

MDT - VEEM exchange a Life Long Burning residency.

I am based in Amsterdam and had my residency at MDT in Stockholm in October 2021. I had applied with a project I call Cat Cow Cat Cow which is an entirely new project. I had specified that I would work very fragmented, try out things and take the first steps in this new creation. I felt this way of working was very encouraged by Anna and the MDT team. There was no pressure to produce, yet there was support if I needed it. I decided to do a very small showing in the end of my residency for a few people. This was mainly to give myself the chance to look at what I had been working on. It was a way to put some words and structure to things. And to understand the material in relation.

It always takes time to enter a new process and I of course found my self needing more time. Time to spend in the studio working and time explore the gorgeous city of Stockholm. However this is almost always the case. I had a delay of one day on my travels because of train delays and had to leave a day early because I was performing another show. So taking that into consideration I think the timing of the residency was good, but time is a furry little animal that is hard to catch.

The best part of the residency for me and something I have been advocating since was the idea of having a host. Oda who is living in Stockholm and had her residency in Veem in December was there to host me in Stockholm. It was really fruitful to have someone who could show me around, especially in the dance scene. She took me out for shows and introduced me to her own studio. A really strong connection was made and one I am grateful for. However it was harder for me to understand what my role as a host was. This was also due to the fact that Holland was pretty much in full lockdown and there was many many restrictions those days and therefor it wasn't easy to meet people and see shows. I also couldn't come to Veem much and be part of the introductions as there was a limit to 4 people meeting. So this also made my role a bit more ambiguous.

I found Anna was very approachable during the residency and the whole team at MDT was generous and kind. I felt really welcome and embraced. It was a really good working environment to be opening up a new process, which often is quite vulnerable.

For the future I would recommend to spend a little time thinking a bit more on the role of the host. It is indeed a really really good idea. It is mainly from the side of the host, that some clarification of the role would be good. Especially since you have to be available for two weeks during the others residency. I fully support the idea, but would consider if some compensation should be thought of for this role?

I felt like this residency came at a blessed moment for me, it was not without frustration and struggle, but this had more to do with the difficulty of beginning a new process and the pressure of having precious time, that is a bigger structural problem of the dance scene, rather than specifically about this one.

All the Best,
Sigrid