

Constructing Presence – aspects of dramaturgy in performance art and experimental theater

The theme will encompass experiences within modern scenic art presented in theaters and/or exhibitions in the broadest sense. Art forms which employ a variety of different media, crossing traditional borders between professions and genres and between artist and audience. These scenic art forms demand new skills, not only of its creators and its hosts, but also of its users as well. Performance art and experimental theater have been given varying attention from audiences, writers and theorists throughout history and there has never been outlined a uniformed genre, aesthetics or dramaturgy. One reason is that the techniques, skills and contexts in experimental projects are in constant change and “inbetween states”. In addition there has never been a formulated coherent theory and vocabulary to describe what these art forms have in common. They seem to be transient by nature.

However we have all experienced a need to pinpoint special characteristics in individual experimental projects to communicate its different aspects – both in the process of creation and in the actual presentation. In order to define the notion of space, presence and dramaturgy we all benefit from taking a point of departure in the physical objects, the scenic images, the site specific environment, the musical scores or a conceptual principle, rather than in the dramatic text and its characters as in the traditional theater. In the presentation we will outline some characteristics of this form of “scenic presence” between the theater and fine arts and give examples of our work.

Jette Lund (dramaturge)
The Meaning of Presence

Jørgen Callesen (Ph.d. Media science, curator & artist)
Between physical presence and media representation.

Gritt Uldall-Jessen (dramatist)
Between the presented text and the present picture.