

Report on the lab/workshop at MDT 16-17 May 2022.

The lab/workshop that I gave at MDT as part of the European project Life Long Burning links three groups from three cities/countries and their nature: Leuven-BE (with Stuk) , Stockholm-SE (MDT) and Montpellier-FR (with ICI-CCN/Exerce).

The workshop was called “Healing Rituals” and the starting point is the research for the last solo piece I’ve created called Nebula (2021), which takes place both in natural places and in theaters. The context of the piece is a post apocalyptic landscape, joining both pre historic practices and a futuristic projection, in the aim to find ways to reactivate life from a destroyed situation.

During the two/three days, the group works both inside and outside, relating the bodies with a local natural landscape, and then is invited to create their own practices/rituals individually and as a group in that particular space. The work is about care, transformation, land art, handcraft and activation of relations between human and non-human beings and materials.

The different experiences made during the lab are then shared with the groups of the two other cities through scores, mail art or any other form of transmission. Aiming to relate different geographical places and recreate one nature and new bodies in a changing environment.

At MDT In May 22, I was very well welcomed by Hanna and Sara who provided everything needed for the workshop. The participants was a small group of three professional local dancers : Katarina Eriksson, Alice Mackenzi and Siriol Joyner, very interesting and creative persons.

The first day we took time to meet each other and I’ve shared some of the practices related to my work, both sensorial, physical and using materials I brought. The group was very open and autonomous, getting deeply into the experiences and proposing their own points of view and sensibility.

The second day we went together to an island were we’ve worked outside , in a forest and by the water. The displacement as a group created a complicity as we were alone in the nature and could have a direct relation between the bodies and the natural elements as well as activating personal and cultural legends and knowledges about nature (plants, cosmologies, geography, history, politics, fictions and believes...).

After some explorations in group and individually, they’ve created through discussions 3 rituals that they’ve written down on a post card so I could transmit to other groups. We also did a ritual to leave the island and walk back to the boat.

On the way back , it was very interesting talking about the conditions of the dancers/choreographers in Sweden related to France where I live, and other countries. It is very important to get to an European network so we feel both close to each other on the needs and artistic interests and at the same time different in the structure, the means and the cultural mentality and politics from one country to the other.

For me it was a very rich and touching experience to be there and meet all of them. And even if it was short on time, we built a close, sincere and generous relationship that open new spaces of exploration.

Thank you .

Vania Vaneau