other producers in different countries are facing similar challenges as I am with getting an audience etc.

keđja is a great opportunity to meet people within dance; it is unique because it is anchored in a larger idea, but has the charm of each hosting country. The only thing is that it seems more closed now than some years back. The participants possibly know more precisely why they are coming there and what to spend time on and in this way it's harder for new people to come in, because so many know each other.

The panel discussions and the workshop sessions were of great inspiration and a great source of knowledge about similarities and differences between different countries and dance communities. In the workshop sessions I had a rare opportunity of working with very talented dancers, choreographers and animators of culture. This Encounter will definitely stay in me as a rich resource for my further practical and theoretical work in the dance and cultural field.

4.4. keđjaMariehamn, Åland Islands 6-9 August, 2014

keđjaMariehamn was conceived from the start as the Encounter that would draw all of the strands, processes and results together. The theme, 'Building New Bridges and Sustaining the Community' would present the outcomes of the keđja activities since 2012.

We looked at the future of the keđja network and cherished the sense of community that keđja has achieved during the past years and discussed and decided how the fruitful collaboration can be sustained in the future.

kedja.net website

PROGRAMME

As in all keđja Encounters since the start, the format included lively and diverse types of discussions, workshops, networking experiences and performances. Three pre-meeting groups kick-started the event: the Nordic-Baltic Network for Producers and Self-Producing Artists who had 'just finished a pilot year of sharing skills and knowledge within the field of production', a 'pre-meeting for choreographers, performers and dance artists ... [to] share who we are as artists and think about how we want to connect in the future' and a pre-meeting about professional dance training.

Barcelona International Dance Exchange (BIDE), a platform for networking and exchange between dance artists, led two 3-day laboratories: one focused on creation and performance and one on teaching. Finnish choreographers led a 3-day workshop. There was a screening of Nordic dance films. The new ÅlDance Festival was catalysed locally as part of the Encounter with performances by young dancers and elder amateurs.

And keđjaMariehamn was rich with the offerings from keđja's three years of labour:

- The opening panel featured two Think Tank members together with the Director of the Crisis Management Initiative, to look at the future of keđja and the Nordic-Baltic dance community.
- keđja mentees performed their final 'concrete' project entitled 'Mentouring' - a performative experience of one to one guidance sessions, delivered via individual boat rides. The keđja mentoring team held a seminar on mentoring and coaching, led by SITE.
- Wilderness held a seminar, premiered a 20 minute documentary video about the overall residencies and the Wilderness artists made up most of the artistic programme (10 out of 14 performances/screenings) showing what they had achieved in the residencies.
- Writing Movement hosted a key lecture on dance discourse and also a writing workshop.
- Sustainability Think Tank's Torsten Schenlaer and Sari Palmgren facilitated workshops, Schenlaer on 'recycling artistic knowledge' and Palmgren repeating her art and sustainability session from keđjaKlaipeda. A sustainable funding session took place with funders from Nordic & Asia-EU funds.

Altogether there were 15 performances (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden), four seminars, four morning class series, 14 practical or discussion sessions, three open networking meetings and various social/networking events. keđjaMariehamn also featured two exhibitions: an interactive 'sustainability wall' and a wall with Writing Movement texts.

THINK TANK LOCATIONS

Both the Sustainability and Touring Think Tanks used the members' presence at all of the keōja Encounters and important Nordic-Baltic dance events to hold meetings. A visit to a good practice model included *The Creative Plot*, a creative hub in Lund, Sweden where the Sustainability group organised their second meeting. The Touring group also met at the 2012 ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform in Helsinki, at a new contemporary dance festival Dance <3, in Stockholm and held a final meeting in Copenhagen.

MENTORING LOCATIONS

Mentoring preparation and feedback sessions took place at the Encounters in Klaipėda and Mariehamn. One-to-one sessions were independently organised in a variety of places across Europe. Mentoring managers also ran a workshop for Wilderness residency hosts in Gothenburg.

3.5. Objectives

keōja's overall objective was to **develop** the Nordic-Baltic contemporary dance scene. In a period of advanced internationalisation of the arts, following decades of advocacy and development of artists' professional mobility across national borders within and beyond Europe, keōja was steadfast: it focused on **self-development and the building of a sustainable, professional, mutually supportive contemporary dance community in the Nordic-Baltic region**. keōja acknowledged policy, economic and historical asymmetries between the eight countries and aimed to assist in bringing both national conditions and different generations towards a common situation.

keōja 2012-2015 would continue the work started since 2008 'by **creating opportunities** for dance professionals to **meet, co-operate, share and move across borders in new ways**' by promoting a **high degree of collaboration** between **many different types of stakeholders**'. keōja trusted that face-to-face meeting - in EU terms, mobility of people, products, services and ideas - would be the vehicle for sharing the skills, transferring the knowledge and the contacts necessary to help create a more level and sustainable playing field across the eight countries.

keōja foresaw that, 'the more **remote areas** of the Nordic-Baltic region would be **connected to other parts of the region via artistic collaborations**, stimulating the **development of future cross-border collaborations**.' keōja activities such as some Writing Movement workshops and all three Encounters, specifically took place in locations outside of the eight nations' capitals. keōja Wilderness residencies brought contemporary dance, mostly found in urban centres, into small, remote communities. The aims were to bring peripheral areas into the limelight and to offer artists a platform for creative exploration and engagement far from city life, in close proximity to nature.

keōja also aimed high - highlighting contemporary dance (often seen as a 'poor cousin' of the more established and better funded performing art forms) as a **'vivid and highly international art form transgressing national, geographic and culturally defined borders.'** Acknowledging the advanced internationalism of contemporary arts and dance in particular, keōja also encouraged the creativity of the entrepreneur, the producer, the policymaker, the educator as well as the artist in contributing to a sustainable field of dance experimentation and production.

As in all currently EU-funded projects, one keōja objective was to support the **trans-border mobility** of both artists and their creative works in the region, including pragmatic, economic reasons - to 'prolong the life-span' and thus the sustainability of dance productions (and dance writing).

It may be useful to keep in mind some shared values or qualities often attributed to the Nordic countries, from a body and health culture, through ethical concepts of universal welfare, education and development. Strong beliefs around democratic principles and processes, transparency, equality, social cohesion are also seen as common Nordic values. Less can be so easily surmised about shared Baltic values: as a current 'laboratory of transition and transformation' and following a half century of Soviet rule and forced population settlement, it is less for the evaluators and more for the three Baltic partners of keōja to define their ancient, contemporary or emerging, national or Baltic, values¹.

1. The Baltic Sea Region: Cultures, Politics, Societies, Witold Maciejewski ed.), Baltic University Press, Uppsala, 200

The main venue was Alandica, a culture and conference centre in central Mariehamn; also public spaces such as the local library, educational facilities and outdoor spaces were used.

ORGANISERS/KEY PARTNERS

The Åland Islands form an autonomous, Swedish-speaking region of Finland located in the Baltic Sea between Sweden and Finland. Main organiser, Dance Info Finland, collaborated with the Nordic Institute, the City of Mariehamn and the Åland Government. Other collaborators included the regional dance centre of Ostrobothnia (FI), Zodiak - Centre for New Dance (FI), Barcelona International Dance Exchange (ES), LOIKKA International Film Festival (FI), Tanssili ry (FI), Nomodaco (SE) and many individual dance artists. The collaboration with Swedish West Bothnia, Finnish Ostrobothnia and the Åland Islands resulted in the local young peoples' dance production.

PARTICIPANTS

There were 239 participants with a majority from Finland (six from the Åland Islands) (41%). Others were from Denmark (15%), Sweden (11%) and Norway (11%), Latvia (6%), Estonia (4%), Iceland (4%) and Lithuania (3%). 14 people, mostly invited speakers or guests, came from eight non-Nordic/Baltic countries.

Although the first two keðja Encounters both cited a varied spread of dance professions present, keðjaMariehamn documented this. Many participants acknowledged having more than one role, but 26% were primarily dance artists, 11% producers and 7% choreographers. 23% of participants attended the Encounter as freelancers. 28% were male and 71% female. Around 64% were aged between 25 and 40.

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

31% of participants responded, giving general grades of 89-96% in the main sections as 'good or excellent'. 64 respondents said they gained ideas that they will take into their own work or that they want to bring to future keðja activities.

Apart from the more usual comments, one participant highlighted an increasingly important aspect (one that actually poses an enormous challenge for the 'arts mobility' which forms the basis of the professional performing arts co-production and touring model as well as the EU's culture funding programme):

I would have loved to practice what I preach and ask to be booked on trains instead but the time frame was too tight so I went with the flow. Still, there should be a travel sustainability policy. Sigh.

Notable feedback from this keðja Encounter was the number of critical comments on the artistic programme, compared to the Encounter participants' response to artistic programmes at Tallinn and Klaipeda. Conference audiences usually have quite a varied reaction to performances. Here, as in previous Encounters, there were comments at all ends of the critical spectrum:

Great spread of performances. Best what I've seen. Good quality but different artistic approaches, which is important in order to not become a platform for only one kind of dance.

I was very disappointed with the quality of the artistic performances.

There were some poor and some good performances but nothing mind-blowing.

The opening performance (a co-production not connected with any of the keðja activity strands) received some harsh criticism:

Be aware of what is programmed as opening performance - especially in such a situation with a highly professional audience.

The content dealt with racism and misogyny in a very offending way. It was a shame ... to kick off keðja with a performance that so disrespectfully and clumsily deals with relevant and super important topics ... in a bad way.

I did not understand the opening show and why it was part of the program as it was not connected to keðja or Wilderness.

Several Wilderness Dance performances got positive audience feedback. The film screening of 'Blind Spotting' by Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir received most positive mentions (30% of respondents) and 19% appreciated 'Of Family and Deer' by Janina Rajakangas & Co.

But, from other comments on the participant feedback surveys, it seems that the audience critiques were a result of the 'work-in-progress' nature of many Wilderness showings. A certain uniformity of themes was also noted (many such residency projects were inspired by similar themes of nature):

Wilderness project demonstrations should have been labelled demos and free of charge entirely. Now some of them suffered the expectations of ready-made performances.

Felt that some were too process orientated and not really appropriate for an external audience.

Very various in levels. Too much 'amateur-work'.

*Unfortunately very disappointing this time ...
The same theme began to be boring...*

Because all shows were dealing with the same topic it came to really expected results ...

The evaluators' conclusion is that the status of 'work-in-progress' sharings should be made more explicit. Often conference participants do not read the programme carefully, thus a sensitive treatment of such 'showings' could be packaged as a clearer artistic content 'theme'.

The general feeling of both keðja co-organisers and keðja-Mariehamn participants was one of fulfilment:

I believe that each of the Encounters (even with a different main theme) gives us an opportunity of building new bridges and sustaining the community. I believe that if we are fully committed to what we do as the artists, then to build up new bridges and to sustain what we already have becomes our duty and a very important part of the everyday practice beside art making. I see it as the only possible way to develop and to move on.

4.5. Evaluation Commentary

I considered the Encounters to be a kind of backbone of the keðja initiative ... open to anyone interested

Kamma Siegumfeldt, overall keðja project manager,
Dansehallerne

Considering that the heart and soul of the project is located in the community and capacity building, I might pin point the Encounters as the most valuable activities, as they enabled the meeting and sharing that is essential to the project.

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland

Whereas some of the keðja co-organisers hesitated to pick out one activity strand as 'the most important', and activity strand managers obviously were closest to their own projects, it is very clear from reading all of the evaluation questionnaires that the Encounters were 'the heart of keðja', 'the place where it all came together', 'where everything made sense', 'where the community was built'.

Because each Encounter included its own evaluation, and because the Encounter organisers were questioned often several times for this evaluation, the Encounters were not the subject of a separate questionnaire. We can assess them from a four standpoints: a) Did they fulfil their stated function in the whole keðja? b) Were the keðja co-organisers and strand activity managers pleased with results? c) Were participants satisfied? d) Did they have a positive effect for the dance community in their locations?

From the many sources examined, the evaluators do feel that the Encounters wholly fulfilled their desired function of networking, sharing, connecting. For keðja co-organisers and activity managers, the Encounters allowed for internal working meetings, give-and-take sharing with dance communities, presentation of in-progress and finished work and even in some cases passing the baton to the next organisers. From the surveys studied, participants were largely satisfied, either already committed to keðja or charmed as first-timers. A much-noted aspect was that so many different kinds of dance-worker took part:

Participants included choreographers, dancers, freelancers, managers, directors, dance critics, teachers, students and people working for different dance organisations.

Participants' Expectations: Networking, learning, sharing, gaining new knowledge. Finding contacts and inspiration. To meet new people, find new inspiration for my work, see interesting performances and become more aware of the dance field in the Nordic and Baltic countries.

Encounter surveys

Finally, we can see that especially (but not only) for the two Baltics, such a high degree of international interest for contemporary dance in their countries had an effect. It caused substantial changes in how the local/national authorities value and respond to the sector and how local dance organisations will positively view and undertake collaboration in the future. If fewer than desired individual dancers participated it is not a tragedy (and the percentages for national participation are in fact fairly consistent across all three events). International cultural collaboration does not always come naturally; language is an issue, people are shy to enter into an arena where they are inexperienced. This will develop if repeated opportunities can regularly come along.

What is notable is the distinct lack of the international professional dance manager crowd - large festival directors, main agents and producers who form the bulk of performing arts markets, networks and conferences. It is a sign that keđja was seriously focused on building and mobilising the Nordic-Baltic dance community, holistically, including all levels and stages of contemporary dance, instead of heavily marketing only those professionals making 'international' work.

After 15 years of creating and participating in the professional dance world/scene in Europe and Scandinavia, I've realized how important a community is. And keđja has proven to be a community within the field where organisers and artists are working side by side from enthusiasm and belief and passion for dance as a growing art form. Each from their own strength and not in order to please the market. Real meetings and proper communication and sharing of works, interests and common topics do build bridges and is an essential part of sustaining a community.

keđjaMariehamn participant survey

Beyond the next programmed Encounter (keđjaHammerfest in November 2015), there are current discussions about future Encounters in the Baltics in 2016 and in Aarhus, Denmark 2017 in connection to Aarhus European Capital of Culture.

The evaluators feel that continuing the keđja Encounters is a positive step, and concur wholeheartedly that it would be a valuable exercise to pass this task (with guidance if it is requested) to a new generation of dance activists who can start to draft the next pages of dance history in the Nordic-Baltic region. Perhaps at that stage, the gradual inclusion of incomers ('outsiders') equally interested in building understanding and participation in dance (and not only the international market) will not be a threat but rather add to the rich mix.



NEW TERRITORIES



5. keðja Wilderness

5.1. Programme outline

keðja Wilderness programme ran a series of dance artist residencies in remote rural locations, inspired by nature and interacting with local communities. The aim was to strengthen the position of contemporary dance on the periphery of the Nordic-Baltic region. It was described in the EU application as:

A residency programme taking place in 10 locations in the Nordic-Baltic region, all of them outside of the capitals, that is in smaller towns or villages where dance is rarely presented - in close proximity to nature and wilderness. The residencies bring artists from other regions to develop work in collaboration with the local community. A selection of suitable works is, towards the end of the project, toured to Nordic-Baltic presentation programmes.

The residencies offered artists:

a platform to explore, engage, create and present work in close proximity to wild nature and local residents

- The 'Wilderness Manifesto' in the Open Call articulated strong values:
- The vast Nordic/Baltic region is a unique source for artistic inspiration
- WILDERNESS brings areas on the edge into the limelight as partakers in a strong contemporary dance project
- WILDERNESS contributes to the public debate about the future of Nordic peripheral communities.

The programme targeted contemporary dance artists and artists' groups (dancers and choreographers, with other creative input appropriate for the proposed dance project) from the Nordic-Baltic countries. Each selected group travelled to two residencies outside their home country and each residency lasted 21 days. Support was provided for up to 5 artists to participate in the residencies. The programme therefore offered twenty residencies in total (two for each group and two in each location) and involved 56 artists in total.

There was no specific overall prioritisation of dance production, creation or community arts work, although the artists' contracts set out what was expected of them within the community setting ('to do workshops'). There was no explicit direction for artists to follow a two-stage developmental process in the way they approached their two different residencies. In leaving these decisions to the artists' process, the stated ex-

pectations were that they would use the residency opportunities to:

- Engage with and be inspired by various local resources, events, circumstance and last but not least - its people *and*
- On the 1st residency, the artistic group would be asked to give the local community an insight into their artistic development during the period
- At the end of the 2nd residency, the artistic group was expected to give a presentation of their artistic work

There was some encouragement to produce work during the residencies. A production costs grant was paid (a standard amount, not related to the project). Groups were also aware that some artistic projects would be selected for presentation at keðja events or other platforms.

An open call was launched in June 2012 and, by the deadline in mid-August, 110 applications were received. Organisers were pleased with this strong demand for the initiative. Wilderness partners from the five hosting countries made the final selection and matched the artists with residencies. Artists signed an agreement which clearly laid out the expected engagement of the artists within the communities and residencies took place January 2013 to May 2014. There was a gap of some 5-12 months between the two residencies, although this varied.

Works made during the residencies formed the main artistic programme for keðjaMariehamn. Several pieces have been performed in other venues, festivals and settings, including the Wilderness artistic programme content at Bora Bora platform, Aarhus in March 2015. Further touring is planned, independently of Wilderness and beyond keðja 2012-2015.

Wilderness partners are in active discussion with a number of existing Nordic-Baltic partners, and others in Europe and Australia to develop a larger programme of residencies, expanding some of the principles and learning from keðja Wilderness.

5.2. People

The keðja co-organiser, SL – the Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland, was responsible for overall coordination of Wilderness. Wilderness management was undertaken by freelance creative producer, Ása Richardsdóttir. She had been a co-organiser, with Iceland Dance Company, in keðjal and was the initiator of the Wilderness programme.

Five of the eight keðja Nordic-Baltic countries hosted residencies (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Latvia & Norway) and Wilderness was managed nationally by these co-organisers:

- **Denmark:** Bora Bora, represented by director Jesper de Neergaard
- **Finland:** MAD Production, represented by artist Sari Palmgren
- **Iceland:** SL – the Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland, represented by producer Ása Richardsdóttir
- **Latvia:** New Theatre Institute of Latvia, represented by producer Laura Stasane
- **Norway:** Dansearena nord, represented by director Susanne Næss Nielsen

These Wilderness partners were responsible for the selection of and liaison with residency hosts in their countries. The hosts were a diverse range of professionals managing rural artists' residencies, folk high schools, culture centres and a dance production centre. Several had much experience of receiving artists and for others it was a first.

The Wilderness partners formed the selection jury, reviewed applications from their own countries and shared out those from other Nordic-Baltic countries. While the residency programme was open to applications from all eight countries, there was a slight bias towards artists from the five host countries. At least one artist group from each host country would be selected, with the other five places open to all Nordic-Baltic applicants, according to the guidelines. The proportion of national funding meant that Wilderness partners wanted to ensure that at least one group from those countries would benefit.

According to the call and the EU project description, the residency programme was open to all applications and did not target specific groups such as emerging or experienced artists. Artists were chosen on the basis of motivation, the quality and suitability of the proposed project. The final selection was a balance between four younger/emerging groups, four more 'established' artists and groups with considerable pro-

fessional experience and two with mid-level experience. Several of the more experienced had attended renowned production residencies worldwide, although it was the first residency for one group who responded to the evaluation survey, thus the level of residency experience and possible associated expectations varied considerably.

The geographical selection was two groups each from Finland, Latvia and Norway, one each from Denmark and Iceland, with two mixed groups (one Denmark/Sweden and one Iceland/ Finland/ Denmark/ Lithuania). The Wilderness groups, residency locations and dates are listed below, along with any known variations in the schedule (as reported in evaluation feedback). The artists met the terms of their contracts, working in local communities, delivering a range of workshops, demonstrations, work-in-progress sharings, outdoor and indoor performances in the residency locations (details of artistic projects can be found on the website and blog):

1. Foreign Mountain (IS, FI, DK, LT)

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------|
| February 2013 | Egilsstaðir, Iceland | 4 artists |
| Mar-Apr 2014 | Ainaži, Latvia | 4 artists |

2. Anatomy of Dance (LV)

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| March 2013 | Akkarfjord & Hammerfest, Norway | 5 artists |
| Aug-Sep 2013 | Toftlund, Denmark | 5 artists |

3. The SWUFU's (LV)

| | | |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Jan-Feb 2013 | Höfn, Iceland | 4 artists |
| Jul-Aug 2013 | Hammerfest, Norway | 4 artists |

4. The Mob (SE/DK)

| | | |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------|
| August 2013 | Stamsund, Norway | 5 artists |
| May 2014 | Kangasniemi, Finland | 5 artists |

5. Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir / Panic productions (IS)

| | | |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|
| March 2013 | Hailuoto, Finland | 4 artists |
| January 2014 | Ringkøbing, Denmark | 5 artists* |

*Two artists stayed for the full residency period, three stayed for ten days²

6. Janina Rajakangas & co (FI)

| | | |
|--------------|------------------|-----------|
| Jun-Jul 2013 | Ainaži, Latvia | 5 artists |
| March 2014 | Stamsund, Norway | 5 artists |

2. Other variations in Wilderness residency stays may have occurred but this is noted here as it was reported in the evaluation survey feedback.

7. Ingri Fiksdal (NO)

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jun-Jul 2013 | Dviete/Brebene, Latvia | 5 artists |
| February 2014 | Oslo, Norway* | 9 artists/ production crew |

*The planned residency in Finland could not be undertaken due to medical issues related to pregnancy. As a result, the group held their second residency in Oslo, where they were hosted by the National Academy of Arts and the Black Box theatre.

8. Herrala, Muilu, Mustonen, Tiitta (FI)

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Mar-Apr 2014* | Toftlund, Denmark | 4 artists |
| Apr-May 2014* | Dviete/Brebene, Latvia | 4 artists |

*Due to other professional commitments, the planned 2013 residency was re-scheduled. As a result, the group travelled to the two locations consecutively with one week at home between the two residency periods.

9. TIP - Translation in Progress (NO)

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------|
| November 2013 | Ringkøbing, Denmark | 4 artists |
| March 2014 | Brønnøysund, Norway* | 4 artists |

*The planned residency in Iceland could not be undertaken due to medical issues related to pregnancy. Since the pregnant artist could not fly, a residency was set up in Brønnøysund, Norway, close to the artist's home.

10. hello!earth (DK)

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| Aug-Sep 2013 | | |
| Kangasniemi, Finland | 5 artists | |
| January 2014 | | |
| Fljótdalshérað, Iceland | 5 artists | |

A number of associated events were part of Wilderness, in collaboration with other keðja co-organisers and partners:

- **November 2012:** Welcome Seminar for Wilderness residency hosts
A 3-day seminar in Gothenburg, Sweden was an opportunity to meet, share experience, learn, outline expectations and plan the residency hosting in detail. It was organised by co-organisers SITE, Sweden and Kultur i Väst.
- **August 2014:** keðja Mariehamn Wilderness seminar
A 'keðja Talks' session at the Mariehamn Encounter.
- **August 2014:** keðja Mariehamn Wilderness performances
Performances/artistic events by groups returned from the Wilderness residencies.

- **December 2014:** ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform, Oslo - Wilderness seminar
'Choreography as Collective and Affective Event' - a seminar with artist Ingri Fiksdal.

- **March 2015:** Bora Bora Platform, Aarhus - seminar & performances
Bora Bora Platform - New Nordic Dance: a Wilderness seminar with Wilderness artist Vera Maeder and Wilderness organisers Jesper de Neergaard and Susanne Næss Nielsen; the artistic programme included works created on Wilderness residencies by three groups (Ingri Fiksdal, Janina Rajakangas Project, Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir).

Several more presentations of Wilderness took place in Europe and beyond, outside the funding scope of the keðja project and are not within this evaluation report.

5.3. Places

The Wilderness concept was based on the notion that most artists in the Nordic and Baltic countries live in urban centres, where they create and present their work. The places chosen for the residencies were far away from the cities, some more wild and remote than others. In Denmark, the organisers asked themselves 'where is there any Danish wilderness?' and settled on the folk high schools as a suitable non-urban setting close to nature. Wilderness residencies were also held in farming and fishing communities, on islands and in a nature conservation park.

Some residency places involved arduous journeys: a 3-day drive to one Icelandic residency, crossing an ice road across the frozen sea to a Finnish island and, in one case, arriving 26 hours late in northern Norway due to bad weather. The seasons encountered during the residency were very different - some had midsummer sunshine and others deep winter snows.

Toftlund Højskole, Jylland, Denmark is in the far south, hosting the Music and Theatre Folk High School. Located in a marshland environment, keðja artists had access to explore the landscapes of the Wadden Sea bordering Denmark with Germany and The Netherlands.

West Jutland Højskole, Ringkøbing, Denmark is in the far west of Denmark, specialising in theatre, dance, music and literature but with dance as a main feature. keõja artists accessed moorland and the majestic west coast.

Jo Jo, Hailuoto island, Northern Finland, one of the biggest islands in the Gulf of Bothnia, resident artists lived in a guest-house in the centre of the island. They worked at the art centre of Hailuoto in proximity to roaring waves and a vast seascape.

Kokko1721, Kangasniemi, Finland - a traditional farm established in 1721 in rural mid-Finland, Kokko estate is now an artists' residency run by an independent dance artist. Artists stayed and worked in the old farmhouse's guest rooms and studio in a tranquil landscape.

Fljótsháðir, Iceland - a former abattoir, Sláturhúsið Culture Centre is one of four culture centres in east Iceland, focused on theatre and dance, holding workshops, performances and exhibitions. Artists stayed in a local guest house, worked at Sláturhúsið and interacted with the local community.

Höfn í Hornafirði, Iceland is a small community spread over a large area in south-eastern Iceland near the biggest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull. keõja artists stayed at a local guest-house in Höfn and worked at the local community centre.

Ainaži, Latvia, a small coastal town 120 km from Riga on the Estonian border, where the first Latvian Sea Academy was founded in the 19th century. Carved wooden houses illustrate its glorious past. keõja artists worked outdoors or in the 1920s-style Culture House studio.

Dviete, Latvia, in the southeast part of Latvia, is 200 km from Riga. The natural floodplain becomes a lake each spring and local villagers use boats to get around. keõja artists stayed in a village near a nature centre with an information centre in an old Latvian farmhouse.

Hammerfest, Norway's most northern town is on the island of Kvaløya surrounded by untouched countryside and open landscapes. Dansearena nord, a centre for dance in the region hosted keõja artists in collaboration with the Arctic Cultural Centre.

Stamsund, Norway, a small but active fishing village, is home to Nordland Visual Theatre, above the Arctic Circle, in one of Norway's most spectacular landscapes, the Lofoten islands. There is a quiet peacefulness difficult to find in the large urban centres.

As noted, two planned Wilderness residencies were altered due to medical issues around pregnancy and the groups transferred to alternative settings at home (in Oslo and Brønnøysund).

5.4. Evaluation Feedback

The Evaluation Questionnaire was sent in early December 2014 to 30 people and returned by 19 respondents (63%): the Wilderness manager and five Wilderness partners/staff members; six residency hosts; six artists, including two from one group; and a dance critic who visited and wrote about the Latvia residencies. The geographical spread of respondents was representative of the main Wilderness protagonists: five from Denmark, four each from Finland & Latvia, three each from Iceland & Norway.

In spite of several reminders from different parties, it is regrettable that only half the artists' groups responded to the evaluation survey and the results are therefore only partially representative. Structured evaluation reports were not part of the residency contract for artists or hosts. Some information was gathered from the Wilderness blog, mostly visual impressions and short texts.

The evaluators met the co-organisers involved in the Wilderness programme and the Wilderness manager in Oslo, December 2014. A Wilderness group session brought together most partners, and one artist, to review the programme and discuss results.



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SELF-APPRAISAL

The Wilderness manager felt that it was important to reach places that keðjal had not touched, to work with ten places in remote areas. For the Denmark Wilderness partner, it was about 'questioning the production of contemporary art, where both the themes and processes are attached to big city life'. He felt it was interesting to place artists 'in rural environments, in contact with a population they don't normally contact; out of context and outside their usual routines'. The search for residency locations started during keðjal, open to participation by all Nordic-Baltic countries. Sweden dropped out at a late stage and there were no hosting proposals from Estonia or Lithuania.

Wilderness was presented by the Wilderness manager as 'a large and important part of the overall keðja project'. It was the main creative and production element of keðja 2012-2015 and it also took up the largest budget proportion of all the keðja activity strands, over a third of the total project budget. For the Latvia Wilderness partner, it was 'the only direct artistic project within keðja ... and [as such] it was the most visible of keðja activities to the outside world and brought a wider attention to the network and region from other places in Europe and beyond'.

Artists stated their preferences and most residency choices could be satisfied. Dealing with groups of artists was sometimes complicated in order to find common available dates. In some cases, group members changed from one residency to another. Occasionally one or more artists arrived late or left early to fulfil other commitments. Health issues related to pregnancy meant that two Wilderness residencies needed to be flexible; these were altered and replaced by 'near home residencies'. A third was rescheduled for reasons of professional commitments and accessibility/availability of residency locations; according to the artists involved, the end result (they travelled to residencies in two different countries, with a one week break at home in between) was not entirely satisfactory.

Thus, the Wilderness residency model proposed in the open call where each group would spend 21 days in two locations (separated by a period of around 6-12 months) had to be flexible to accommodate the diverse wishes and needs of artists and communities. Perhaps half the groups experienced the "standard" model residency in terms of timing, duration and spacing. This reality is a useful learning point for organisers of other such group-oriented artistic residencies.

Some Wilderness partners acknowledged that the artistic results were mixed. The Latvia Wilderness partner said that 'as in any artistic process where you take risks, there are also disappointments - in this case with the artistic quality of some of the residency results'. The works that she found more interesting were not the same as those appreciated by the local community. A staff member of the Danish Wilderness partner had hoped the project would result in '10 great performances grounded in the soil/cliffs of the Nordic Baltic area' but felt that this was not delivered - his assessment was that 'only a few of the projects led to a final performance and even fewer with interesting results'. The Denmark Wilderness national partner Jesper de Neergaard 'had dreamed of 10 great performances ... but could see that it was not reality. Some were not entirely finished and out of the rest only a few were great'. De Neergaard emphasises that it is realistic to expect a mixed outcome from such a programme, and that it is important to learn from this.

Discussions in Oslo were enlightening on the challenge of offering concurrently a quiet remote space to develop creative work and a place to connect/collaborate with the local community. Some tensions arose between the hosts' expectations of community engagement and artists' desire to develop a concentrated, closed process. An artist said 'perhaps the expectations of the hosts were too high - that the artists would be of service to dance for the community, instead of the fact that they had to be focused on producing a piece for a premiere'. Hosts and organisers observed that some artists took a different approach on the two residencies, being more open to community engagement in the first location, more focused on their work and production in the second.

MOTIVATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The project has created more curiosity about each other ... the artists had a very different take on this situation ... in reality it's much more complex and multi-layered than just a romantic notion of artist being inspired by the landscape.

Laura Stasane, Latvia Wilderness partner

The artists were drawn to residencies for 'a time of deepening, developing a new work in a natural environment' and 'a peaceful place to focus on the artistic process'. They wanted to get away from daily distractions: 'research time in the Wilderness to go deeper and in a more intimate, private and quiet setting with the people I did the research/creation with ... to

be away from daily duties and concentrate together'. They appreciated the financial conditions: 'an opportunity to work as a choreographer with financial support (co-production grant), working space, accommodation and fees for the dancers I work with'.

Only one artist who responded stated that 'contact with the local community' was a motivation for her residency. In general, this aspect does not register strongly as a reason to apply for Wilderness. However, several artist groups have remained in close contact with their host community after the residency, have re-visited or are planning to return.

Hosts wanted 'to give new perspectives to the visiting groups; to gain new perspectives on art as an independent dance artist; to gain new contacts as a residency host' and 'expected from artists some wonderful and fresh work'.

KEDJA'S SPECIFICITY

Artists, several with substantial experience of dance residencies across Europe, in Australia and Brazil, recognised that Wilderness was different because of the location and because it was not connected to a production house, choreographic centre or artistic community. The programme was particular in offering two residencies in different countries, as part of the same concept. One artist found the residency different 'because they are not used to having those kinds of artists working there. I felt like exotic being ... and the place was exotic for me ...'. On the downside, the working spaces were not all dance studios and the artists needed to be flexible about the work environment.

Nordic peripheral communities are very special places that have a lot to offer artists and vice versa. The collaboration requires a lot of negotiations but I believe it can be very fruitful to both artists and to the rural communities. However, it needs resources to develop proper working spaces, particularly if it is a dance residency.

Satu Herrala (Wilderness artist)

As the first dance residency programme of its kind in the Nordic-Baltic countries, Wilderness can be placed in a wider context of artistic residencies in remote, rural and peripheral locations, found around Europe and beyond. Within the Nordic and Baltic countries, several 'wilderness-style' residencies exist in non-urban sites and are mostly designed for individual creators in visual arts and some other artforms. Current

trends observed in artists' residencies are a move towards more interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary open spaces, allowing both individuals and artist groups to undertake creative residencies. These can be found in peripheral locations and not necessarily within dedicated artist residency organisations. Thus, Wilderness can be seen both as a unique phenomenon in the region and as a reflection of international trends towards more flexible, open artists' residencies.

The specificity experienced in some of the keōja Wilderness residencies was more about an informal, personal relationship between artists, hosts and communities. A close encounter with Nordic-Baltic values and conviviality through giving, receiving and sharing.

The ancient hospitality - foreigners are still very special guests, so it is important to accept them in the best possible way, to show them around, to help out, and to feed them well. Satisfaction is if they are satisfied.

Inta Balode, dance critic
(from article on residencies in Latvia)

KEDJA INTEGRATION

Most artists knew about the wider keōja programme, particularly since all presented artistic work at the Mariehamn Encounter. Some hosts knew that Wilderness was part of a bigger project but a cultural centre host in Iceland only knew about the residencies. For a host in Norway, 'my feeling was that the Wilderness residency program was standing on its own feet'.

Wilderness was integrated into the overall keōja project in several ways. The artistic programme at keōjaMariehamn presented all the dance groups from keōja Wilderness. Several Encounter participants commented that they felt that some works were not ready for public presentation and should have been labelled demonstrations but other performances got positive feedback.

Co-organisers from Sweden responsible for the Mentoring scheme ran a well-received workshop for hosts in 2012 in Gothenburg. 'Hosts formed friendships and a kind of network'.

A bridge with Writing Movement was provided by the dance critic Inta Balode (Latvia WM organiser) who visited residencies in Latvia and wrote a series of interesting articles. Inta Balode's 'Voyage into the Wilderness' Parts I - V deconstructs an imagined wilderness world, confronting the 'Wilderness be-

liefs' with her own 'somewhat sceptical and suspicious position'. Through conversations with locals, she uncovered the subtle impacts, potential and traces of residencies in Ainaži and Brebene.

COMMUNICATIONS

Overall a whole lot of PR was made and the productions which got the strongest critical attention and awards received attention well beyond their national borders. We made three documentaries in addition.

Ása Richardsdóttir, Wilderness manager

Communications were an important element of the project, to make visible the activities in diverse locations. An external PR person drew up an 8-page PR Manual to guide Wilderness project partners with success criteria, media planning, key messages and examples. The PR Manual is dated February 2014 and planned an intensive media campaign for Wilderness in March-July 2014, covering around six of the residencies still to take place.

Project communication and blogging was in the contract for artists, most of whom who contributed images and short texts to the dedicated Wilderness blog. Artists documented their projects in various ways: photos, videos, Facebook, website postings. Other communications mentioned were an article in a Danish theatre magazine and a residency diary for Finnish Dance in Focus (Dance Info Finland magazine). One group produced a magazine as a creative output. Hosts involved local media such as local TV & radio interview in Finland and Iceland broadcast on RUV.

Artists often had to be prompted to post content and it is noticeable that not all the respondents were willing social media communicators. In general, they kept documentation 'as effortless as possible', since 'blogging was not the main task'. One artist made a good point: 'It felt a little contradictory as we were supposed to be in the wilderness. I would personally prefer to be left alone there to just focus on the work and do the public reflection and communication afterwards.'

Artists and hosts read the blog to find out more about the places and other artists. One artist asked 'if it was only interesting for the people involved in the project, not so much for the general public'. The Denmark Wilderness partner also commented: 'it was quite an introverted project with no real interest beyond a small group of outsiders'. One host used the

content for internal reflection 'to look for signs of what the artists think about us and how they cope with the remoteness', and 'it is always interesting to see what the artists write about themselves and their work'.

LEARNING AND OTHER BENEFITS

Trips into nature were a secondary action to one group and 'disturbed' their artistic process at first. But then they got the idea that all the surroundings and actions are part of the process. Cultural impacts are important new fuel for artistic working.

Jukka Ristolainen, Kokkol721 (residency host)

Most artists appreciated the 'unique, special residency experience' and 'privileged access to a community and place they would not otherwise have visited'. Their priority was creation and production: all used the residency to develop new work. Half found the location inspiring but only one said they used the residency to develop community activities. Most were keen to go on more wilderness-style residencies, although two favoured urban residencies - for particular projects and better working facilities. Most had developed Nordic-Baltic professional contacts.

For some, the experience was challenging: 'I learned that being placed outside your own context is not to joke around with. It can be great and hard. Often at the same time.' Another learned about 'the responsibility in encounters: so precious when there are so few people'.

The five artist groups that responded to the evaluation survey reported 46 performances/showings in 2014/15 in Berlin, Mariehamn, Reykjavik, Gothenburg, Stockholm, Malmö, Bordeaux, Aarhus, Vienna, Helsinki, Humlebaek, Egilsstaðir, Kangasniemi, Copenhagen, Bergen, Trondheim, Oslo. The extended life and visibility of the Wilderness residency programme through performance touring is an important concrete result of the project.

The Wilderness manager's report for the Nordic Culture Fund also focuses on the artists' results. Two productions by the more 'experienced' selected artists get most attention here and in other contexts due to the critical acclaim they have received: 'Blind Spotting Performance Series' by Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir and 'Hoods' by Ingri Fiksdal.

I managed to create my biggest work till now (Blind Spotting, with 8 performers), after a career as an active choreographer in

the Icelandic, Scandinavian and European dance scene for 16 years. I made a film version of this big work and a small duet version. When you get supported as I did by the Wilderness program ... it makes it much easier to find the rest of the funding needed and support of theatres to show the work. So through keðja and other funding bodies I have gained more visibility and possibilities to tour the works.

Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir (Wilderness artist)

These two choreographers achieved great results through the Wilderness residencies, partly due to their level of experience and professional capacity. As indicators of their professional level, both were selected for ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform 2014; Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir was selected for ICE HOT 2012 and for the EU-funded Life Long Burning co-production support programme in 2014-15; Ingri Fiksdal was selected for the SAMARA Baltic-Nordic-European contemporary performing arts network co-production and touring support in 2013. Their Wilderness proposals were for specific production projects, resulting in strong productions with touring potential.

However, with the more professionally mature artists, some Wilderness hosts did not always get the community engagement they anticipated. According to the evaluation feedback received, some hosts recorded a lower level of satisfaction with the 'experienced' than with 'less experienced' artists. In one residency context, the experienced artist reported 'there was some lack of communication between the organisers and the office organising the residency regarding what me and my crew were doing there', whereas the residency host there felt that 'the group from [...] didn't really care about us. A really bad experience.' Nevertheless, the evaluator notes that these asymmetrical perceptions of the same residency situation may not be representative of other residencies - as stated above, the evaluation feedback from artists was rather low.

But for the hosts, the majority found it 'a positive experience to receive artists into our community' with 'some good results'. Most saw the artists as hard-working, communicative and accessible. Most hosts wanted to invite more artists for residencies and to develop more varied arts programmes in their community. Again, the community engagement received lower scores, with some positive and some negative feedback. One residency in Norway had resulted in an invitation to Janina Rajakangas & company to return to the county later that year for a mini-tour.

Drawing attention to the potential of peripheral communities in the Nordic-Baltic region as a creative resource was at the heart of Wilderness, as was contributing to public debate on the future of peripheral communities in the region. This was articulated in the EU application project description as connecting with EU Lisbon Strategy aims, in terms of new approaches in regional development, reinforcing European Agenda for Culture objectives.

The few artists' responses on this point centred on the nature/creative resource aspect:

Remote is a place of resource and connectivity, as much as a city.

Vera Maeder, hellolearth (Wilderness artist group)

For the hosts, living in the so-called 'wilderness', the approach was logical and they resisted being seen as on the edge of anything:

Everything is possible even in peripheral communities. Maybe it is easier to do a project like this in small communities as you make more marks.

Halldór Warén, Slaughterhouse Culture Centre
(residency host)

It raised awareness that these small villages have an important value in society and this kind of project, even if large-scale overall, can be human-sized at the local level. This project was so important to be with - there is now an artistic consensus on this way of working. It is not marginal anymore!

Jukka Ristolainen, Kokko1721 (residency host)

The writer who reviewed the Latvia residencies summed it up cogently:

I think any attention to peripheral communities is crucial to recognizing differences and seeing them as an advantage, not a problem. It is obvious that some communities are so small and somehow so detached that lives move away from there - in this sense Wilderness is like an ethnographic research of dying cultures. Also, when seeing foreigners really enjoying nature, it gives a different viewpoint for local people who might have stopped appreciating where they live, and perhaps inspire them to protect nature more.

Inta Balode, dance critic

5.5. Evaluation Commentary

The Wilderness residency programme is an appealing and distinctive concept, offering a unique proposal to contemporary dance artists and reaching out to peripheral communities in the region. The programme description incorporates many different objectives. On first appraisal, the logic of the two-phase residency structure was complex to understand. The strategic, artistic and professional benefits for a group to spend time at residencies in two different countries, not necessarily linked through a common project or suitable timeframe, were not entirely clear. For the artists, hosts and organisers, the diverse programme objectives raised potential challenges in balancing the offer of an open creative process in nature and the concrete expectations of local community engagement.

In practice however, the Wilderness residencies delivered many positive outcomes, for artists, hosts, communities and national partners. In particular, the dance productions which have emerged through the process are taking on a life of their own and touring plans extend well beyond the Nordic-Baltic region and the time period of the overall project, a lasting legacy of the residencies.

This success was achieved by selecting artists with very different motivations and experience, ensuring that several solid production projects were in the mix. The experienced Wilderness partners were not concerned that some artists prioritised production, while others approached the residency in an open spirit of creative investigation. But issues sometimes arose when hosts were confronted with these different approaches.

According to the evaluation responses received from artists and residency hosts, for several it remained unclear whether the residency was intended to be primarily a resource for the artists or whether the artists were a resource for the communities. Although the level of engagement with the community was set out in the artists' contract, where problems arose, it was due to these mixed expectations and different interpretations of what had been agreed. For artists, the goals of the project were not always clear - was the artist supposed to act as 'a contemporary dance missionary'? How much should they give and how much should they take? What was too little and what was too much? Respect for local communities was crucial: as one partner said, 'people there don't feel they are on the outskirts of anything'.

Reciprocity is enormously important, it's very potent. We have

to be very clear about who is the 'giver' and who is the 'receiver'.

Jesper de Neergaard, Denmark Wilderness partner

In general, the Wilderness partners seemed to value above all the desire of artists to produce work and wanted to support that process, whereas hosts valued artists who were communicative and available to the community. In some cases, the hosts just didn't understand why the artists wanted to close the studio door, why artists might not want to have an intern assigned to follow them and document their process. As described above, contrasting expectations led to a real lack of communication in some situations.

Some residencies did focus almost entirely on engagement with the local community, although partners felt that some such projects may have been due to inexperienced artists who 'lost themselves in community arts work'. The most successful residencies managed to integrate nature inspiration, community engagement and to provide subtle guidance to the creative process. An attentive host with experience of artists and open residencies was definitely an asset.

The evaluator observes that it is unusual to combine so many different expectations within one residency: to produce new work, to be inspired by nature and remote setting, to engage with the local community, to present work/creative process to local people, to contribute to public debate about the future of Nordic peripheral communities. In reality, few of the artists' groups engaged on all levels within any one residency; it was intended - and interpreted by artists and communities - as more of a menu of possibilities. The two residency structures allowed some artists to take a different approach in the two locations. But for several artists, the residency was not necessarily viewed as specific or different from other creation and production opportunities; they expected to go about their work in the same way as elsewhere and seemed surprised when nature, extreme weather and local expectations made demands.

The trade-off between the artistic results and the host community satisfaction levels reported for some residencies is worth analysing for the design of a future programme. Perhaps some experienced artists were more focused on their production and artistic results, while some less experienced artists were more available to the local community. Maybe there is a good rationale for placing purely production residencies into a more dedicated professional environment, without the community engagement requirement. The spe-

cial added value of the Wilderness residency location could be reserved for artists with a compelling motivation to interact with the natural environment and/or the local communities.

Within the keõja project, Wilderness seems to have occupied a large but rather separate space. The five national Wilderness partners bonded closely. One agreed that there was a sense of 'a project within a project' and that the selection process benefited the five host countries most, partly due to a more active promotion of the residencies in those countries.

Among the existing Wilderness partners, some differing priorities have emerged and it will be interesting to follow how these are integrated into any new programme, currently under discussion. 'We should focus on the production side - it's the most complicated thing that artists do, and brings the real added value' needs to be balanced with 'Education of local people is also part of it. Interaction is an opportunity to talk to people about contemporary dance'. The keõja Wilderness programme has certainly initiated a better understanding of urban (mis-) perceptions about peripheral, rural locations. Exploring the reciprocity question further would be of value.

2300
DANCE PROFESSIONALS
> artists, students, managers, policy makers

6. keõja Writing Movement

6.1. Programme Outline

While I was studying dance at the European Dance Development Centre in the 1990s, I frequently encountered claims on the part of my teachers that dance could not be spoken about or described... dance could and would be destroyed if it were subjected to thought and interpretation... My experience was different ...

Sidsel Pape, Norwegian dance scholar,
dramaturge, writer, teacher and dancer
(*Expeditions in Dance Writing:
Writing Movement 2012-2014*, p.95)

Writing Movement aimed to strengthen the critical discourse on and around dance through workshops, publications and a network. keõja co-organiser, Dance Information Norway (DIN), created a network of key individuals and organisations across the eight countries. These so-called local hosts or local collaborators (in this report we call them the **national organisers**) collaborated in turn with local organisations such as dance festivals to produce labs (workshops) on dance writing, attracting new writers and new voices with different perspectives, accessible to new publics.

The national organisers included writers and editors of online dance journals, led by DIN. They met regularly to exchange experiences from their local workshops, discussing the different lecturers or animators and formats of their labs and handling administrative matters of the project.

The activities can be understood as a mobilization - of the resources that think, talk, read, and write dance, the idea being that a stronger discourse will benefit the development of the art form and its dissemination and communication towards audiences.

Writing Movement blog

An open call was made to writers in the region for dance article proposals. Writing Movement then supported and guided the selected writers by editing, translating and promoting their work to publishers who were encouraged to make their own editorial choices from the twenty very diverse articles made available to them. The call for articles of 5,000 - 10,000 words was launched at the end of August 2013 with a deadline of 1 October. Forty-seven proposals were submitted by writers in all eight countries: Norway (13), Sweden (12), Denmark (6), Lithuania (5), Finland (4), Iceland (3), Estonia (2) and Latvia (2). After a challenging process of reading and debate by the organisers, twenty varied proposals were chosen. The

articles were then actively promoted to publishers from February 2014. Writers had a standard contract giving Writing Movement exclusivity until June 2014, and a grant of € 500. The idea for a later second call for proposals was replaced by the decision to create a final Writing Movement publication.

keõja Writing Movement sponsored 21 labs with a total of 385 participants. They varied richly in terms of format, location, participation and concept. Some were two or three day writing workshops targeting dancers, writers, both theatre and dance critics. Others used case studies or observation of real dancers to spark the writing process. Some were linked to academia, and others to dance festivals, venues and their audiences. The Latvia organiser produced a dance festival in order to insert her writing workshop in it.

The fact that ... critic was the third last profession in a ranking list of professions' popularity published in Suomen Kuvalehti a few years ago, between slaughterer and gravedigger, was the starting point of the critic Maija-Liisa Westman's presentation.

Writing Movement blog

An important aspect of the work was to stimulate the publication of texts discussing dance by engaging with existing publication channels like daily newspapers, academic press, art journals, websites and blogs. Fifty-four potentially interested publications and websites in the eight countries were analysed and targeted. Sixteen of the selected articles were published 25 times in Nordic and Baltic magazines and on webpages, as well as in an American journal and an international journal. In addition, Writing Movement produced a 'catalogue', a publication documenting the project that included articles from the national organisers, inspiring pieces by other writers and some of the selected writers' articles as well as a glossary of terms in all of the national languages of keõja. With a print run of 6,000, the book, *Expeditions in Dance Writing: Writing Movement 2012-2014*, is currently being diffused by keõja Writing Movement partners.

Changes in the publishing sector due to the rise in digital and social media and the relative disappearance of the art critic from the traditional press were discussed. Writing Movement opened a blog site and Facebook group in addition to the keõja overall website. A major focus was on developing new language for dance, not only in terms of enriching local languages to replace 'international-English' contemporary dance words but also to shift the analysis of dance from an out-dated

theatrical stance to one that sees corporal movement from its own politics and motivations.

6.2. People

Labs ... were open for and relevant to professional critics, dancers, choreographers, curators, researchers, teachers/ pedagogues, arts managers, producers and others who work with dissemination and communication of dance and the performing arts as well as to audiences.

Writing Movement blog

Writing Movement (WM - original title 'Reading Dance - Writing Dance') originated with Ine Therese Berg, dance advisor at DIN (until August 2014 when Sigrun Drivdal Johnsen, Ine Therese's assistant, took the post). Berg conceptualised and coordinated WM. Berg and Inta Balode co-edited the final publication (project catalogue), *Expeditions in Dance Writing: Writing Movement 2012-2014*.

keõja 2012-2015 co-organisers are differentiated from WM national organisers, who conceptualised and collaboratively produced local labs, selected and edited submitted articles, encouraged publishers and editors to cover more dance and were the heart of WM. They were:

- Dansehallerne, Denmark - Kamma Siegmundfeldt, overall keõja project manager, dance scholar, academic
- The Union of Estonian Dance Artists - Maike Maiste, freelance writer
- liikekieli.com, Finland - Veera Lamberg, online journal editor and dance artist
- The Iceland Academy of the Arts - Sesselja G. Magnúsdóttir, dance critic and historian
- *www.Journal.dance.lv*, Latvia - Inta Balode, online journal editor and dance critic
- Ne[w]kritika and New Baltic Dance (*www.dance.lt*), Lithuania - Ingrida Gerbutavičiūtė, dance critic, dramaturg, academic
- Dance Information Norway - Ine Therese Berg/ Sigrun Drivdal Johnsen, dance advisors at DIN
- Dansbyrå, Sweden - Moa Sahlin, choreographer, artistic director of Dansbyrå

SELECTED WRITERS

Of the 20 writers selected, eight are from Sweden, three from Norway, two from Denmark, two from Estonia, two from Finland, one from Iceland, one from Latvia and one from Lithuania:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Corina Oprea (SE) | Ellen Kilsgaard (DK) |
| Hanna Nordqvist (SE) | Niklas Fransson (SE) |
| Anne Grete Eriksen (NO) | Raminta Bumbulyte (LT) |
| Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt (SE) | Elina Bērtule (LV) |
| Iiris Viirpalu (EE) | Jan Uulst (EE) |
| Karen-Maria Jonsdóttir (IS) | Maija Ikonen (FI) |
| Maija Karhunen (FI) | Pil Hansen (DK) |
| Rebecca Chentinnell (SE) | Venke Sortland (NO) |
| Vilde Sparre (NO) | Karolin Kent (SE) |
| Marika Hedemyr (SE) | Pavle Heidler (SE) |

6.3. Places

As mentioned, keõja Writing Movement sponsored 21 labs/ workshops, but 41 actually took place due to some national organisers' ability to raise additional funds and organise other sessions without EU keõja funding. The nationally organised Writing Movement events were done via local partnerships based on the defining features of that country's dance environment and strategic opportunities.

Labs were a mix of practical workshops, movement + writing sessions, lectures, panel discussions, artists' rehearsals, after-performance discussions and artists' talks. Sidsel Pape's 'Re/ viewing Dance' writer's workshop was given in four of the Nordic countries, including at keõja Aarhus 2011 and keõja 2012-2015 Writing Movement events in Copenhagen and Tallinn.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Writing Movement local organisers strategically partnered with existing venues and events, placing the labs to benefit fully from wider visibility, larger audiences and better promotion.

Denmark: The 'Re/viewing Dance' writers' workshop (consisting of three consecutive sessions) was held in conjunction with performances programmed in the Dansehallerne.

Estonia: Five labs (of which two were Writing Movement-sponsored) included two 'Re/viewing Dance' sessions, as well as sessions on 'cooperative criticism' and 'critic as

historian', partnering with the Uus Tants Festival 2013, the Estonian Dance Agency, Estonian Debating Society and Telliskivi Loomelinnak (Tallinn Creative City, a revamped complex of 11 old industrial buildings, formerly the Baltic Railways factory).

Finland: Ten labs were held, only one of which was a directly sponsored Writing Movement event. They included a five-session writing workshop at Theatre Corner in Helsinki. Other partners included eight Finnish dance festivals in seven cities throughout the country and the Writing Movement sponsored seminar at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki. Two sessions on dance writing organised by DIN were also held as part of the keõjaMariehamn Encounter.

Iceland: Venue partners for the three sessions were the City Theatre, the Art Museum and the Theatre Academy in Reykjavik.

Latvia: The five Latvian workshops included two dance festivals, 'New Dance into the New Venue', specifically organised for and by the Writing Movement local organiser to benefit from the visibility surrounding the opening of two new arts venues, in Rēzekne, eastern Latvia and in Cēsis, a small historical town northeast of Riga. Other lectures, workshops and seminars were held in collaboration with Riga's Time to Dance festival. Only the lab / festival in Rēzekne was directly sponsored by Writing Movement.

Lithuania: Six sessions took place, one at keõjaKlaipeda, four at the New Baltic Dance festival in Vilnius, and one at the Aura Dance Festival in Kaunas.

Norway: One festival was a location for a session, the CODA Oslo International Dance Festival, and four other venues hosted workshops: Dansens Hus, the Black Box Teater, Den Norske Opera & Ballett in Oslo and, in a suburb, the kulturhus of Bærum.

Sweden: Two workshops took place, one at the Stora Teatern as part of the Textival literature festival and the other at Dansbyån, both in Gothenburg.

keõja Writing Movement hosts (organisers) participated in seven internal network meetings in Tallinn, Helsinki, Klaipeda, Jūrmala, Stockholm, Mariehamn and Oslo.

6.4. Evaluation Feedback

The Evaluation questionnaire went in December to 23 people and was returned by 11 respondents (48%). The current DIN Writing Movement manager responded and four other national organisers (50%) from Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Norway. Six of twelve writers (50%) responded, representing Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. In addition, the Evaluators held a discussion with six national organisers in December 2014 during the ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform in Oslo and a skype interview took place with Veera Lamberg, the Finnish national organiser.

SELF-APPRAISAL

Organisers and the Writing Movement manager feel that Writing Movement was born out of necessity and a common urge felt by more than one, 'the idea was in the air; there was a need for such a thing.'

Everyone mentioned the relative lack of funding for WM for administration/management. It meant that the organisers' network meetings regrettably focused more on admin and logistics than on intellectual exchange. This was exacerbated by imbalances in local fundraising opportunities (hence the many more sessions in Finland) and between organisers: some were freelancers with other, non-dance employment while others were employed by dance organisations. These aspects led to a major regret almost universally expressed - too little time to do what was desired (and a general feeling of exhaustion by the end).

I wish I had had more time. So many ideas but so little time. As a freelance, I have a day job ... it was very frustrating.

Maike Maiste, Union of Estonian Dance Artists, Estonia
Writing Movement organiser

Even if most of us are writers or artists, we didn't have enough time and space to really get into what happens in dance in each country, what do we share, what is different, what about Nordic-Baltic relationships?

Inta Balode, Journal.dance.lv, Latvia
Writing Movement organiser

Several respondents noted Writing Movement's independence from the wider keõja. Ine Therese Berg feels that the independence and flexibility allowed to the national organisers was necessary due to the disparities between them. Berg had hoped to visit all the events, but they were too numerous and



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CAPACITY

she had insufficient time. There was not much crossover at each other's events: this was in part because they were in the local languages and thus inaccessible to foreigners.

The capacity to actually pay writers was a rare treat for some:

It was incredibly important that (for once!) I could pay people properly! It wasn't the usual case of, 'Oh, we are poor Baltics, please can you help us out?'

Inta Balode, Journal.dance.lv,
Latvia Writing Movement organiser

MOTIVATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Whilst the contemporary dance is varied and quite multifaceted, the reflection on it seems to be a bit behind it, and in my opinion keđja Writing Movement is a project which changes this situation.

Elina Bērtule (writer)

National organisers wanted to stimulate more texts about dance in their countries by providing publishers and existing journalists with more knowledge, competence and interest in dance. They wanted to encourage new writers with the practice and confidence to write about dance. There was a desire to legitimise dance writing and reflection, bringing it onto a level with other art forms, and to put artists and writers together in dialogue and exchange. Writing Movement organisers wanted to build or strengthen networks of publishers and writers and to find out what was happening in the other countries. Many cited the strong desire to think about or diffuse new approaches to dance writing.

That much of this was achieved is attested by responses that it has become easier to contact publishers and national journalists who have also become more interested in dance. More new writers and dance artists are writing about their work and/or about dance; students and recent graduates are blogging. Local workshop participants have expressed interest to continue and links between the eight countries' partners are strong, with a corresponding desire to continue the partnership. In Estonia, 'We see a change in the way reviews are written, a lighter, more accessible language'.

The publication ('project catalogue') *Expeditions in Dance Writing: Writing Movement 2012-2014* is a source of pride, a useful and historical dance document for the organisers, as are the 20 selected and translated articles.

All of the organisers who responded stated they had learned how to better develop and manage an international project.

KEDJA'S SPECIFICITY

Writing Movement was unique in terms of its scale - it encompassed numerous local labs but also included publishing on an international level.

Neither writers nor organisers are much involved in international networks and this is perhaps the reason they value their new network, with all of them citing the desire to continue in some way, whether formally or informally - several already in touch for advice, invitations to workshops or commissioning/writing texts.

Writing Movement was also designed to be artist-centred as opposed to the more usual events focusing on managers, producers and programmers.

The project was different because we - critics, writers, artists, took up the role of organisers and implemented actions ... to improve the situation

Inta Balode, Journal.dance.lv,
Latvia keđja Writing Movement organiser

KEDJA INTEGRATION

I would depict this keđja ... as a hand. All the activities are fingers and the whole project is the arm. The fingers can move separately, but they are also moved by the arm. What the arm does influences what the fingers do or can do.

Maike Maiste, Union of Estonian Dance Artists,
Estonia Writing Movement organiser

Only one organiser attended and wrote about a Wilderness residency in her country. The formalised crossover with other keđja activity strands took place during some of the keđja Encounters. Some felt that Writing Movement was slightly 'detached' but, reflecting on a perceived marginal role for the critic, 'It is not much different from how criticism functions in everyday life'. Another view is that in raising awareness overall for contemporary dance writing, Writing Movement improved the basic foundation of understanding and interest and certainly contributed to the aims of the whole keđja. Only half of the writer respondents were aware of the whole keđja project.

COMMUNICATION

There was no common communication strategy, but each partner did their own, as each was so unique. The national organisers were all users and contributors to the keõja Writing Movement blog and Facebook pages, whereas the writers used the blog and Facebook pages not at all or occasionally. Ine Therese Berg recognised, 'We should have opened the FB page as an open group from the start'.

Those who organised workshops used printed flyers, press releases, direct mailings to the dance community and/or higher education institutes. Those linked to higher profile events such as festivals or the opening of new arts venues (e.g. Latvia) shared media campaigns directed at radio, TV and other media. The Finnish organiser created a closed Facebook page for their workshop participants.

LEARNING AND OTHER BENEFITS

Breaking isolation was an important benefit: 'we are not alone', said one organiser, remarking that the situations in the Baltics were not worse, only different, and joining others in appreciating that a Nordic-Baltic network of people interested in dance discourse had been built. The organiser respondents universally shared their Writing Movement experiences with colleagues. Alongside making new contacts, opening new channels for communicating, improving their national and international profiles, most felt they had improved their capacity to analyse dance for their readers.

The process of selecting articles from the many submissions was a moment of rich Nordic-Baltic and artistic exchange, 'What was interesting and new for one, was old fashioned and commonplace for another.'

Organisers feel the network will hold over time, and there is hope that if artistic exchange and mobility continue, a shared discourse, cross-readership and publishing model may be possible.

There was only universal praise amongst the writers who responded. They obviously wanted to (and felt they did) improve their writing and analytical skills, gain knowledge about the art form itself, broaden their perspectives and come away with useful tools. Getting into contact with dancers and choreographers from other countries and becoming part of a dance writing community was also mentioned. For the less experienced writers, the editorial guidance was important.

At least for an inexperienced writer the feedback during the writing process helped a lot ... I really profited from the advice on how to choose the reader, for example.

Elina Bértule (writer)

For those more experienced, or already publishing, a wider international circle of readers was developed. It was noted that theatre writers became more willing to analyse and write about dance.

The research that I did was challenging and exciting. I would definitely do that again. ... I think Lithuania got more integrated in the dance-related cultural processes happening in the neighbouring countries ... A fantastic initiative worth expansion and further development.

Raminta Bumbulyte (writer)

Most of all, I believe that the contacts between different artists, organisers and critics-academics can be the most influential in the future, allowing new works and interesting ideas to rise.

Iiris Viirpalu (writer)

6.5. Evaluation Commentary

Writing Movement was a laudable initiative in a field that is under threat and most often considered marginal, yet fundamental to the understanding of emerging dance forms and thus to the development of audiences and even artists. That so much was accomplished by a relatively small number of people, including some working almost as volunteers, is also notable.

Surprisingly, only one of the writers who responded attended a Writing Movement workshop. With such a small sample it is not possible to draw any conclusions, but it seems to indicate that the workshops attracted a different audience from the open call.

Writing Movement's independence (from the larger keõja) has been criticised by other keõja partners, but the evaluators feel that it may have been counter-productive to force critics and dance artists, for example, by insisting on more Wilderness residency reviews. By following their instincts the writers and organisers exploited local opportunities and opened out to their audiences.

However, more keõja branding by Writing Movement (and thus visibility for the larger project) could have been useful (only one respondent writer knew any of the other activities). After all, keõja is now an eight-year project that will undoubtedly be studied by future dance writers. Was this a self-imposed exile in order to escape the constraints of belonging to a larger group of decision-makers? One non-Writing Movement keõja co-organiser regrets that Writing Movement national organisers did not have the same status as co-organisers. It is likely that a more numerous presence of national organisers at the top table would have changed perspectives.

The most important aspect now will be professional diffusion of the 'project catalogue', continuation of press relations and of the local workshops, either by universities (there is some evidence of this happening), or via relationships with festivals (e.g. Textival in Sweden or another dance festival in Latvia in 2015) or simply by the organisers – a one year network application was sent to KK Nord in February 2015.

Iceland organiser Sesselja G. Magnúsdóttir observes, 'Writing Movement has opened a new space to belong, a space between academia and dance praxis' and Swedish organiser Moa Sahlin speaks of 'a more "fluent identity" [that of] critic, writer, pedagogue, artist'. In order to consolidate these changes in the various sectors it has touched, Writing Movement should not rest, but needs to keep building on the strong foundation it has laid. But that will require money, and time. Will funders take note?



mobilise
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borders



7. keōja Think Tanks

7.1. Programme Outline

Dance Info Finland wanted to ... realise activities that would benefit the dance field both in a strategic and practical way. The Touring Think Tank was something with a practical goal; the need for touring possibilities was something that we knew ... also from the feedback that was gathered from the dance field during keōja. The Sustainability Think Tank was the strategic process ... to create tools, recommendations etc. for the dance field and policy makers ...

Sanna Rekola, Dance Info Finland

The Think Tanks along with the Mentoring Scheme formed a single activity strand in keōja's EU application text. Although the description was relatively vague, the key word was 'action' - creating 'concrete action plans'. Desired long term results were better infrastructure, working and economic conditions for contemporary dance in the region. The tools to accomplish this were two expert groups - a Sustainability Think Tank and a Touring Think Tank, meeting and deliberating twice a year over two to three years.

Bringing together opinion-formers and 'competent people within the sector ... to analyse different relevant issues' the Touring Think Tank created concrete plans for a pilot performance touring circuit in the region. The Sustainability Think Tank outlined schemes, strategies and tactics 'for direct actions concerned with collaboration, development and mobility' in order to build or improve the resources and infrastructure necessary to ensure that the contemporary dance sector was sustainable.

Both Think Tanks were allowed relatively free rein in their reflections. Concrete actions were demanded but the precise steps to them were not pre-ordained: 'the nature of the Think Tank work, by definition, requires independent and creative thinking'. Both groups balanced the intimacy necessary for reaching consensus with the transparency common to the Nordic approach. Having finished the discussion stage the Sustainability group in particular now intends to diffuse widely their recommendations in order to influence policy and practice. The Touring Think Tank has applied for Nordic funds to support a pilot tour, now planned for Autumn 2015.

In addition to its final report, the Sustainability Think Tank produced reports after each meeting and updated the eight national summaries of the state of play for contemporary dance that had been produced for the first-ever keōja Encounter in 2008 in Vilnius.

The Touring Think Tank has formalised its plans, and successfully raised funds towards a first trial tour in Autumn 2015 to potentially include the following presenters:

- Baltoppen LIVE, Ballerup, Denmark
- Estonian Dance Agency and partners, Tallinn, Estonia
- Tjarnarbió, Reykjavik, Iceland
- Arts Printing House, Vilnius, Lithuania
- Bærum Culture House, Bærum, Norway
- Dansearena nord and partners, Hammerfest, Norway

7.2. People

Both Think Tanks were to a large extent the brainchild of Dance Info Finland (DIF), one of the four partner dance information centres and the one whose public profile most stresses public advocacy. DIF conceptualised the Think Tanks: Katarina Lindholm, project manager at DIF, was the Think Tank manager and responsible for overall coordination and communication for both Think Tanks. DIF's Director, Sanna Rekola also moderated the Sustainability Think Tank from its second meeting onwards.

The two Think Tanks aimed to inform practically everyone active in the sector: cultural policy makers, dance artists, dance educators, managers, programmers, producers or professional service organisations such as the dance information centres or dancers unions. It was originally thought that up to 20 key professionals would join the Think Tanks working sessions throughout keōja's duration, envisaging the eventual participation of 60 people. These numbers were surpassed, as seen below. Open invitations to join the Touring Think Tank were direct mailed in 2012 and 2013 to well over 100 venue and festival managers in all Nordic-Baltic countries and keōja partners also diffused the call. Both groups shared their work at various keōja Encounters and held additional open workshops.

Although keōja had its Nordic-Baltic focus, some external key people were invited to inspire the Think Tanks. Alan Rivett moderated the Touring Think Tank. Director of Coventry's

Warwick Arts Centre, Rivett is a member and current Chair of the UK's 14 year old Dance Touring Partnership³ which brings together middle scale, mixed programme venues, several times a year to discuss companies and organise UK tours.

Similarly, the Sustainability Think Tank invited Julie Teyssou, French tour manager of the dance company David Rolland Chorégraphies (Nantes), to their kick-off meeting in 2012 as well as Marie-Christine Duréault, an experienced French cultural leader whose work covers sustainable culture, regional cultural development, governance, collective intelligence and participation.

The Sustainability Think Tank alternated public and private sessions but the Touring Think Tank learned halfway through that to be effective, it had to close ranks (before re-opening later to share their deliberations) and include only those people who had a strong will and were ready to make sacrifices to see the touring circuit take shape.

I told them they had to have absolute commitment to the project in order to make it work. I told them that the conditions for building it were openness, honesty and trust ... After keõjaKlaipeda, I laid down some rules: a) no more changes in the participants, b) everyone participating had to have full access to a venue, staff, tech etc. even if they didn't have their own venue

Alan Rivett, Warwick Arts Centre,
Touring Think Tank moderator

SUSTAINABILITY THINK TANK

Apart from its working meetings, the Sustainability Think Tank held open discussions to present their on-going reflections and, using various facilitation techniques, solicit feedback from the sector. Two workshops for dance artists were held in June and September 2013 on survival skills. The open sessions and workshops drew around 80 people and some 100 people attended the seminar talks.

In addition to Sanna Rekola, Director of DIF, and the Think Tank manager, the six other Sustainability participants from the start were:

- Riitta Heinämaa, Director of the Finnish Institute in Estonia
- Sari Palmgren, freelance choreographer and dancer, MAD Production, Helsinki
- Torsten Schenlaer, Head of the Cultural Department of the city of Lund
- Ragnar Siil, Chair of the European Union Expert Group on Cultural and Creative Industries and former Undersecretary for Fine Arts at the Estonian Ministry of Culture

And, from the second meeting onwards:

- Tove Bratten, Director, Performing Arts Hub Norway
- Audronis Imbrasas, Director, Lithuanian Dance Information Centre and Arts Printing House

Touring Think Tank

In addition to Alan Rivett, Think Tank moderator and Katarina Lindholm, Think Tank manager, 23 people from 19 producing and presenting organisations from all eight countries participated in the Think Tank with an additional 120 in the open seminar and sharing sessions. A core membership of around nine people attended at least three of four meetings (in addition to the moderator and Think Tank manager). They were:

- Ib Jensen, Baltoppen LIVE, Ballerup
- Raido Bergstein, Estonian Dance Agency, Tallinn
- Maija Eränen, Zodiak-Center for New Dance, Helsinki
- Jukka-Pekka Pohjolainen, Regional Dance Center for Eastern Finland, Kuopio
- Gunnar Gunnsteinsson, SL- Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland/Tjarnarbió, Reykjavik
- Audronis Imbrasas, Lithuanian Dance Information Centre / Arts Printing House, Vilnius
- Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord, Hammerfest
- Jørgen Knudsen, DanseFestival Barents, Hammerfest
- Anne-Sofie Ericsson, SITE, Stockholm

It is noticeable that Latvia's representation in both Think Tanks was weak, despite the presence of one representative in the second Touring meeting.

3. <http://www.dancetouringpartnership.co.uk>

7.3. Places

Sustainability Think Tank: *life cycle thinking when speaking of funding, artistic practices and careers and developing the structures in general*

- **keõjaTallinn, Estonia:** Kickoff meeting, September 2012, to start the work process by discussing and defining the concept of sustainability (an ecosystem) and setting the overall framework for the group. The working day was followed by an open session for around 50 Encounter participants. Five themes emerged: the life of productions, communicating value, artistic practices, funding and other support for dance and structures in the dance field.
- **Lund, Sweden:** Second meeting, April 2013, to sharpen and elaborate the five key themes, considering contemporary dance's wider impact and reception, and to focus on sustainable mobility, sustainable funding and sustainable structures in the dance field. The very different national systems were acknowledged. The group agreed to aim for a final formal report with recommendations.
- **KeõjaKlaipeda, Lithuania:** Workshop, June 2013, aimed at dance artists in particular. Topics: time and financial management; employer/employee relations; the need for spaces and training; needs of/for communities, of longer lifespans for productions; recycling/sharing resources and knowledge; having more time and security to do things well.
- **Helsinki, Finland:** Third meeting, September 2013, working toward the final document focusing on two core areas of sustainability in dance: collective strategies for the dance community and flexible, long-term funding on national, regional and EU levels (as opposed to project-by-project logic). 'Recycling' (seen as pause or transformation) was proposed as a concept linked to sustainability. Presentations included artistic incubators, the Dance House project in Helsinki and the research report of the CreativePlot in Lund.
- **Copenhagen:** Final meeting, March 2014, to decide on the form and content of the final document.
- **Helsinki:** Working meeting, May 2014, with Sanna Rekola, Katarina Lindholm and Ragnar Siil to work on the final document.

- **keõjaMariehamn, Åland Islands:** Various sessions, August 2014, presentation of the Think Tank's work and results in one main seminar, a discussion on sustainable funding and two workshops for the dance community.

Touring Think Tank: *sharing resources, knowledge and advocacy; mitigating differences; co-producing more efficiently; increasing mutual support and synergy*

- **ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform:** Kickoff meeting, December 2012, to map the possibilities for a Nordic-Baltic touring circuit and ask 'Why?' (for artistic and audience development in the region); 'What kind?' (Nordic-Baltic productions as a priority); benefits and challenges. Challenges included running a cross-border structure in such a diversified region and maintaining a sustainable network.
- **keõjaKlaipeda, Lithuania:** Second meeting and a sharing session, June 2013, practical issues were discussed: structure, scale, funding, marketing and branding, overall coordination. Videos and suitable productions were discussed. A pilot tour was proposed to test the model being developed. Following this meeting, there were strict criteria for participation in the group.
- **Dance <3, Stockholm, Sweden:** Third meeting, December 2013, at a new contemporary dance festival. A concrete plan was made and network structure, membership, criteria, selection process, fundraising and the pilot tour were discussed.
- **Copenhagen, Denmark:** Final meeting, May 2014, to prepare the next steps (post-keõja) up to 2016. Data collection, for audience development evaluation and measurement, was also agreed.

The funding applications that had been submitted earlier in spring [for a pilot tour in Autumn 2014] had proven unsuccessful, thus much of the Copenhagen meeting was spent preparing for the next round of applications by focusing on those issues that needed to be improved or concretized, such as the audience development activities.

End Report, Touring Network
for the Nordic-Baltic Region, DIF

- **keðja Mariehamn, Åland Islands:** Seminar and sharing sessions, August 2014, to share the work process and conclusions with the wide audience present at the final keðja 2012-2015 Encounter.

7.4. Evaluation Feedback

The Evaluation questionnaire was sent in December 2014 to 27 Think Tank members and returned by 11 people (41%). The geographical spread favoured the Nordics, with four from Finland, two each from Denmark and Norway, one each from Sweden and Estonia, one from the Finnish Institute in Estonia and none from Latvia, Lithuania or Iceland. In addition to the Think Tank manager, five out of the seven Sustainability members responded (71%) and five of the main nine Touring members responded (55%).

The evaluators held a session in Oslo in December 2014 with the Think Tank manager and eight members, including three (Iceland, Estonia, Norway) who did not return the questionnaire. Evaluators had a private interview with the Touring Think Tank moderator and with the Latvia keðja co-organiser. A later Skype interview took place with Sanna Rekola and Katarina Lindholm from DIF.

SELF-APPRAISAL

There is a unanimous if somewhat plaintive wish that the Think Tanks' discussions and exchange could continue but some doubt that this can happen outside of a funded project, due to everyday time and cost constraints. If the Sustainability group could go on, potential topics were mentioned: art and democracy, public management, challenges due to increasing commercialisation of society, the relevance of art and internationalism.

As well, some doubts were expressed about the longer-term feasibility of the touring circuit due to funding uncertainties and the difficulties of meeting together to see and discuss productions on a regular basis in such a large geographic region.

The Touring Think Tank did not really get into gear until its third meeting and might have failed after funding applications for a pilot tour in Autumn 2014 were rejected. A joint discussion was followed by a joint decision to make new applications. The application process was also done as a collaborative effort between several TT members, one of whom was in

charge of putting it all together. Thus a Nordic Culture Fund grant request was successful. It is possible that this touring model is a preferable alternative to the co-producing consortia popular in the EU. One respondent declared a preference for 'searching for artists outside of official network situations', echoing perhaps what another feels, 'The model of networks of co-producers is old hat. The more interesting work is being produced outside of the venues. There is a much greater diversity of choice coming from the independent artists.' In other words, it is relevant to create this circuit of venues that will support new, independently produced work rather than circulating works specifically commissioned by networks of co-producers.

Both groups state that they could have usefully used one additional meeting at the end of keðja and both groups had very high praise for the Think Tank manager and the moderators.

MOTIVATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Sustainability respondents were motivated to learn about challenges, policies and the state of contemporary dance in neighbouring countries, as well as to be inspired by a diversity of ideas leading to better sustainability. All felt that this was achieved.

Common and updated understanding of references, priorities, language to use to strengthen the field of dance and performing art in a more sustained and focused way in the future.

Tove Bratten, Performing Arts Hub Norway

Touring respondents were motivated by curiosity or the wish to see a touring network in the region. Even if not totally sure it would happen, keðja being the 'the last try' to create it, there was a strong will to undertake a concerted effort and make concrete decisions.

A mapping of the challenges we face in connection to touring the Nordic/Baltic countries and solutions to some of these challenges. An action plan for a touring network - the first steps towards a functional, effective and sustainable network of dedicated presenters wanting to collaborate on developing the field of contemporary dance...

Hanne Svejstrup, Dansehallerne

A few were reticent ('if we manage this'; 'not sure it's the right thing') but all respondents feel that the Touring Think Tank achieved its results with the blueprint for a first tour in Au-

turn 2015, and almost all believe a circuit will exist in three years' time. In addition, 'major and minor touring structures, in bigger and/or smaller circles, are under construction.' The group task of analysing problems and coming to an agreed solution, despite very different contexts, was challenging but ultimately satisfying. Although only a few felt that keðja would succeed to create more sustainable funding (from any source) for Nordic-Baltic contemporary dance, almost all believe that a touring network will lengthen the life of productions, 'cut costs and raise visibility'.

KEDJA'S SPECIFICITY

Think Tank respondents were already part of existing dance networks and platforms. For over half of them, keðja's Think Tanks stood out because they were bottom-up, focused on creating a community, on improving the framework conditions in the Nordic-Baltic region through concentrated collaborative thinking over a defined period, 'a peer support network'. The Think Tanks' holistic nature was praised ('artistic, strategic, educational, political and networking') and more than one mentioned 'keðja is not for buying/selling'.

KEDJA INTEGRATION

All Think Tank members were aware of the full keðja project and all (but one) thought they were well integrated into the larger keðja because they nourished the Encounters' content and/or because they contributed to overall aims: e.g. a touring circuit would improve the sector's sustainability by increasing the life of productions seen by more people over a longer period of time.

COMMUNICATIONS

None of the Think Tanks' members used keðja's digital or social media communication tools much except to find information on keðja events. It was felt that, 'it would have probably created heavy expectations from the field. For a process like the Touring Think Tank, it's good to give space and time, not to hurry with opening unfinished ideas.' However, as mentioned, the Sustainability group will widely and actively diffuse their finished report as a means to open up discussions on its recommendations, throughout the region.

LEARNING AND OTHER BENEFITS

Respondents firstly valued learning about the conditions in the dance field in the Nordic-Baltic countries and expressed the hope that keðja would eventually lead to fewer imbalances, less isolation and improved conditions. 'This helps me to

understand the different realities in the neighbouring countries and will make collaboration easier in the future.'

Communication was an important point and learning – both understanding the different cultures and also communicating your work better at home.

Gunnar Gunnsteinsson,

SL – Association for Independent Theatres in Iceland

Another much appreciated aspect was the extended time to reflect deeply without being rushed. Good practices were shared, personal bonds were built and although the experience of meeting professionals from other countries was not new, the diversity in the groups and the rare and precious continuity was stimulating. Improving professional competences and increasing contacts rated highly, and around half of the respondents had shared their keðja experiences with other colleagues, which is a positive sign.

7.5. Evaluation Commentary

The Think Tanks were a direct development of discussions and observations made during the first, and the interim keðja periods, from 2008 onwards. In this sense the promise of so-called keðjal (2008-2011) was not only fulfilled but also evolved and generated concrete results.

These results clearly produced a feeling of achievement for the Think Tank members and look fairly certain to outlive keðja 2012-2015 and evolve further.

Especially notable in the Sustainability group there was a willingness to work hard to overcome differences and to even seek out differences to address. The sense of a Nordic-Baltic community is strong, but is still in the stages of its construction due to the discrepancies in available funding and infrastructure for contemporary dance in the Baltics, the uneven levels of development between the three Baltics and also between some Nordic countries. It can only be hoped that as these initiatives develop, Latvia will become more involved and more Estonians and Lithuanians will also be able to participate fully.

It is noticeable that Latvia's representation in both Think Tanks was weak, despite the presence of one representative in the second Touring meeting. The relative lack of funding, of

key individuals and infrastructure for contemporary dance in Latvia have been offered as reasons by other, non-Latvia keōja participants.

The biggest challenge now linked to the Sustainability final advocacy document will not be its diffusion, but securing buy-in from policy makers and catalysing real change in the sector. It could be useful to set goals in each participating country to organise public (and private) presentations to decision-makers and dance professionals in order to prioritise recommendations and create national action plans to achieve them.

The members of the Touring Think Tank acknowledge that honesty and trust building is the basis for any future touring network and this is a strength. However, the evaluator feels that the touring circuit is still in a fragile phase - it is a commonplace observation that the strongest cross-border European cultural projects are those that take place, albeit on a reduced scale, without EU funding in initial stages but due to the will, own budgets and commitment of partners. The detailed plans for the pilot are sound and if a pilot tour is successful it could convince funders to invest in a pilot series, possibly by increasing national funding directly to each individual presenter, adding matching regional (Nordic) funding to ensure full participation of the Baltics, thus paving the way for something more lasting.



empower



8. keðja Mentoring

8.1. Programme outline

The keðja Mentoring programme was developed to address a lack of skills in communication and business management in the independent dance sector, which was identified during the keðja 2008-2010 project. The target group for the programme was 12 younger performing arts managers /producers /self-organising artists, to be selected as mentees through an open call and matched with experienced mentors. The programme focused on sharing knowledge and experience – between mentor-mentee and through group activities – in order to develop the performing arts management field. The overarching aim was to develop the international capacities of the mentees, as set out in the open call:

The mentoring sessions will emphasize the empowerment of the individual, strengthening the competences needed to initiate local, international and cross-border activities

The call for participants was announced in June 2012 and, by the deadline in mid-August, the organisers had received 60 applications. The sub-group of co-organisers and partners that project-managed the activity strand (SITE and Kultur i Väst, with Dansehallerne and SL Independent Theatres of Iceland), selected the mentees, who were informed by mid-September. At the same time, the Mentoring scheme managers assembled a pool of potential mentors, via the keðja co-organiser network, participation in keðja Encounters and other Nordic-Baltic dance sector initiatives. A careful matching process allocated mentors with suitable skills and experience to meet the expectations of the selected mentees. The mentor-mentee pairs came from different countries and the organisers wanted to choose mentors who would ‘push’ the mentees.

Mentors signed an agreement and were paid a standard fee plus expenses for their contribution. Mentees did not have a formal contract and were reimbursed travel and accommodation costs. The programme set out the expectation for all parties that they would meet 2-3 times over the period, participate in the keðja Encounters at Klaipeda and Mariehamn and that mentees would be given an assignment and asked to ‘solve concrete tasks in relation to keðja 2012-2015 activities’.

The Mentoring programme was scheduled to last two years (1st January 2013 – 31st December 2014). Documentation indicates that mentoring activity was unevenly spread across the period, with few taking advantage of the full timeframe. Most mentors and mentees first met at a planning workshop at keð-

jaKlaipeda in mid-June 2013, while much of the mentoring activity concluded in August 2014 after keðjaMariehamn (mentoring evaluation workshops and Mentouring activity). However, there were individual variations with some mentor-mentees meeting earlier (e.g. at ICE HOT, December 2012 and in early 2013) and some continuing the process into the second half of 2014 (e.g. ICE HOT, Oslo, December 2014).

At the end of the programme, mentoring was central to a new proposal, involving the same mentors, manager and several keðja co-organisers. The Nordic Circle of Artistic Management (current working title) was planned as a 3-year programme (2015-2017) offering two one-year mentoring cycles to young Nordic producers alongside workshops and network meetings to further develop dance field management skills. The project was awarded a grant from the Nordic Culture Fund but did not secure the required network grant from the Nordic Culture Point to start the programme. It is planned to reapply with a revised proposal.

8.2. People

The Mentoring programme was planned and implemented by keðja co-organiser SITE, in close collaboration with associated partner Kultur i Väst, and supported by Dansehallerne and SL-Independent Theatres of Iceland. The programme was devised by Christina Molander, when she was Director of SITE. By the time it was implemented, she had moved jobs and took the role of a mentor. Anne-Sofie Ericsson, Managing Director at SITE and Eyrun Thorhallsdottir, Regional Dance Advisor at Kultur i Väst were the Mentoring scheme managers.

Selected mentees and mentors came from all the participating Nordic and Baltic countries (Sweden and Denmark – 6 each, Norway – 5, Finland – 4, Iceland – 3, Estonia, Latvia & Lithuania – 1 each). The final selection of mentees and mentors included several duos (one pair of mentees and two pairs of mentors, as well as two mentees who work together and were allocated separate mentors). A cultural manager who applied as a mentee was persuaded that her experience level was better suited as a mentor and this was agreed. The selected participants were:

Mentees

Linda Birkedal (NO)

Anne-Linn Akselsen (NO)

Emelie Bergbohm (SE)

Kajsa Sandström (SE)

Riikka Thizt (FI)

Heli Meklin (FI)

Niels Bjerg &

Kirstine Kyhl Andersen (DK)

Christine Borch (DK)

Ásgerdur Gunnarsdóttir (IS)

Alexander Roberts (IS)

Justina Brazaite (LT)

Zane Estere Gruntmane (LV)

Mentors

Christina Molander

& PeO Sander (SE)

Satu Tujunen (FI)

Bradley Allen (DK)

Helena Jónsdóttir (IS)

Triinu Aron (EE)

Kirre Arneberg (NO)

Karene Lyngholm (NO)

Bogdan Szyber &

Carina Reich (SE)

Gunn Hernes (NO)

Jesper de Neergaard (DK)

Outi Järvinen (FI)

Lene Bang (DK)

Among the mentees were several independent choreographers/dance artists, a curator, performing arts producers, programmer, a culture communications manager and a dance project coordinator. Among the mentors were artistic directors, choreographers, a producer, arts managers, an international consultant and a senior lecturer.

8.3. Places

The main locations for the Mentoring activity were:

- **keðjaKlaipeda Encounter** (June 12-13 2013): a two day workshop for mentees and mentors aimed to create a common, shared understanding of needs and working methods within a mentoring scheme. There were presentations by mentors and mentees. The 'concrete task' to be developed for keðjaMariehamn Encounter in August 2014 was brainstormed and decided. Due to long and interesting discussions the entire group also met during the mornings of June 14-15. In addition to these activities, mentors and mentees participated in the Encounter programme and had two further days (June 14-15) to continue the mentoring discussions informally.
- **keðjaMariehamn Encounter** (August 5-6 2014): the mentors and mentees met as a group and in pairs. The aim was to get structured feedback on the programme with a half day each for evaluation and planning the documentation to take place in the Autumn. On August 7-8, the mentees pre-

sented 'Mentouring', the performative mentoring session devised as the 'concrete task'. Encounter participants were invited to book a Mentouring row boat tour where the mentee and guest discussed a professional question as they travelled on the water. The Mariehamn programme also included a plenary Learn & Share panel session (7 August) entitled 'Sharing Stories - Perspectives on Mentoring and Coaching Methods' with contributions by nine mentors.

- **Diverse locations:** mentors and mentees met in various places for one-to-one sessions. Some were in conjunction with performances, festivals and network meetings to maximise the potential for learning and professional development. Evaluation questionnaires report meetings in Stockholm, Antwerp, Helsinki (ICE HOT), Oslo (CODA International Dance Festival), Copenhagen, Skien, Reykjavik (Reykjavik Dance Festival), IETM Montpellier, Vilnius (New Baltic Dance Festival), Paris, Larvik, Brussels, Oslo (ICE HOT) and Berlin, as well as by Skype and email.

8.4. Evaluation Feedback

The Evaluation Questionnaire was sent in early December 2014 to 27 people and was returned by 20 respondents (74%): two Mentoring scheme managers; nine mentors; nine mentees, including a duo. The geographical spread of respondents was balanced: five each from Sweden & Norway; four from Denmark; two each from Finland & Iceland and one each from Latvia & Lithuania.

The evaluator met the co-organisers involved in the Mentoring programme, as well as a separate meeting with the Mentoring scheme managers in Oslo, December 2014. The evaluator also attended an informal breakfast meeting with a small group of mentors and mentees.

The evaluator did not review the Mentoring applications and therefore cannot comment in detail on the quality and geographical spread of applications. The typology of selected mentees seems to fit the planned target group, although age/professional level was not known.

SELF-APPRAISAL

An important observation by the Mentoring scheme managers was that the programme missed a 'good opening and a

good closing', referring to the rather delayed and imprecise timeframe of the programme (as it was reportedly experienced by mentees and mentors). Also noted was that the budget only included a limited sum for travels and meetings and the common meetings connected to the Encounters were considered important. The Encounters calendar underpinned the programme's timeframe and the delayed meeting point affected how the mentoring relationship developed between some mentors and mentees.

The Mentoring scheme managers also said that they would have hoped to receive more applications overall: 'we had very few applications to our activity which shows that we did not reach the community'. They noted particularly the low level of applications from the Baltic countries (no mentees were selected from Estonia and no mentors selected from Latvia or Lithuania), and they were disappointed with the number of applications from Sweden and Iceland. However, they were satisfied that the programme included all eight participating keõja countries and met a specific need within the sector.

The producers are an important part of the ecosystem of dance and it was a clear need and wish from the earlier keõja activities to have activities for this group.

Eyrun Thorhallsdottir, Kultur i Väst,
Mentoring scheme manager

All the couples had met, some working on professional skills and some more on artistic themes, but several were less active in the mentoring programme. The Mentoring scheme managers felt that two of the twelve mentor-mentee partnerships had not been successful. Nevertheless, the network that had formed was very important, with potential for future collaborations. Several mentees were interested in continuing the Mentouring activity in other festivals.

The final group session at Mariehamn, due to focus on evaluation and documentation, fell short of the Mentoring scheme managers' expectations. They reported resistance from some mentees to feeding back publicly on a process which many had experienced as private and confidential.

MOTIVATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

I was just beginning my career in the dance field... my main goal was to become confident in myself as a manager/producer, to know what I do right, what I could do better and to be able to get advice from colleagues if needed.

Justina Brazaitė (mentee)

I believe we form a very strong and lasting network for brave arts professionals that will continue to take new steps. The Nordic/Baltic connection is important now and in the future.

Lene Bang (mentor)

For the mentees, the large majority (89%) appreciated the programme: 'it was great to have the support of my mentor' and the same number had developed new professional contacts among other mentees. For the mentors, developing a network with other mentors was also an important result (67%), and 56% were interested in developing an international project involving mentoring. The strongest success indicator is that the large majority of respondents (83%) wish to continue the mentoring relationship, formally or informally.

I feel I have gained future collaborators - both artists and managers who can support me in the future on concrete projects.

Christine Borch (mentee)

Overall **satisfaction levels** reported for the mentoring process were evenly spread between mentors and mentees. The majority (66%) were either very satisfied or satisfied with the process; 17% were fairly satisfied and 17% were unsatisfied. Over half of those who responded had experienced the Mentouring activity at Mariehamn, all very satisfied or satisfied. One mentee commented that the project had been a lot of work and would have appreciated if it would have been financially compensated.

The mentoring developed in a self-determined way, through agreement between mentor and mentee. According to the questionnaires, there were considerable variations between number of meetings/contacts between mentors and mentees. Including the two Encounter sessions, each mentor-mentee pair met directly between two and six times; they had anything from zero skype/phone sessions to 10 dedicated additional sessions (1-4 hours long); email contact ranged from very occasional to extremely regular. One mentee was unsatisfied with the level of contact: 'we did only meet twice so the time we

spent together was very short and an ongoing process not present' while another said 'my mentor is a well of information and was very generous with me during the mentoring'.

Several mentors and mentees criticised the unclear time-frame and structure: 'At the beginning of the mentoring period, it was not very clear what we were supposed to do and what the framework of the project was ... we lost time there' and 'I think that we needed a common start earlier in 2013 and a common end, later in the project in 2014'. One mentee even said 'The worst thing concerning mentoring process was that the first half of the year from January 2013 until Encounter in Klaipeda, we did not know what we have to do with all this great mentoring opportunity'.

Some mentor-mentee pairs devised an internal development plan to guide the process, while others followed a more responsive, flexible pathway: 'At the beginning, it was very hard to understand how the process would work, but after we set our personal goals with the mentor, it became more and more fruitful'.

KEĖJA'S SPECIFICITY

Several mentors had experience of other mentoring programmes and found the keĖja mentoring to be 'more formalised', 'a longer and more lasting commitment - the long and deep conversation over time is very fruitful'. A mentee commented that 'the 2-year stretch makes it work on "all" of your challenges and not just one or a few'.

KEĖJA INTEGRATION

The mentoring scheme brought mentors and mentees to two Encounters (Klaipeda and Mariehamn). For some mentees it was a new networking and learning experience, while many of the mentors were regular Encounters participants. Mentoring sessions were scheduled within other network and festival settings. This was not part of any public programme, but the scheme may have enabled several mentors and mentees to attend professional events they might otherwise not have seen.

As presented in chapter 5, the Mentoring scheme managers ran a workshop for the Wilderness hosts and partners, providing a bridge to that activity strand. While this was not intended to impact specifically on the mentors and mentees, it reinforced experience important for any future mentoring programme in the Nordic-Baltic region.

COMMUNICATIONS

We did not look for a large audience with the mentoring scheme. It is very hard to make visible to others a one-to-one conversation which continues for two years.

Anne-Sofie Ericsson,
SITE, Mentoring scheme manager

The open call set out plans for documentation: 'mentees are encouraged to produce texts for presentation on the keĖja website. The network will be working to find other ways for dissemination in print as well as via social media and to start a common blog as a diary during the entire program'. However, such documentation seems to have been neglected. To an extent, the initial ideas were found to be unsuitable for the process (it seems that a closed Facebook group page was started but not used) but new documentation methods were not explored:

There was no method of gathering the knowledge or experience ... no guidelines or structure for the documentation. It would be nice to create a tool, manual, guidebook or something concerning mentoring in the arts/arts management on a Nordic level. That way, the outcome of this scheme would benefit a larger number of artists and managers, and make a bigger change in the field.

Outi Järvinen (mentor)

No common blog diary was created and no texts by mentees are presented on the website. A few short reports were submitted by mentees at the midway point or at the end, and several arrived after the end of the evaluation research period, but little formal reporting was forthcoming, or indeed part of the mentoring contract. As noted by the Mentoring scheme managers, there were problems discussing documentation and evaluation at the Mariehamn mentoring session. However, a third of mentors and mentees did report that they had 'shared experiences of the mentoring scheme with professional colleagues'.

LEARNING AND OTHER BENEFITS

It was a great pleasure to hear how mentees tell us how they have grown, have taken several steps they had dreamed of. How they could support each other and now had a large network of colleagues and knowledge available.

Christina Molander (mentor), from mentoring 'sub-meeting' report, Oslo, December 2014

Most mentees improved their professional competences, gained in professional confidence, learned about some new opportunities and strengthened their capacity to initiate Nordic-Baltic region arts projects. Indicative comments such as: 'I have learned a lot about organisation and communication as a producer. Connected to this are reflections and different processes of working internationally. I have also built a network' and 'I have got some new tools for my career planning and time management'.

I wanted to clarify the field I want to work in; to observe and learn how to work in the international field; to develop my personal professional skills in a profession ... The right questions from my mentor always gave me big challenges to think about questions or situations from above, to try and be more objective.
Zane Gruntmane (mentee)

Several mentees emphasised the potential of the network: 'What came out of the program, its other mentors and especially the group of mentees turned out to be the most useful and developing'.

Mentors reported they had acquired 'new skills as a mentor; new ideas of mentoring' and 'learned new things from others in the mentor group'. Mentoring was found to be a good reflection process for the mentors: 'My mentee was very bright and quick and gave me also several ideas in my own development' and 'I revisited my own way of working, so it became a U-turn for me personally'.

Getting to share the knowledge of an experienced manager/producer is one of the best ways of focusing on your own knowledge and getting new knowledge. Also for the mentor, it is a great way of reflecting on one's own practice.
Kirre Arneberg (mentor)

For mentors, mentees and the Mentoring scheme managers, lessons can be learned from the process of running a mentoring scheme for artists and producers where the line between creative process and arts management is often blurred. Several commented on the importance of defining expectations in relation to artistic guidance and professional skills mentoring.

A mentor said: 'I could not and would not be a mentor in the creative process of her work at all ... both mentor and mentee have to be very clear about what they want or need to be mentored on'. A mentee (in a different partnership) said 'I do

not think my mentor really understood, or had the ability to see, my work and its needs professionally'.

One of the Mentoring scheme managers made an important point about long-term evaluation: 'we learned that mentorship as a model often has a positive feeling, but to know the long-term impact, you have to get back to the participants after some years'.

8.5. Evaluation Commentary

The Mentoring scheme made a considerable investment in 12 mentees and there were many positive outcomes. Lessons can be learned to inform future mentoring programmes. The responses to the evaluation indicated some structural weaknesses that meant that the pilot may not have achieved its full potential.

There was an acknowledged loss of momentum, due to the delayed programme structure. It is not clear to the evaluator what was the purpose of starting to recruit mentees almost a year before they met for the first work session. The scheme's longer timeframe was seen as a specific benefit by some but the unstructured start was unsatisfactory for most. Better time planning might have led to a shorter programme with later recruitment or, as recommended by one mentor, it should have had earlier and later group meeting points, not necessarily tied to the keõja Encounters calendar. Within the existing process, the Mentoring managers might have taken a 'reality check' in spring 2013 that the mentees and mentors were still fully engaged in the programme and had no changes in personal or professional commitments that might hinder their participation.

There was a relatively low level of turnout for the 'obligatory' meetings at keõjaKlaipeda & keõjaMariehamn (around 70% attendance overall), with around half the mentors taking part in Klaipeda and only two-thirds of mentees at Mariehamn. One pair of mentees, one mentor and one pair of mentors did not attend either Encounter, although they did meet in other locations. One mentor reported that there were problems establishing the mentoring relationship which she linked to the fact that she had not been able to attend the first meeting.

The mentoring introductory workshop in Klaipeda was relatively short; several found it unsatisfactory for this reason,

citing also an overall lack of guidance and information tools. The fact that much of the mentoring process was self-determined gave it a flexibility that several appreciated, but it also led to great variations in what was delivered, e.g. in the quality and quantity of contact time. The range in the number of meetings and mentoring sessions between pairs matches, to some extent, the satisfaction levels. Along with the lack of a formal contract for mentees, this impacted on the low level of documentation and evaluation within the programme.

The 'concrete task' assignment was not particularly well developed: on first meeting in Klaipėda in June 2013, mentees who did not know each other well yet were given the brainstorming task to decide on a joint project to be delivered 14 months later. More time seemed to have been programmed for the Marihamn task planning than to overall mentoring introduction work. The Mentouring activity which was decided on as a result was found by participants and organisers to have been a success; however, the task development process and timing could have been improved.

The matching of mentors and mentees was done with great care; in many cases, very successfully and much appreciated. Some of the duos of mentors and mentees encountered problems, although the fact that they were in pairs was not necessarily the cause. One mentee found that her paired mentors had a lack of communication with each other. Another mentee was more interested in sharing the process with her partner's mentor than with the mentor assigned to her. There were two mentee pregnancies and maternity leaves during the mentoring programme. As reported, this compromised the availability and commitment of mentees (and also partners who were mentees).

Overall, the mentoring programme has been a useful pilot to inform future programmes in the region and, particularly, in the dance field. Attention should be given to careful planning to ensure the best use of the initial momentum generated by any new scheme. An intensive, well structured introductory programme for both mentors and mentees is recommended, learning from the structure piloted during keōja Mentoring scheme, as is building in a contractual relationship with both parties.

In selecting the mentors and mentees, expectations should be clarified to avoid confusion between artistic guidance/critical feedback and professional skills mentoring. Open discus-

sion on values would be useful. Better documentation (including clear contractual deliverables for participants), time-tabled reporting and evaluation plans should be set out from the start. This can help develop a tool-kit or manual as a concrete outcome to benefit others interested in running mentoring programmes.

The continuation of a Nordic-Baltic perspective in any future mentoring programme is strongly recommended, with attention to regional representation, imbalances and needs.



community



9. keõja Project Management

9.1. Project and Financial Management Structure

PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

As required in such EU-funded cultural collaboration projects, keõja's management structure had several tiers: The Project Leader (Dansehallerne), with ultimate responsibility for overall coordination, financial control and achievement of the stated aims. The Project Leader (also a co-organisier) worked with the other ten co-organisiers (and one associated partner) responsible for the individual activity strands: Encounters, Think Tanks, Mentoring, Writing Movement and Wilderness. Dansehallerne, as the Project Leader organisation, employed the overall keõja project manager who worked in their premises.

Each co-organisier worked in turn with local or national partners (arts centres, festivals, residencies, publishers, support agencies and so on) who played important roles in hosting, organising, promoting and producing the 75 events and activities that together made up keõja 2012-2015.

COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT

The EU application made reference to two bodies: one was the 'content management circle' that in the course of events became the large (and apparently unwieldy) co-organisiers' meetings, largely devoted to logistics and admin and rather less on sharing of content. The other was a management committee comprising a representative from Dance Info Finland, the Writing Movement manager from Dance Infor-

mation Norway, and the overall keõja project manager. It was foreseen that they would 'engage in necessary decision making etc. on a structural/technical level concerning the overall project management, on behalf of all the co-organisiers'.

Two other smaller groups also emerged and met with the overall keõja project manager mainly by skype, email or when they found themselves together: a communication group (SL-Iceland, Dance Information Norway and Dance Info Finland) and an evaluation group (Dance Info Finland, SITE, Bora Bora and Fish Eye).

FINANCES

Overall financial control was the responsibility of Dansehallerne, the Project Leader. They, and the other co-organisiers, were committed by the EU grant contract to contribute a percentage of the total project costs, either through their own financial input or through their own fundraising. Each partner was expected to raise 55% of their own activity's total costs, with the EU grant covering 45%. The Project Leader made a self-funded contribution of 25% and had an EU contribution of 75%. In the planning process leading up to the EU application, 'The capacity to self-generate funds [on the part of the co-organisiers] was what dictated the budgets.'

With an overall total budget of €1397233, the EU contributed half: €689604 from the EU to match the eleven co-organisiers' own contributions totalling €707629.

Shares of the total keõja budget per activity (percentages rounded):

| |
|---|
| All five Wilderness partners (Wilderness activities only) |
| Dansehallerne: Management, Writing Movement DK, one Think Tank session |
| Dance Information Norway: Writing Movement only |
| Dance Info Finland: keõja Mariehamn Encounter and both Think Tanks |
| The Union Estonia: keõja Tallinn Encounter (some Writing Movement activities) |
| Fish Eye: keõja Klaipeda Encounter |
| SITE: Mentoring and one Wilderness hosts meeting |

TOTAL (% of total)

| |
|----------------|
| €520.059 (37%) |
| €205.250 (15%) |
| €181.974 (13%) |
| €175.000 (12%) |
| €125.600 (9%) |
| €100.000 (7%) |
| €89.350 (6%) |

The detailed breakdown of the €520.059 allocated for the Wilderness project was:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Dansearena nord (Norway national organisier) | €130.326 (9%) |
| Bora Bora (Denmark national organisier) | €108.061 (8%) |
| SL-Association Icelandic Theatres (Wilderness manager & national organisier) | €104.713 (7%) |
| MAD Production (Finland national organisier) | € 98.892 (7%) |
| New Theatre Institute of Latvia (Latvia national organisier) | € 78.067 (6%) |

As Project Leader, Dansehallerne was obliged to ensure that all co-organising partners kept to their contracted budgets (including fundraising targets), to notify the EU of any changes, and to ensure that partners recorded income and expenditure according to EU guidelines. As such, Dansehallerne was expected to guide and train less experienced partners, but partners would also be responsible for supplying accurate and timely financial information to the Project Leader. Dansehallerne 'made and gave templates to the partners, returned the budgets received from them in the new template so they could understand how to do it and how it was organised centrally.' Visits were made by Dansehallerne financial staff to each partner's bookkeeper (except Iceland, as SL preferred to control its own budget).

The overall keđja project manager coordinated the self-financing activities of the co-organising partners to ensure that targets were met, that the same funders were not asked for the same or similar activities, and in general to keep the overall budget updated and on target. In addition she fundraised for activity strand projects at Dansehallerne itself.

9.2. Project Leader, Co-organisers and Devolved Management

PROJECT LEADER

Dansehallerne continued on as Project Leader from keđja 2008-2010, following the merger of Dansens Hus and Dansescenen in 2012. Benedikte Paaske, formerly Director of Dansens Hus, became Director of the new Dansehallerne, but the responsibilities of the Project Leader fell to the overall keđja project manager, Kamma Siegumfeldt, who had also managed the six-partner keđja project 2008-2010 (i.e. since 2007). In this newer keđja, Siegumfeldt managed her own plus the ten other co-organisers' activities and was allocated seven hours per week to do so. (Note: in reality, seven hours were paid from the keđja project budget, the rest was paid from Dansehallerne's budget. In fact, the overall keđja project manager worked between 25 and 37 hours a week on the project.)

Responsible for overall financial control, the coordination of the partners' fundraising and adherence to complex EU financial requirements, Dansehallerne's financial director 2012-2015 played an important role, but staff turnover in that department meant that three different people took that role during the period.

A non-comprehensive list of the Project Leader's tasks, which fell almost exclusively to the overall keđja project manager, excluding additional activity strand tasks that are in the next section, includes the following:

- *General management and administration:* adherence with EU formalities and requirements; contact with and coordination of partners; internal communication; organisation of partner meetings and associated documentation; providing templates and outlines for common procedures and processes; visiting the projects.
- **Financial and Funding:** applying to the EU and others, interim and final reporting to the EU, KKNord and other local funders; coordinating the local, national and regional fundraising of the co-organising partners; guiding co-organising partners re: EU financial management and providing tools for them to track their finances.
- **Communication:** adapting the old keđja websites until Autumn 2012 and development of a new keđja website thereafter, also developing blogs and Facebook and providing content for them; liaison between two external web collaborators, artists, keđja partners and an occasional updating assistant; production and diffusion of the keđja mailings until Spring 2013 and the newsletter thereafter; writing press guidelines for co-organisers, press liaison and writing press releases; coordinating film and video documentation; responsible for Mentoring and Wilderness online applications systems; set up the Wilderness artists' blog; responsible for setting up Writing Movement blog; ensuring/reminding co-organisers to use the EU and keđja logos; presenting or coordinating presentations of keđja in international fora: e.g. ICE HOT Dec. 2012; IETM Montpellier, April 2014; Nordic Performing Arts Days Copenhagen, June 2014; Danish Arts Agency's annual meeting, September 2014.
- **Documentation:** surveying and collecting coverage in all media; continuous updating of keđja's digital and social media presences; creating and analysing evaluation surveys from Encounters and coordinating evaluation with partners and evaluators; coordination of filmed documentation in collaboration with the relevant activity strand managers.

All co-organisers agreed to work collaboratively and signed individual agreements guaranteeing their financial and other responsibilities with Dansehallerne. They committed to:

be fully responsible of running the activities assigned to the organisation, at the same time respecting the overall context in which the activities take place, and to be equally involved in the joint actions carried out by the partners by participating in the Encounters and in the working meetings concerning the implementation of the project on a logistic, technical, managing and content level and in regards to communication of it as well as continue the further development of the network dimension of the project, strengthening the culture of contemporary dance in the Nordic-Baltic region and in the rest of Europe.

EU application text

CO-ORGANISERS AND DEVOLVED MANAGEMENT

The co-organisers responsible for activity strands had a very large degree of freedom to develop their activities as they wished, always in keeping with the agreed EU application descriptions, and in collaboration with the local organisations they partnered.

- **Dansehallerne, Denmark**, in addition to its tasks as Project Leader, was involved in four activity strands which the overall keðja project manager fulfilled:
 - Encounters: responsible for the registration processes in keðjaTallinn and keðjaKlaipeda
 - Think Tanks: responsible for partial fundraising and organising two Think Tanks in Copenhagen
 - Mentoring: advised overall, helped select mentees and match them with mentors
 - Writing Movement: fundraised, organised and promoted the Danish workshops, helped select articles for translation, edited Danish submissions, contacted Danish publishers.
- **The Union of Estonian Dance Artists** co-organised and facilitated the keðjaTallinn Encounter in 2012 and collaborated as the Estonian partner of Writing Movement.
- **Fish Eye Artists' group** in Lithuania conceptualised coordinated and co-organised the keðjaKlaipeda Encounter in 2013 that included Wilderness and Writing Movement activities.

- **Dance Info Finland (DIF)** was a member of the management circle and thus assisted with advice on overall planning and implementation. As a co-organiser, DIF was responsible for organising the keðjaMariehamn Encounter, as well as both the Touring and the Sustainability Think Tanks. keðjaMariehamn was planned in collaboration with the other co-organisers to ensure that this final Encounter would bring together all the strands that had taken place over the whole period.

- **Dance Information Norway (DIN)** organised, co-ordinated and managed Writing Movement activities and was responsible for the self-financing. They administered keðja funding for the writing and translation of the selected new texts and were closely involved in selection and promotion of texts as well as the final project catalogue publication. DIN managed the Writing Movement network, organised meetings, supported local labs with content, dissemination of information, managed project blog and administration of the speakers.

- **SITE Sweden**, in collaboration with associated partner, Kultur i Väst, planned and implemented the Mentoring Scheme and also a Welcome Workshop for the Wilderness residency hosts in 2012.

- **SL - Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland** provided the overall co-ordination, planning and implementation of the Wilderness activities, in collaboration with four other Wilderness co-ordinators and local residency hosts. SL also co-ordinated the Iceland Wilderness residencies.

Other Wilderness co-organisers (Dansearena nord, Norway; MAD Production, Finland; Bora Bora, Denmark; New Theatre Institute of Latvia) were responsible on their national levels for administrative and financial tasks and liaising with the overall Wilderness manager in Iceland. They facilitated the actual artists' residencies at national level and liaised with partners in rural areas who received the international artists.

CO-ORGANISER MEETINGS

Seven co-organisers' meetings took place, at keðja Encounters and key Nordic-Baltic dance events:

- May 2012, New Baltic Dance Festival, Vilnius, Lithuania
- September 2012, keðjaTallinn, Estonia
- December 2012, ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform, Helsinki, Finland

- June 2013, keðjaKlaipeda, Lithuania
- November 2013, Copenhagen, Denmark
- December 2014, ICE HOT Nordic Dance Platform, Oslo, Norway
- March 2015, Bora Bora Platform - New Nordic Dance, Aarhus, Denmark

9.3. Evaluation Feedback

The co-organisers' evaluation questionnaires were sent in November 2014 to 24 people responsible for various aspects of keðja in all of the co-organisers' organisations and one associated partner, and were returned by 17 respondents (71%). Only the Latvian partner did not return a questionnaire but was privately interviewed in December 2014 during the keðja meetings at ICE HOT in Oslo. The evaluators also attended a co-organisers meeting in Oslo and, together with other meetings there, met and interviewed representatives from all co-organisers except those in Lithuania. In Oslo the evaluators had an interview with Dansehallerne's current Financial Director and have had a subsequent Skype discussion with the Director and Think Tank manager from Dance Info Finland, as well as several Skype and email exchanges with keðja's overall project manager.

KEÐJA PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Whereas co-organisers agree that the keðja project was led very democratically, in the eyes of some Dansehallerne fell short as a strong, visionary, strategic master-figure. Five out of 14 co-organisers who responded to the question felt there was a definite lack of leadership. Some respondents agreed that the relative ease of the earlier keðja project led to an underestimation by Dansehallerne of the complexity of the second keðja. To the question, 'Do you feel you received sufficient support /back-up from the Lead organiser Dansehallerne?'

- 9 indicated yes, it was OK, sufficient, it was more a question of the responsibility of each partner to use (or not) the opportunities
- 3 were less satisfied: OK but it could have been stronger; administration but not leadership, lacked strategic vision
- 3 gave no answer
- 2 definitely felt there was a lack of leadership, it was not strong, more clarity/leadership/better communication was needed, there was a leadership problem

The managerial tasks were quite extensive and communication coordination complex to administer and the collaboration between eleven partners more challenging and complicated than the collaboration between 6 organisations in keðja 2008-2010. Expectations towards the project leader were quite high and unrealistic seen in relation to the available budget.

Kamma Siegumfeldt, overall keðja project manager

The overall management of the project has always been a challenge, since the project contains so many activities.

Pirjetta Mulari, Dance Info Finland

On a detailed level some practical issues could have been a bit more precise and handled differently. However, we could not have known this, without trying.

Hannah Oxenvad Svarrer, Bora Bora

Dansehallerne is not a very strong lead organiser in terms of developing vision, content and taking new initiatives, but has done an adequate job in managing the administrative tasks.

Ine Therese Berg, former advisor/WM manager, Dance Information Norway

Perhaps the project coordinator could have had more help from her organisation, it felt that at times she was taking care of everything alone and that she could have used some help ... Nevertheless, she has been very active in networking and making keðja visible in different contexts, and that is something to congratulate.

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland

There was a gap between the expectations and the reality that was not bridged by the overall leader of the project.

Jeppe Hemdorff Nissen, Bora Bora

There was a strong will to have democratic processes, and I felt like I could have my voice heard.

Eyrun Thorhallsdottir, Kultur i Väst

This could have been more clear, but it gave different organizers more freedom also.

Sari Palmgren, MAD Production

KEDJA FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

To the question, 'Do you feel you received sufficient support / back-up from the Lead Organiser (Dansehallerne) in terms of financial reporting and financial management?', responses were mixed. That there were three financial staff changes over the period did not help; it is well known that EU financial requirements are extremely difficult for the uninitiated, but there is evidence that Dansehallerne gave guidance and training to its partners.

- 6: no answer
- 4: very good or good
- 4: usually/not always but understandable given constant staff changes, improved since 2013
- 3: not good (all three from the same organisation)

Information changed during the project, leading to much extra work. It has also been difficult to receive clear answers to questions demanding an absolute yes or no.

Randi Urdal, Dance Information Norway

It was great to have Jens Christian here and teaching our book-keeper about how to do the bookkeeping according to EU rules.

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord

Everything was shared from the beginning in the Dropbox, including funding opportunities at KK Nord - with dates, criteria, priorities. So partners could apply for their activities, however, they often forgot to coordinate this with Dansehallerne

Kamma Siegumfeldt, overall kedja project manager, Dansehallerne

KEDJA SYNERGIES AND COLLECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Given that all had agreed on collective responsibility, co-organisers were asked, 'Do you feel that all the partners/co-organisers contributed to the management and content of the project sufficiently and at an appropriate level?' (Some answers may also refer to the connections between activity strands as below)

- 7: yes
- 5: yes, but only regarding their own activities; yes, we all did our best
- 3: no
- 2: no answer, can't say

kedja is very much a collective but now and again it felt like people went rogue, you did not know what was going on.

Eyrun Thorhallsdottir, Kultur i Väst

I think we were focusing too much on our own projects and most of us did not contribute or ask to take part in others' projects.

Anne-Sofie Ericsson, SITE

Well, no. I think that often too many private agendas got in the way of a fruitful collaboration.

Jeppe Hemdorff Nissen, Bora Bora

The projects overall were too ambitious to have time to involve the different strands with each other and contribute very much to the overall management or collaboration. It's again also down to lack of administrative resources.

Ine Therese Berg, former dance advisor/ WM manager, Dance Information Norway

I feel I could have given more input, but for a young dance artist it is sometimes hard to get in touch with all the producers, thinkers/generators. I felt at some points I had nothing to give so overwhelming or different from what people are already doing or knowing.

Doris Feldman, Union of Estonian Dance Artists

The partners meetings have not been used to the fullest. Too many nitty gritty details being discussed and not, which I think is more important, the overall vision, aim and links between the strands of the project. At times a large number of people - over 20 - were sitting around the table. In such circumstance a clear agenda and more prepared input would have been needed, which was not done.

Ása Richardsdóttir, SL-Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland

KEDJA INTEGRATION

The different activities were quite independent, so there is /was at some point (or at many) a lack of coherence. Whether this could have been managed with better communication or leadership, I do not know. It may just be that it is/was the nature of this project. Since the overall end result was good I do not see it as a problem anymore, but at some points I did.

Sanna Rekola, Dance Info Finland

In the activity strand questionnaires, the question was specifically asked if the activities were well integrated (connected) into the whole kedja. Several co-organisers also commented on the integration or disconnection between the strands. Most said that collaboration and connection was very good

between the partners of the activity strands but that there was not very much exchange between the strands. Others approached the issue from a different perspective, commenting that the activities worked on objectives and clear targets identified in the previous keðja and combined with the rest of the actions to reach the common goals of the whole project.

Actually, keðja no. 2 was never one project - but many activities.
Ása Richardsdóttir, SL-Association of
Independent Theatres in Iceland

There could probably have been done more work in connecting the strands together, and a better information flow between the partners, but this is not only the responsibility of Dansehalerne but is a consequence of the very meagre allowance for administrative costs from the EU funding.

Ine Therese Berg, former dance advisor/
WM manager, Dance Information Norway

I think that keðja2 had five fantastic activity strands; any of them could have been its own project. Finding a true red thread (other than Nordic-Baltic collaboration) has been challenging especially when communicating about the project to outsiders.
Pirjetta Mulari, Dance Info Finland

The plan to make bridges between [the activity strands] did not happen ... bridges between the different strands could have made the project stronger
Eyrun Thorhallsdóttir, Kultur i Väst

We think that conditions to participate and collaborate were created the same for everybody. And in most of the cases it depended on partners themselves - do they want to be involved more or less into activities.
Goda Giedraityte, Artists' group, Fish Eye

LEARNING AND OTHER BENEFITS

Learning benefits accruing to the co-organising function basically fell into four categories:

- EU project management, management of large, international, complex projects (11)
- Better understanding of the Nordic and/or Baltic contemporary dance scene (8)
- Improvements and knowledge for my own activity or community, within own organisation or own field (5)
- Bonding, becoming a community; exchanging ideas and experiences (4)

The overall objective of being a 'meeting point' for professionals in contemporary dance in Nordic/Baltic region has been met. It has in particular been important for younger generation of artists and producers. The feeling of 'community' felt by those attending keðja encounters is genuine and valuable.

Ása Richardsdóttir, SL-Association of
Independent Theatres in Iceland

As organization, we have achieved great results while organizing keðja Encounter in Klaipeda. First of all for inviting network's members (around 200 people) to discuss, work and create together. And secondly for our city and country, where we could show and speak about contemporary dance activities with more strength and possible ways of acting. We have also learned that size of organization doesn't matter - what matters is a wish to be an active member of community you are involved in.

Goda Giedraityte, Artists' group Fish Eye

A lot about partnerships, tolerance, thinking long-term.
Pirjetta Mulari, Dance Info Finland

9.4. Evaluation Commentary

What is a Project Leader? And how does a Project Leader 'lead' eleven organisations, themselves led by strong individuals, many of whom had conceptualised their own activity strands, written their own project plans and raised half their budgets? Was 'visionary leadership' included in the job description of the overall keðja project manager? And most importantly, what would have been different had there been a strong, authoritative, visionary leader?

We can acknowledge the challenges in keðja 2012-2015, from unforeseen family or health situations to staff changes, a very serious underestimation of the labour required and of course the learning curve of any large collaborative and diverse project which is felt by all members. What is clear however, is that some - not all - co-organisers certainly felt the lack of a strong directive hand and that many regret the lack of synergies between the strands.

How much of the responsibility lies with the co-organisers is an open question. Only half of the respondents feel unequivocally that the co-organisers contributed fully to the collaborative management they had signed up to in the EU contract.

But to paraphrase two of them, 'We are all busy people and there are only so many hours in a day'. As early as the end of 2012 in the EU interim technical report they clearly expressed the need for better management of overly large partner meetings, better internal communication and for information on all activities to be circulated amongst the co-organisers by the overall keõja project manager. A newsletter was duly created. But partner meetings were increasingly infrequent as the project progressed.

Another sensitive area has been the allocation of funding for each strand, notably comments that Mentoring and Writing Movement were underfunded, although in the case of WM there seems to have been a budget design that was inappropriately allocated to the eventual activity spread and needed more flexibility to re-balance. Regarding the former, it appears to be due to the absence of the former director of SITE who had conceived the project. Thus, once keõja's financial planning was underway, 'There was no one there to negotiate'. Other strands may have suffered, or conversely benefited, due to their relative autonomy within keõja. There is evidence of competition for funding from the same sources on a national and also on the Nordic level to match the EU funds or even add supplementary activities, despite efforts by the keõja project manager and some co-organisers to coordinate efforts.

In a tiered management system it is natural that some felt themselves to be more of a 'team' with those in their activity strands than in the 'higher' level keõja co-organisers' management group. All the more reason for the overall keõja project manager to be fully a team leader, and not a secretary, communications assistant, a fundraiser.

From the evaluator's perspective, it is curious that the Director of the Project Leader organisation, with the ultimate legal and financial responsibility for an overall budget of nearly a million and a half euros, delegated so much to the overall keõja project manager, from time-consuming and rather low level secretarial tasks to highly skilled diplomatic work. There may be valid reasons: the evaluation team has not explored this further, nor do they feel it is their place to do so. Re-delegating responsibilities mid-project is difficult but not impossible especially when all can see that a system is not working optimally.

Certainly the word 'exhausted' has come up several times in interviews, minutes, evaluations and other materials - on the

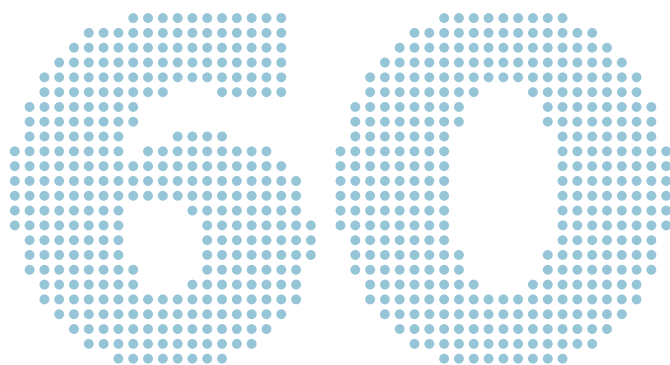
part of some co-organisers if not the overall keõja manager. Some blame the EU funding criteria that limits spending on administration. The evaluators have heard several times that, knowing the work level, none of the current co-organisers have the desire to be a Project Leader for a future whole-keõja project. That is unfortunate.

Large EU collaboration projects are extremely challenging, for leaders, for co-organisers and for the high level of trust and mutual dependence they require. A consistent underlying aim is to encourage Europeans to try and overcome these challenges, to learn how to understand and work together across cultures. Managing this process is never easy. It is our assessment that the overall project and financial management of keõja 2012-2015 was more than adequate, even if it has been difficult at times. What is in question is the nature of the project itself: did co-organisers want a Secretariat or a Director? A communications hub or a powerful Team Leader? Viewed from inside, keõja may have felt like five separate projects, operating in silos, but from the evaluators' perspective it appears to be a productive collaboration of quite independently-minded leaders whose work has created a singular critical mass.

What can be concluded from the materials provided and collected, is that keõja 2012-2015 accomplished an enormous amount of work for, with, and by, an increasingly bonded contemporary dance community in the Nordic and Baltic countries, contributing towards addressing imbalances in the region, and touching probably every type of profile active in the sector, from student and artist to manager and policy maker.

Would that effect have been enhanced had the strands been more connected, if for example, the Wilderness artists had all been reviewed by the writers, or their work produced by mentees, their survival skills analysed in the Think Tanks or their work programmed as part of the first pilot tour? The evaluators are not wholly convinced of this.

Art, like collaboration, works best when it is not forced. keõja 2012-2015 was already a regionally inward-looking project, focusing strictly on the Nordic-Baltic area. Yes, joining the strands would have made the keõja brand and the individual strands more visible but overall communication may still have been difficult and keõja's specific focus, so crucial to go deep and get bottom-up results, would have been even more pronounced.



performances

7450

AUDIENCES

A hand is holding a small, folded piece of paper in the foreground. In the background, there are several wooden chairs and a large, disorganized stack of papers or documents on a table. The lighting is warm and somewhat dim, creating a focused atmosphere on the task at hand.

CREATE
impact





10. Communicating keðja

10.1. Overview

Plans for communication and promotion activities of keðja 2012 - 2015 were set out in the EU application. Briefly, this included the following elements:

- keðja project website: to communicate progress and results of the various activity strands; in an open form to enable input and feedback from interested people
- Think Tanks: to develop relevant communication channels to promote and share the proposed ideas and strategies
- Approaching other organisations to post info on other international websites/communities
- Communicating info directly to the keðja community, including updates on social media
- Progress reports by the 3 co-organiser dance information centres (DK, NO, FI) through their channels and networks, as well as by other co-organisers
- Live presentations at relevant network meetings
- Selection of texts/materials at the end of the project for publication and dissemination as a reflection on the whole project
- Video documentation of some Wilderness activities and performances at keðjaMariehamn

Target groups were identified and estimated total audiences (by media type) were listed.

As set out in Chapter 9, communication and documentation were the responsibility of the overall project manager. Although important and time-consuming activities, these constituted a relatively small part of the extensive project management task list (9.2). Some external specialists were involved for website design and set up.

The devolved management structure also placed some communication and documentation responsibilities with the co-organisers. An analysis of communications for the various activity strands, to supplement this information and analysis, can be found in section 4 of the following chapters: 4. Encounters, 5. Wilderness, 6. Writing Movement, 7. Think Tanks and 8. Mentoring.

10.2. Communications Tools & Audiences

Most of the standard communications methods and tools were used, these exceeding the range foreseen in the EU application. Communications aimed to reach both 'internal' target audiences - the existing and expanding network in the Nordic-Baltic region (the so-called 'keðja community') and 'external' audiences, comprising a wide spectrum of publics. External audiences included culturally interested professionals outside the region; people in local hosting communities for the Wilderness residencies and other outreach activities; European cultural networks, arts projects and residencies; universities and arts academies, researchers and students involved in dance discourse and writing; performing arts critics and specialist journals.

WEBSITES AND BLOGS

The main website for keðja 2012-2015 (<http://www.kedja.net/>) was initially an adaptation of the former keðja project website. By October 2012, a new website was launched, using the same logo, in new colours to incorporate the new activity strands. This work was undertaken by an external consultant for Dansehallerne, Thilde Maria Kristensen, working with web designer Hans Landgreen. The set up was overseen by the overall keðja project manager, who wrote and sourced the content.

The website was the main information platform for the project, maintained by the overall keðja project manager with the DIF project manager updating the Think Tank and keðja-Mariehamn pages in connection to those events. The website presents the partners, places and main activities, with photos, texts, project reports and links to videos. It has a Facebook feed, locations map and image gallery. The site announced upcoming Encounters meetings, with programmes and on-line registration, as well as post-Encounter reports, feedback and videos. It carries news and a sign up for newsletters. A repository for keðja activity, it shows the history and evolution of the project, giving a sense of continuity over eight years. An archive documents keðja activities 2008-2011 and contents reach beyond keðja 2012-2015, with keðjaHammerfest info in November 2015.

During the open call period for Mentoring and Wilderness, applicants used an online form on the site. This tool did not function properly for the Wilderness applications and the

selection jury had to contend with complicated spreadsheet presentations of project proposals and supporting material.

A professional, clean design, the main website presents the project and content well. It conveys an impression of accessibility and transparency through openly available content, reports, comment option and published email contacts. It carries a good balance of text and image to present a fresh, energetic picture of the contemporary dance scene and its people in the Nordic-Baltic region.

In addition, project activity blogs were set up for Wilderness and Writing Movement. The same consultants developed these blogs, with Ine Therese Berg at Dance Information Norway taking on the main content provision for the WM blog. Both blogs used open source software, with low-cost design templates. The Wilderness blog used Tumblr, one of the most visual-based social media sites, and Writing Movement used Wordpress, a popular choice for bloggers and project websites.

The design, style and content of the two blogs are very different, intended to fit the activities of, and audiences for, the two sub-projects. However, to an outside eye, they would not necessarily form part of the same keõja 'project family' and the branding is inconsistent. The Wilderness blog is particularly different visually, and presents rather like an independent project. The word keõja is in the URL but the name is barely visible on the site, the keõja logo is not on the front page and it is not clear why contents are copyrighted © Wilderness rather than keõja. Writing Movement blog is more identifiable visually as a keõja project but the name is not in the URL.

The Wilderness blog (<http://kedjawilderness.tumblr.com/>) covers the duration of the residencies (January 2013 – May 2014) with 166 posts, mostly visual material and short impressions. Content was posted by artists as part of their residency contract. The blog centres on the artists' experiences of the residency locations and does not represent the full spectrum of the Wilderness project, e.g. performances at Mariehamn or seminars. As noted in 5.4, it was surprising to find that several artists reported blogging to be a chore, some were unenthusiastic or non-users of social media. Nevertheless, the Wilderness blog is a great source of visual material and impressions, conveying a live immediacy of how the residency places were experienced and what developed with the people.

The Writing Movement Blog (<http://writingmovement.com/>) was launched in February 2013 with content up to January 2015 (55 posts: News, Seminars & Workshops and Writings). Although this is a relatively small number of posts, the content is rich with some longer articles. A few recent posts do not show in category lists and the total postings may be higher. The blog carries lively reports on the WM meetings and workshops. A dense tag cloud lists around 20 writers, giving an impression of active engagement. The WM national organisers were all users and contributors to the blog.

All three websites are foreseen to continue beyond the formal end of the project. The overall keõja project manager is planning to make the main site 'archive-like', while clearly displaying Hammerfest information and any other relevant keõja legacy activities. The two blogs will be kept online for some years, with DIN taking some responsibility for the WM blog.

Analytics for these three websites are not fully available since the statistics records started some time after the websites were set up. Basic visitor numbers were provided by the activity strand managers. For the main site, statistics run from the end of May 2013 (it started late 2012) and a total of 26,000 visits are recorded (i.e. approximately 10,000 per year). The Wilderness blog launched in January 2013 but statistics only started in October 2013, with 14,292 visits to date (again, approximately 10,000 per year). The Wilderness blog had most of its content posted during the first eight months of 2013, the period for which there are no statistics, so an accurate pattern of engagement with Wilderness blog content cannot be analysed from these figures. For the Writing Movement blog, the Google Analytics package was only recently attached to the site. Thus no reliable statistics are available and very low monthly visitor traffic is recorded in January 2015. It is regrettable that the statistics and analytics do not allow proper analysis of online engagement.

SOCIAL MEDIA

keõja followed the same pattern as above for social media, almost exclusively on Facebook:

- **keõja on Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/Kedja2012/>

The Facebook community page for keõja was established September 2012 preceding the keõja Tallinn Encounter. It currently has 789 likes, a large photo stream and a regular pattern of content posting, done by the overall keõja pro-

ject manager and Dance Info Finland with occasional input from other co-organisers.

- **Writing Movement on FB:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/441581462521789/?fref=ts>
(NB: FB log in required) Set up in June 2012 as a closed group for the WM network partners, the FB page was used actively. Initial posts were all by the then-WM manager, Ine Therese Berg and the overall keðja project manager, but it quickly engaged with others in the group. It was opened up to public participation in September 2014 and currently has 95 members. The WM manager acknowledged that it would have been better to make it an open group from the start.

- **keðjaMariehamn on FB:** <https://www.facebook.com/kedjamariehamn2014>
This dedicated FB community page for the Mariehamn Encounter started August 2013, almost a year before the meeting and has content posted up to January 2015. It currently has 433 likes. The page was managed by Dance Info Finland, as part of their communications activities for the Encounter. The page provides a lively and professional documentation of the meeting. It is a model of forward planning for a large meeting in a challenging location for travel and logistics, during the high summer holiday season.

The Finnish organisers of Writing Movement created a closed FB group for workshop participants in Finnish WM events. A closed FB page was also reportedly set up for the Mentoring project but this has not been found by the evaluator (one mentee said she joined the internal mentoring group on FB but 'there was not a lot of activity there'). The Wilderness manager said she regretted not setting up a separate FB page for Wilderness. An event FB page has been created for the forthcoming keðjaHammerfest 2015 meeting.

- **keðjaMariehamn on Twitter:** #mariehamn
A hashtag was created for keðjaMariehamn by active Twitter user, Dance Info Finland: <https://twitter.com/DanceFinland>, the hashtag also worked on Facebook and Instagram.

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

Three video documentaries were produced, two about the Wilderness activities ('Out of the Wild' has had nearly 400 views on the Vimeo channel) and one summing up the keðja-Mariehamn Encounter and the overall keðja project.

The Vimeo account **keðja - dance activities**: <http://vimeo.com/user9899636> was set up three years ago and currently lists 33 videos, with a simple interface that does not show views and weekly statistics on the home page. This account owns the Vimeo channel **keðja 2012**: <http://vimeo.com/channels/kedja2012>, set up one year ago. The channel carries 41 videos (all of its own content plus videos with other owners that keðja links to). On the channel the statistics and views can be seen. Videos available on Vimeo include: Encounters in Mariehamn and Klaipėda; performances, workshop clips, interviews and project showings from the Wilderness residencies; and two from Writing Movement - a Lab and a Text in Movement exploration.

PRESS AND PR

Press material can be found on the main website: http://www.kedja.net/?page_id=2176

Several general press releases were produced on the project, with others specific to the Mariehamn Encounter and the Wilderness project.

A PR Manual for Wilderness was produced to assist co-organisers in an intensive media campaign to give visibility to the Wilderness activities over the last six months of the residency programme. Wilderness had the visual appeal and narrative potential to generate media attention and there were several articles on the programme, local, regional and national media coverage. Television and radio broadcasts were made in Finland and Iceland featuring Wilderness locations and artists.

OTHER NETWORK COMMUNICATIONS

The overall keðja project manager distributed communication guidelines to the co-organisers to ensure consistency of style and presentation, to remind them of how and where to use logos, and to prompt them to plan documentation and evaluation as part of the activities.

Although the evaluator has not made an exhaustive search of all partner sites and content, a few small discrepancies were noticed, and not all materials were consistent with the communications guidelines. At the point of evaluation, the SITE website had a dedicated page for keðja: http://sitesweden.se/?page_id=952 without the EU logo. Bora Bora Platform - New Nordic Dance acknowledged support with appropriate logos: <http://bora-bora.dk/en/festival/bora-bora-platform-2015/>, but the text presented 'the residency-programme Wilderness' and 'the Nordic/Baltic dance network keðja' as separate cooperation partner entities (both inaccurate and misleading). The

necessary corrections were promptly instigated by the overall keõja manager once advised in the draft evaluation report.

Seven newsletters were produced and mailed out to an average of 1242 recipients for each mailing. Starting in Spring 2013, they were mailed out quarterly until late 2014. The short contents aimed to update the network and interested subscribers on current and planned keõja activities. The newsletters began part-way into the project; the open calls for Mentoring and Wilderness (June 2012) as well as information regarding keõjaTallinn, were disseminated by partners to their national lists and other contacts and also centrally. To varying degrees this has been the case for all information dissemination.

PUBLICATIONS

The Writing Movement catalogue Expeditions in Dance Writing 2012-2014 (see chapter 6) was published in December 2014 and launched at ICE HOT, Oslo. As of Spring 2015 the catalogue has been distributed to 65 organisations.

The Sustainability Think Tank report is in production and expected to be disseminated through various channels during 2015.

PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

The overall keõja project manager and others presented keõja in a number of international fora throughout the project. These included ICE HOT, Helsinki (December 2012), IETM Montpellier (April 2014), Nordic Performing Arts Days Copenhagen (June 2014), the Danish Arts Agency's annual meeting (September 2014). Wilderness was presented at seminars in ICE HOT, Oslo (December 2014) and Bora Bora Platform, Aarhus (March 2015), as well as several other external public settings.

10.3. Evaluation Feedback

All the evaluation questionnaires asked for feedback on communications – what tools people had used, what was most effective, how it might have been improved and so on. The co-organisers gave a lot of attention to this in their responses and it was clear that communication had been a regular topic at partner meetings and in other exchanges. For many of the project participants, communication was viewed differently: sometimes a useful tool but also an additional chore.

For the co-organisers, culture professionals with experience of international projects, they were keenly aware of the importance of communication, social media, visibility and public engagement with relevant audiences to share the project's ideas and results.

There were comments about the lack of an overall communications strategy and the sporadic nature of some internal and external network communication:

Many of the activities (like Think Tanks or Mentoring) are not easy to communicate to a wide audience... but they could have been communicated to the partners and the keõja community to a larger extent. A communications strategy should have been developed from the start of the project together with regular newsletters from the beginning.

Ine Therese Berg, former dance advisor,
Dance Information Norway

At times the communication – both internal and external – could have been better; clearer and more efficient. The overall project can be challenging to communicate due to the somewhat complex structure and very independently run activities. When communication responsibilities are delegated to the co-organisers regarding their activities... there should be clear guidelines and strict control of how it is done.

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland

Some activities were more suitable to communicate than others. For Kamma Siegmundfeldt, 'it was really only the performances at the Encounters and the Wilderness showings that were accessible to larger audiences'. The Wilderness video documentaries with their strong visual impact locations have had a higher number of views than other video content. Dance Info Finland's Director, Sanna Rekola, speaks from experience: 'These kinds of projects never get the media attention that would make them visible to a large audience – it is just their nature'.

Among the activity strands, Writing Movement was successful in its communications, albeit for a specialised audience, centred on writing, publishing and live workshop events, often at festivals:

The activities were made visible to a large audience. The hosts used a wide variety of websites, blogs and networks to market the activities. Since the project was about writing dance, it

generated visibility and media attention, for instance a large amount of articles printed in journals and magazines in seven of the countries.

Ine Therese Berg, former dance advisor/
WM manager, Dance Information Norway

The evaluator perceives a developing awareness in the second half of the project among co-organisers of the need to prioritise communications activity. Wilderness had a big push with a more intensive media strategy for the last six months of residencies and reached local, regional and national media in several countries. However, the timing was too late for one national organiser:

The Wilderness marketing came far too late. There could have been good ways of making the project visible to a large audience; there are good pictures and lots of 'show it - don't tell it' in the residencies. But when we finally got around to doing it, the residencies in Norway had all finished.

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord

The Encounters were media-friendly events with a lot of PR potential. keōjaKlaipeda for example used outdoor awnings, open air screens, national television and radio, among the many ways they publicised the event. Dance Info Finland 'really worked a lot with communications and PR on keōja-Mariehamn' and this, combined with the efforts of the overall keōja manager, was rewarded by a much higher number of participants, a popular Facebook page, a video and dissemination of results through several social media channels. The local tourist agency contributed to visibility and distributed posters and handouts for the open programme. High participant numbers may also be a reflection of the location, the summer period, the overall subject and the many people involved.

On the other hand, many of the project participants surveyed (Wilderness artists and hosts, mentors, mentees, Think Tank participants, Writing Movement hosts and writers) had less to report, beyond occasionally consulting the website and using a few communications tools. The evaluators were surprised at the number of respondents (among younger artists and writers) who said that they did not engage much with social media and preferred to keep their activities private. The sample was small and perhaps not fully representative but good intelligence is needed to know how best to connect with such participants in future.

Nevertheless, for the Wilderness artists and published writers, keōja has provided a substantial professional legacy to validate achievements and advance their careers. Links to the Wilderness videos, blog postings and images, to the Writing Movement project catalogue and WM blog will be part of those artists' CVs and feature on their websites and social media for many years.

10.4. Evaluation Commentary

With modest administrative resources, the keōja project leaves a relatively impressive communications pathway. It used a selection of communications tools, with a lot of national and regional information dissemination via diverse channels. Some areas carried more media potential than others, some had more energetic and persuasive communicators than others.

The keōja style of engagement with the public is quite consistent across the overall project, even though it was created by different players from the Nordic and Baltic countries. It comes across as open, friendly, on a human-scale, featuring fresh natural environments and people. There is a certain quirkiness and humour in evidence:

The Head of the Pensioners Union says that Disa's solo at the beginning of the performance made her think of a foreign seagull who has landed in a foreign land and is little afraid, showing off a bit, trying to become loved by the locals.

Inta Balode, dance critic (from article on
Wilderness residencies in Latvia)

The overall project manager did her best, with limited time and resources, to facilitate an active information exchange and communications process, internally and externally. One might question how well the co-organisers and project participants used the communications tools available. Almost all respondents gave the impression that communication was not at the top of their list of priorities, inevitable for busy professionals who are not communications specialists.

Many were aware of the difficulty of communicating keōja. The fact that people often understood the project to be only the part they knew about. For some it was a residency project, others believe it is primarily a regional network or dance community. Several artists saw it as a co-production partner, one

Nordic dance manager not involved with keðja thought it was a community dance project. Was it a publisher or a grants programme? A training workshop organiser or a conference manager? In truth, it was all and many more of these things.

The structure of the project, being divided into several, quite independent sub-projects, made very much sense in order to involve many different categories of dance professionals and create synergies between them in order to develop the field as a whole. However, I often ran into very different characterizations of keðja (e.g. network, community, project, platform, meeting, seminar, conference), which might point to the fact that the overall project was sometimes overshadowed by its sub-projects ...

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland

While some of the activities were well communicated and documented, others missed their targets. What seems to have been missing at some points is an overview of communications as a joined-up function for the overall project. With more (or differently allocated) resources, keðja might have invested from the outset in developing a holistic communications and social media strategy. This could have integrated promotion and documentation with a more streamlined approach to social media, proper monitoring and reporting of analytics.

One way to achieve this would have been to engage external input (a social media or communications expert). This could have been a good learning opportunity for the co-organisers to improve their own communications knowledge and skills, benefitting the Nordic-Baltic dance sector by extension. Relieving them of the communications tasks might have enabled them to concentrate on project implementation.

Another approach would have been to place a Communications Hub for the entire project within one of the co-organisers organisations, as a separate function from the administrative and financial management tasks of the Project Leader. Again, this would have been a large job and would have required additional skills and management input. Combining internal and external communications, PR work, maintaining a consistent online presence, ensuring widespread publicity for all open calls across the Nordic and Baltic countries, the Communications Hub would have had a neutral, detached insider/outsider status within the project. It could have identified more opportunities to tell the keðja story across other contexts and regions.

With communications and social media strategy on a different footing and responsibility placed elsewhere, an external overview might have improved the linkages between the different activity strands. A stronger joined-up approach could have clarified the overall messages about keðja and told a more unified balanced narrative.

11. keðja's Wider Impacts

11.1. Introduction

Other Nordic dance initiatives (Nordic participation in international dance fairs; the Nordic Dance Platform Ice Hot; a Nordic Children's Dance festival) have surfaced in recent years. Together with the keðja 2008-2010 activities these different yet related initiatives have created a 'Nordic-Baltic dance momentum' which must be built on and exploited in the development of sustainable practices for the sector.

keðja 2012-2015 EU application text

In this chapter, we look at two related aspects: how the various keðja 2012-2015 processes and activities interacted to produce synergetic effects and what was catalysed as a result. The evaluators have looked across the duration of the project to see how the activities (sometimes described by co-organisers as 'sub-projects') interacted with each other to beneficial effect. They also review what will remain as a legacy for the future, from concrete projects and new advocacy initiatives to less tangible traces, ideas and hopes.

A complete analysis of keðja's wider impacts cannot be made here scientifically. Firstly, it would have needed a base line study in order to measure changes from pre-keðja to post-keðja. Secondly, it would have required measuring any changes in a statistically valid number and spread of the types of people touched by keðja: producers, artists, students, readers of dance articles and so on. Thirdly, as stated in the EU application, there are many dance activities happening in recent years in the region and, together with keðja, they have and are creating a critical mass, influencing each other in complex unquantifiable ways.

What we can do, however, is look at the available evidence and point out examples that demonstrate some effect. This has the advantage of identifying good practices. It can also provide us with reflections on what constitutes 'synergy' or 'legacy' and perhaps bring some insights into the conditions needed to nurture and facilitate those magical reactions.

11.2. Synergies

Definition: the combined power of a group of [two or more] things when they are working together that is greater than the total power achieved by each working separately (Cambridge Dictionary)

The evaluators found that keðja's EU application did not specify many actions designed to connect the various sub-pro-

jects. Clearly the Encounters were the main focal point and the 'glue' holding the different strands together. The management group's discussions and partner meetings, as well as some communications tools (main website and Facebook page, external presentations) were the other main contexts where the project was considered and presented 'in the round'.

In terms of synergies, the EU application speaks of, 'a high degree of collaboration between organisations and individuals through different kinds of dialogues and processes. Many different stakeholders reflecting the diverse dance/performing arts landscape in the region will participate in various ways ...'

The role of Dansehallerne, the Project Leader, was to 'be in close and regular contact with the co-organisers, providing support and feedback ... regarding ... the development and implementation of the activities content [and] economy [and] ... that the activities are coordinated and presented in a way that ... supports the overall ideas behind the project'. Here again there is no specific mention of connecting the strands.

That said, it is usual for the EU culture programme to assess applications on the basis that the collaboration projects funded would not be separate activities done in parallel by partners who could have done them alone. It is also fair to say that any good cultural manager at a senior level would look for connections between actions if these would notably increase visibility, demonstrate more coherence and reinforce impact.

But one might surmise from the application that the project was largely planned to evolve in an environment that did not anticipate many crossovers and inter-connections between the different strands. The activity strands needed time and space to develop their pathways and distinct characters. Placing an added burden of cross-connecting might have interfered with that process and diluted the results. Synergies were expected to arise 'naturally' from the overall collaboration, dialogue and processes, and through the Encounters.

In fact, the evaluators found that many of the co-organisers singled out the low level of interaction between activity strands as something they were most dissatisfied with. The evaluators observed a sense of territoriality where some activity strand managers were immersed in their own sphere and found it difficult to view the other keðja activities dispassionately, or even to see them at all. Co-organisers were proud

of the interactions and synergies associated with 'their' activity strand but some felt that other project strands were less willing to share and interact, to embody the spirit of generosity which might have been expected. These 'silo mentality' attitudes were not conducive to creating a favourable environment for synergies.

Nevertheless, a very high level of international (Nordic-Baltic) connection and synergy did emerge within the keõja activity strands amongst the many national and local partners and sub-partners. There are some instances of cross-connection between the activity strands. A few co-organisers did also participate in or contribute to the activities of other strands.

Some of the main synergies observed across the activity strands were:

Encounters - All of these Nordic-Baltic gatherings involved collaboration on national and local levels in order to produce the events themselves: not only funders but more importantly dance and arts organisations, venues, community groups and spaces, educational institutes and even private sponsors and businesses. The keõjaTallinn Encounter was organised at the same time as the first Baltic Bubble (Baltic Dance Platform), giving significantly more visibility to dance performance from the Baltic States. In all three cases, the keõja co-organisers involved reported 'firsts' in the level and achievement of arts or dance actors working together to produce the Encounter and/or productions or even a new dance festival.

The Encounters have become a natural place for other networks and projects in the Nordic-Baltic dance field to schedule their own meetings. Activity strands held internal working sessions there, shared their reflections with the participants and got feedback from the sector. Many post-meeting survey comments attest to the fact that Encounter participants came away with an impressive view of the 'whole keõja'.

Wilderness - The five national co-organisers of the Wilderness residencies bonded through the process of implementing the residency programme, benefitting from the interactions, crossovers and learning synergies the project offered. Selecting and liaising with host organisations, choosing and matching artists with residencies and discussing the works that emerged fostered the creation of what the Wilderness manager described as a solid team of Wilderness partners.

SITE and Kultur i Väst (Mentoring Scheme managers) organised a welcome workshop for the residency hosts. The participants' testimonies are echoed by the co-organisers - the hosts gained a lot from the networking and shared learning, created an informal support network and several remain in touch.

There was a bridge with Writing Movement, through Inta Balode's blog articles on the Latvia residencies which describe interaction by the visiting dancers with the local communities.

Writing Movement - The bonding between the national organisers involved in Writing Movement appears the strongest of all of the activity strand teams. This may be due to their relative isolation working in the marginal field of contemporary dance writing or the struggle to cope with the lack of funding for administration and organisation of the many Writing Movement events. It is also evident from the breadth of local/national collaborations that Writing Movement organisers collaborated strategically with dance festivals, a literature festival, performing arts venues and universities, as well as local press and media, writers, editors and publishers. The activity strand itself embodied the synergy of translating articles into other languages so that they would be published and diffused in other countries.

Think Tanks - Strong synergies were active in the Think Tanks, by their very nature, catalysed also by sharing the same Think Tank manager. They brought together representatives from the collaborating countries (Touring) and from different professions within the sector (Sustainability). The working processes were based on confrontation of the different national contexts, policies, artistic, financial and infrastructural realities as well as identifying and analysing audiences and participants. Both groups used Encounters to share plans and ideas with participants in the other keõja countries, and at least in the sustainability group, to provoke thought, good practice models and to get feedback across the region.

Mentoring - Capacity for connecting dance people and organisations in the Nordic-Baltic countries was of course limited for mentoring by its one-to-one nature, but integral to the scheme was matching mentors and mentees from different countries. Mentoring sessions took place in diverse locations (festivals, performing arts network meetings etc. across Europe) creating further potential synergies for the mentors and

mentees through these opportunities. In Mariehamn, especially, an open session on mentoring and coaching took place, and there were efforts to spread the experience more widely and inspire others. Mentouring also incorporated the aim to open up and share knowledge from the scheme with others.

11.3. Spin-offs and Legacies

In this report we define spin-offs as specific activities, event or impacts that took place alongside or as an immediate result of a keðja initiative. Legacies are seen as longer-term outcomes, such as concrete actions planned to occur at a later date and significant changes in perspective and practice.

Some examples of the spin-offs from keðja include:

- As a complementary part of keðjaMariehamn, a group of local dance enthusiasts organised their first dance festival ÅlDance as an off-programme in collaboration with the organisers.
- Wilderness artist Janina Rajankangas was invited back by the Stamsund host organisation in 2014, some months after the end of the residency, for a mini-tour in Nordland county, Norway. She gave five performances of 'Of family and deer' with an accompanying workshop programme.
- The Norwegian dance group led by Ingri Fiksdal received the Norwegian Critics Awards 2014 for the performance HOODS that was developed during the Wilderness residencies.
- The five Wilderness artist groups that responded to the evaluation reported 46 performances / showings in 2014-15. While some were part of the residency programme, around half are spin-offs. Works have been programmed in many European countries outside the Nordic-Baltic region.
- Writing Movement was invited to return to Textival literature festival in Gothenburg, Sweden (March 2015), where a Writing Movement workshop had taken place the previous year. Textival offered a stand to Writing Movement and a platform to launch the WM catalogue/final publication.

Some of the most significant legacies identified by the evaluators are:

- keðjaHammerfest Encounter takes place in November 2015, with funding from Nordic and Norwegian funding bodies. Possibilities are being explored for further Encounters (in a Baltic country in 2016 and in Aarhus in 2017, connected to Aarhus European Capital of Culture).
- The extended life and visibility of the Wilderness residency programme through performance touring is an important tangible legacy. As part of the repertoire of the companies involved, several productions can be expected to tour over some years.
- The advocacy report setting out the findings of the Sustainability Think Tank is scheduled for publication and those involved are committed to dissemination and discussion of the ideas. The results will be presented at IETM (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts) Spring Plenary in Bergamo, Italy in April 2015.
- A longer-term legacy of the Think Tanks and Encounters may be closer connections between different parts of the dance sector, through the experience and good practice examples.
- Most of the Wilderness partners are planning a larger follow-on programme, with some significant changes. It is planned to involve partners in other European countries and Australia, and the outline ideas (at point of evaluation) were residencies in both remote and urban centres, a focus on the production cycle and dance film production.
- The Writing Movement project catalogue is a significant legacy for the WM activities and partners. Extensive distribution is planned through various circuits, extending the life of the project and continuing the mobilisation around writing dance in other contexts.
- Some Writing Movement partners and collaborators have applied for a one-year network grant from the Nordic Culture Point to develop the Writing Movement work further.
- The Nordic Circle of Artistic Management has emerged out of the earlier Nordic/Baltic Producers Network and the keðja Mentoring scheme. The new project integrates mentoring alongside workshops and network meetings for pro-

ducers and self-producing choreographers. It has starter funding from the Nordic Culture Fund and is currently refining its proposal for a 3-year activity programme.

- A pilot Nordic-Baltic touring circuit, planned for autumn 2015, will include presenters in Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Lithuania and Norway, supported by the Nordic Culture Fund.
- Some mentees plan to extend the performative-informative 'Mentouring' (one-to-one advice sessions in boats), developed as part of the mentoring scheme. Mentouring row boat sessions may take place at the Oulu Festival, Finland in August 2015.
- Bora Bora's Jesper de Neergaard, inspired by Wilderness, intends to make 'rural residencies more widespread in the context of the European Capital of Culture in Jutland (2017). Making them into "inspiration rooms". We are not taking art to rural areas but rather putting the rural areas into art.'

11.4. Impacts for Partners: Learning Benefits

This project taught us a lot about the other partnering countries as well as broadening the possibilities for dance artists in our region. Being situated far from Oslo and the funding structures we also gained from getting to know Danseinformasjonen [DIN] in Oslo much better - they have become colleagues rather than a just another newsletter once a month. During this project period we also grew some self confidence - learning that we are not better or worse than our colleagues. We just have other challenges.

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord

As referenced in previous chapters, and particularly in Chapter 9 on Project Management, there has been substantial learning, an important outcome for the partners, as well as for project participants. Most of the learning benefits identified by the co-organisers and overall keðja project manager fell into the areas of managing large, complex international or EU projects.

When asked if their original motivations or expectations were achieved, 14 of 17 (82%) responding co-organisers said they

were: 'Yes, on organisational and artistic levels'; 'Yes, to take an active part in a community and in projects to support artists'; 'Yes, to be part of a bigger international space'; and, most compellingly, 'In my opinion all we ever came for was fulfilled'.

There is a unanimous feeling that keðja achieved its goal to facilitate mutual learning about contemporary dance within and between the Nordics and Baltics and thus continue building the community it started in 2008 with the first keðja. This scored highly on the evaluation questionnaires to all levels of keðja organisers and participants.

From keðja1, the goal was to create a Nordic-Baltic dance community and this has happened. Collaboration between artists has increased. After keðja2, projects and collaborations happen without EU money or without the involvement of the keðja partners.

Sanna Rekola, Dance Info Finland

I have seen the network growing. More artists are involved. Seven years ago no one knew each other in the region.

Benedikte Paaske, Dansehallerne

We wanted to extend our network and learn more about the overall structures of dance in other Nordic and Baltic countries.

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord

We wanted to deepen and strengthen these connections further - yes - we've seen an increase in Finnish dance performances in the Nordic and Baltic countries between 2006 and 2013 for example.

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland

11.5. keðja continues

In Europe and indeed the Baltics, dance organisations are often small and funding inadequate. A Nordic-Baltic dance community is being formed. The need for it, in the current economic situation, is big.

EU application text

Sustainability featured in the EU application and was an important topic for keðja 2012-2015. 'The sustainable Nordic region' is one of the five themes for the Nordic Council of Ministers Strategy for Nordic Cultural Co-operation 2013-2020. Whether keðja will result in more Nordic-Baltic or EU funds

supporting contemporary dance in the region is an, as yet, unanswered question that some co-organisers felt quite unsure about.

The final keðja 2012-2015 co-organisers' meeting takes place in Aarhus in March 2015, and will open up to various invited people in order to share experiences and advice, and hopefully pass the keðja torch to a new generation of organisers. Plans have been mooted for a future iteration ('keðja3') but this remains on the drawing board at the point of evaluation. (See more detail on these developments in the overall keðja project manager's post-script.)

Two of the follow-on projects (the Touring circuit and the Nordic Circle of Artistic Management) were awarded grants by the Nordic Culture Fund in late 2014. However, both were unsuccessful in their first applications to the Nordic Culture Point (KKNord). Whatever the reasons, KKNord has a strategic overview of networks and other projects it funds under the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme for Culture, and would look at how proposed new initiatives might contribute to that environment. The Nordic Circle of Artistic Management is revising the proposal with a view to a new application.

Observing potential synergies and crossovers with other KKNord funded projects, the evaluators feel that it may be time for some keðja legacy activities to consider joining forces with new partners. Strategic alliances may be the way forward in order for the 'Nordic-Baltic dance momentum' to step up the pace.

Be that as it may, keðja looks set to continue in various forms and leaves an impressive legacy.





NEW
networks

12. keõja Values

12.1. Introduction

In order to bring in a fresh look at keõja, the evaluators sought to create a grid of a different and perhaps more artistic/humanistic nature than that normally used for EU-funded projects. They started by looking at UNESCO's approach on evaluating culture and development⁴. UNESCO acknowledges that 'quantifying culture's role (in development) is a conceptual minefield' and to address this has developed a primarily qualitative 'indicator suite' with seven 'dimensions'. While these UNESCO dimensions are not appropriate for keõja, the evaluators were inspired to develop a different set of 'values' that are considered positive benchmarks today in the arts and culture sector and that also link with the EU's and keõja's objectives.

Values-led evaluation is gaining prominence in the arts and culture sector. In the UK, The Cultural Value Project⁵, a research initiative set up in 2012 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council is examining the value of the arts and culture rather than just its outcomes. ENCATC (European Network on Cultural Management and Cultural Policy education) ran an advanced seminar in October 2014 on 'Rethinking Cultural Evaluation: Going Beyond GDP'. The international cultural evaluation expert François Matarasso champions a values-led approach, as exemplified in his report *Cultural Encounters*⁶, an evaluation of the Swiss Cultural Programme in the Western Balkans (14 years - 9 countries - 3,000+ projects).

keõja, as a name choice for the initiative, uses the concept of the chain as in a linking structure and also referring to the Nordic chain dances common to the folk dance traditions in many of the keõja participating countries. An important thing to remember is that a chain is as strong as its weakest link.

Recognising keõja's valorisation of nature and rural life, also noticing the several newborns who arrived to artists or managers involved in various strands over the course of keõja 2012-2015 and northern Europe's short but essential growing season, the evaluators have chosen the metaphor of 'fertile ground' for this evaluation report. Our starting point was: the

keõja community prepared the soil well through its activities 2008-2011. So we wanted to ask: did keõja 2012-2015 make good use of that growing medium? What seeds did it sow? What flourished, what didn't? Is the ground still (as) fertile as when the partners started?

12.2. Adding Good Value

The word husbandry, in English, refers to the care, conservation and breeding of crops and animals and requires careful management of resources. Good husbandry of an eco-sustainable farm or a cultural project would equally require the integration of certain values in the planning and execution. These principles underpin our keõja suite of values, which are also inspired by *How fine arts graduates contribute to innovation*⁷, a 2008 research by the UK's National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA).

The evaluators believe that keõja can be assessed with the values: **adaptive, developmental, diverse, synergetic, generative** and **visionary**. These create the acronym 'adds good value'.

Adaptive - *How adaptable/flexible/sensitive were the planned activity elements and the project's organisation to respond to necessary changes and challenges along the way? Adaptive behaviour comes out of learning. Were the activities adapted to the very different national/local environments, the state of contemporary dance development, the size and development of the professional sector, the local or national opportunities and strategic features?*

We find evidence of adaptive (and strategically adaptive) behaviour throughout keõja. Examples include:

- The Latvia Writing Movement national organiser's clever use of the launch of two new regional arts centres as a high profile hook for dance performances, writing seminars and workshops that would otherwise risk only to have marginal visibility

4. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/diversity-of-cultural-expressions/programmes/culture-for-development-indicators/>

5. <http://www.wahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Funded-themes-and-programmes/Cultural-Value-Project/Pages/default.aspx>

6. <http://parliamentofdreams.com/2013/04/21/portraying-the-change/>

7. <http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/art-innovation>

- The Finland Writing Movement national organiser's seeing the many dance festivals across Finland as opportunities to add in a substantial number of writing workshops, on top of the EU-funded one
- Some of the Wilderness artists' improvisational adaptations to the physical spaces and community situations in which they found themselves in the residencies, many needing to rethink their project plans in relation to local realities
- The Wilderness manager, national partners, residency hosts and artists were flexible and adapted to unforeseen personal and professional circumstances, which obliged several changes in the planned residency schedules
- The Touring Think Tank's decision to close its membership at a certain point in order to more effectively take decisions and draw up concrete plans

Developmental – *How much did the activity strands evolve from the issues encountered in the keõja 2008-2010 project and in the bridging year of 2011? Did activities address an expressed need? Was there a solid foundation for the activities, despite any implementation problems, that allowed them to evolve?*

The original keõja (2008-2011) organisers have all attested to the fact that keõja2 picked up and developed the ideas, needs and issues raised in keõja1 and in some cases before. Discussions in 2007 or even earlier were cited: 'We had been talking about this for years and nothing ever changed'; 'There was a very pronounced will to overcome differences in the region and use EU funds to address them as much as that was possible'. Activities were indeed developed out of the needs of the sector and the fact that there was an active engagement in all five main activities (Encounters, Writing Movement, Think Tanks, Mentoring, Wilderness) demonstrates that the organisers had listened well and shaped the programme accordingly.

Diverse – *What effort was made to include all sectors (ages, phases etc.) of the contemporary dance field in the Nordic-Baltic region? For example, to what extent were artists, students, dancers, universities, dance teachers, media, producers, programmers, administrators, agents, festivals, theatres, policy makers, amateurs and professionals involved?*

We have seen that, especially in the Encounters, participants, foreign guests and organisers alike have cited this particular strength of keõja – 'creating the community'. The inclusion of an artist in the Sustainability Think Tank was also mentioned by several as a good practice, although we might ask why only one artist and not more were included. Diversity was well considered in Mariehamn, as shown by the statistics collected not only on professions but also gender and age.

There were obvious efforts to always include all eight keõja countries, although this did not always work: Latvia's relatively weak overall keõja participation – albeit balanced by a very exemplary showing in Writing Movement; some imbalances in the writers selected for Writing Movement; some gaps in the countries hosting Wilderness residencies which impacted slightly on the artist selection; also in the mentors and mentees, the reasons for which are covered in the designated chapters.

When speaking of diversity an obvious question is, 'How much were differently-abled, or non-native, immigrant or immigrant-generation dance people involved?' but the evaluators saw no data on this. They acknowledge that this is an extremely complex question in an arts field that struggles with employment, recruitment, education and access issues regarding these populations. The rural/urban divide, however, was addressed through Wilderness.

Synergetic – *What synergies were to be found on local, national regional and international levels? Were there synergies between participants as well as local partners? On a regional level (i.e. Nordic-Baltic), were there synergies between certain generic types of players in the sector?*

From the section on synergies (11.2.) it is clear that keõja did not specifically prioritise actions to connect the five activity strands in its EU application (apart from using Encounters for this purpose), nor did it implement later ideas to connect them, except in a few isolated cases. Connecting them via additional actions could have improved visibility and given a coherency to the presentation of keõja as a hub or cluster of related projects. It could have corrected limited or misperceptions amongst keõja participants and dance sector professionals not involved in keõja who only noticed parts of the whole.



keõja
= chain



An important consideration is the inflexibility of EU-funded culture projects (if new activities intended for crossovers – and their costs – were introduced at a later stage, permission from the European Commission would have had to have been sought and given). There is also the question of who would have found the extra time and money to organise these new actions? Could the individual co-organisers have simply made easy connections without waiting for a directive from on high? Yes, opportunities were missed and might have integrated with existing actions relatively easily – this is surely a point for any further keõja project development.

However, the evaluators have found substantial evidence of synergies and transnational connections within the activity strands, on local and regional levels, in the collaborations forged to produce Encounters, in locally-based events and so on. Connections can occur at several levels, and keõja has encompassed many.

Generative – *How well were the activities positioned to generate and embrace spin-offs and new ideas or to leave legacies, rather than just 'ticking the boxes'?*

We find that keõja embodied a generative dimension. Think Tanks were focused on concrete action and produced a blueprint for a touring circuit and recommendations for sustainability. Both are starting points for further action. Writing Movement's aim to 'find new voices and new approaches' is a kick-off for the next stage of supporting and spreading these voices and approaches; it does not end here. Wilderness shows every sign of change and development, both in terms of its own ambition and format and in a newfound interest by some hosts to develop their arts programmes. We did not hear from all artists involved, but there appears to be follow-up and movements of the work produced. It seems the organisers of the Mentoring Scheme learned a great deal from keõja, and, together with the Nordic-Baltic Producers' Network, will put that learning to use in a new scheme where they will have more input and control.

The Encounters also generated change on local and national levels, including choosing locations beyond capital cities as locations: Dance Info Finland identified an autonomous archipelago between Sweden and Finland as a creative location for an Encounter, bringing together people, organisations

and local authorities for the first time from all three areas to create a new dance festival and youth project. The Estonian Union of Dance Artists is adamant that keõja has radically improved the landscape for contemporary dance. And the organisers in Klaipeda have identified a necessary role linking the international community with their local dance scene, something they can build upon in the years to come.

Visionary – *To what extent was keõja 2012-2015 planned in order to be a step, stage or springboard for a next generation? To what extent can keõja be considered part of the several historic waves or layers of development of dance in the Nordic-Baltic area?*

While 'passing the wand to the next generation' was not an explicit aim in the EU application text, the evaluators note that this is now being planned and hoped for during the keõja meeting in Aarhus, March 2015. In addition, there are signs, especially in Writing Movement and in the Mentoring Scheme, of a commitment to supporting emerging dance professionals.

The word 'exhaustion' has surfaced here and there in the evaluation materials and the evaluators noted that there is a reticence shown in stepping up to 'lead' a third keõja cluster project due to the huge amount of work (and financial responsibility) it represents for the Project Leader organisation. Was keõja such an ambitious project that its vision was obstructed by the sheer effort of corralling what seems to have sometimes been a team of wild horses, and attempting to achieve its own high standards? Hopefully not.

12.3. Preparing Fertile Ground

keõja takes its place in the much larger and longer timeline of Nordic political and artistic exchange since the early 1900s. In the 2011 publication, *Dance and the Formation of Norden: Emergences and Struggles*, editor/writer Karen Vedel exposes parallel political and artistic developments in collaboration and community-building across the Nordic and eventually the Baltic countries. We see the gradual transformations of councils, commissions, committees and foundations dedicated first to theatre and then to dance, supporting tours, exchanges and scholarly research across the region.

In her chapter, Vedel comments on the 2002 establishment of the Nordic Centre for the Performing Arts (Nordscen) and its proactive concerns of producing, broadening the art forms, looking at crossovers, supporting new ways for artists to collaborate, and opening the Nordic space up to artists 'from outside'. Vedel writes (the emphasis is ours):

*Nordscen marked a three-fold transition: 1) from a primary focus on dance and the intra-Nordic to a focus on Nordic dance in a wider global context; 2) from an emphasis on the autonomy of dance as an art form to the autonomy of the individual artists; 3) and finally from a cultural political structure built on the democratic idea of representation and delegates taking on the voice of a larger group of people, to a structure built to a larger extent on networks of individual agents in the field. An example of the latter is **keđja, North European Dance Encounters, 2008-2010 ...***

Karen Vedel (ed.), *Dance and the Formation of Norden: Emergences and Struggles*, (Tapir Academic Press, Trondheim, 2011), p 124.

If we look at a definition of sustainability sometimes used by the EU, we see that the concept does not necessarily refer to the longevity of a particular organisation or project, but rather to the longer-term cascading effects of initiatives.

Vedel again:

cultural fields and sub-fields continue to emerge. They also perish, re-construct, and re-invent themselves. Significant developments in the performing arts are currently taking place outside of the institutions, and as a result, the internal logic of the field is being disputed and re-negotiated ... not only do new artistic practices emerge but also new structures of support and collaborations that are aligned with the realities of the present days.

Vedel (ed.), *Dance and the Formation of Norden*, p 126

In its wide breadth, through the community and synergies generated by touching a diversity of dance activists, as well as its capacity to evolve directly from previously identified problematics and yet adapt to different contexts, keđja can be considered a visionary initiative. It has done - and is doing - its part to ensure that the Nordic-Baltic ground continues to be fertile for sustaining a constant re-emergence and growth.

share





13. Concluding Questions

As you continue, which you will do, the way to proceed will become apparent.

John Cage

John Cage's simple words refer to his belief in an artistic process in which each sequential step carries within it the seeds of what should follow. In other words, illumination comes from doing; inspiration arrives step by step; seeing ahead is possible from the vantage point of doing, not from holding back.

keðja has not only started a process, but is deeply inside it. keðja has been and continues to be a self-developmental community-building initiative, the latest in a long line of Nordic and Nordic-Baltic collaboration movements. Its desires, urges, needs and imagination should naturally come from the dance lovers and dance do-ers in the Nordic-Baltic region, not from external consultants.

The evaluators have placed a critique, evaluation assessments and recommendations at the ends of each chapter in this report. But keðja may or may not begin a third phase; it may remain as a single clustered project, or it may separate into independent initiatives. Therefore, rather than a list of prescriptions, in this concluding chapter we prefer to add some ideas and pose some questions that may be helpful when the current, or potential, keðja organisers plan their next steps.

1. Use it or lose it? What is the price of drawing a line and concluding keðja as a cluster project? Would a third keðja be able to learn from its first phases and be even better? Could all the dreams of the busy co-organisers be finally realised? Certainly there seems to be a risk of losing momentum and missing the very important phase of consolidation, especially in activities such as Writing Movement and the Sustainability Think Tank whose work has just started. What other parts of keðja (or the whole keðja) would lose momentum by stopping too soon without really achieving their promise?

The Sustainability Think Tank has produced a blueprint for the future sustainability of the contemporary dance sector. The evaluators have not been able to access it as it is not finished at this date. Could it also be a blueprint for a new keðja? Could actions be attached to the main issues, just as keðja 2012-2015's actions arose from the previous keðja? There is no shortage of issues facing the sector at this moment.

2. One keðja or many? In the course of the evaluation, several people questioned whether keðja as a cluster of projects should continue, or if the activity strands that wish to develop should become independent entities or projects. An important aspect of this is, of course, whether funders are more likely to continue to fund a large clustered initiative or separate projects. If all the 'keðja-offshoots' become independent projects seeking funding from similar sources, can the funders cope with the increased volume?

One idea might be to refer to the model of the value (or production) chain: *education/training ... creation ... production ... diffusion ... documentation*

A chain is as strong as its weakest link and a cultural eco-system is healthy when all the links are connected. Nordic-Baltic dance organisers might ask themselves if those production chain links are equally strong in each partner country and, if not, what might be done to address the weak points. Linking those elements both within and across the Nordic-Baltic countries could make more access points available to artists and audiences alike and provide smoothly flowing, productive pathways for artists. It doesn't matter so much if a healthy eco-system is formed from a single cluster initiative or by independent projects, as long as they agree to collaborate actively and see themselves as part of a larger, connected landscape. This will doubtless be how a funder sees things.

Are all of the elements on the chain equally strong and are they complementing each other to form a balanced eco-system? Who are the main players (in or out of keðja)? Is there obvious duplication or are there elements lacking?

There are many other networked arts initiatives and projects in the Nordic-Baltic region (residencies, arts and environment, arts education and various other performing arts support mechanisms); is it possible to link/build connections/join forces in order to maximise resources and leave new spaces open for invention?

3. Us or them? keðja has been special and has 'worked' because it focused on a defined geographic region. Is the Nordic-Baltic dance identity and community strong enough to open and let others in? What would be the advantages and disadvantages, and for whom? Would international banality be the result or would inspiration fall on keðja's fertile ground to catalyse something new?

Are there other regions that share histories, geographies or values with whom the contemporary dance sector might link? Are there opportunities to connect keōja projects with other EU funded initiatives with similar aims - Writing Movement and Unpack the Arts, Wilderness and Frontiers in Retreat are just two examples of potential sister project pairs.

keōja aimed to include everyone, but one part of the dance sector was missing: the active, international, super-successful world touring companies and producers (the 'buyers and sellers'). There are sound reasons for this, given keōja's aims. But are there others missing? If a current goal of keōja is to pass on the torch to a younger, or different generation, the question is, are they present and eager to take over? How and what would motivate them to join the keōja movement?

4. The 'final' result: an oxymoron? As John Cage reminds us, one thing leads to another but despite this, as we have mentioned in the point above, chain reactions can be compromised if good initiatives stop before they have a chance to set down roots in good soil and be in a good position to grow further.

Planning by results is a technique not always embraced by the arts community who see the achievement of the event (festival, conference, production, publication) as the final point - often because they are so exhausted by the effort involved in getting there. It's harder to look further and plan for the effect generated by that not-so-final result. In teaching, for example, it's not ending the lesson that counts, it's the effect the lesson has on the student.

So, has keōja realised all of the effects of the actions it has undertaken or are there more steps necessary to get to that good result? Who is best suited to do this? What would be the most conducive structure to lead keōja activities to that next stage? In other words, despite the oft-cited 'exhaustion' by certain keōja partners, is the work really done?

5. KIS: Keep it Simple. Evaluators heard often that keōja's communication missed its potential. In a future keōja, if there is one, the question could be asked: what must be done centrally? What can be done by others? Is the central role one of leading, coordinating or communicating? If communication is the key role, why not make it so from the start? KIS - keep it simple: what is the most important thing to do and who can do which thing best? KIS - keep it simple - is also perhaps a

question for the Wilderness residencies: what was the most important, the most fertile aim for the residencies? Did too many expectations conflict and create confusion?

6. NOISE. NOISE is an alternative method of analysis that many feel is more helpful than SWOT. Created by Michael Cardus of Create-Learning Team Building, it is a method that looks for solutions through teamwork, building on the experience, knowledge and perspectives of team members. Like SWOT, NOISE is an acronym. It stands for Needs, Opportunities, Improvements, Strengths and Exceptions (where the exceptions are when things go wonderfully right, when problems don't come up, when all the gears have meshed).

Certainly there was diversity in the complementary strengths of the 11-strong co-organising team. The 'devolved management' may have been problematic but it also might have been a bonus in allowing some co-organisers inspire, energise or cause to reflect. Given the concerns heard by the evaluators about team management of the overall keōja, NOISE might be an enjoyable way for keōja co-organisers past and future to look at the work ahead.

Acknowledgements

The evaluators would like to thank sincerely all those who provided information, ideas, opinion, testimonies and materials for this report.

We would particularly like to thank Kamma Siegumfeldt who answered our many and continuous questions, searched and made available every piece of documentation we sought, and brought additional material to us such as the books on the development of dance in the Nordic region. She could not have been more helpful. Likewise the keōja activity strand managers provided us with full documentation and honest appraisals. We extend our thanks to keōja's co-organisers, associated partner and the Writing Movement 'national organisers' for patiently answering - sometimes several times - our questions and for being available to us in Oslo in December 2014. We are also grateful to the artists, writers, other keōja participants and funders for their clear responses and perspectives.

keōja is a complex, ambitious and impressive initiative. If its breadth and variety have been a challenge to an easy evaluation process, it is certainly a testimonial to the imagination, creativity, passion, endurance and vision of its artists, architects and executors who believe that the 'ephemeral' art of dance can be supported, developed, described, documented, and shared. They are undoubtedly following Nietzsche's wise advice, 'We should consider every day lost in which we don't dance'.

The evaluators value the high level of trust that has been given to us. As the respected arts and culture evaluator, François Matarasso, has written⁸:

A self-critical and honest approach to arts evaluation can only develop in a context of trust. That culture of trust must extend to the work of artists and managers and the judgements that it involves, the reporting and management processes of public cultural agencies, and the debates that may be created as a result.

Mary Ann DeVlieg and Judith Staines
February 2015

⁸ <https://parliamentofdreams.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/2005-how-the-light-gets-in.pdf>

Postscript

Since the finalisation of this report in March 2015, a group consisting of people who were involved in the Writing Movement activities, in April 2015 was granted Short-term Network Funding from Nordic Culture Point. This enables the network to continue to meet and facilitate workshops around the issue of dance writing.

The report from the Sustainability Think Tank has been disseminated widely and presented at numerous occasions in the North as well as in Europe and Asia.

At the final kedja 2012-2015 Content Management Circle in Aarhus March 2015 a group that will work on a joint future development of the kedja project was established. It includes among other Nordic and Baltic organisations, representatives from Klaipeda/Lithuania and Aarhus/Denmark where it is anticipated that Encounters will take place in 2016 and 2017.

More info about this will be posted on www.kedja.net

Kamma Siegumfeldt,
kedja project manager
May 2015

sustainability





ANNEX A – Evaluation consultation

1. KEDJA CO-ORGANISERS & OTHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR KEY ACTIVITIES

Questionnaire sent 19.11.14 to 24 people (more than one per organisation) and returned by 17 respondents:

Ine Therese Berg, former dance advisor/ Writing Movement developer/manager, Dance Information Norway (NO)

Anne-Sofie Ericsson, Managing Director, SITE (SE)

Doris Feldmann, Project Manager, Union of Estonian Dance Artists (EE)

Goda Giedraityte, Head of Organisation, Artists Group Fish Eye (LT)

Sigrun Drivdal Johnsen, Dance Consultant, Dance Information Norway (NO)

Katarina Lindholm, Project Manager, Dance Info Finland (FI)

Pirjetta Mulari, Manager: International Affairs, Dance Info Finland (FI)

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Director, Dansearena nord (NO)

Jeppe Hemdorff Nissen, Production manager/Dramaturge, Bora Bora - Dans og Visuelt Teater (DK)

Benedikte Paaske, Managing Director, Dansehallerne (DK)

Sari Palmgren, dancer/choreographer, MAD Productions (FI)

Sanna Rekola, Director, Dance Info Finland (FI)

Ása Richardsdóttir, freelance, SL independent theatres / Performing Arts Iceland (IS)

Kamma Siegumfeldt, Project Manager, Dansehallerne (DK)

Hannah Oxenvad Svarrer, Producer, Bora Bora (DK)

Eyrun Thorhallsdóttir, Regional Dance Advisor, Kultur i Väst (SE)

Randi Urdal, General Manager, Dance Information Norway (NO)

2. KEDJA WRITING MOVEMENT

Questionnaire sent 03.12.14 to 23 people and returned by 12 respondents:

Activity strand manager

Sigrun Drivdal Johnsen, Dance Consultant, Dance Information Norway (NO)

National Organisers

Inta Balode, dance critic, Dance.LV Journal (LV)

Veera Lamberg, Editor of Liikekieli.com web journal & dance artist (FI)

Maike Maiste, freelance writer, Union of Estonian Dance Artists (EE)

Kamma Siegumfeldt, Project Manager, Dansehallerne (DK)

Writers

Raminta Bambulyte, Dance critic & selected writer (LT)

Elina Bértule, selected writer (LV)

Rebecca Chentinell, Dancer/Choreographer/Curator & selected writer (SE)

Ellen Kilsgaard, Dancer/choreographer & selected writer (DK)

Hanna Nordqvist, freelance writer/critic (SE)

Vilde Sparre, choreographer & selected writer, Dance Information Norway (NO)

Iiris Viirpalu, student, freelance theatre critic & selected writer (EE)

3. KEDJA MENTORING

Questionnaire sent 04.12.14 to 27 people and returned by 20 respondents:

Activity strand managers

Anne-Sofie Ericsson, Managing Director, SITE (SE)

Eyrun Thorhallsdottir, Regional Dance Advisor, Kultúr i Väst (SE)

Mentors

Bradley Allen, former Manager/Producer, Hotel Pro Forma (DK)

Kirre Arneberg, General manager/producer, Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt (NO)

Lene Bang Henningsen, CEO/Producer/International Relations, Lene Bang Org (DK)

Gunn Hernes, Producer, winter guests and M-AP (NO)

Outi Järvinen, Manager, Arts Management Helsinki (FI)

Helena Jonsdottir, Choreographer/filmmaker/producer, Hproduction (IS)

Karene Lyngholm, producer/project manager/consultant perf arts, Dervish&Co (NO)

Christina Molander, Producer/Arts Manager/Educator, Keyfuture AB, Stockholms Dramatiska Högskola + (SE)

PeO Sander, consultant/adviser/senior lecturer, PeO Sander/Stockholm Academy Dramatic Arts (SE)

Mentees

Anne-Linn Akselsen, Choreographer/dancer/teacher, Human Works (NO)

Linda Birkedal, Dancer/choreographer, Molitrix Scenekunst (NO)

Christine Borch, Choreographer/performer (DK)

Justina Brazaitė, Project Manager, Lithuanian Dance Information Company (LT)

Zane Gruntmane, producer, Pigeon-Bridge (LV)

Ásgerður G. Gunnarsdóttir, Artistic Director, Reykjavik Dance Festival (IS)

Kajsa Sandström, choreographer, dancer (SE)

Riikka Thitz, Producer, Kiasma Theatre (FI)

WE GO (Kirstine Kyhl Andersen & Niels Bjerg), Artistic directors (DK)

4. KEDJA THINK TANKS

Questionnaire sent 04.12.14 to 27 people and returned by 11 respondents:

Activity strand manager

Katarina Lindholm, Project Manager, Dance Info Finland (FI)

Think Tank Participants - Sustainability

Tove Bratten, General Director, Performing Arts Hub Norway (NO)

Riitta Heinämaa, Director, Finnish Institute in Estonia (FI/EE)

Sari Palmgren, choreographer/dancer, MAD Productions (FI)

Sanna Rekola, Director, Dance Info Finland (FI)

Ragnar Siil, Managing Partner, Creativity Lab, Estonia (EE)

Think Tank Participants - Touring

Maija Eränen, Producer, Zodiac Center for New Dance (FI)

Amy Fee, Head of production department, Dansens Hus Stockholm (SE)

Ib Jensen, Director, Baltoppen LIVE (DK)

Jørgen Knudsen, Artistic Director, DanseFestival Barents (NO)

Hanne Svejstrup, Producer, Dansehallerne (DK)

5. KEDJA WILDERNESS

Questionnaire sent 05.12.14 to 30 people and returned by 19 respondents:

Activity strand manager

Ása Richardsdóttir, freelance, SL independent theatres / Performing Arts Iceland (IS)⁹

National organisers

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Director, Dansearena nord (NO)¹⁰

Jeppe Hemdorff Nissen, Production manager/Dramaturge, BoraBora (DK)

Hannah Oxenvad Svarrer, Producer, Bora Bora (DK)

Sari Palmgren, choreographer/dancer, MAD Productions (FI)

Laura Stasane, producer/programmer, New Theatre Institute of Latvia (LV)

Local residency hosts

Preben Faye-Schjøll, Director, Nordland Visual Theatre (NO)

Jurgita Gruberte, physiotherapist & wilderness host, Nature Park Dvīetes Floodplain (LV)

Else Mathiassen, Headmaster, Vestjyllands højskole (DK)

Solveiga Muciņa, Director, Ainaži Culture House (LV)

Jukka Ristolainen, Kokko1721 residency (FI)

Halldór Warén, Manager, Slaughterhouse Culture Center (IS)

Residency artists

Emma-Cecilia Ajanki, choreographer and dancer, The Mob (DK)

Ingri Midgard Fiksdal, choreographer, Ingri Midgard Fiskdal Dans (NO)

Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir, choreographer, MS Guðjónsdóttir (IS)

Satu Herrala, choreographer/dancer/festival programmer, Herrala, Muilu, Mustonen, Titta (FI)

Vera Maeder, Artistic director/choreographer, helloearth (DK)

Masi Tiitta, artist/choreographer, Herrala, Muilu, Mustonen, Tiitta (FI)

Writer

Inta Balode, dance critic, Dance.LV Journal (LV)

6. INTERVIEWS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS

keõja co-organisers and partners meeting - Oslo, December 2014

Raido Bergman, Union of Estonian Dance Artists and Estonian Dance Agency (EE)

Anne-Sophie Ericsson, SITE (SE)

Gunnar Gunnsteinsson, SL Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland (IS)

Susanna Cardemil Iversen, Dansehallerne (DK)

Sigrun Drivdal Johnsen, Dance Information Norway (NO)

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland, (FI)

Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord, Hammerfest (NO)

Ása Richardsdóttir, SL Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland (IS)

Kamma Siegumfeldt, Dansehallerne (DK)

⁹ Also national organiser for Iceland residencies

¹⁰ Also host organisation for Hammerfest residency

Hannah Oxenvad Svarrer, Bora Bora (DK)
Eyrún Thorhallsdóttir, Kultur i Väst (SE)
Randi Urdal, Dance Information Norway (NO)

Wilderness group interview

Ása Richardsdóttir, SL: Association for Independent Theatres in Iceland (IS)
Gunnar Gunnsteinsson, SL: Association for Independent Theatres in Iceland (IS)
Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord, Hammerfest (NO)
Sari Palmgren, MAD Productions (FI)
Jesper de Neergaard, Bora Bora (DK)
Hanna Oxenvad Svarrer, Bora Bora (DK)
Satu Herrala, Wilderness artist (FI)

Think Tanks group interview

Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland (FI)
Susanne Næss Nielsen, Dansearena nord, Hammerfest (NO) (Touring)
Sari Palmgren, MAD Productions (FI) (Sustainability)
Gunnar Gunnsteinsson, SL Association for Icelandic Theatres in Iceland (IS) (Touring)
Tove Bratten, Performing Arts Hub Norway (NO) (Sustainability)
Amy Fee, on leave from Dansens Hus Stockholm (SE) (Touring)
Maija Eränen, Zodiak - Center for New Dance, Helsinki (FI) (Touring)
Hanne Svejstrup, Dansehallerne (DK) (Touring)
Raido Bergman, Union of Estonian Dance Artists and Estonian Dance Agency (EE)

Writing Movement group interview

Inta Balode, Dance LV Journal and editor of WM publication (LV)
Maike Maiste (Estonian WM collaborator)
Ine Therese Berg, former dance advisor, Dance Info Norway, WM project developer/manager (NO)
Sigrun Drivdal Johnsen Dance Info Norway, current WM manager (NO)
Randi Urdal, Dance Info Norway (NO)
Kamma Siegmundfeldt, Dansehallerne (DK)

Individual interviews

Raido Bergstein and Doris Feldman, Union of Estonian Dance Artists and Estonian Dance Agency (EE)
Ása Richardsdóttir, SL: Association of Independent Theatres in Iceland (IS)
Alan Rivett, Touring Think Tank facilitator (UK)
Anne-Sophie Ericsson SITE and Eyrún Thorshaldottir, Kultur i Väst (SE)
Laura Stasane, New Theatre Institute of Latvia (LV)
Jens Christian Jensen, Dansehallerne (DK)

Skype interviews

Sanna Rekola and Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland (FI)
Veera Lamberg, Liikekieli.com (FI)
Kamma Siegmundfeldt, Dansehallerne (DK)
Nordic dance professionals not closely or formally involved with keõja

ANNEX B – Documentation and Online Resources

The evaluators reviewed a very large quantity of documentation on the project, as well as websites and other resources. This list is not exhaustive and records the key reference documents and resources consulted.

1. KEDJA PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

Overall keðja project manager Kamma Siegumfeldt provided many documents and references through a Dropbox. In all 32 documents related to the keðja 2008-2010 project and 61 related to the keðja 2012-2015 project under evaluation in this report. The documentation from this, and other sources included:

- EU application and project description; Interim and final technical implementation reports and partner cooperation reports; EU grant offer and scorecard commentary.
- Encounters participants lists and evaluation feedback
- Information from the preparation phase for keðja2, keywords etc.
- Various internal management documents, budgets, fundraising plans etc.
- Wilderness: open call, PR strategy, Wilderness final report to Nordic Culture Fund (including press files), report by Steve Mayhew for Australia Council, Foreign Mountain art magazine
- Mentoring: open call, introductory workshop and other content, planning cycle, sundry reports
- Writing Movement: open call, information on publishers, contract etc.
- Think Tanks: reports on the various think tank meetings and presentations; 1000 words on dance
- Nordic-Baltic Artistic Management Circle and Producers network – background info and proposal

Expeditions in Dance Writing 2012-2014: Writing Movement, Ine Therese Berg & Inta Balode (eds.), Dance Information Norway, Oslo, 2014 (The 'project catalogue' of keðja Writing Movement activities 2012-2014)

Program to Perform: Exploring Dance and New Media, Ine Therese Berg & Lise Amy Hansen (eds.), Oslo School of Architecture and Design and Dance Information Norway, Oslo, 2009. Published under the first iteration of keðja on the occasion of the keðjaOslo encounter in 2009 on the subject of dance and new media

Dance and the Formation of Norden: Emergences and Struggles, Karen Vedel (ed.), Tapir Academic Press, Trondheim, 2011.

2. WEBSITES AND ONLINE RESOURCES

keðja websites and social media:

keðja: <http://www.kedja.net/>

Wilderness blog: <http://kedjawilderness.tumblr.com/>

Writing Movement Blog: <http://writingmovement.com/>

keðja on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kedja2012/>

Writing Movement on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/441581462521789/?fref=ts>

keðjaMariehamn on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kedjamariehamn2014>

Vimeo (video documentation): keðja – dance activities: <http://vimeo.com/user9899636> and keðja 2012: <http://vimeo.com/channels/kedja2012> (Vimeo channel)

Bora Bora Platform – New Nordic Dance: <http://bora-bora.dk/en/festival/bora-bora-platform-2015/>

Websites of the keðja partners (co-organisers) and some of the project participants were reviewed selectively where additional information was required.

Other websites and online resources:

Dance in Nordic Spaces: http://www.nordicdance.net/site/DANCE_IN_NORDIC_SPACES.html

As a part of the research programme Nordic Spaces, the project Dance in Nordic Spaces (2007-2012) investigated dance and dancing as participants in the development of 'Norden'.

European Network on Cultural Management and Cultural Policy education: <http://www.encatc.org/pages/index.php> and *Advanced Seminar on Rethinking Cultural Evaluation*: <http://www.encatc.org/pages/index.php?id=372>

Frontiers in Retreat: <http://frontiersinretreat.org/>

KreaNord: <http://www.kreanord.org/en>

Nordic initiative to improve growth prospects for the region's cultural and creative industries

Life Long Burning: <http://www.lifelongburning.eu/>

Nordic-Baltic Dance Network for Young Audiences: www.nobadance.org

Nordic Culture Fund: <http://www.nordiskkulturfond.org/en>

Nordic Culture Point (KKNord): <http://www.kulturkontaktnord.org/lang-en/home>

Nordic Forum for Dance Research (NOFOD): <http://www.nofod.org/>

Nordic Journal of Dance: <http://nordicjournalofdance.com/>

SAMARA: <http://www.saaalee/event/552/?lng=en>
Baltic-Nordic-European contemporary performing arts network (co-production and touring)

The keōja project, Platform for European Nordic-Baltic dance scene, Marie Le Sourd, June 2014, TheApro (Korea Arts Management Service performing arts platform), http://eng.theapro.kr/?sub_num=59&pageNo=1&state=view&idx=426

UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/diversity-of-cultural-expressions/programmes/culture-for-development-indicators/seven-dimensions/>

3. OTHER DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

Cultural Encounters: Swiss Cultural Programme in South Eastern Europe 1999-2012, François Matarasso, 2013, Swiss Cultural Programme in the Western Balkans
<http://parliamentofdreams.com/2013/04/21/portraying-the-change/>

How the Light gets in - the value of imperfect systems of cultural evaluation, François Matarasso, 2005 (presentation at Vara Konserthus, Sweden), among sundry articles on cultural evaluation and values on: <http://parliamentofdreams.com/category/evaluation-2/>

Happiness or art?, Patrycja Kaszynska, June 2014, article about the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Cultural Value Project, Arts Professional (UK online arts management magazine), <http://www.artspromagazine.co.uk/magazine/275/article/happiness-or-art?>

Further references for The Cultural Value Project: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Funded-themes-and-programmes/Cultural-Value-Project/Pages/default.aspx>

NOISE Analysis, an alternative to SWOT Strategic Planning, Create-Learning Team Building,
<http://create-learning.com/article/manager-training/noise-analysis-an-alternative-to-swot-strategic-planning>

Nordic Council of Ministers Strategy for Nordic Cultural Co-operation 2013-2020, <http://www.kulturkontaktnord.org/lang-en/resources/nordic-culture-strategy-2013-2020>

The Art of Innovation, Oakley, Sperry and Pratt, 2008, National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA), <http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/art-innovation>

Partners



**DANSE
HALLERNE**



**BORA
BORA**
DANS OG VISUELT TEATER

 dansearena nord

MAD PRODUCTION

 Tanssin Tiedotuskeskus
Dance Info Finland



LATVIJAS JAUNĀ
TEĀTRA INSTITŪTS

DANSEINFORMASJONEN 



Eesti Tantsukunstnike Liit

SITE



menininkų grupė
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With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union



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