

Weld Company 2013

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Hi, how are you?

We meet: Kajsa, Marie, Noah, Robin, Sandra, Sybrig and myself, to work for seven days on choreography in a process to be performed before an audience on the last day. The time frame and the public performance are two set conditions for the process. Another set condition is that the performance must be "without words and props". We meet without previously knowing each other. We come together from totally different backgrounds, cultures, training, genres and aesthetic preferences. Everything starts with a question: Hi, how are you?

I pose that question to myself every day and challenge myself to answer without talking. Who am I? Why? In relation to what and to whom? A need to stir up and mess about with all the fuss and trouble we have to deal with. Raising awareness through stirred up feelings is a way to develop faith in that which gives existence a meaning, a way to capture confidence and trust. Then I can pose the question also to others. To the other. That's what I do.

Hi, how are you? Dare to be unfaithful? Risk-taking demands manoeuvring among wayward doubts. I'm happy enough to have survived mine – so far. Daily despair doesn't frighten me. I know it to contain embryos of insight that my work depends on. It is the technology of living, or maybe you can call it a method, that is the focus of our search. To find the balance between vulnerability and strength. Part of this balance is to think of the process as the aim and not the result. As an artist I never finish a work. I leave that to the audience.

The whole week is a journey. We speak through movement and words. Working with choreography is journeying through language and layers of conception. Through choreography we can think, make and articulate states of mind and chains of events. Working together in the project we live the process, capture experiences and gain insights for further use. How to do this comes to light in a treadmill of theory and practice.

This is how we carve out (cut-out) slices of (in) reality. These slices turn into fragments of imagery, words, scents and events; a starting point for interaction and testing the material that will be composed as completely new entreties. Interaction is a condition easily misunderstood as dialogue, but mostly made up by particularities and doubts. Doubts that formulate critique as well as new questions. What happens

next? Why so? We make something new together. In a week. Guided by the awareness of a time frame.

Everything innovative aspires to being newer than something that was before. Innovative - a curious word to use. Creativity demands rethinking (the commonplace), researching (through your own action) and critical reflection (of the present). The process offers methods to be implemented both by body and thought. Rethinking means research leading to criticism that puts the present in focus. NOW. We work through oblivion, leaving history and the past behind. Redundant terminology must be weeded out of our vocabularies. We're all shaped in different schools, cultures, traditions and conventions. Genres are markers that force choreography into the conserving formats I abhor. I feel sick when they appear and occupy my body, my mouth, my throat. Okay – how to build something new? Through trust?

We have to fight. Seriously and for real. It hurts and leaves physical marks in sore muscles and scratches. Pain is worth taking care of. Words block thinking and a lot of feelings get bruised. If we rely on language as something more than words, something happens in our relation. If we can establish confidence in the process that doesn't provide us with answers, there is what we can call trust. If we can also agree on an ethical protocol that doesn't need signing, there is a good chance we can do something together and establish a room for what is to come. Sound trustworthy?

The idea of what we do together must be possible to express through language without making it feel like violating the work. Choreography is an interesting concept, but I find it hard to talk about a dance performance. I say presentation, representation, maybe staging or just performance. Dance, to dance, being a dancer – okay, just do it. But why make a difference between choreography and dance, choreographer and dancer? In the Weld Company programme there is a presentation of us. I don't want all my professions recounted (choreographer, dancer, professor, writer, artist, poet, philosopher). They do not tell what I would like to present myself as. To place myself at your disposal, use me as memory, experience, knowledge, doubt and everything else I carry with me, offers more than categories. We take risks by doing, testing and retesting. We conquer and reject and offer a process of testing and capturing for our meeting. I am an artist. Who are you?

Confidence and trust in the process are still a condition for taking the risk that can lead to failure or the opposite. We define and value the result. No, that is not true. It's for the individual to do. I, you, he, she... Then we talk. Talking is a good cover for thinking. We talk of experience, from experience. We talk both with each other and

past each other. We talk of hierarchies that rule the language, of power structures and who owns the right of interpretation. We quit fighting. We cry.

Is there anything to blame, anything that stops us from doing what we want? You have to be brave and strong to lay bare your own inabilities and uncertainties in the search. That too is made easier by trust from others. We move and think politically. We limp around with old injuries and experiences that both limit and open up. Choreography is a way of writing movement into the present. Through the experience of doing, we develop our abilities to both see, read and interpret not just the process (and the work), but reality itself. Everything must be for real, serious and without reservation. Everything must be done without adding to what is agreed upon.

Meeting the audience, somebody else, is a curious event. We are challenged in everything we have conceived. The agreement we have made is at stake, our idea of time, rhythm and meaning is changed. The outside eye that is watching has an effect also on the dancer's eye. A slight uncertainty is perceived as fever. A breath is heard as a cough. Communication is intensified, which at best makes for greater transparency. We put ourselves at their disposal. I too do that by my representation of the process, even if I'm not on stage.

Then it's over. What happened? I was so left alone. How are you? Is there a "we" after this?

So many came, shared, thought and expressed a meaning. Positive review in Dagens Nyheter. Who cares? What is the meaning? Weld Company lives on without me. The meeting was short, the contact was casual. The audience easily forgets and papers are thrown away. I'm tired. The meeting was too short to give back the kind of energy that is generated when something is allowed to develop and grow. It kindled trust between us, as well as a lust to test and capture. To understand is something else and to transform the material into something internal is yet another process. We must give to dance both a face and a body over and over again. Choreography is the movement of thought and a week is seven days to be lived.