**A description of Wilderness. March 2014**

**The pristine Nordic and Baltic region**

Much of the nature in the Nordic and Baltic countries is characterised as undeveloped and pristine. We have large areas covered with forests and ice. We are enriched with heathland, seas, and huge swaths of empty land, where only small local communities reside, outside the reach of the big cities and their dynamic and experimental artistic scenes.

**The definitive and final projects are taking place now**

That’s what the Wilderness project wants to deal with. Ten of the Nordic and Baltic countries most innovative and dynamic dance troupes have been chosen to realise the Wilderness project.

The project’s first wave took place in 2013. We’ve just embarked on the second wave, where the ensembles will collect the last of their inspiration, and realise their projects. All of the productions will be shown under the tenth *keðja Encounter,* a 3 day seminar in Mariehamn on the Åland Islands, as well as in the ensembles’ own countries.

**Can art create progress in smaller communities?**

For 2 periods of 21 days, the selected ensembles will be working and living in smaller communities in one the Nordic or Baltic countries. In each of the chosen countries, dancers and choreographers will find their base in the local nature, community, or in dialogue with the locals themselves. They will explore what happens with the artistic expression when the art is grounded in the local narrative, in the people, and the wilderness..

The Wilderness project is at once an artistic experimental lab and a cultural political statement. The project should both strengthen the network within the Nordic and Baltic dance scene, and add new inspiration. The Wilderness project should also explore the possibilities for new cultural policy models, where art is in dialogue with remote societies to create progress and innovation. The project is the spearhead for uncovering hidden potential in driving regional progress in our fringe areas.

Wilderness is part of the three year project keðja. The purpose of keðja is to strengthen the network of the Nordic and Baltic dance scene, and develop and realise projects that strengthen dance and its stakeholders, to benefit Nordic and Baltic audiences. keðja and Wilderness has received funding from the EU as well as Nordic funds. The project is taking place from 2013 through January 2015.

**Wilderness in short:**

Wilderness is a three year project in collaboration with the dance scene in the Nordic and Baltic countries. Ten of the most interesting dance groups in the Nordic and Baltic region are participating. Each group will be living and working in two different local communities in two different countries. They will be gathering inspiration from the local nature and society, and creating activities to integrate into the community and the people living there. Wilderness strives to be a model for future cultural development in fringe areas, and to bring art into a dialogue with Nordic and Baltic nature. The project will run from 2013 through January 2015, and has been funded in part by The European Union’s cultural programme, as well as several Nordic and national institutions within the participating countries.

See more at <http://www.kedja.net/?page_id=1075>

See a 10 min. video presentation of Wilderness here: <http://vimeo.com/67869642>